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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SAFETY.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that process servers play  
2 an important role in facilitating a timely judicial process and  
3 protecting public safety. The legislature attempted to regulate  
4 process servers in the early 1990s. Auditor's Report No. 91-17,  
5 an after-the-fact sunrise analysis on the state regulation of  
6 process servers, alluded to concerns such as alleged delays by  
7 the sheriffs in serving process. However, the Auditor  
8 recommended in that report that the State not regulate process  
9 servers at the time. Nearly two decades later, Auditor's Report  
10 No. 10-06, *Audit of the Department of Public Safety, Sheriff*  
11 *Division* (June 2010), stated, "Inefficiencies in the warrant  
12 process point to larger problems in the Sheriff Division." The  
13 Auditor recommended, among other things, "that the department  
14 pursue accreditation for the Sheriff Division from the  
15 Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.  
16 (CALEA), to ensure that proper law enforcement policies and  
17 procedures are enacted and followed."



1 A survey conducted by the Feerick Center for Social Justice  
2 at Fordham Law School, entitled *State-by-State Survey of Process*  
3 *Server Provisions*, was conducted in 2009. The purpose of the  
4 project was to explore the potential for process server  
5 education and training as one method to improve industry  
6 practice. The survey demonstrates that regulation of process  
7 servers varies greatly throughout the country. In some states,  
8 only law enforcement personnel may serve legal process whereas  
9 in other states, process can be served by any adult who is not a  
10 party to the action. Some states require licensure,  
11 registration, or appointment while others do not. Additional  
12 provisions mandate education, such as training or testing, bond  
13 or insurance requirements, and fee guidelines. Finally, some  
14 state requirements are statutory and regulatory whereas others  
15 are imposed by court rule. Based on the survey, twenty-four  
16 states require some type of license, registration, or  
17 appointment.

18 Civil process servers in Hawaii are not required to obtain  
19 a license. Section 634-21, Hawaii Revised Statutes, identifies  
20 who may perform service of process:

21 "§634-21 Service of process, by whom. Except as  
22 otherwise provided, service of all process and orders shall



1 be made by the sheriff or the sheriff's deputy, the chief  
2 of police of the county in which the service is made or the  
3 chief's duly authorized subordinate, some other person  
4 specially appointed by the court for the purpose, any  
5 investigator appointed and commissioned by the director of  
6 commerce and consumer affairs pursuant to section 26-9(j),  
7 or a person authorized by the rules of court."

8 For persons authorized to serve process by the rules of court,  
9 Rule 4(c), Hawaii Rules of Civil Procedure, requires the  
10 following:

11 "Service of all process shall be made: (1) anywhere  
12 in the State by the sheriff or the sheriff's deputy, by  
13 some other person specially appointed by the court for that  
14 purpose, or by any person who is not a party and is not  
15 less than 18 years of age; or (2) in any county by the  
16 chief of police or the chief's duly authorized subordinate.

17 A subpoena, however, may be served as provided in Rule 45."  
18 For the service of subpoenas, Rule 45(c), Hawaii Rules of Civil  
19 Procedure, in part, requires the following:

20 "A subpoena may be served: (1) anywhere in the State  
21 by the sheriff or deputy sheriff or by any other person who  
22 is not a party and is not less than 18 years of age; or (2)



1 in any county by the chief of police or a duly authorized  
2 subordinate."

3 Thus, in addition to law enforcement officers and individuals  
4 specially appointed by the court, any individual may perform  
5 service of process so long as that individual is not a party to  
6 the matter and has reached the age of majority.

7 In light of ongoing concerns regarding service of process,  
8 the legislature finds that the department of public safety  
9 should more clearly define and delineate the duties and  
10 responsibilities of process servers under its jurisdiction and  
11 examine ways of certifying and registering its process servers.

12 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of  
13 public safety to convene a working group to clarify the duties  
14 and responsibilities of process servers under the department's  
15 jurisdiction, create a process of registration and certification  
16 of process servers, and address other relevant issues.

17 SECTION 2. The department of public safety shall convene a  
18 working group with the following objectives:

19 (1) Defining and delineating the duties and  
20 responsibilities of process servers under its  
21 jurisdiction;



- 1 (2) Creating a process of registration for process servers
- 2 in the State;
- 3 (3) Examining the licensing requirements of and
- 4 jurisdictional concerns with the private process
- 5 server industry in the State; and
- 6 (4) Addressing other issues deemed relevant by the working
- 7 group or by the department of public safety.

8 SECTION 3. The working group established under section 2  
9 shall be composed of ten members as follows:

- 10 (1) Two current process servers to be appointed by the
- 11 governor;
- 12 (2) Two current employees of the sheriff division to be
- 13 appointed by the director of public safety;
- 14 (3) Two employees of the judiciary to be appointed by the
- 15 chief justice;
- 16 (4) Two members of the Hawaii state bar association to be
- 17 appointed by the president of the Hawaii state bar
- 18 association;
- 19 (5) A representative from the professional and vocational
- 20 licensing division of the department of commerce and
- 21 consumer affairs; and



1           (6) The director of public safety, as an ex officio  
2           member, to serve as chair.

3           SECTION 4. Members of the working group shall serve  
4 without compensation for their service on the working group.

5           SECTION 5. The working group established by this Act shall  
6 report its findings and recommendations to the legislature no  
7 later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular  
8 session of 2014. The working group shall meet at least four  
9 times.

10          SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



**Report Title:**

Sheriff; Process Servers; Working Group

**Description:**

Requires the Department of Public Safety to form a working group to define and delineate the duties and responsibilities of process servers under its jurisdiction, create a process of registration, and address other relevant issues. (HB1280 HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

