



Acceptance of Legal Papers

POLICY STATEMENT

Cornell University faculty members, staff members, and students who are contacted by any individual attempting to serve university-related legal papers should direct an individual attempting to serve such a notice to the Office of University Counsel.

REASON FOR POLICY

The university must be able to coordinate properly its response, formulate its position, meet deadlines, and otherwise comply with its legal obligations with respect to legal proceedings.

ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

- Endowed Ithaca and Contract Colleges of the University (including the Joan and Sanford I. Weill Medical College)

WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY

- All members of the Cornell community

WEBSITE ADDRESS FOR THIS POLICY

- http://www.policy.cornell.edu/vol4_13.cfm

Policy 4.13
Acceptance of Legal Papers

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RELATED DOCUMENTS

Table 1
Related Documents

University Documents

[University Policy 4.9, Legal Defense and Indemnification](#)

[University Policy 5.6, Access to Electronic Mail \(Upon Issuance\)](#)

CONTACTS

Direct any general questions about University Policy 4.13, Acceptance of Legal Papers, to your unit's administrative office. If you have questions about specific issues, call the following offices:

Subject	Contact	Telephone	URL/Email address
Policy Clarification	Unit Administrator Office of University Counsel	255-5124	http://web.cornell.edu/counsel/

DEFINITIONS

These definitions apply to these terms as they are used in this policy.

Legal papers	Documents issued by a court, officer of the court, attorney, government agency or administrative agency requiring the university or any unit of the university to appear in court, provide testimony, documents, records, or property, or to take or refrain from taking some action. Examples of legal papers include subpoenas, court pleadings (summonses, complaints, court orders, interrogatories, notices of deposition, requests for production of documents, notices to admit, and all other forms of demands for disclosure), restraining orders, garnishments and mechanics liens. ◆ Note: Responsibility for certain types of routine reporting to governmental agencies, such as the EPA and the Department of Labor, has been delegated, with the consent of University Counsel, to individual units. These routine procedures are not covered by this policy.
Process Server	One who delivers legal papers.
Service	Delivery of legal papers by one of the means authorized by law.

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PROCEDURES

Service of Legal Papers on the University

Service of legal papers on the university or any unit of the university may be accepted only by the following officers of the university:

University Counsel and Secretary of the Corporation
300 Computing and Communications Center
Ithaca, NY 14853

President
300 Day Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

Provost
300 Day Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer
317 Day Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

At the Medical campuses

Provost for Medical Affairs
Weill Medical College of Cornell University
1300 York Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Service in Person

When the President, Provost, Provost for Medical Affairs, or Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer accepts service of legal papers, he or she must forward such papers to the Office of University Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.

All other faculty members, staff members, or students must direct anyone attempting to serve legal papers pertaining to the university or any unit of the university to the Office of University Counsel.

◆ **Note:** If, after you inform a process server that you are not authorized to accept legal papers on behalf of the university, the process server insists on leaving papers with you, promptly deliver any documents left with you to the Office of University Counsel together with the envelope, any packaging, and an explanation of when and how you came to be in possession of the legal papers.

◆ **Note:** If anyone not affiliated with the university makes a request for a sworn statement from you in your capacity as a university employee, or for university records without providing a subpoena or similar legal paper,

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PROCEDURES, CONTINUED

immediately contact the Office of University Counsel, which will determine if the material may be provided under applicable law and if a legal paper is required prior to disclosure.

Service by Mail

If university-related legal papers are delivered by mail to any individual who is not authorized by this policy to accept legal papers on behalf of the university, he or she should immediately deliver the legal papers to the Office of University Counsel together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery of the legal papers.

Service by Fax or Electronic Mail

If an individual contacts you and requests consent to fax legal papers or send them via electronic mail, do not agree to accept service. The university does not accept service made by fax or electronic mail unless there are exceptional circumstances and only with the explicit permission of the Office of University Counsel.

Service of Legal Papers on Named Individuals

Service of legal papers that name a specific individual employee of the university can be accepted by that individual. If the legal papers relate to performance of job responsibilities at the university, contact the Office of University Counsel. Those seeking legal representation and/or indemnification from the university should refer to University Policy 4.9, Legal Defense and Indemnification, and follow the steps listed in that policy.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

The major responsibilities each party has in connection with University Policy 4.13, Acceptance of Legal Papers, are as follows:

Individual Faculty Member, Staff Member, or Student	Refer any individual attempting to serve university-related legal papers to the Office of University Counsel. Immediately deliver any university-related legal papers that are delivered by mail, email or fax to the Office of University Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.
President	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university. Forward such papers to the Office of University Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.
Provost	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university. Forward such papers to the Office of University Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.
Provost for Medical Affairs	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university. Forward such papers to the Office of University Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.
University Counsel and Secretary of the Corporation	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university and act on these papers as appropriate.
Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university. Forward such papers to the Office of University Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.
