



# Acceptance of Legal Papers

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## 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 General Counsel.

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## 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.

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## ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

- Ithaca-based locations
- Cornell Tech campus
- Weill Cornell Medicine campuses

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## WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY

- All members of the Cornell community

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## MOST CURRENT VERSION OF THIS POLICY

- [www.dfa.cornell.edu/policy/policies/acceptance-legal-papers](http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/policy/policies/acceptance-legal-papers)

## POLICY 4.13

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## RELATED RESOURCES

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### University Policies and Information Applicable to All Units of the University

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

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## CONTACTS

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Direct any general questions about this policy to your college or unit administrative office. If you have questions about specific issues, contact the following offices.

### *Contacts, All Units of the University*

Subject	Contact	Telephone	Email/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation	Unit Administrator Office of General Counsel	(607) 255-5124	<a href="mailto:counsel.cornell.edu">counsel.cornell.edu</a>

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## DEFINITIONS

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

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<b>Legal Papers</b>	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.  ◆ <b>Note:</b> Responsibility for certain types of routine reporting to governmental agencies, such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Labor, has been delegated, with the consent of General Counsel, to individual units. These routine procedures are not covered by this policy.
<b>Process Server</b>	One who delivers legal papers.
<b>Service</b>	Delivery of legal papers by one of the means authorized by law.

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## RESPONSIBILITIES

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The major responsibilities each party has in connection with this policy are as follows:

<b>Individual Faculty Member, Staff Member, or Student</b>	Refer any individual attempting to serve university-related legal papers to the Office of General Counsel.  Immediately deliver any university-related legal papers that are delivered by mail, email, or fax to the Office of General Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.
<b>President</b>	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university. Forward such papers to the Office of General Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.
<b>Provost</b>	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university. Forward such papers to the Office of General Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.
<b>Provost for Medical Affairs</b>	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university. Forward such papers to the Office of General Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.
<b>General Counsel and Secretary of the Corporation</b>	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university and act on these papers as appropriate.  Authorize other university employees to accept service of legal papers, when appropriate.  Maintain a record of individuals authorized to accept service of legal papers.
<b>Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer</b>	Accept the service of legal papers on the university or on any unit of the university. Forward such papers to the Office of General Counsel, together with the envelope, any packaging, and a statement identifying the time, date, and manner of delivery.

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## PROCEDURES

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### **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:

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

President  
Cornell University  
300 Day Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853

Provost  
Cornell University  
300 Day Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853

Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer  
Cornell University  
317 Day Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853

#### At the Weill Cornell Medicine [campuses](#)

Provost for Medical Affairs  
Weill Cornell Medicine  
1300 York Avenue  
New York, NY 10021

General Counsel may authorize additional university employees to accept service of legal papers on behalf of the university. These authorizations are made in writing, and a record of them is maintained in the Office of General Counsel.

### **Service in Person**

When a university officer or other authorized individual accepts service of legal papers, they must forward such papers to the Office of General 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 General Counsel.

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## PROCEDURES, continued

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◆ **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 General 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, immediately contact the Office of General 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, they should immediately deliver the legal papers to the Office of General 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 General 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 General 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.