

Henry County Adds Mobile to Civil Process

The Henry County Office of the Sheriff recently added mobile laptop computers to assist them in serving Civil Papers. “Serving Civil Papers is a fundamental responsibility of every Sheriff” stated Keith McBrayer, Sheriff of Henry County, Georgia. “And it is a significant cost to the citizens” he added. “We decided to implement mobile laptops in the deputies’ vehicles to reduce costs and improve our customer service.”

When a civil paper is received by the sheriff’s office, it defines the paper type and the plaintiff as well the defendant(s) who need to be served. This information is entered into the Police Central Law Enforcement system that the Sheriff purchased and then the paper is distributed to the deputies who actually perform the service.

As a Civil Paper may include multiple defendants, several deputies can be dispatched to locate the defendant(s) and “Serve” the document. Often, defendants are not easily located or require multiple “attempts” before a Service is successfully completed. When the Service is complete, that information was keyed into the Police Central system by a clerk: thus the clerk not only entered the paper when received, but also updated the system with Service information. Note that when a paper was “out for Service” (perhaps for a number of days) the Civil Office did not know how many times an attempted service was made.



This “dual entry” by the clerk has now been eliminated via the use of wireless mobile laptops. When a deputy makes a “Service Attempt” he simply clicks a key on the laptop and indicates whether the attempt is successful. The information is date/time stamped, and the deputy can enter any notes desired. This data is automatically loaded back to the Police Central system -- thus completely eliminating the need for the clerk to manually enter the service information for each defendant. “Some papers might have a dozen defendants (each of whom needs to be served), so updating each successful service was very time-consuming” said McBrayer.

CRN	Date Added	Name	Person Type	Address	Completion Status
CRN: 354353 (1 item)		JAMES MARTIN	Defendant	100 MAIN STREET MCDONOUGH, 44444	PENDING
CRN: 1234 (1 item)		ROBERT SOWELL	Defendant	150 MAIN STREET JONESBORO, GA 33333	COMPLETED
CRN: 073132C (1 item)		WALMART	Defendant	1000 MAIN STREET MCDONOUGH, GA 33333	PENDING
CRN: GRAND JURY (2 items)		KEISA CARTER HOLLOWAY	Defendant	160 GREENVIEW TERRACE MCDONOUGH, GA 30253	PENDING
CRN: GRAND JURY		SABRINA N QUARTEY	Defendant	4040 ANGELS DRIVE STOCKBRIDGE, GA 30281	PENDING
CRN: 07CV1313 (1 item)		BRIAN E JACKSON	Defendant	147 MT BETHEL MCDONOUGH, GA 30252	PENDING
CRN: 07CV1303 (1 item)		DOROTHY BENNEVENDO	Defendant	236 BOULDER WAY STOCKBRIDGE, GA 30281	PENDING
CRN: 07CV1314 (1 item)					

“I think at least 20% of my day was inputting Service Information when the deputy was done with a paper” said Donna Hubbard, clerk of the Civil Division. “Most people don’t realize that the Civil Division is a very busy place with lots of papers received every week. So, any elimination of effort is really welcomed. Each time the deputy makes an attempt using the laptop, it saves me time” she said. Also, she said “When an attorney calls to inquire about a paper, I now have a complete history of attempts that is right up to date “.

Henry County has made an investment in private, secure wireless infrastructure throughout the County. The deputies’ laptops are set up to automatically connect

to securely upload information. And, the Police Central laptops will store information on the laptop in case a wireless network connection is lost. Further, the system can also be configured to securely use other wireless networks like McDonalds or Starbucks. “Therefore,” said McBrayer, “we don’t need to get air cards and a monthly data account for our deputies. This avoids any additional monthly costs. At \$50 or so a month, that would really add-up for several deputies over a year’s time”.

“We started with Police Central over ten years ago” said Chief Deputy David McCart. “At that time we basically just did mugshots and a brief Arrest Record. Over time we added complete Jail Management, Criminal Warrants and Civil Process into Police Central’s completely integrated system. So, all of our staff know whether a person has been arrested, has warrants or civil papers in the County. That is really important from an officer safety point of view”.

Every time a person is arrested in Henry County, the deputy completes an Arrest Record on a paper form. When the officer and the inmate arrive at the Jail, the paper Arrest Record is given to the Booking Officer to be input into the Police Central system. “We want to explore using laptops in the vehicles for the Arrest Record” said McCart. “That way, when the person is transported to the Jail, the record will already be in-place, eliminating manual entry by the Booking Officer.”



“Whether it is Civil Process or Arrest Record, all of these enhancements that eliminate redundant effort really make our staff more efficient and ultimately saves money”, said Sheriff McBrayer.

Sheriff McBrayer also provides another service for his citizens. You can search on the Henry County Sheriff Website for Inmate Information that shows arrest information, charges, and bond details from the Police Central Jail Management system. But since the Police Central Civil system now contains all Service Attempts from the laptop computers, he has provided that information on the website as well. “Phone calls to the Jail or the Civil Office from the public or attorneys requesting information have fallen by 50%” McBrayer says. “That’s lots of phone calls we don’t have to answer anymore. People just use our website to get information”.

Use the following links to see the Henry County Sheriff website:

Henry County Sheriff Main Site:

<http://www.henrycountysheriff.net/Home/tabid/92/Default.aspx>

Henry County Inmate Information:

<http://www.henrycountysheriff.net/InmateInformation/tabid/122/Default.aspx>

Henry County Civil Unit:

<http://www.henrycountysheriff.net/FieldOperationsDivision/CivilUnit/CivilProcessStatus/tabid/230/Default.aspx>