

Protocol for Accepting Service of Legal Papers

Scope and Purpose

To ensure that all legal papers served upon The Cooper Union are received, documented, and routed promptly to the appropriate parties in a timely manner.

This protocol applies to all vendors, contractors, employees, reception staff, security personnel (staff or contracted), mailroom staff, administrators, and any individual who may be the first point of contact for delivery of legal papers.

“Legal papers” include, but are not limited to:

- Summons and Complaints
- Subpoenas
- Orders to Show Cause
- Garnishments, Levies, or Liens
- Administrative agency notices
- Service of process from courts or government agencies
- Attorney correspondence indicating pending legal action

Authorized Individuals to Accept Service

Only the individuals listed below (“authorized individuals”) may accept service of legal papers on behalf of The Cooper Union:

- Chief of Staff
- Any staff person assigned to the Office of the President
- Chief Financial Officer
- Controller
- Director of Campus Safety and Security

No other employee may accept service unless specifically directed by an authorized individual¹.

When Legal Papers Are Received

Upon receipt of official service of legal papers, the authorized individual must:

Step 1: Record the Details

Any authorized individual who is presented with legal process must immediately acknowledge receipt. Upon delivery, the authorized individual should stamp the document with the current

¹ As of July 2026, the Chief Financial Officer has authorized Erika Rivera, Senior Accountant to accept service.

date or, if a stamp is unavailable, legibly hand-write the date and their initials on the face of the document. This notation is critical for establishing the legal clock for a response; however, if the process server explicitly forbids marking the original document, staff should proceed immediately to recording the details.

Following the physical receipt, the authorized individual must promptly record the following information:

- Date and time the documents were received
- Full name of individual serving the papers
- Agency or firm that the individual represents
- Name and title of authorized person who accepted the service

Step 2: Immediate Notification and Digital Recording

Immediately following the recording of service details, the authorized individual must scan the documents in their entirety (including any exhibits or attachments) as a PDF. This digital copy must be sent via email to president@cooper.edu and the Chief of Staff. The subject line of the email should clearly state: "URGENT: Legal Service of Process - [Date]."

Step 3: Hand Delivery of Originals

Once the digital notification has been sent, the authorized individual must hand-deliver the original documents to the Chief of Staff or their designated representative in the Office of the President as soon as possible. These documents should be handled with care to preserve any original markings, staples, envelopes or formatting provided by the server. Items should be delivered directly to a person and not left on a desk or in open space.

Confidentiality

Throughout this process, the matter must be treated with strict confidentiality. Discussion of the contents of the documentation, the nature of the service, or parties involved are strictly prohibited. Access to both the physical and digital copies should be restricted only to those with a direct "need to know" to fulfill their professional duties.

Once the original documents have been hand-delivered and the email sent, the authorized individual should delete the scanned file from their local computer Downloads folder or email Sent items, if instructed by the Chief of Staff, to further ensure security.

Instructions for Front Desk / Security

If someone identifies themselves as a process server or says they are delivering legal papers, follow these steps:

1. State that you are not authorized to accept legal service on behalf of The Cooper Union. Do not sign any delivery logs or take the papers at this stage.
2. Call the following individuals in the order listed. Ask the authorized individual to come to your location to meet the server or, if directed by the authorized individual, escort the server to the authorized individual's office:
 - Any staff in the Office of the President: 212.353.4248
 - ✓ Steve McLaughlin, Michelle Marsh or Luisa Cruz may accept service.
 - Chief of Staff: 212.353.4241
 - ✓ Jessica Haber may accept service.
 - Director of Campus Safety and Security: 212.353.4119
 - ✓ Tom Tresselt may accept service.
 - Chief Financial Officer: 212.353.4247
 - ✓ John Ruth, Keith Stokeld or Erika Rivera may accept service.
 - If service is attempted at The Cooper Union Residence Hall, please direct them to the **Foundation Building**.
3. If the server leaves the papers and departs despite the statement of non-authorization:
 - Secure the documents in a private location (such as a locked drawer) until an authorized individual can retrieve them.
 - Immediately call the Office of the President at 212.353.4248. If you cannot reach anyone by phone, please email president@cooper.edu with subject line: "URGENT – SERVICE OF PROCESS".
 - Treat the event as strictly **confidential**. Do not discuss the documents or the server with anyone other than the authorized individuals listed above.
 - If it is after business hours – in addition to the above steps, please notify the security supervisor who will notify the director of campus safety and security.