

## **"My First Process Serve"**

- By *Francisco* of *Mercia Detective Agency (CPI)*

My mentor, John F. Hope, of Mercia Detective Agency in The West Midlands, phoned me stating that a process serve was heading my way. The first thing I did was to revise my API folder so that I didn't slip up & continue to enhance the reputation of my mentors agency, established in the investigative & process serving field for thirty years. No pressure then!

The next morning, with apprehension, I opened the envelope and read the contents. Ok, back to The API folders again. I wanted to be 100% certain of what I had to do & how to do it. What if the recipient refused the documents? Would I fill in the Affidavit, Certificate or Statement of Service correctly? Would I even be serving the right person? Knowing my luck, I would have the twin scenario i.e. same date of birth, surname & address, but totally wrong person. Murphy's Law strikes again!

Ok, so I'm over-reacting. But it's a bit like a first date, you don't want to put a foot wrong & make yourself look like a 'know nothing green horn'.

So, there was the name and address, but no postcode! What's the use having a Satnav when there's no postcode! Ok, lets think like an investigator, research & locate! Well, 192.com is pretty good, so put in the details and hey presto! Confirmed resident name? Check! Postcode? Check! Telephone number? Even better!

So, after confirming a few details, I knew the recipient was at home and off I went, confident that I was fully prepared.

Making sure my car was far enough away so that not to be recognised in future, but close enough for an emergency, I knocked on the door and a lady asks me what I wanted. I greeted her in her own language, and she appeared to relax a little. 'Is Mr X at home?' She confirmed he was & stated that she was his wife & off she went to get him.

All appeared to be going well.

Then, she returned and said that he was not coming to the door, but she would give the papers to him. Drat! What was I to do? So I handed the papers to her, but didn't feel sure if that was the right thing to do. Then I remembered whilst studying for the API diploma that you should never give papers to a third party or leave them in a porch, letter box or garage. Well, that's my first mistake & I felt that I had let down my mentor. I phoned John and explained my actions and he told me to write down on the affidavit what the wife said and he gave me some encouraging advice.

On reflection, we learn from experience and it is good to have a mentor that you can speak to for advice 24/7. If you are not fortunate enough to be in this position, then hopefully, this website can be a source for such help.

Now I am a director of my own agency in Staffordshire & a franchisee of Mercia Detective Agency and I'm still learning new skills e.g. studying for a post-graduate in Forensics (fingerprinting, forgery etc) and still phoning John Hope for that 'golden nugget' of advice!

Well, I was a 'know nothing green horn', but don't we all start off that way?

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