

# Changes for process servers set aside

New guidelines from the Sheriff's Office draw some complaints.

By **JOE BLACK**  
The Times-Union

The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office has decided to set aside changes in serving non-criminal legal paperwork until it can meet with private contractors and come up with new plans.

Officials sent a letter to private process servers — those contracted to serve legal paperwork on behalf of companies,

banks and the court system — Sept. 20 that outlined new procedures.

Those new rules were to begin Saturday and include higher insurance requirements and a need to go through the Sheriff's Office before any of the paperwork could be served. The plan required a \$20 fee for each document with \$10 staying with the Sheriff's Office and \$10 going to individual contractor.

The process servers worried the new regulations would slow down how they do their work and new insurance costs would be too high for them to pay,

effectively forcing them out of business.

"We want to make sure we can create a system that works for everyone and is accountable," Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Lauri-Ellen Smith said. "We are in no way trying to stop these businesses."

Process servers said their work has been largely unregulated in recent years. In many cases customers could come to them directly with paperwork and the money made on the transaction could be kept with them.

"What's scary is how fast this moved before we were told

anything was going to change," said Tressa Ray, who owns A Professional Process Service. "These changes turn upside-down how we do everything and we were only given two weeks."

Smith said the Sheriff's Office began looking at adding more regulation after being contacted by legal advisers for Jacksonville, who cited a need for more accountability.

The meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m. Monday in the Police Memorial Building on Bay Street.

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