

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

IN RE:

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STATE PRISONER LITIGATION

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MISC. NO. 00-308

STANDING ORDER 2012-01

In an effort to reduce the costs and improve and expedite the process by which service of process is obtained in civil rights actions brought by prisoners, this Court—in cooperation with the Maryland Attorney General, various County Attorneys, and private counsel representing police officers and corporate health care providers routinely involved in prisoner civil rights litigation—has devised a mechanism whereby counsel automatically accept service of process for, and enter an appearance on behalf of, those individuals and entities named in prisoner complaints.

In recognition of counsel's need to check payroll records to determine the employment status of named defendants, and in light of the fact that counsel usually move for (and receive) extensions of time in which to determine whether service should be accepted and to prepare a response on behalf of the appropriate defendants, this Court on November 21, 2003, expanded upon the original Memorandum and Order of March 4, 1992, to provide a procedure whereby all participating counsel are given automatic extensions of time in which to respond in these cases.

The Court recognizes that most of the County Attorneys as well as counsel for various police officers and prison contractual health care providers, currently are included in this process, and will indicate acceptance of service of process for those individuals and entities named as defendants in civil rights actions typically filed by self-represented detainees, prisoners and others who have come into contact with law enforcement or corrections personnel and who

currently are or were employed by their respective clients. An exception shall be made for those individuals and entities whose insurance contracts and contracts of employment or inclusion in union bargaining agreements make automatic acceptance of process by others impossible.

Counsel is asked to identify those individuals and entities s/he will represent and those whom counsel cannot automatically represent by notifying the court of same. Counsel is further requested to enter her or his appearance each time counsel accepts representation of a defendant.

Accordingly, it is hereby

ORDERED that Administrative Order 2003-7 is rescinded; and it is further

ORDERED that in all cases as set forth above, as well as in all cases brought by prisoners pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983:

1. All defendants for whom service of process is accepted by the Maryland Attorney General, the County Attorneys, and various private law firms, are deemed to have filed a motion for extension of time to respond to the complaint, with the response due no later than sixty (60) days after the date on which counsel first receives a copy of the complaint. To the extent that counsel accepts service on behalf of one or more defendants during the early stages of the litigation, then later enters an appearance on behalf of other defendants who required personal service, the sixty (60) day period described herein begins to run from the first date on which service was accepted on behalf of any defendant; and
2. Unless otherwise ordered in a specific case, that motion for extension of time is granted.

Date: April 27, 2012

_____/s/_____
Deborah K. Chasanow, Chief Judge
United States District Court