

## WARRANT OF ARREST AND SUMMONS

**(a) Warrant of Arrest.**

(1) *Generally.* If an indictment is found or an information is filed, the court may direct the clerk to issue a warrant for the arrest of the defendant.

(2) *Probable Cause.* Before ruling on a request for a warrant the court may require the complainant to appear personally and may examine under oath the complainant and any witnesses the complainant may produce. A warrant of arrest may not issue unless the court determines that there is probable cause to believe that the defendant committed the offense charged. The court shall determine probable cause based on an affidavit, a statement as provided in GR 13, or sworn testimony establishing the grounds for issuing the warrant. Sworn testimony shall be recorded electronically, stenographically, or through any other reliable means. The evidence shall be preserved and shall be subject to constitutional limitations for probable cause determinations and may be hearsay in whole or in part.

(3) *Ascertaining Defendant's Current Address.*

(i) Search for address. The court shall not issue a warrant unless it determines that the complainant has attempted to ascertain the defendant's current address by searching the following: (A) the District Court Information System database (DISCIS), (B) the driver's license and identicard database maintained by the Department of Licenses; and (C) the database maintained by the Department of Corrections listing persons incarcerated and under supervision. The court in its discretion may require that other databases be searched.

(ii) Exemptions from Address Search. The search required by subdivision (i) shall not be required if (A) the defendant has already appeared in court after filing of the same case, (B) the defendant is known to be in custody, or (C) the defendant's name is unknown.

(iii) Effect of Erroneous Issuance. If a warrant is erroneously issued in violation of this subsection (a)(3), that error shall not affect the validity of the warrant.

**(b) Issuance of Summons in Lieu of Warrant.**

(1) *Generally.* If an indictment is found or an information is filed, the court may direct the clerk to issue a summons commanding the defendant to appear before the court at a specified time and place.

(2) *When Summons Must Issue.* The court shall direct the clerk to issue a summons instead of a warrant unless it finds reasonable cause to believe that the defendant (i) will not appear in response to a summons, (ii) will commit a violent offense, (iii) will interfere with witnesses or the administration of justice, or (iv) is in custody.

(3) *Summons.* A summons shall be in writing and in the name of the State of Washington, shall be signed by the clerk with the title of the office, and shall state the date when issued and the county where issued. It shall state the name of the defendant and shall summon the defendant to appear before the court at a stated time and place.

(4) *Failure To Appear on Summons.* If a person fails to appear in response to a summons, or if service is not effected within a reasonable time, a warrant for arrest may issue.

**(c) Requisites of a Warrant.** The warrant shall be in writing and in the name of the State of Washington, shall be signed by the clerk with the title of the office, and shall state the date when issued and the county where issued. It shall specify the name of the defendant, or if the defendant's name is unknown, any name or description by which the defendant can be identified with reasonable certainty. The warrant shall specify the offense charged against the defendant and that the court has found that probable cause exists to believe the defendant has committed the offense charged and shall command that the defendant be arrested and brought forthwith before the court issuing the warrant. If the offense is bailable, the judge shall set forth in the order for the warrant, bail, or other conditions of release.

**(d) Execution; Service.**

(1) *Execution of Warrant.* The warrant shall be directed to all peace officers in the state and shall be executed only by a peace officer.

(2) *Service of Summons.* The summons may be served any place within the state. It shall be served by a peace officer who shall deliver a copy of the same to the defendant personally, or it may be served by mailing the same, postage prepaid, to the defendant at the defendant's address.

**(e) Return.** The officer executing a warrant shall make return to the court before whom the defendant is brought pursuant to these rules. At the request of the prosecuting attorney any unexecuted warrant shall be returned to the issuing court to be canceled. The person to whom a summons has been delivered for service shall, on or before the return date, file a return with the court before which the summons is returnable. For reasonable cause, the court may order that the warrant be returned to it.

**(f) Defective Warrant or Summons.**

(1) *Amendment.* No person arrested under a warrant or appearing in response to a summons shall be discharged from custody or dismissed because of any irregularity in the warrant or summons, but the warrant or summons may be amended so as to remedy any such irregularity.

(2) *Issuance of New Warrant or Summons.* If during the preliminary examination of any person arrested under a warrant or appearing in response to a summons, it appears that the warrant or summons does not properly name or describe the defendant or the offense with which the defendant is charged, or that although not guilty of the offense specified in the warrant or summons, there is reasonable ground to believe that the defendant is guilty of some other offense, the judge shall not discharge or dismiss the defendant but may allow a new indictment or information to be filed and shall thereupon issue a new warrant or summons.

**(g) Failure to Issue Warrant--Dismissal.** Upon five days' notice to the prosecuting attorney, the court shall dismiss a charge without prejudice if (i) 90 days have elapsed since the indictment or information was filed and (ii) on the date that the order of dismissal is entered, no warrant has been issued and the defendant has not appeared in court.

Comment

Supersedes RCW 10.31.010, .020.

[Adopted effective July 1, 1973; Amended effective September 1, 1983; September 1, 1986;  
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