

## Chapter 107

### (House Bill 1109)

AN ACT concerning

#### **Criminal Procedure – Search Warrants – Procedures**

FOR the purpose of requiring an application for a search warrant to be dated; providing the ways in which an application for a search warrant may be submitted to a judge; providing the ways in which an applicant for a search warrant and a judge may converse about a search warrant application; providing the ways in which a judge may issue a search warrant; requiring a judge to file a copy of a certain search warrant, application, and affidavit with the court; requiring a certain law enforcement officer to give a copy of a certain search warrant, application, and affidavit to a certain occupant or leave a copy of the warrant, application, and affidavit at certain premises; requiring a certain law enforcement officer to prepare a certain return which shall include a certain date and time; requiring a certain law enforcement officer to give a copy of a certain return to a certain occupant or leave a copy at certain premises; requiring a certain law enforcement officer to file a copy of a certain return with the court in a certain manner; and generally relating to search warrants.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Criminal Procedure

Section 1–203(a)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2008 Replacement Volume and 2013 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

#### **Article – Criminal Procedure**

1–203.

(a) (1) A circuit court judge or District Court judge may issue forthwith a search warrant whenever it is made to appear to the judge, by application as described in paragraph (2) of this subsection, that there is probable cause to believe that:

(i) a misdemeanor or felony is being committed by a person or in a building, apartment, premises, place, or thing within the territorial jurisdiction of the judge; or

(ii) property subject to seizure under the criminal laws of the State is on the person or in or on the building, apartment, premises, place, or thing.

(2) (i) An application for a search warrant shall be:

1. in writing;
2. signed, **DATED**, and sworn to by the applicant; and
3. accompanied by an affidavit that:

A. sets forth the basis for probable cause as described in paragraph (1) of this subsection; and

B. contains facts within the personal knowledge of the affiant that there is probable cause.

**(II) AN APPLICATION FOR A SEARCH WARRANT MAY BE SUBMITTED TO A JUDGE:**

**1. BY IN-PERSON DELIVERY OF THE APPLICATION, THE AFFIDAVIT, AND A PROPOSED SEARCH WARRANT;**

**2. BY SECURE FAX, IF A COMPLETE AND PRINTABLE IMAGE OF THE APPLICATION, THE AFFIDAVIT, AND A PROPOSED SEARCH WARRANT ARE SUBMITTED; OR**

**3. BY SECURE ELECTRONIC MAIL, IF A COMPLETE AND PRINTABLE IMAGE OF THE APPLICATION, THE AFFIDAVIT, AND A PROPOSED SEARCH WARRANT ARE SUBMITTED.**

**(III) THE APPLICANT AND THE JUDGE MAY CONVERSE ABOUT THE SEARCH WARRANT APPLICATION:**

1. IN PERSON;
2. VIA TELEPHONE; OR
3. VIA VIDEO.

**(IV) THE JUDGE MAY ISSUE THE SEARCH WARRANT:**

**1. BY SIGNING THE SEARCH WARRANT, INDICATING THE DATE AND TIME OF ISSUANCE ON THE SEARCH WARRANT, AND PHYSICALLY**

**DELIVERING THE SIGNED AND DATED SEARCH WARRANT, THE APPLICATION, AND THE AFFIDAVIT TO THE APPLICANT;**

**2. BY SIGNING THE SEARCH WARRANT, WRITING THE DATE AND TIME OF ISSUANCE ON THE SEARCH WARRANT, AND SENDING COMPLETE AND PRINTABLE IMAGES OF THE SIGNED AND DATED SEARCH WARRANT, THE APPLICATION, AND THE AFFIDAVIT TO THE APPLICANT BY SECURE FAX; OR**

**3. BY SIGNING THE SEARCH WARRANT, EITHER ELECTRONICALLY OR IN WRITING, INDICATING THE DATE AND TIME OF ISSUANCE ON THE SEARCH WARRANT, AND SENDING COMPLETE AND PRINTABLE IMAGES OF THE SIGNED AND DATED SEARCH WARRANT, THE APPLICATION, AND THE AFFIDAVIT TO THE APPLICANT BY SECURE ELECTRONIC MAIL.**

**(V) THE JUDGE SHALL FILE A COPY OF THE SIGNED AND DATED SEARCH WARRANT, THE APPLICATION, AND THE AFFIDAVIT WITH THE COURT.**

**[(ii)] (VI)** An application for a search warrant may contain a request that the search warrant authorize the executing law enforcement officer to enter the building, apartment, premises, place, or thing to be searched without giving notice of the officer's authority or purpose, on the grounds that there is reasonable suspicion to believe that, without the authorization:

1. the property subject to seizure may be destroyed, disposed of, or secreted; or

2. the life or safety of the executing officer or another person may be endangered.

**(3) The search warrant shall:**

**(i)** be directed to a duly constituted police officer, the State Fire Marshal, or a full-time investigative and inspection assistant of the Office of the State Fire Marshal and authorize the police officer, the State Fire Marshal, or a full-time investigative and inspection assistant of the Office of the State Fire Marshal to search the suspected person, building, apartment, premises, place, or thing and to seize any property found subject to seizure under the criminal laws of the State;

**(ii)** name or describe, with reasonable particularity:

1. the person, building, apartment, premises, place, or thing to be searched;

2. the grounds for the search; and
3. the name of the applicant on whose application the search warrant was issued; and

(iii) if warranted by application as described in paragraph (2) of this subsection, authorize the executing law enforcement officer to enter the building, apartment, premises, place, or thing to be searched without giving notice of the officer's authority or purpose.

(4) (i) The search and seizure under the authority of a search warrant shall be made within 15 calendar days after the day that the search warrant is issued.

(ii) After the expiration of the 15-day period, the search warrant is void.

**(5) THE EXECUTING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER SHALL GIVE A COPY OF THE SEARCH WARRANT, THE APPLICATION, AND THE AFFIDAVIT TO AN AUTHORIZED OCCUPANT OF THE PREMISES SEARCHED OR LEAVE A COPY OF THE SEARCH WARRANT, THE APPLICATION, AND THE AFFIDAVIT AT THE PREMISES SEARCHED.**

**(6) (I) THE EXECUTING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER SHALL PREPARE A DETAILED SEARCH WARRANT RETURN WHICH SHALL INCLUDE THE DATE AND TIME OF THE EXECUTION OF THE SEARCH WARRANT.**

**(II) THE EXECUTING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER SHALL:**

**1. GIVE A COPY OF THE SEARCH WARRANT RETURN TO AN AUTHORIZED OCCUPANT OF THE PREMISES SEARCHED OR LEAVE A COPY OF THE RETURN AT THE PREMISES SEARCHED; AND**

**2. FILE A COPY OF THE SEARCH WARRANT RETURN WITH THE COURT IN PERSON, BY SECURE FAX, OR BY SECURE ELECTRONIC MAIL.**

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2014.

**Approved by the Governor, April 8, 2014.**