



Jeffrey R. Gahler,
Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

Bail Bondsmen/Bounty Hunters

Distribution:	All Law Enforcement			Policy Number:	OPS 1708
Responsible Unit:	Police Operations Bureau			Rescinds:	MAN 3500 (dated 6/14/12)
Original Issued Date:	04/01/20	Revision #:	1	Latest Revision Date:	03/02/26
Required 3-Year Review Completed:	03/02/26			Next Review Due:	03/31/29

1. Purpose

To provide guidance to deputies responding to calls for service regarding Bail Bondsmen/Bounty Hunters pursuant to the powers of arrest granted as a matter of common law.

2. Policy

Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) deputies will safeguard the peace during calls involving Bail Bondsmen/Bounty Hunters but will not become actively engaged in apprehension efforts.

3. Definitions

BAIL BOND: a written obligation of a defendant, with or without a surety or collateral security, conditioned on the appearance of the defendant as required and providing for payment of a penalty sum according to its terms.

BAIL BONDSMAN: an authorized agent of a surety insurer. The Bail Bondsman must:

- Be duly licensed in the jurisdiction in which the charges are pending, if that jurisdiction licenses Bail Bondsmen;
- Be authorized to engage the surety insurer as surety on the bail bond pursuant to a valid general or special power of attorney; and
- Hold a valid license as an insurance broker or agent in Maryland, and that the surety insurer is authorized by the Insurance Commissioner of Maryland to write bail bonds in the state.

BOUNTY HUNTER: may be authorized to pursue a fugitive and that empowerment is generally received from the Bail Bondsman who put up the bond. Bounty Hunters may work in-house for a bail bonds agency or work as independent operators contracted by a Bail Bondsman. Although Bounty Hunters can operate in Maryland, no license is needed, and no laws are in place governing their activities.

COLLATERAL SECURITY: any property deposited, pledged, or encumbered to secure the performance of a bail bond.

SURETY: a person other than the defendant who, by executing a bail bond, guarantees the appearance of the defendant.

4. References

Maryland Rule 4-217
Shifflett v. State, 80 Md. App. 151, 159 (1989)
Frasher v. State, 8 Md. App. 439, 445 (1970)

5. Procedures

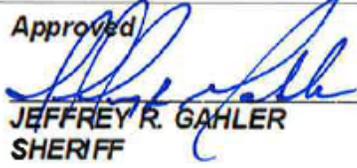
A. Deputy Responsibilities

1. Notify a supervisor to respond to any call for service involving Bail Bondsmen/Bounty Hunters.
 - a. A supervisor will respond to the location of all calls involving Bail Bondsmen/Bounty Hunters.
 - b. HCSO personnel will activate their body-worn camera in accordance with policy OPS 0103.
2. Verify the identification of the Bail Bondsman/Bounty Hunter.
 - a. Bail Bondsmen carry a current Bail Bondsman license.
 - b. Bounty Hunters carry a letter of authorization.
3. Verify the existence of a valid arrest warrant or Court Order of Forfeiture of the prisoner.
4. Verify the identity of the subject prior to his being taken into custody.
 - a. Allow the Bail Bondsman/Bounty Hunter to transport the prisoner if the only arrest warrant for the prisoner is the one the Bail Bondsman/Bounty Hunter is apprehending the prisoner for.
 - b. Take the prisoner into custody and transport to the Inter-Agency Processing Center if more arrest warrants exist than the one the Bail Bondsman/Bounty Hunter is apprehending the prisoner for.
5. Limit himself to protecting life and property and not becoming involved in the physical arrest or forced entry into a dwelling or business unless extenuating circumstances exist.

6. Summary of Changes

- A. 03/30/23 the required 3-year review was completed and the following revision was made:
 1. Added 5.A.1.b. HCSO personnel will activate their body-worn camera in accordance with policy OPS 0103.

- B. On 03/02/26 the Agency 3-year policy review was conducted, and no changes were made.

Approved

JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF
DATE 3-30-23