

GUIDELINES FOR POSTING BAIL IN LEHIGH COUNTY

BAIL HOURS -- Normal business days: 8:00 am to 4:30 pm; 4:30 pm to 5:00 pm by appointment only (610-782-3730) -- Clerk of Judicial Records' Office – Criminal Division - Room 122, Courthouse. After 5:00 pm, weekends, and holidays by appointment only (610-782-3664) – Lehigh County Jail, 38 North 4th Street, Allentown. (After normal hours bail–additional fees apply.)

CASH (Full Amount Set) -- Payment accepted in Cash only. Personal checks are not accepted. There is a service charge collected upon disposition of the case of 6.21¢ of the first One Thousand (\$1,000.00) Dollars and 2.06¢ of the balance.

PERCENTAGE CASH BAIL - 10% of Amount Set if allowed by Court) -- The Percentage Bail Program is supervised by the Lehigh Valley Office of Pretrial Services, Inc. You must contact the Pretrial Services' Office to provide information. The telephone number is 610-289-2410. Approval by the Pretrial Services' Office may be required by the Court. A picture identification of the surety may be required when posting the bail. A bail bond is filed for the full amount; however, only 10% in cash is posted. Note: If the defendant fails to appear for Court, the bail you post may be forfeited and as the surety, you are responsible for the full amount of the bail. There is a service charge that is collected upon disposition of the case of 30% of the money posted pursuant to local Court Rules.

SURETY COMPANY (BOND AGENTS) -- All Surety Company Bail, which is posted by a Bond Agent, is processed through local bond agents who are listed in the telephone directory and Lehigh County website – www.lccpa.org

REAL ESTATE COLLATERAL -- Real Estate located in Pennsylvania may be posted as collateral for bail. There is a non-refundable \$250.00 Real Estate Bail Processing Fee. In order to determine if there is enough equity in your property to cover the amount of the bail, follow these steps: A completed Certificate of Opinion of Title and Liens on Real Estate form which must be filled out by an attorney or any abstracting firm. (Attorneys and Abstractors are listed in the telephone directory.) The forms are available in the Clerk of Judicial Records' Office. Begin with the assessed value of the property. (Assessment property value is 100% in Lehigh County.) Subtract any and all encumbrances such as mortgages, liens, judgments, etc. Subtract the amount of \$1,500.00 (amount needed if the property must be sold by the Lehigh County). After you complete these calculations, you will arrive at the equity you can use for bail on the property. If there is enough equity to cover the full amount of the bail, the bond will be prepared by the Clerk of Judicial Records' Office. All persons listed on the deed must sign the bail bond. If any person listed on the deed is deceased, a certified copy of the death certificate must be provided at the time of posting the bail. A photo identification for each person signing is required.

Appraisal of Property -- If equity is insufficient, based on the assessed valuation, an appraisal of the property can be used. An appraisal must be conducted by a Real Estate Agency. The Realtor must prepare a letter and an authorized representative from the real estate agency must sign the letter stating the fair market value of the property. Appraisals can not be completed more than 6 weeks before time of posting bail. Using the appraised value, deduct 10% (for any possible future legal action against the property) and subtract any and all encumbrances such as mortgages, liens, judgments, etc. After these deductions, you will arrive at the equity you can use for bail on the property.

A judgment is then placed on record in the county the property is located and Lehigh County against this property. A judgment in the full amount is entered against each person individually. A filing fee of \$74.50 will be collected if your property is in Lehigh County and a minimum of \$94.50 if it is located in another county. Please check with the Bail Clerk in the Clerk of Judicial Records' Office to determine the appropriate filing fees for the property located in other jurisdictions. These fees will cover the filing and satisfaction of the judgments. Upon final disposition of the case in which you are surety, the judgment will be satisfied. Notice of the satisfaction of judgment will be mailed to you.

PROPERTY BAIL CANNOT BE PROCESSED AFTER 3:00 P.M OR ON WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS.

If at any time you desire to revoke the bail, contact the Clerk of Judicial Records' Office between the hours of 8:00 am and 3:30 pm for further information.

Your refund check will be mailed to you approximately 20 days after final disposition of the case. Final disposition includes a 30 day appeal period from the date of sentence.

NOTE - BAIL IS POSTED TO ASSURE THAT THE DEFENDANT WILL APPEAR FOR ALL COURT HEARINGS. IF THE DEFENDANT FAILS TO DO SO, A BENCH WARRANT MAY BE ISSUED AND BAIL FORFEITED. YOU, AS SURETY, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FULL AMOUNT OF BAIL SET.