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Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate: Fact Sheet on Legislative and Administrative Duties

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The Senate Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper is an officer of the Senate with protection, security, decorum, protocol, and administrative responsibilities. The Sergeant at Arms is elected by the membership of the Senate. The duties of the Sergeant at Arms are mandated by law, Senate rules, and policies and regulations set by the Senate Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration in the exercise of their oversight duties. For more information on legislative process, see [<http://www.crs.gov/products/guides/guidehome.shtml>].

Protection, Security, and Decorum Responsibilities

As the Senate's chief law enforcement officer, the Sergeant at Arms is responsible for security in the Senate wing of the Capitol, the Senate office buildings, and on adjacent grounds. As a member of the Capitol Police Board, the Sergeant at Arms is responsible for oversight of the U.S. Capitol Police, a jurisdiction shared with the House Sergeant at Arms and the Architect of the Capitol. The board is authorized by law to design, install, and maintain security systems for the Capitol and its grounds.

The Sergeant at Arms, along with the Secretary of the Senate, develops and maintains a continuity of operations program to enable the Senate to conduct business and retrieve data at offsite locations, and oversees the office of security and emergency preparedness within his office operations. He enforces rules made by the Committee on Rules and Administration for regulation of the Senate chamber, Senate wing of the Capitol, and Senate office buildings. When rules and regulations are violated, the Sergeant at Arms is authorized to arrest those responsible. He is authorized by the Senate to control admittance to the Senate floor and ensure order is maintained in the chamber and its adjoining rooms and galleries, and to compel the attendance of absent Senators to the Senate floor, when so ordered by a majority of Senators present on the floor.

Protocol Responsibilities

As the chief of protocol of the Senate, the Sergeant at Arms performs ceremonial functions that fall within his jurisdiction through custom and precedent. In carrying out these duties, the Sergeant at Arms greets and escorts the U.S. President, heads of state,

and other official Senate guests while attending functions in the Capitol; leads Senators from the Senate side of the Capitol to the House chamber for joint sessions of Congress, to their places on the inaugural platform, and to any other place the Senate goes as a body; and assists in arrangements for inaugurations and the planning of funerals of Senators who die while in office. By custom, the sergeant at arms is custodian of the Senate gavel.

Administrative Responsibilities

As an administrative official, the Sergeant at Arms is responsible for a number of facilities and services in support of the needs of the Senate as an institution and in support of the individual needs of Senators' offices.

Facilities and Services to the Senate As a Whole. Among the various facilities for which the Sergeant at Arms is responsible are the

- Senate service department, which is responsible for production of newsletters and other Senate mailings, purchase and maintenance of equipment, storage of Senate publications, and micrographics services;
- Senate computer center, which oversees Senate computer operations;
- Senate post office, and Senate recording and photographic studios;
- Senate barber and beauty shops;
- maintenance facilities in the Senate chamber and Senate wing of the Capitol, among them, custodial services, carpentry shop, furnishings and mechanical equipment services, and Senate automobiles;
- Senate garage and other parking facilities;
- Senate health promotion office; and
- Senate placement office, which assists Senators and other Senate offices in filling staff vacancies.

A wide range of services is also administered by the Sergeant at Arms, including

- Senate telecommunications services, and preparation of Capitol telephone exchange and Senate telephone directory;
- guide service and other visitor services;
- Senate page program and assignment of duties to messengers;
- oversight of doorkeepers;
- issuance of identification cards to employees of the Senate;
- disposal of surplus equipment, including transfer to public schools;
- construction of monuments to deceased Senators; and
- education and training programs for Senate staff.

Services to Senators' Offices. The Sergeant at Arms also provides services to Senators and their staff on an individual basis. These include

- securing office space in home states, including mobile offices;
- providing additional state office services for use during disasters;
- supplying furniture, equipment, furnishings, and supplies for state and D.C. offices, including purchases, lease, and reimbursements;
- certifying payments for office expenses; and
- maintenance of constituent mail systems.

See [http://www.senate.gov/reference/office/sergeant_at_arms.htm], for further information.