

# NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA SUPREME COURT

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June 13, 2018

## **Electronic Search Warrant Program Goes Statewide**

PHOENIX – The Arizona Supreme Court authorized the expansion of the electronic search warrant program statewide for certain vehicular offenses. This expansion will greatly enhance efficiency for law enforcement agencies across Arizona while still providing appropriate judicial review of requests for warrants.

Effective August 1, the Superior Court in Maricopa County will assist law enforcement statewide by authorizing, when appropriate, electronic search warrant requests for blood, breath, urine, or other bodily substances for the following vehicular offenses:

- Driving under the influence;
- Vehicle-related homicide;
- Vehicle-related aggravated assault;
- Vehicle-related endangerment, or
- Other vehicle-related offenses.

The Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety collaborated with Maricopa County Superior Court and 24 Valley police departments on funding to develop an online electronic warrant project for blood draws on individuals suspected of driving under the influence. The early success of the 2012 pilot program led to another round of grant funding to allow Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) to expand the program to its officers across the state. The new [Arizona Supreme Court's Administrative Order](#) expands the program to all law enforcement agencies.

Search warrants and affidavits are exchanged electronically and securely between the law enforcement agencies and the Superior Court in Maricopa County. Previously, access to a fax machine was necessary to submit information for judicial review. Judicial officers review the affidavit and, if appropriate, return a search warrant through the county's 24/7 Initial Appearance Court.

“We commend Supreme Court Chief Justice Scott Bales, Superior Court Presiding Judge Janet Barton and the former Presiding Judge Norm Davis for working on this process,” Alberto Gutier, Director of the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety said. “Being able to submit warrants for judicial review 24 hours a day and getting a timely response can mean the difference between safety and tragedy on our roadways.”

Transporting drivers suspected of impaired driving to a location that has a fax machine is hampered by the state’s geography and many remote, rural areas. By reducing the amount of time it takes for law enforcement to obtain a warrant, public safety will be enhanced with faster, more accurate test results – and violators can be held accountable with biological evidence.

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