



MAGS

MARYLAND AUTOMATED GUIDELINES SYSTEM

Administrative Protocol

Overview

The Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy (MSCCSP) designed the Maryland Automated Guidelines System (MAGS) to automate the sentencing guidelines calculation and worksheet submission process via a web-based application. To access MAGS, users select the MAGS login button from the [MAGS homepage](#). This link directs the user to a secure website on a Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) server.

When Should MAGS Be Utilized?

The [MAGS deployment cycle](#) identifies the official MAGS start date for each circuit court. MAGS should be utilized to initiate, edit, and submit **ALL** official guidelines worksheets from the selected start date moving forward.

If a user wishes to calculate sample guidelines under various sentencing scenarios, they should utilize the *Guidelines Calculator Tool* (GLCT), accessible via the MSCCSP website at www.msccsp.org/MAGS. The GLCT does not require a User ID or password and does not save any of the entered information. The GLCT **cannot** be used to **officially initiate** or **submit** completed guidelines worksheets.

Who is Responsible for Initiation, Completion, Submission, and Distribution of Guidelines Worksheets in the MAGS Application?

Initiation of Worksheet: It is expected that the State's Attorney's Office (SAO) or Parole and Probation investigator (if a PSI was ordered) will originate the sentencing guidelines worksheet process and complete all of the sentencing guidelines information up to the point of specific sentence. The State's Attorney's Office or Parole and Probation investigator should complete any applicable information on the *Victim Information* screen prior to sentencing.

- The criminal docket identifies guidelines-eligible cases requiring a worksheet in MAGS. In Montgomery County the flag designation is **(mags)**; in Prince George's County the flag designation is **MAGS**; in counties using the UCS case management system the flag designation is **WI**; and in counties using the MDEC case management system the flag designation is **Mags:Yes**. Please note that the flag may not accurately identify all guidelines-eligible cases, including sentence reconsiderations for crimes of violence, three judge panel reviews, and resolution events or status hearings where there is a plea and the defendant is sentenced immediately.



- The judge's designee (law clerk, administrative assistant/secretary, and/or court clerk) should access MAGS prior to the sentencing hearing to determine if a worksheet has been initiated for the designated guidelines-eligible cases on the sentencing docket.
- The judge's designee should contact the SAO or Parole and Probation investigator to direct them to initiate the worksheet if none had been initiated.
- The judge's designee should print the worksheets from MAGS for the cases listed on the sentencing docket, attach the worksheets to appropriate case files, and make copies of the worksheets for the prosecution and the defense in advance of sentencing.

Completion of Worksheet: The judge (or judge's designee) should access the initiated guidelines worksheet and complete the sentence and departure information while in the courtroom or in chambers shortly after sentencing.

- The judge (or judge's designee) is primarily responsible for data entry in the Sentence, GLS/Overall Sentence, and Departure/Submit screens. However, the judge or judge's designee may make modifications to the *Offender Score* or *List of Offenses* sections.
- The judge or judge's designee is also expected to complete any applicable victim information fields that cannot be completed by the SAO or P&P investigator in advance of sentencing. For example, the judge or judge's designee should indicate whether a no contact order was granted (on the *Victim Information* screen) and whether the victim-related court costs were imposed (on the *GLS/Overall Sentence* screen)
- The judge's designee may save a PDF version of the worksheet and print it for the judge's signature.
- The judge then signs completed worksheet and provides the worksheet to the court clerk.

Submission of Worksheet: The judge (or judge's designee) should submit the completed guidelines worksheet to the MSCCSP database.

- The submit option will only be available to users with permission to submit a case (see Section 2.4 of the [MAGS User Manual](#) for details on user access and permissions).
- Only MSCCSP staff, judges, and judges' designees may view submitted guidelines worksheets.

Distribution of Completed Worksheet: The PDF hard copy or digital file should be provided to the court clerk for distribution to the various agencies that are required to receive a copy of the completed guidelines worksheet.

- The judge's designee should print a copy of the completed worksheet, ask the judge to sign the completed worksheet, and then provide the signed copy of the worksheet to the Clerk's Office for distribution.
- The Clerk's Office should ensure that completed copies of the guidelines worksheet are sent to the Court file, the State's Attorney, and the defense attorney and attached to the commitment order if the defendant receives any period of incarceration or to the



probation order if the defendant is put on probation immediately. In the case of a split sentence, please send a copy of the worksheet to the appropriate Parole and Probation office.

- The Clerk's Office may choose to scan the signed copy of the worksheet and deliver it electronically to the respective agencies.
- The MSCCSP suggests that each agency (e.g. SAO, OPD, P&P) establish a designated email address or identify a designated person's address, so that the Clerk's Office can scan the signed copy of the worksheet and e-mail it to the respective agencies. For example, the SAO may consider creating an email address of MAGS-SAO-XCounty@statesattorney.us. This office would then designate an individual(s) to retrieve this e-mail and process it for their respective office.

What Steps Does a Jurisdiction Need to Take to Prepare to Start Using MAGS?

1. Identify a court employee to serve as the main point of contact for MAGS implementation at the court and notify the MSCCSP staff of the selected designee.
2. MSCCSP staff will work with DPSCS and each jurisdiction's IT office to establish a login authentication process for the local SAO.
3. The circuit court should identify information technology staff to work with the MSCCSP staff and DPSCS to set up the user login authentication process for court employees. If the circuit court is a UCS jurisdiction, Judicial Information Systems (JIS) has already established a process whereby court users' logins are authenticated through the active directory maintained by the JIS.
4. The County Administrative Judge or Court Administrator should identify the court personnel who will have access to MAGS, including circuit court judges, law clerks, judges' administrative assistants/secretaries, and court clerks. In UCS counties, the County Administrative Judge or Court Administrator should complete the MAGS section of the *Circuit Court – Security Access Request* form for all designated MAGS users and send it to the Security Administration team at JIS prior to the selected MAGS start date. JIS will then adjust the state judiciary active directory logins for identified users so they can access MAGS.¹
5. The County Administrative Judge should determine which of the judges' designees have submission capabilities. Allow time for court staff to review MAGS user manual and training videos prior to implementation of MAGS.
6. The County Administrative Judge should notify the State's Attorney's Office and Parole and Probation investigators that all guidelines worksheets for the respective circuit court should be initiated and submitted via MAGS effective the selected start date.

¹ The benefit of this procedure is that court users will not need to learn a new user ID or password unique to MAGS. Rather, each user will simply use the same user ID (preceded by the prefix "courts\") and password associated with their state judiciary login (i.e., the credentials used to access JIS records and mdcourts.gov email accounts).



User Access Levels

User access to MAGS will vary depending on agency affiliation. The MSCCSP has identified 11 different user groups. The table below illustrates the various user groups and their respective access levels.

	Stand-Alone GL Calculator Tool	Maryland Automated Guidelines System (MAGS)					
		Create Case	Edit Case Prior to Submission	View Case Prior to Submission	Delete Case Prior to Submission	Submit Case	Access Submitted Case
MSCCSP Staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*
Judges (Active and Retired)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*
Judges' Law Clerks	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes**	Yes*
Judges' Administrative Assistants/Secretaries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes**	Yes*
Court Clerks	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes**	Yes*
State's Attorneys	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Attorney General's Office	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Parole & Probation Agents	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Public Defenders	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Private Attorneys	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Technical Services Staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

* Only MSCCSP staff, judges, court clerks and judges' designees have access to view submitted cases via the MAGS application. Only MSCCSP staff have access to edit a submitted case.

** The County Administrative Judge has the authority to decide whether judges' law clerks, judges' administrative assistants/secretaries, and/or court clerks will be granted permission to submit completed cases.

MAGS User Manual and Training Videos

For assistance with the MAGS application, please refer to the tools available on the [MAGS homepage](#). A detailed [User Manual](#) is available for download. Additionally, the site provides two training videos. Each video is approximately 10 minutes long.

The first video, "Video 1: Utilizing MAGS to Initiate the Sentencing Guidelines Worksheet" focuses on initiation of the guidelines worksheet and calculation of the sentencing guidelines. State's Attorneys and Parole & Probation investigators who calculate the sentencing guidelines should plan to review this video.

The second training video, "Video 2: Utilizing MAGS to Enter Sentence Information and Submit Completed Sentencing Guidelines Worksheets" focuses on completion of the



sentence and departure information, as well as instructions for submission of the completed worksheet. Judges and judges' designees should allow time to review training video 2.

The MSCCSP encourages ALL users to review the User Manual and view the appropriate video PRIOR to use of the MAGS application.

MAGS Access Issues

If a user is unable to access MAGS, please follow the steps described below:

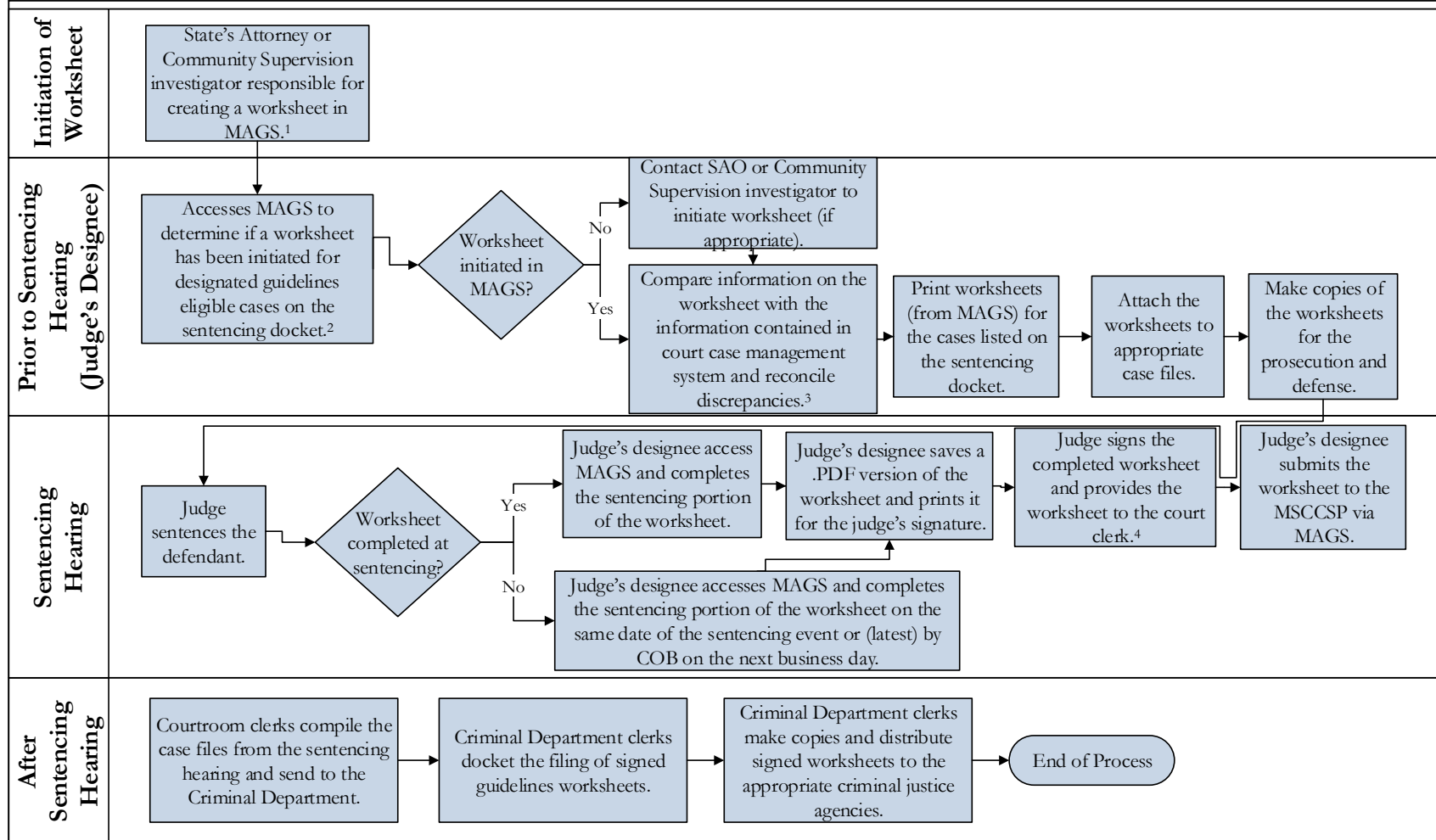
1. User should contact the MSCCSP help desk via email at msccsp@umd.edu or via phone at 301-403-4165 to determine if the access issue is specific to their individual login.
2. If the MSCCSP help desk determines that the access issue is specific to an individual login, the user should contact their agency's IT department to reset their password, or to confirm that they have access to MAGS.

Procedural Flowchart

The Appendix contains a proposed procedural flowchart. Jurisdictions may choose to amend the protocol based on established procedures in their court.

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Appendix: Maryland Automated Guidelines System (MAGS) – Proposed Procedural Flowchart



¹ The Community Supervision investigator (P&P agent) initiates the worksheet if a pre-sentencing investigation is ordered.

² The judge or judge's designee is primarily responsible for data entry in the Sentence, GLS/Overall Sentence, and Departure/Submit sections. However, modifications may be made by the judge or judge's designee to the Offender Score or List of Offenses sections.

³ The information to be compared is the defendant's first and last names, convicted offense title (i.e., guilty charges), and docket/case number contained in MAGS. The judge's designee should also verify the sentencing date on the worksheet; however, this should occur at the sentencing event.

⁴ When the worksheet is completed outside the courtroom, the judge's designee is responsible for sending the worksheet to the Criminal Department in the Court Clerk's Office once the judge's signature is obtained and the worksheet is submitted to MAGS.