



Sergeant at Arms for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives

According to *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania*, May 28, 1712, “Ordered, That the Speaker...apply to the Governor and request him to appoint an Officer in the Nature of a Sergeant at Arms, to observe and obey the Commands of this House.” This was the first mention of the Sergeant at Arms in the history of the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

Today, the Sergeants at Arms’ main duty is to police the Hall of the House and those areas used and maintained by the House and its Members. When the House is in session, they maintain order and decorum on the House floor.

Some of the responsibilities of the Sergeant at Arms have changed over the years. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, not only did the Sergeants at Arms act as security for the House, the department also maintained the House Bill File Room where they would print bills and deliver them to the Members’ desks. They would also make sure there were enough resolutions, calendars, histories, and journals for distribution to each Member.

Between 1943 and 1979, the name of the Chief Sergeant at Arms is not known. The House Journals do not provide names of many of the regular employees of the House. During this same time, the position changed from an appointed one, to that of a hired employee of the House.

In 1999, the department became the “Office of Security and Safety,” and the Chief Sergeant at Arms served as the director. Each caucus had its own set of security members with a Chief, who would report to the director of Security and Safety. In 2021, the department reverted back to the “House Sergeant at Arms.”

Session Dates	Name	County	Date Appointed
1711	Joshua Fincher		5/28/1712
1712-1715	unknown		
1716-1720	Peter Worrall		10/17/1716
1721	unknown		
1722-1727	John Eyer		10/16/1722
1728-1737	James Mackey		10/15/1728
1738-1740	Joseph Prichard		10/15/1738
1741-1769	Samuel Kirk		10/15/1741
1770-1776	William Sheed		10/16/1770
1777	Martin Krebs		
1778-1779	William Hurrie	Philadelphia	12/1/1778
1780	John Moyes		11/3/1780
1781-1784	unknown		

1785-1786	Nicholas Weaver		
1787	James Martin		10/24/1787
1788	unknown		
1789-1791	James Martin		11/3/1789
1792-1793	unknown		
1794-1795	James Martin		
1796	unknown		
1797	James Martin		12/6/1797
1798	unknown		
1799	James Martin		12/5/1799
1800	unknown		
1801	James Martin		
1802-1810	Joseph Fry		12/9/1802
1811-1819	John Benjamin		12/5/1811
1820	John Tobias Heiss		12/8/1820
1821-1834	James Smith		12/6/1821
1835	John Ash		12/5/1835
1836	James Mitchell	Allegheny	12/9/1836
1837-1840	Andrew Krause		12/7/1837
1841	Job G. Peterson		1/7/1841
1842	Alfred M. Clark		1/6/1842
1843-1844	David Stedman		1/4/1843
1845	Thomas P. Simmons	Clinton	1/9/1845
1846	John R. Herd		1/7/1846
1847	James Moorehead		1/8/1847
1848-1849	Daniel McCleary	Philadelphia	1/6/1848
1850	John Piatt	Lycoming	1/2/1850
1851	Michael Kelly	Philadelphia	1/9/1851
1852	H.W. Krotzer		1/7/1852
1853	Jonathan Grinder	Armstrong	1/5/1853
1854	J. Humphries		1/3/1854
1855	Sheshbazzar Bently	Washington	1/4/1855
1856	James B. Sansom	Fulton	1/2/1856
1857-1858	Jacob Glassmeyer	Philadelphia	1/7/1857
1859	John Clemens	Washington	1/6/1859
1860-1861	Joseph Matthews	Philadelphia	1/4/1860
1862	E.D. Pickett		1/8/1862
1863	Benjamin Kelley	Philadelphia	1/7/1863
1864	James Subers	Philadelphia	1/6/1864
1865-1866	Charles Idell	Philadelphia	1/3/1865
1867	W.J. Owens	Philadelphia	1/1/1867

1868	Casper Gang	Allegheny	1/10/1868
1869	Joseph Cowell	Philadelphia	1/6/1869
1870	Thomas Wilson	Philadelphia	1/4/1870
1871	W.J. Owens	Philadelphia	1/3/1871
1872	John Sherman (Shemer)	Philadelphia	1/2/1872
1873	David Martin	Philadelphia	1/7/1873
1874	William Douglass	Philadelphia	1/7/1874
1875	F.A. Beamish	Luzerne	1/6/1875
1876-1878	Oscar Gaines	Luzerne	1/4/1876
1879	J.B. Potter	Tioga	1/8/1879
1881	Charles White	Chester	1/5/1881
1883	John Boland	Schuylkill	1/3/1883
1885-1889	John Patterson	Dauphin	1/7/1885
1891-1893	George Hoopes	Chester	1/6/1891
1895	John Schoener	Schuylkill	1/1/1895
1897	Joseph Wyatt	Schuylkill	1/20/1897
1899-1901	E.C.M. Rawlings	Philadelphia	1/20/1899
1903-1905	James C. Smith	Philadelphia	1/21/1903
1907	J.J. Griffith	Philadelphia	1/16/1907
1909-1913	George Wills (Wylis)	Philadelphia	1/20/1909
1915	Oscar Baird	Philadelphia	1/20/1915
1917-1919	Daniel Hannihan	Allegheny	1/23/1917
1921	Robert Tracey	Philadelphia	1/19/1921
1923	Frank Lamb	Philadelphia	1/16/1923
1925	Harry Berger	Philadelphia	1/20/1925
1927	Frank Lamb	Philadelphia	1/25/1927
1929	Alexander Robinson	Philadelphia	1/15/1929
1931	Thomas Evans	Allegheny	1/26/1931
1933	William Gallagher	Allegheny	1/17/1933
1935	William Wakefield	Fulton	1/14/1935
1937	Thaddeus Nawrocki	Beaver	
1939	William Kemper	Philadelphia	1/17/1939
1941	William Carson	Philadelphia	1/13/1941
1980	Kenneth Wiest	Schuylkill	
1980-1990	Destry Mangus	Dauphin	
1990-1994	Robert Spence, Jr.	Fayette	
1994-1999	Frank Oliver, Jr.	Dauphin	
1999-2012	Phil Frederick	Cumberland	
2012-2016	Harold Roach	Schuylkill	

2016-2018	Patrick Stoops (ACTING)	Cumberland	
2019-	Rick Farnsler	Perry	