

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How are jurors selected?

In Shelby County, jurors are selected from the list of registered voters in the county. However, Ohio law allows for jurors to be summoned from the list of registered voters in the county or jurors may be summoned from a combined list of registered voters and licensed drivers in the county.

What are the requirements for being a juror?

To serve on a jury in a particular court, you must be a resident of the geographical area served by that particular court. Ohio jurors must be at least 18 years of age, and they must not have lost their right to serve on a jury by having been convicted of certain types of crime. Beyond that, everyone is given the opportunity to be a juror regardless of age (if at least 18) and regardless of occupation. If you are 76 years of age or older, you may request to be excused from jury duty.

What is the difference between a Petit Juror and Grand Juror?

A grand juror decides whether a person should be placed on trial for a criminal offense. A petit juror decides if the defendant is guilty or not guilty in a criminal trial. In a civil trial, the petit jury will decide the facts which are in dispute.

How do I know when to report?

You will receive a summons in the mail telling you the exact date and time to report.

How long will I be reporting for jury duty?

You may be selected for a term of four months. Usually, a juror is only called one time during the term. The average trial length is two to three days. Some jury trials last longer.

Is it possible that I might report for service but not sit on a jury?

Yes. The parties involved in a case usually try to settle their differences and avoid the time and expense of a trial. Sometimes a case is settled only minutes before the trial begins. But your time spent waiting to serve is not wasted; your presence encourages settlement.

How many jurors must agree on a verdict?

The type of case determines the number of jurors who must agree on a verdict.

A civil case is usually between two or more persons, companies or corporations who have a dispute concerning money or property. In a civil case, the jurors must decide if and/or how to compensate the plaintiff for any damages. In civil cases, six (6) jurors (three-fourths of the eight jurors) must agree on a verdict.

In a criminal case, twelve (12) jurors determine if an accused person is guilty or not guilty of a charge, and the verdict must be unanimous.

I received a jury summons from Shelby County and I no longer live in Shelby County. What do I do?

To be eligible to serve in Shelby County, you must reside in Shelby County. If you have moved from Shelby County, complete an application to be excused from jury duty and submit it to the Clerk of Courts. In the meantime, you may want to contact the Board of Elections to make sure they know that you have moved outside the county. Otherwise, you could continue to be called for service in Shelby County.

I received a jury summons for a deceased person. What should I do?

We apologize for any undue hardship this has caused. Please complete an application to be excused from jury duty for the deceased person and submit it to the Clerk of Courts. We will be sure to take the name out of our system. You should also contact the Board of Elections to make sure they have been notified that the family member is deceased. Otherwise, the name will remain on their records, allowing us to have access to it each year when new jurors are pulled.

I've been called several times for jury duty and yet I know a lot of people who have never been called. Why?

The drawing of prospective jurors each year is a completely random process. There really isn't a good explanation of why some people are called more than once when others haven't been called at all.

Do I have to respond to the jury summons?

To answer your question directly, yes. Your jury summons is an official court order. If anyone fails to report for jury duty without a lawful excuse from the court, they may be brought before the court for possible contempt of court proceedings. If found in contempt by the judge, the court may impose a fine and/or other punishment as provided by Ohio law.

I have a medical and/or work problem and can't serve jury duty. What do I need to do?

Pick up and complete a juror's excuse form from the Clerk of Court's office, located on the third floor of the courthouse. If you have a physician's medical excuse, bring that

with you to attach to the excuse form. Generally, work or employment is not sufficient to get excused. The judge will review your request and you will be notified of his decision.

I can't serve as a juror at this time of the year. Can I serve later in the year?

Depending on the circumstances, the judge may allow you to serve later in the year.

What if my employer requires me to turn in a statement that verifies my attendance to jury duty?

Work verification reports will be provided for you at the completion of your service. Your employment is protected by law while you are serving as a juror. If you have any problems with your employer in connection with your jury service, please notify the Clerk of Courts.

Will my family be able to contact me at the courthouse in the event of an emergency?

Absolutely. Our number at the court is 937/498-7230. You may leave this number with family, school, childcare providers, etc.

Where do I park?

You may park around the courthouse square.

I meet the eligibility requirements for serving as a juror but am I really "qualified" to serve?

You do not need any special skills, training, or legal knowledge to be a juror. You do need to be able to listen carefully, follow instructions, keep an open mind, and be willing to make a decision free from personal feelings or biases. As a juror, you will be responsible for impartially evaluating all the facts that are presented to you during the trial and, as the judge instructs, apply the law as it is written to the facts of the case.