



A GUIDE TO JURY SERVICE

WHAT QUALIFIES YOU TO BE A JUROR?

You must be at least 18 years of age, possess a valid Florida Driver's License or ID card, and be a resident of the State of Florida and Marion County.

HOW ARE JURORS SUMMONED FOR JURY DUTY?

Jurors' names are randomly selected by computer from the list of all Florida licensed drivers and ID card holders in Marion County.

ARE THERE ANY EXEMPTIONS FROM SERVING AS A JUROR?

The exemptions from reporting for jury duty, if you meet the above qualifications, are:

- You have served as a juror in Marion County within the past 12 months.
- You have been convicted of a felony and have not had your civil rights restored.
- You are not a United States citizen.
- You are an elected official: Governor; Lt. Governor; Cabinet Officer; Clerk of Court; Judge.

The Clerk's Office can excuse you from jury duty for one of the following reasons:

- You are 70 years of age or older.
- You are an expectant mother or a parent that is not employed full-time and have custody of a child less than six years of age.
- You are a law enforcement officer or investigator.
- You are responsible for the care of someone mentally or physically unable to care for themselves.
- You are a practicing attorney or physician.

If you feel that serving as a juror will cause a hardship or extreme inconvenience, your request to be excused must be approved by the presiding judge.

PAYMENT FOR JURY DUTY

Jurors who are regularly employed and continue to receive regular wages while serving as a juror are not entitled to receive compensation for the first three days of service.

Jurors who are regularly employed but do not continue to receive regular wages while serving as a juror or jurors who are unemployed are entitled to received \$15.00 per day for the first three days of service.

All jurors, regardless of their employment status, who serve more than three days will be paid beginning on the fourth day of service at a rate of \$30.00 per day.

A juror excused from jury service at his/her request is not entitled to receive compensation.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

The first day of service is normally limited to jury selection for trials to be held during that trial week. Jurors selected to serve will be required to return on the date(s) of that trial.

JUDICIAL CENTER NUMBERS

Court Administration..... 401-6701
Jury Assembly Room 671-5581
Law Library..... 401-7841
Mediator's Office 401-7805

TYPES OF TRIALS

Cases which come before a petit jury are divided into two general classes: Civil and Criminal.

In a civil trial, parties in dispute come to court to settle their case. The person who brings the action against another is the "plaintiff". The person against whom the action is brought is the "defendant".

In a criminal trial the people of the State of Florida, represented by The State Attorney, bring charges against the defendant. The State Attorney is commonly referred to as the "prosecutor". The "defendant" is a person or corporation accused of a violation of law.

"VOIR DIRE" OR EXAMINATION OF JURORS

Once a prospective juror has been impaneled in a case, the judge and the attorneys will ask some questions regarding his/her background. These questions are not intended to embarrass a juror in any way. The questions are to assist the attorneys in deciding which jurors to select. If the juror feels that they cannot be an impartial juror and this is not brought out by the questioning, the juror should bring this to the attention of the judge.

If a juror is excused for any reason it is in no way a reflection on the juror. When a juror is excused it means only that in this particular case it is proper and lawful to excuse him or her.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER DURING A TRIAL

After you are sworn as a juror in a case, there are some rules of conduct which you should observe:

- Be on time for court. The trial cannot proceed until all jurors are present.
- Sit in the same seat in the jury box. This allows the judge and attorneys to identify you more easily.
- Listen carefully. Your verdict will be based on the evidence given. It is therefore important that you hear every question asked and every answer given. If you do not understand any portion of the trial, ask the judge to have it explained.
- Do not talk about the case. You may not talk to anyone about the case. This includes the clerk, attorneys, judge, bailiff or even another juror until you have retired to the jury room for deliberations. If anyone tries to talk to you about the case or attempts to influence you as a juror, you should report it to the judge immediately.

In accordance with the American Disabilities Act, a person needing special accommodations to participate in jury service should contact the ADA coordinator at the Office of the Trial Court Administrator, phone (352) 401-6710, immediately upon receiving a summons. If you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.