

Thank you for responding to your jury summons. We hope your experience as a juror is educational and interesting. Without willing jurors, the fairness and integrity of our judicial system could not be maintained. If you have any specific problems while you are with us, please bring them to the attention of one of the clerks.

JANIS WHITENER-MOBERG
Judge

TYSON R HILL
Judge

BRIAN D BARLOW
Judge

ANNA L GIGLIOTTI
Court Commissioner

WELCOME TO AN IMPORTANT JOB!!

The right to trial by a jury of our fellow citizens is one of our most important rights and is guaranteed by the Washington State and United States constitutions. By serving on a jury, you are helping to preserve this freedom. Your job as a juror is to listen to all the evidence presented at the trial and to 'decide the facts' – that is, to decide what really happened. The judge, on the other hand, 'decides the law' – that is, makes decisions on legal issues that come up during the trial. Most of the Grant County District Court trials last only one day, and at most two days. Lunch breaks are usually from noon to 1:30 pm. Whether selected to be on a six person jury panel, or not, by your appearance and availability to serve, you will have satisfied your jury summons.

HOW WAS I CHOSEN?

Your name was selected at random from voter registration and driver's license and "identocard" records. Your answers to the juror questionnaire were evaluated to make sure you were eligible for jury service. To be eligible, you must be 18 years of age, a United States citizen, a resident of Grant County, and able to communicate in English. If you have been convicted of a felony, you must have had your civil rights restored.

WHAT KIND OF CASE WILL I HEAR?

In Grant County District Court you will be hearing testimony and receiving evidence from misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor cases such as DUI, theft, assault, driving while suspended, disorderly conduct, etc. as well as civil cases not exceeding \$50,000. More serious felony cases such as robbery or homicide are handled in Superior Court.

HOW IS A SIX PERSON JURY SELECTED?

The judge will tell you about the case and will introduce the lawyers. Following explanations and taking of the oath, the judge and the lawyers will question you, and other members of the panel to determine if you are impartial. This process is called "VOIR DIRE", a phrase meaning to "speak the truth". Some of the questions may seem very personal; the lawyers are not trying to embarrass you but are trying to make sure you do not have opinions or past experiences which might prevent you from making an impartial decision.

At the conclusion of the questioning, the lawyers will challenge jurors in order to reach the final six persons. Once selected, the jury will be provided with an opportunity to call their homes or offices prior to the start of trial.

WHY ARE SOME PEOPLE EXCUSED?

Jurors are excused for several reasons and the lawyers rarely tell you why. Don't be upset if you are excused or challenged, it is nothing against you personally. Just enjoy the freedom to leave when excused.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE TRIAL?

The usual order of events in District Court is as follows:

STEP 1: Selection of the jury;
STEP 2: Opening statements by lawyers;
STEP 3: Plaintiff presents their evidence;
STEP 4: Defendant may, but is not required to present evidence;
STEP 5: The judge's instructions;
STEP 6: Closing arguments;
STEP 7: Jury deliberation;
STEP 8: Announcement of the verdict.

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR JURORS

DURING THE TRIAL

DO pay close attention. If you cannot hear what is being said, raise your hand and let the judge know.

DO keep an open mind throughout the trial. Don't form an opinion on the case until you and the other jurors have conducted your deliberations.

DO listen carefully to the instructions read by the judge. Remember, it is your duty to accept what the judge says about the law to be applied to the case.

DON'T try to guess what the judge thinks about the case. Remember that rulings from the bench do not reflect the judge's personal views.

DON'T talk about the case, or issues raised by the case with anyone--including other jurors--while the trial is going on, and DON'T let others talk about the case in your presence, even family members. If someone insists on talking to you or another juror about the case, please report the matter to a court employee. These rules are designed to help you keep an open mind during the trial.

DON'T talk to the lawyers, parties, or witnesses about anything. This will avoid the impression that something unfair is going on.

DON'T try to discover evidence on your own. Never, for example, go to the scene of an event that was part of the case you are hearing. You must decide the case only on the basis of evidence admitted in court.

DON'T let yourself get information about the case from the news media or any other outside source. Even if news reports are accurate and complete, they cannot substitute for your impressions about the case. If you accidentally hear outside information about the case during trial, tell a member of the court staff in private.

DON'T express your opinion about the case to other jurors until deliberations begin.

DO arrive on time and return promptly after breaks and lunch. The trial cannot proceed until all jurors are present.

You will be provided with pen and paper to take notes during the trial. These notes are for your personal use and are not to be shared with anyone until deliberations begin.

DURING DELIBERATION

DO consult with other jurors before making up your mind about a verdict.

DO work out differences between yourself and other jurors through complete and fair discussions of the evidence and of the judge's instructions. DON'T lose your temper, try to bully or refuse to listen to the opinions of other jurors.

DON'T mark or write on exhibits or otherwise change or injure them.

DO reconsider your views in light of your deliberations, and change them if you have become convinced they are wrong.

DON'T change your convictions about the importance or effect of evidence just because other jurors disagree with you or so that the jury can decide on a verdict.

DON'T try to guess what might happen if the case you have heard is appealed. Appellate courts deal only with legal questions—they will not change your verdict if you decided the facts based on proper evidence and instructions.

DON'T talk to anyone about your deliberations or about the verdict until the judge discharges the jury. After discharge, you may discuss the verdict and the deliberations with anyone, including the media, the lawyers, or your family. But DON'T feel obligated to do so – no juror can be forced to talk without a court order.

PAYMENT OF JUROR EXPENSES

After your jury service is completed, Grant County will pay you \$10.00 for each day you serve, as well as mileage for traveling to and from the courthouse if you must travel from a town other than the one in which you reside. You should expect payment within 30 days from the end of your jury term. Again, thank you for your participation

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON JURY SERVICE IN WASHINGTON

<http://www.courts.wa.gov/newsinfo/resources/>

GRANT COUNTY DISTRICT COURT WEBSITE

http://www.grantcountyweb.us/sub_District_Court/index.htm

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GRANT COUNTY DISTRICT COURT

JUROR INFORMATION



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