

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SERVING ON A JURY?

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People may be apprehensive about jury duty and fear their time will be wasted or that the experience will be negative or an imposition.

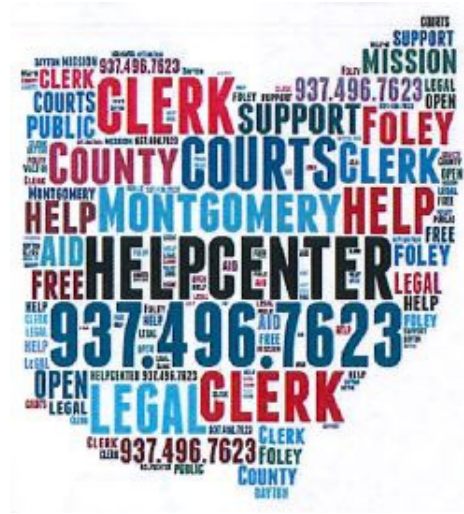
Most jurors, however, find that the experience is positive. Jurors learn about the legal system as well as the particular subject matter of the lawsuit. They meet others and may even make new friends during their service. They have the satisfaction of knowing they have contributed to our system of justice that cannot work without them.

Court officials are careful to treat jurors courteously and professionally. They know that fair and just results for those before the court cannot be had without fair and impartial jurors. The benefits of jury service to the entire community are huge.

## I HAVE A DISABILITY. IF I AM CALLED FOR JURY SERVICE, WILL ACCOMMODATIONS BE MADE.

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Courts will work with you to enable you to perform jury duty. Be sure to call the court that summons you to discuss your needs.



## "TAKING THE COURTHOUSE TO THE COMMUNITY!"

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## CONTACT US

### ADDRESS:

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The Help Center: 937-496-3038

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# JURY SERVICES

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THE HELP CENTER

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**MIKE FOLEY, CLERK**  
MONTGOMERY  
COUNTY CLERK OF  
COURTS

## **WHY IS JURY SERVICE SO IMPORTANT?**

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A juror is a very important person in our legal system because our justice system is based on the belief that a just and fair result in court comes from having disputes settled by our fellow citizens. Very few of us ever have to go to court as plaintiffs or defendants, but when we do, we want good, honest people to listen to the evidence and decide our cases fairly.

Therefore, when we are called to serve on a jury, we have an obligation to our fellow citizens to honor the summons and appear at court. Some cases may be more important than others, but to the parties involved, the case can be life-changing, and they deserve to have it decided by honest and impartial jurors.

## **HOW ARE JURORS SELECTED?**

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In Ohio, persons are selected for jury service by random drawing from either a list of registered voters or a combined list of the registered voters and the list of licensed drivers residing in the county or city that the court serves. Jury trials are held in the United States district courts, the common pleas court of each county, the municipal courts, the county courts and in some cases, juvenile and probate courts. In Ohio, a new list of eligible jurors is compiled each year.

## **WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR BEING A JUROR?**

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To serve on a jury, you must be a bona fide 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 (or must have had those rights restored). Beyond that, everyone is given the opportunity to be a juror, regardless of age (if at least 18), race, color, creed or occupation.

## **MAY I BE EXCUSED FROM JURY SERVICE?**

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The following persons can be excused from jury service: members of cloistered religious orders; people whose mental or physical condition renders them incapable of performing jury service, whose spouse or near relative has recently died or is seriously ill, whose jury service would cause them or someone in their care extreme physical or financial hardship, or who would be harmed or would harm the public by serving on a jury; those who are older than 75 years of age; those who are members of or are cognized Amish sect; and members of the armed forces currently on active duty. Even if you fall within one of these categories, the court must approve your excuse. If the court excuses you, you will become eligible for jury selection again the next jury year. You may also ask that your jury service be postponed. To ask for an excuse or postponement, you must contact the court at least two business days before your scheduled service.

## **WHAT IF I IGNORE MY SUMMONS TO SERVE AS A JUROR OR SIMPLY DON'T SHOW UP?**

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A summons from the court is an order. If you ignore it, the court may issue a warrant for your arrest and punish you with contempt of court and other sanctions. Therefore, you must contact the court and discuss options for requesting an excuse or postponement of jury service.

## **WILL I BE PAID FOR MY JURY SERVICE?**

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Jurors are paid for each day they serve. Compensation varies between courts. Some courts also provide free parking for jurors. The law says your employer cannot fire or threaten to fire you for serving as a juror if you give reasonable advance notice about your jury summons and jury service is the actual reason for your work absence.

## **WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF JURIES?**

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Most jurors are selected to serve on a petit jury, a jury that hears and decides a particular case. For a criminal trial involving a felony (a more serious type of crime), the law requires 12 jurors. A civil trial requires only eight jurors. In municipal and county courts, where misdemeanors (a less-serious level of crime) are brought to trial, juries consist of eight persons. If a trial is expected to last more than one day, alternate jurors may be selected in case a juror must be excused during the trial.

Unlike the petit jury, a grand jury hears evidence about alleged crimes (usually felonies), and only decides whether or not a person should be indicted and tried for committing a crime. Also unlike the petit jury, the grand jury does not decide guilt or innocence. If you are selected for grand jury service, your service probably will be longer than if you serve on a petit jury, although in most smaller counties, grand jury duty may only be once or twice a month for a three- or four-month period.

## **MIGHT I REPORT FOR JURY SERVICE, BUT NOT SIT ON A JURY?**

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Jurors are paid for each day they serve. Compensation varies between courts. Some courts also provide free parking for jurors. The law says your employer cannot fire or threaten to fire you for serving as a juror if you give reasonable advance notice about your jury summons and jury service is the actual reason for your work absence.

