

PETIT JUROR INFORMATION GUIDE

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
Pittsburgh Division
13 County Jurisdiction
(NOT A COUNTY/STATE COURT)

Welcome to the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania. The federal courthouse is located in downtown Pittsburgh in the U. S. COURTHOUSE BUILDING AT THE CORNER OF SEVENTH AVENUE AND GRANT STREET. Be aware that our court IS NOT associated with the Federal Building OR the Allegheny County Courthouse building in downtown Pittsburgh. Your term of jury service is determined by the court. During your term of service, we ask that you use good judgment in attire (no shorts, tank tops, torn jeans, flip flops, tee shirts, etc.). Business casual is appropriate. The Court asks that the rules of etiquette be followed in the courtroom.

Firearms, pocket knives, scissors, razors, mini batons, etc., are NOT permitted in the courthouse. These items, as well as any others that can be construed as a weapon, will be confiscated at the entrance of the courthouse by security officers. You and any personal belongings brought into the building will be required to pass through electronic security equipment. While cell phones are permitted in the building (turned off) for now, cameras and recording devices are NOT. Cell phones with these features MAY be retained by court security until you exit the building. Picture taking and video/voice recording is PROHIBITED throughout the entire Courthouse. Photo ID is required entering the building.

PROTECTION OF JUROR'S EMPLOYMENT U.S. CODE 28 USC 1875 SECTION (a)

"No employer shall discharge, threaten to discharge, intimidate, or coerce any permanent employee by reason of such employee's jury service or attendance in connection with such service, in any court of the United States." You should contact the court immediately if such a situation arises.

SUMMONS FOR JURY SERVICE

Immediately, complete the "Jury Information" portion of this form within 5 days on-line at www.pawd.uscourts.gov. Click on Jury Information, then click on "eJUROR" (SSN's not required at this stage). You will need your nine-digit participant number for eJuror access. Or, you can complete and mail (using envelope provided), fax, or email it to the jury office (fax and email address on next page). Be sure to read all information accompanying the summons.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REQUEST FOR POSTPONEMENT, PARTIAL EXCUSE, OR EXCUSE
Include all information requested in steps 1-4 and return it within 5 days of receipt. If utilizing eJUROR, only required documentation needs to be sent to the court. ONLY USE ONE METHOD OF REQUEST. DO NOT DUPLICATE YOUR REQUEST.

1. You must complete the lower portion of summons (Jury Information Form). Complete **ALL** fields, **including phone numbers on-line through eJUROR at www.pawd.uscourts.gov. Click on Jury Information. You'll need your 9 digit participant number to access eJUROR. You may also mail, email or fax completed form.**
- 2 **Requests for postponement or excuse can made through eJUROR. Written requests can be mailed, e-mailed to EJuror2@pawd.uscourts.gov or faxed to 412-208-7545. Only those submitted by the juror will be considered.**
- 3 **Requests must be specific** (conflict dates, times, ages of children, etc.). The court may grant partial excuses, depending on the nature of request. Failure to provide sufficient information for the court to make a determination will result in denial.
- 4 **Additional documentation REQUIRED with request.**
 - a. *If medical*, a doctor letter is **ALSO** required explaining why he/she does not feel you should serve (in layman terms) & with original signature ("for medical reasons" will not be accepted). A form for physician completion is available at www.pawd.uscourts.gov. Click on Jury Information.
 - b. *If financial*, a letter from the employer is required (signed) stating company policy concerning pay while serving as a juror.

The additional correspondence (if request submitted on line) can be sent by mail, e-mail or faxed; Include participant number. Otherwise is should be sent along with your written request when using one of the other submission methods.

Once correspondence is received, processed, and reviewed, you can check the status of your request by calling the Juror Automated Phone System at 1-866-498-8562. You need your 9 digit participant number. Or you can also check on line through eJUROR. Please allow 7 days before checking your status. You will also need to have your nine digit number to access this information.

All summoned jurors, whether requesting an excuse or not **MUST complete the juror information form. Any type of excuse request will not be determined unless the juror information form has been completed.**

In **MOST** cases, requests that are granted are TEMPORARY (including financial hardship) and you will be summoned again. We cannot defer to a specific date; therefore, you can be summoned again **AT ANY TIME**. Jury duty **CAN** be deferred twice, however, upon the third summons, requests are denied. This Court has trial terms every two weeks all year.

WHEN DO I REPORT?

DO NOT REPORT UNTIL YOU HAVE CALLED THE TOLL FREE NUMBER FOR YOUR INSTRUCTIONS.

You will call 1-866-498-8562 AFTER 4:00 on

- ✓ Friday, Monday and Tuesday **EACH** week to check on your reporting status for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. You will need your nine digit participant number for access. You are not reporting for selection every day for two weeks. If you are not instructed to report when you call, you should go to work &/or proceed with your normal day.
- ✓ If selected:
 - most trials start immediately
 - most trials are held Monday-Friday during normal business hours
 - you are excused at end of your trial from further service

If you appear for jury duty and have not been instructed to report, you will not be authorized to collect any juror fees or expense reimbursement.

JUROR IDENTIFICATION

When you report, a juror badge will be issued to you by jury personnel. **The juror badge is to be worn at all times while in the courthouse.** You also have been assigned a 1, 2, OR 3 digit juror number. It is hand-printed on your "Official Notice". This assigned number is used once you report and will be further explained at that time. It is not to be confused with your 9 digit participant number which is used when you phone our toll-free number for instruction.

HOURS

Generally speaking, your duty hours will run from 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. **You must plan on being here a full day.** However, if selected as a trial juror, the courtroom deputy clerk or a judge will verbally inform you as to the time to report for jury service in his/her courtroom. You will normally be released by a jury clerk or a courtroom deputy at the close of the day. You are not to leave at any time until officially dismissed. Your lunch break will be announced by a jury clerk or a courtroom deputy.

Handicapped jurors with the proper identification **MUST** contact the jury office at 412-208-7540 **WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE TWO WEEK TERM** to make any necessary or special arrangements.

JUROR PAYMENT

Jurors receive \$40.00 for each day in attendance. Jurors also receive reimbursement for travel mileage at the current government rate from their residence to the courthouse (round trip). Parking fees will be

reimbursed up to \$15.00 per day upon submission of a validated receipt. Jurors staying in hotels, (MUST BE 60 MILES OR MORE AWAY ONE WAY TO QUALIFY), will receive the current government subsistence rate per day. Hotel receipts are required. Jurors who stay with friends or relatives will receive a reduced subsistence payment at the current government rate.

Checks for jurors are prepared and mailed twice each month. You will receive a statement of all fees paid with your check. This statement can be used as verification of days of service and the amount of jury pay that you received. If you have any questions concerning payment or need further information for your employer, contact the jury office. The attendance fee that a juror receives (\$40.00 per day) is taxable income and must be reported to the Internal Revenue Service. Only jurors receiving \$600.00 or more will receive a 1099 form at the end of the calendar year.

The Clerk's Office is unable to arrange hotel accommodations for you. Therefore, you should personally contact a hotel of your choice for reservations. When making a hotel reservation be certain to state that you are a federal juror to receive the lower government rate that may be available (see special insert w/summons).

Federal employees are required to report their federal status to the jury clerk on their first day of jury service.

WHILE YOU WAIT-- JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM (Room 3300)

The Clerk's Office continues to strive to make your wait in the assembly room as comfortable as possible. Books, magazines, cable television, and wireless internet access via Wi-Fi are available to you for your use while you are waiting in the assembly area. (For Wi-Fi user information and disclaimer, go to www.pawd.uscourts.gov - Court Technology.)

You are encouraged to bring your own reading material or some other item to occupy your time in the event there is a waiting period. At times, it can be lengthy. A kitchen/lounge area is equipped with a microwave and small refrigerator for your use while waiting in the assembly area as well. You are also free to pack a lunch and are encouraged to bring a snack in the event of a lengthy wait. **Meals ARE NOT provided and/or paid for by the Court.** We ask your cooperation in keeping the entire area clean. Coffee, tea, bottled water, and a variety of juices and sodas are provided by the court while you wait in the assembly area on your selection day. Restrooms are located in the jury assembly room and jurors are not permitted to leave the assembly room for any reason until instructed by Court personnel. Relatives or friends are not permitted to wait in the jury assembly room with the jurors. You should plan to be in the courthouse all day.

The United States Courthouse is a smoke-free building. While waiting in the assembly area, jury personnel are not permitted to allow jurors to leave the building to smoke. You are permitted to smoke outside the building when dismissed as a group for lunch or break by court personnel.

Should an emergency arise in the assembly room, immediately notify one of the jury clerks. If an emergency arises during your two week term, or while you are on your way to the court in the morning, please call **412-208-7540**. Our hours are 8:30 – 5:00.

The Clerk's Office cannot be responsible for items lost or stolen while you are on jury service. The courthouse undergoes routine fire alarm drills. You are requested to remain in the assembly room should the alarm sound and wait for instruction from jury personnel. In the unlikely event of an actual fire, court personnel will come to escort you safely out of the building.

COURTROOMS

Voir dire and subsequent jury selection usually is conducted in the courtroom. No food, drink, or reading material is permitted in the courtroom and all electronic equipment **MUST** be turned off. Use of ANY electronic devices (including, but not limited to, laptops, cell phone usage, including picture taking, text messaging, game playing, internet surfing, etc.) in the courtroom is prohibited at all times. Your device will be confiscated if the procedure is not followed. You are reminded that this is a formal court proceeding and proper attire is required (business casual) in the courthouse. Some courtrooms can be cold so you may want to bring a sweater.

REPORTING DATE

Although your summons gives you a date to report, this date is subject to change. Be sure to follow the telephone call-in instructions included with your summons. **The court is not responsible for any expenses incurred due to the failure to follow instructions concerning reporting for service.** Your “Official Notice” instructs you when to begin calling the automated jury phone system. You will need to have your nine digit number that appears on your summons prior to calling for instructions. The toll free number is: **1-866-498-8562**.

REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR SUMMONS WITH YOU WHEN YOU REPORT FOR SERVICE. The Court trusts that your experience will be pleasant, rewarding, and memorable.