

# JURY DUTY FAQ'S

## Who is entitled to a Jury Trial?

Generally, any person charged with a criminal offense and parties in some civil cases have a right to a jury trial. All parties are equal before the law and each is entitled to the same fair treatment.

## Who is qualified to serve on jury duty?

Jurors Must:

- Be at least eighteen (18) years of age
- Be a United States Citizen
- Be a resident of the County of Prince William or Cities of Manassas or Manassas Park for at least six months
- Be a resident of Virginia for one year
- Never have been convicted of a felony unless the juror's civil rights have been restored
- Not be currently adjudicated mentally incompetent or insane

## How are jurors selected?

Once a year prospective jurors from Prince William County and the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park are randomly selected through Department of Motor Vehicle data and Voter Registration lists to receive a jury questionnaire via mail. Once the questionnaires are returned to the Clerk's Office, they are reviewed by court appointed jury commissioners to determine which citizens are qualified to serve. Those who qualify make up the master jury list for the following calendar year. Men and women over 18 years of age and from all walks of life have an equal opportunity to be called for jury service.

- Jury questionnaires are sent out each year in the month of August.
- You will not be contacted by the Court after returning your questionnaire even if you have asked to be excused or reported special circumstances.
- Selections are made in the month of September/October for the following year beginning in February.
- Jurors are summoned to serve for a month on a Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday.
- Randomly selected prospective jurors receive a JURY SUMMONS in the mail approximately four weeks prior to their jury service date. This is the first contact with a prospective juror after completing the questionnaire.
- If you receive a jury summons, be sure to read BOTH sides of the summons even if you think you are not eligible to serve as a juror or would like to be postponed or excused. If after reading ALL of the information and instructions on the summons, please feel free to contact us with any additional questions by sending an email to [circuitcourt@pwcgov.org](mailto:circuitcourt@pwcgov.org) or calling the Jury Clerk at 703-792-6047.

## Am I required to report for jury duty?

Yes. FAILURE TO APPEAR WHEN SUMMONED COULD RESULT IN LEGAL ACTION AGAINST YOU BY THE COURT. A Show Cause will be issued and posted by the Sheriff for those who fail to report.

[Prince William County Circuit Court Clerk's Office Contact Information](#)



Jury Clerk: 703-792-6047



Email: [CircuitCourt@pwcgov.org](mailto:CircuitCourt@pwcgov.org)



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## Who is exempt from jury service?

Only a limited number of persons are ineligible to serve as jurors. Virginia Code § [8.01-341](#) lists those persons who are exempt from jury service and Virginia Code § [8.01-341.1](#) lists persons who may claim an exemption from jury service.

## How can someone be excused from jury duty?

Your request must be sent to the Circuit Court Clerk's Office in writing via fax, mail, or email and must be received within five (5) business days of receipt of your summons. Requests and inquiries must contain the juror's identification number that appears below the barcode on the summons.

- Mailing address: Clerk of Circuit Court, Jury Clerk, 9311 Lee Avenue, Manassas VA 20110
- Email address: [CircuitCourt@pwcgov.org](mailto:CircuitCourt@pwcgov.org)
- Fax: (703-792-5746)

## What about my job?

Your employer cannot fire, demote, or otherwise penalize you for missing work while performing jury duty. Many employers continue to pay your salary during your jury duty service. It is advisable to give your employer ample notice of your jury duty and to determine your employer's policy regarding payment of wages/salary while serving as a juror. (Virginia Code § [18.2-465.1](#))

Prospective jurors who are not paid by their employer when on jury duty will NOT be excused. You may however request a postponement to a later time.

## What if an unexpected emergency keeps me from coming to the courthouse?

It is very important that all jurors report on time each day. Your absence may delay a trial and result in hardship on the participants or cause unnecessary costs to all involved parties. If you have an emergency (sudden illness or a death in the family) immediately call the Jury Clerk at 703-792-6047 and/or send an email to [CircuitCourt@pwcgov.org](mailto:CircuitCourt@pwcgov.org).

## How do I know if I have to report the next day?

On the evening before your assigned day indicated on the summons, our office will update our jury communication channels, listed below, with the assigned groups for the following day.

- Call our jury recording line (703-792-6032)
- Find us on Social Media by searching for @PWCCircuitCourt on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).
- Visit the Jury Duty page of our website [HERE](#)

## How will I know what to expect during my jury service?

The morning that you arrive for jury duty you will be shown an orientation video that will explain your role as juror. In addition, the Jury Clerk will take attendance and answer any questions you might have.

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## How long will I be on jury duty?

Jurors summoned for service are on-call one day a week for one month. Jurors are assigned one day of the week. Many jury trials are only a day; very few are more than two. Each week, jurors must call our jury recording line, visit our website or our social media pages on the evening before their assigned day to determine whether they need to appear. On average, we have six juries a month for a total of 10 days of service.

Once you have served on a jury panel, you are ineligible under state law to serve again for a period of three years. You may still be eligible for jury service on a Grand Jury or in a federal court.

## How are jurors selected for a particular trial?

Each day jurors report to the Jury Assembly Room and their attendance is taken. When a judge is ready to begin the jury trial, the jurors needed for the case are selected from those persons in attendance for that day. The groups are called, and the panel of jurors is escorted to the courtroom.

Once the jury panel reaches the designated courtroom, the jurors are questioned under the supervision of the judge. During this questioning, some jurors may be excused from the case. Once all questioning has been completed, each attorney in the case can remove a certain number of jurors from the panel. The sworn jury will consist of the jurors remaining on the panel. Jurors not selected will return to the Jury Assembly room. Once all jury panels have been selected for the day, the remaining jurors, if any, will be released and their service will be complete for that day.

## Is it possible that I might report for jury duty but not actually sit on a jury?

There are times when you will report for jury duty only to be released early in the morning. When this happens, it means the parties have reached a settlement or entered a plea and the case will not be tried. We try to avoid having you come in when not needed, but if there is a last-minute settlement or plea, you may be released without hearing a case. If this happens, you are still entitled to \$50 for travel and the defendant or parties will still bear the cost of a jury trial.

## How long will I be in Court?

It is impossible to predict how long a trial will last. Most trials are completed in one day, but a few cases require two or more days to complete. In most cases, jurors are released by 5 p.m.; however, on occasion, jurors may have to stay beyond that time. You will be given a lunch break and possibly a morning and/or afternoon break as well. If you find that you need a break at another time, please notify the bailiff (sheriff's deputy).

## Will I be reimbursed for serving on jury duty?

You will be paid \$50 for each day you must report to the courthouse. This amount is set by statute and is considered as reimbursement for your travel and other expenses. Approximately three

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weeks after the end of service, you will be mailed a check for your service. (Virginia Code § [17.1-618](#))

## Is there anything I can do to make my jury service more comfortable?

Yes. While efforts are made to reduce delay and avoid waiting time, you may have to sit for some time before you know whether you have been chosen to sit on a jury. You should bring a book, crossword puzzles or any other activity you can do quietly while waiting. Cell phones are permitted in the courthouse on **SILENT**. All devices must be **TURNED OFF** while in the courtrooms.

## What may jurors wear to jury service?

Jurors should dress comfortably, but appropriately for a courthouse. Court proceedings are conducted with dignity and respect. Your dress should be suitable for the occasion. Please come prepared for cooler temperatures in the courtrooms.

Unsuitable clothing includes such items as: **shorts, miniskirts, tank tops, halter tops and flip flops**. These items are **NOT PERMITTED**. If you report to jury service wearing inappropriate attire, you will be required to return home to change into more suitable attire or you will be given a new report date and will have to return on that date.

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