

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT JUROR SERVICE IN NEW JERSEY

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Jury Service in General | 2 |
| 1. Why is it important that I serve as a juror? | 2 |
| 2. Where does the list of jurors come from? | 2 |
| 3. How are jurors selected? | 2 |
| 4. How do I know if I need to report for jury duty? | 2 |
| 5. How will I know if the court is closed due to inclement weather? | 2 |
| 6. Why do I seem to get summoned more frequently than others? | 2 |
| 7. I received a green Juror Summons postcard. What should I do? | 3 |
| 8. What should I do if I lost my Summons?..... | 3 |
| 9. How do I update my address? | 3 |
| 10. What should I do if am summoned but no longer live in New Jersey?..... | 3 |
| What should I do if I no longer live in the county that summoned me?..... | 3 |
| 11. I received a Juror Summons for a family member that has passed. What should I do?..... | 3 |
| Types of Jury Service | 4 |
| 12. What are the different types of juror service?..... | 4 |
| 13. Does recent service as a federal juror affect my scheduled service in the New Jersey Superior Court?..... | 4 |
| 14. Does recent service in another state excuse me from serving in new jersey?..... | 4 |
| Juror Qualification/Disqualification | 4 |
| 15. What are the qualifications to serve as a juror? | 4 |
| Requesting an Excusal | 5 |
| 16. Who can be excused from jury service? | 5 |
| 17. How do I request to be excused from jury service? | 6 |
| Rescheduling Your Summons Date | 7 |
| 18. How do I reschedule my jury service date? | 7 |
| Compensation/Employment | 7 |
| 19. How much do I get paid for jury service?..... | 7 |
| 20. When will I get paid for jury service?..... | 7 |
| 21. How can I obtain proof that I served as a juror? | 7 |
| 22. Is my employer required to pay me when I have jury service?..... | 8 |
| 23. Can I be penalized by my employer for serving on jury duty?..... | 8 |
| 24. Can I collect unemployment while serving as a juror? | 8 |
| Coming to the Courthouse to Serve | 8 |
| 25. Is there a dress code for jurors reporting?..... | 8 |
| 26. Where can I find public transportation information and/or driving directions? | 8 |

Frequently Asked Questions about Juror Service in New Jersey

Jury Service in General

1. Why is it important that I serve as a juror?

Jurors are an essential part of our justice system. The right to trial by jury in the United States dates from Colonial times and is rooted in English history. It is guaranteed by the Sixth and Seventh Amendments to the Constitution of the United States of America and Article One of New Jersey's State Constitution. People have a right to have matters determined by a jury of their peers. Participating in our judicial system is not only an honor, but is also one of our civic duties. Although juror service may be inconvenient, citizens must participate in the jury process in order for it to work. Cases that go to trial need to be resolved by citizens who hear the evidence, determine the facts and render a verdict. It is impossible to get a fair cross-section of the community to participate in the jury system if people do not report for jury service. If you ever found yourself or a loved one involved in a civil or criminal trial, it's likely that you would want a jury of fellow citizens who will be fair and impartial.

2. Where does the list of jurors come from?

The Judiciary is required by statute to create a single list for juror selection that combines names of registered voters, licensed drivers, filers of N.J. personal income tax returns, and applicants for homestead rebates.

Citizens can assist in this process by using their legal name when filing relevant forms and checking to ensure that all information, including address and identifiers, is accurate.

3. How are jurors selected?

Prospective jurors are randomly selected by computer. If selected, a juror is mailed a green Juror Summons postcard which contains summons information, and which identifies the internet site at which the juror can complete his or her Juror Questionnaire.

Jurors who do not have access to a computer will be mailed a Juror Questionnaire to complete and return.

4. How do I know if I need to report for jury duty?

To determine if you are required to report for jury duty, visit the [Juror Reporting Page](#) after 5:00 PM the evening before you are scheduled to report for service for instructions. Jurors who completed their questionnaire online through the Juror eResponse Portal, may also find reporting instructions by navigating to Service Information under the Profile/Status section.

The Judiciary also provides an additional service to jurors by allowing summoned jurors, when completing their Juror Questionnaire online, to request text or email messages regarding their juror service. Those jurors who opt in for this service will receive a reminder message prior to their summons date, as well as messages that provide reporting information.

5. How will I know if the court is closed due to inclement weather?

During inclement weather situations, all jurors, including those who will opt in for text or email messages, should check the [State Court Closing Information](#) page prior to reporting to the courthouse.

6. Why do I seem to get summoned more frequently than others?

Each juror record has the same chance of being selected at any time. As a result, some jurors may find they are summoned more frequently than others. If you have been summoned in the same county within the past three years, you may request to be excused from jury service. Please click [here](#) for instructions on requesting an excusal.

7. I received a green Juror Summons postcard. What should I do?

If you receive a Juror Summons postcard, you will need to complete the Juror Questionnaire. This can be completed on the [Juror eResponse Portal](#).

After you submit the Juror Questionnaire online, you will be asked to “confirm your service”. Please answer this question with “yes” even if you need to postpone your service or request an excusal as it ensures all your information is received.

Jurors who do not have access to a computer will be mailed a Juror Questionnaire to complete and return.

8. What should I do if I lost my Summons?

If you misplace your Juror Summons or Juror Questionnaire, you should contact the Jury Management Office in your county for a replacement. A directory with email addresses and phone numbers can be found [here](#).

9. How do I update my address?

Jurors may update their address two ways:

1. Jurors who completed their Juror Questionnaire online can update their address through the [Juror eResponse Portal](#). Go to the Homepage in the Juror eResponse Portal, then go to Personal Information and select Modify at the bottom of the page.
2. Jurors who did not complete the Juror Questionnaire online will be mailed a printed version of the questionnaire and may update their address on this form under the Other Information section. Check the box for address change and write your new address on the line provided.

10. What should I do if am summoned but no longer live in New Jersey?

What should I do if I no longer live in the county that summoned me?

If you no longer live in New Jersey or received a Juror Summons from a county you no longer reside in, it is important that you respond by completing the Juror Questionnaire through the [Juror eResponse Portal](#). You will be asked about your residency on question one.

Completing the Juror Questionnaire will allow the Jury Management Office to update your jury system record, which will prevent later enforcement efforts if there is no response to the summons (since N.J statutes require a response).

The Judiciary is required, for jury selection purposes, to merge lists of registered voters, licensed drivers, New Jersey personal income tax filers, and applicants for homestead rebates every year for each county. Non-residents can be summoned when changes are delayed during list processing or if record holders have not updated their records.

11. I received a Juror Summons for a family member that has passed. What should I do?

If you receive a Juror Summons or Juror Questionnaire addressed to a person who is deceased, please contact the summoning Jury Management Office. A directory can be found [here](#). This will allow the Judiciary to make the record ineligible for future selection.

In addition, please make sure to also notify New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission and New Jersey Division of Elections as juror lists are generated from these sources:

New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission

New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission
Driver Management Correspondence Unit
P.O. Box 134
Trenton, NJ 08666-0134
(609) 292-6500

New Jersey Division of Elections

NJ Division of Elections
P.O. Box 304
Trenton, NJ 08625-0304
1-877-NJ-VOTER (1-877-658-6837)
Tel: 609-292-3760

Types of Jury Service

12. What are the different types of juror service?

You may be summoned for one of three types of jury service. You may be summoned to serve as a Petit Juror, a Grand Juror, or a State Grand Juror.

- **Petit Jury** service includes criminal and civil trials. Petit jurors who sit on a criminal trial decide guilt or innocence in a criminal matter. Petit jurors who sit on a civil trial decide liability or damages.
- **Grand Jury** determine whether there is enough evidence to move forward with criminal charges against a defendant.
- **State Grand Jury** and county grand jury operate similarly but the State Grand Jury has statewide jurisdiction and representation and meets in Trenton rather than one of the county seats.

Please also be aware that you may be summoned to serve as a federal petit juror or grand juror in U.S. District Court. Such service is independent of N.J. Superior Court jury service. Federal courthouses are located in Newark, Trenton, and Camden.

13. Does recent service as a federal juror affect my scheduled service in the New Jersey Superior Court?

Recent service as a federal juror does not automatically relieve you from your petit jury civic obligation but you may provide that information to your summoning Jury Management Office. A directory can be found [here](#).

14. Does recent service in another state excuse me from serving in New Jersey?

Recent service in another state does not excuse you from serving in New Jersey.

Juror Qualification/Disqualification

15. What are the qualifications to serve as a juror?

N.J.S.A. 2B:20-1 establishes six criteria for a person to qualify for jury service:

1. be a resident of New Jersey;
2. be a citizen of the United States;
3. be physically and mentally able to perform the functions of a juror (noting that the Judiciary will provide accommodations consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act);
4. have no conviction for an indictable offense;

- Examples of persons who would be disqualified are anyone who was convicted of, or pled guilty to, a crime in Federal Court or Superior Court; or anyone currently on PTI (Pre-trial Intervention Program.)
 - Examples of persons who would qualify to serve jury duty are anyone whose only convictions are in Municipal Court (most traffic violations fall into this category, as do most shoplifting charges;) or anyone who has been accused of a crime but has not yet been convicted or has yet to enter a guilty plea.
 - Also, traffic offenses, juvenile and DWI related offenses that occurred in New Jersey are not grounds for disqualification.
 - You are not disqualified with respect to criminal record if you successfully completed a Pre-Trial Intervention program (PTI) for an offense and have not been convicted or pled guilty to another disqualifying offense.
5. be at least 18 years of age; and
 6. be able to read and understand the English language

Requesting an Excusal

16. Who can be excused from jury service?

N.J.S.A. 2B:20-10 sets forth grounds for which a person can request to be excused from jury service. You may request to be excused from jury service you if fall into one of the categories below.

Please Note: All jurors must complete the Juror Questionnaire through the [Juror eResponse Portal](#) before requesting an excusal. In addition, supplemental documentation may be required for excusal requests. Please read below for additional information.

- **You are 75 years of age or older.**
You will be required to provide your DOB the Jury Management Office.
- **You have served as a juror in the same county within the last three years.**
You will be required to provide the date you served.
- **You believe that you will suffer a severe financial hardship.**
In order to be excused for financial reasons, you must show that serving as a juror will cause a severe financial hardship that will compromise your ability to support yourself and/or your dependents. You will also be required to submit to the Jury Management Office a certification (sworn statement) listing the sources of your household income; whether you will be paid during jury service; and the impact of the length of service. The certification is posted [here](#).

Jurors who report for service may speak with the trial judge regarding any financial hardships based on the anticipated length of the trial.
- **You have a medical inability to serve as a juror.**
If you suffer from a medical condition that is unlikely to change within a year, and this condition prevents you from serving on jury duty, you may request to be excused. You will be required to complete the certification posted [here](#).
- **You care for a minor child, or a sick, aged, or infirm dependent, and have no alternative care available without suffering severe financial hardship.**
When requesting to be excused for any of these circumstances, keep in mind that the Jury Management Office will grant you time to arrange for alternative care. Please be aware that the Judiciary will accommodate mothers who are breastfeeding and will provide a suitable private location for their use during the day.

The Jury Management Office will also require supplemental documentation for excusal requests as indicated below:

- **If you are requesting an excuse based upon a personal obligation to care for a sick, aged, or infirm dependent,** you must submit a doctor's note from a licensed physician stating that you are the sole caregiver and your continued presence is essential to the regular and personal treatment of that person.
- **If you are requesting an excuse based upon a personal obligation to care for a minor child or children,** you must submit to the Jury Management Office the certification posted [here](#) which states you are personally obligated to care for the minor child(ren). By completing this certification, you acknowledge that the court may require further information and/or financial documentation in support of the request.
- **You provide highly specialized technical healthcare services for which a replacement cannot reasonably be obtained.**
The Jury Management Office will require proof of licensing as a healthcare provider and a letter from your employer verifying that no coverage can be reasonably obtained.
- **You are a healthcare worker directly involved in the care of a person with a mental or physical disability, and your continued presence is essential to the regular and personal treatment of that person.**
You will be required to provide a letter from your employer verifying that your continued presence is essential to the regular and personal treatment of the person.
- **You are full-time teacher of a grammar/high school during the school year for which a replacement cannot be reasonably obtained.**
You will be required to submit a letter from your school superintendent confirming you are full time instructional staff and indicating either an excuse is necessary due to the volume of teachers called at the time or you are a special education teacher and it is essential for you to be in attendance.
Other teachers who cannot find a replacement, may reschedule their service.
- **You are an active member of a volunteer fire department, fire patrol, first aid or rescue squad.**
The Jury Management Office will require a letter on letterhead from your fire captain/EMT squad captain; or identification showing active volunteer status (must not be expired).
- **You are on active duty as a member of the United States military.**
In order to be excused from jury service, you must be on active duty on the summons date and the military service must be in the United States military, which includes members of the National Guard who are assigned to active duty.
You should provide information relating to your current assignment, such as a copy of your orders, a letter from your commanding officer, or a copy of your ID card indicating an active duty assignment.
The Judiciary thanks you for your service.

17. How do I request to be excused from jury service?

Jurors may request to be excused from jury service for up to three years if they fall into one of the categories listed [here](#). Instructions for requesting an excusal are as follows:

- a. The first step in requesting an excusal is completing the Juror Questionnaire through the [Juror eResponse Portal](#).
- b. After submitting the Juror Questionnaire, navigate to the Home Page in the Juror eResponse Portal.
- c. Then go to Excuse Service.

- d. Select an Excuse Reason from the dropdown menu
- e. Submit your request by selecting the Ok button

Important Note: The Jury Management office may request supporting documentation before granting excusals.

Rescheduling Your Summons Date

18. How do I reschedule my jury service date?

If you have a conflict with the days for which you have been summoned, you may request to have your service rescheduled to a later date through the [Juror eResponse Portal](#).

Instructions:

- a. The first step in rescheduling your service is completing the Juror Questionnaire through the [Juror eResponse Portal](#).
- b. After submitting the Juror Questionnaire, navigate to the Home Page in the Juror eResponse Portal.
- c. Then go to Defer Service.
- d. Select a Reason from the dropdown menu.
- e. Use the calendar to find a new date of service. All available dates will be displayed in green.
- f. Submit your request by selecting the Ok button

Important Note: Jurors will *not* be able to reschedule their service using the Juror eResponse Portal if it is one week before their reporting date. Jurors who need to reschedule their service date due to unforeseen circumstances, must call the [Jury Management Office](#) to reschedule their service.

Compensation/Employment

19. How much do I get paid for jury service?

Petit jurors are paid \$5 dollars for each day of service. If a petit juror serves more than three days, the pay rate will increase to \$40 per day beginning on the fourth day.

Grand jurors are paid \$5 dollars for each day of service.

20. When will I get paid for jury service?

Juror payrolls are processed each Friday, except holidays. Therefore, a juror may receive more than one check if that juror served in different weeks. Checks are processed centrally in Trenton in order to reduce costs and are generally mailed within a week of the Friday processing. Please note that juror fees are considered to be reimbursement for expenses incurred while serving, rather than income. You will not receive a Form 1099 relating to your juror fees.

21. How can I obtain proof that I served as a juror?

Jurors who completed the Juror Qualification Questionnaire online, can obtain a letter of attendance by logging back into the [Juror eResponse Portal](#) and clicking Print Letters from the Home Page. If you are unable to your print letter or did not create an eResponse account, your Jury Management Office can provide you with an attendance letter.

22. Is my employer required to pay me when I have jury service?

In New Jersey there is no statutory requirement that a private employer pay your salary during juror service. Whether or not your employer pays you for jury duty depends on your employment situation, including employers' policies, union contracts, etc. The State of New Jersey will pay you the appropriate juror fee as set forth in the New Jersey statutes. The Jury Management Office is aware that many employers do not pay their employees during jury duty. If service as a juror will create a severe financial hardship, as set forth in N.J.S.A. 2B:20-10, you may request to be excused. But please be aware that non-payment by your employer, by itself, is not a valid reason to be excused from service. Each situation will be reviewed individually.

If you are employed full time by the State of New Jersey, you will receive your usual compensation while you serve as a juror. However, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 2B:20-16 you will not receive juror payment. This law applies to persons employed full time by any agency, independent authority, instrumentality of the State of any political subdivision of the State (such as counties or municipalities). Jurors affected by this policy should notify the Jury Management Office when they report for service. If a check is issued to you in error, you will be required to return it to the Jury Management Office.

23. Can I be penalized by my employer for serving on jury duty?

N.J.S.A. 2B:20.17 prohibits an employer from penalizing you because you serve as a juror. Penalties for a violation of this statute include the possibility of a criminal charge, as a disorderly person's offense, and a possible civil action for monetary damages and for reinstatement of employment.

24. Can I collect unemployment while serving as a juror?

You may still collect unemployment benefits while serving as a juror. *N.J.S.A. 43:21-4(c)(5)* protects a person's unemployment benefits during juror service. That statute states the following:

(5) An unemployed individual, who is otherwise eligible, shall not be deemed unavailable for work or ineligible solely by reason of the individual's attendance before a court in response to a summons for service on a jury.

If an employment interview is scheduled on a day on which you need to report for juror service, notify the Jury Management Office, in advance if possible, and your service will be rescheduled to a later date. Please be aware that verification may be required.

Coming to the Courthouse to Serve

25. Is there a dress code for jurors reporting?

Jurors reporting for service should wear clothing appropriate for an appearance in court. Shorts, t-shirts, uniforms or clothing containing statements or offensive symbols are not permitted. All hats must be removed when in a courtroom. Comfortable clothing is also advisable.

26. Where can I find public transportation information and/or driving directions?

- Public transportation information can be found on the [NJ Transit](https://www.njtransit.com/) website.
- Directions to each courthouse can be found at <https://www.njcourts.gov/courts/directions/directions.html>