

PETIT JUROR INFORMATION GUIDE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, PITTSBURGH DIVISION
E-mail: eJuror2@pawd.uscourts.gov

WELCOME

Welcome to the Pittsburgh division of the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania. The Pittsburgh division encompasses 13 counties in the Western portion of our state. Those counties are **Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Clarion, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, Mercer, Washington and Westmoreland**. You have been summoned for jury service in our division, based upon your residence in one of these counties.

RESPONDING TO YOUR SUMMONS

As mentioned in the Official Notice on the back of your summons, you should complete the Jury Information Form at the bottom of your summons and return it in the enclosed envelope first and foremost. You can also complete the form online at our website at www.pawd.uscourts.gov by clicking on the “Jury Info” tab to access the eJuror system. You will need to enter your 9-digit participant number, listed on your summons, to use eJuror. You can also email a copy of the completed form to ejuror2@pawd.uscourts.gov or fax it to (412) 208-7545.

REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS

The Official Notice directs you on when to call the Automated Juror Information System (AJIS) for your reporting instructions. Please follow the Notice’s directions carefully. See the section of the Notice entitled “**When Do I Report?**”

YOU SHOULD NOT REPORT UNTIL YOU HAVE CALLED THE AUTOMATED SYSTEM FOR YOUR INSTRUCTIONS. If you appear for jury service and have not been instructed to report, you will not be authorized to collect any juror fees or expense reimbursement. If you are not instructed to report when you call, you should go to work and/or proceed with your normal day.

Although your summons provides a specific date to the start of your term, that may not be the date of your first appearance. Our court only selects juries on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. Therefore, you are not reporting for jury selection every day for two weeks.

IF YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO REPORT...

See the “**Where Do I Go?**” section of the Official Notice. The federal courthouse in downtown Pittsburgh is known as the Joseph F. Weis, Jr. U.S. Courthouse. Our building’s address is **700 GRANT STREET, PITTSBURGH, PA 15219** and is located on the corner of Seventh Avenue and Grant Street. Our courthouse IS NOT associated with either the Federal Building or the Allegheny County Courthouse, both of which are also on Grant Street in downtown Pittsburgh.

You, and any personal belongings you bring, will be required to pass through electronic security equipment. You may bring your lunch, books, magazines, study materials, laptop computers and cell phones into the building. However, Court Security Officers will screen these items and have the discretion to confiscate any items. Firearms, pocketknives, scissors, razors, mini batons, and the like are **NOT** permitted in the courthouse. These items, as well as any others that can be construed as a weapon, will be confiscated.

During your term of service, we ask that you use good judgment in attire that is respectful of the formality of a court proceeding (i.e. no shorts, tank tops, torn jeans, flip flops, tee shirts, hats, etc.). Business casual is appropriate. Since our courtrooms can be cool at times, you may also want to bring a sweater or light jacket as well.

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On the day you are required to appear, you will report to the Jury Assembly Room on the 3rd floor of the courthouse (Room 3300). There you will be checked in by the Jury Office staff, who will issue your juror badge. **This badge should always be worn while you are in the Courthouse.**

A court day, whether for jury selection or trial, will usually run from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. **You should plan on being in the courthouse for a full day.** You are not to leave at any time until officially dismissed. If a selection is still ongoing, your lunch break will be announced by either a jury clerk or a member of the selecting Judge's staff.

If you are selected as a trial juror, most trials start immediately after selection. The presiding Judge on that case, or a member of their staff, will verbally inform you as to when you will need to report to their courtroom. At the end of any trial in which you serve as a juror, your term of jury service will be considered complete.

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

Once you have checked in and received your badge, you are not permitted to leave the assembly room for any reason until instructed by Court personnel. Relatives or friends are not permitted to wait with you in the jury assembly room. Should an emergency arise while you are in the assembly room, immediately notify the Jury Office staff.

You are welcome to bring your own reading material or other items to occupy your time if there is an extended waiting period. However, the Clerk's Office cannot be responsible for items lost or stolen while you are on jury service. Wireless internet service is available and, while you can bring your laptop, cell phone or wireless device, it is requested that you refrain from doing any independent research about the matters or proceedings going on in the Courthouse on the day you report. For more information, disclaimer, and terms of use about the court's wireless internet access, please visit www.pawd.uscourts.gov/wireless-internet-access.

Please be advised the Courthouse DOES NOT have cafeteria services at this time and meals are not provided or paid for by the Court. However, you are permitted to bring a lunch and/or snack. The Jury Assembly Room is equipped with a refrigerator and microwave for your use. In addition, for health and safety reasons, we are not providing shared beverages such as hot coffee or tea. Bottled water will be provided, and vending machines are available. Restrooms are located within the Jury Assembly Room.

Our Courthouse is a smoke-free building. While waiting in the assembly area, you will not be permitted to leave the building to smoke. You are, however, permitted to smoke outside the building when dismissed as a group for lunch or break by court personnel.

COURTROOMS

The questioning and actual selection of a jury is usually conducted in the courtroom. Jurors are asked to follow the rules of etiquette while in the courtroom. No food or drink is permitted, and all electronic equipment **MUST** be turned off while in the courtrooms. Furthermore, while cell phones are permitted in the building, cameras and recording devices are NOT. The taking of pictures and any video/voice recording is **PROHIBITED** throughout the entire Courthouse. Failure to follow these procedures may result in the confiscation of your device.

REQUESTING AN EXEMPTION OR EXCUSE FROM JURY SERVICE

A summoned juror may request to be exempt or excused from jury service upon written request and with proof to establish the basis for their request. The Court, in its discretion, may or may not grant the request and could instead defer a juror's service to a later date:

Grounds for Exemption

- Members in active service in the Armed Forces of the United States;
- **Full-time** members of the regular fire or police departments of any state, district, territory, possession or subdivision thereof; and
- **Full-time** public officers in the executive, legislative, or judicial branches of any federal, state, or local government who are actively engaged in the performance of official duties. "Public officer" shall mean a person who is either elected to public office or who is directly appointed by a person elected to public office.

Grounds for Excuse

- Any person 70 years of age and over;
- Any person who served as a **federal** grand or petit juror within the last two years;
- Any person not gainfully employed full-time outside the home and having sole full-time active custody of a child or children under eight (8) years of age and the health and/or safety of such child or children would be jeopardized by that person's absence for jury service;
- Any person not gainfully employed full-time outside the home that is essential to the care of aged or infirmed persons who reside full-time in the same household. This category does not apply to health care workers and/or those employed as caregivers;
- Any person whose presence is so essential to the operation of a business, that such business must close or cease to function during the absence of that person for jury service;
- Any volunteer safety personnel who serve in an official capacity, without compensation, as firefighters, rescue squad members or ambulance crews of a public agency of the United States, or any state, district, territory or possession thereof. "Public Agency" for this purpose means the United States, any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, or any unit of local government, department, or instrumentality of the foregoing.

REQUESTING A DEFERRAL OR PARTIAL EXCUSE FROM JURY SERVICE

If you have reason to request a deferral (postponement) or partial excuse from your term of service, you must follow the steps below. In order to process your request quickly, **ALL** requested information must be provided and should be submitted as soon as possible. No action on a request can be taken until your response to the Jury Information Form, attached to the bottom of your summons, has been submitted either by mail or online. In addition, all requests must come from the summoned juror themselves. Family members, medical providers and/or employers cannot submit requests on your behalf.

1. Requests for deferral or partial excuse can be made...
 - a. Online through the eJuror system when completing your Jury Information form. Please note that eJuror only works properly with personal computers and laptops. It does not

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always work well with smartphones, tablets, or Google Chrome. It also does not accept attachments, which may be necessary for your request.

- b. In writing via the U.S. mail, accompanied by your completed Jury Information form.
- c. By email to EJuror2@pawd.uscourts.gov, submitted with or after completion of your Jury Information form.
- d. By fax to 412-208-7545, also submitted with or after completion of your Jury Information form.

2. Requests must be specific (i.e. dates and times of conflict, specific ages of children, etc.) and detailed. One-sentence requests are usually too vague to be granted and often require additional information. Failure to provide enough information will result in a denial of the request. Depending on the nature of the request, a partial excuse may be granted in lieu of a full deferral.

3. Additional documents are **REQUIRED** if...

- a. A request is made for **medical** reasons. A note or letter from your physician or health care provider must accompany your request, explaining why they feel you should not serve on a jury. This note should state their reason(s) clearly and succinctly and have an original signature. A generic “for medical reasons” will not be accepted. In lieu of a note, a Doctor or Physician may complete and submit a Physician’s Statement for Medical Excuse form, available at www.pawd.uscourts.gov/sites/pawd/files/PhysicianFormRev.pdf.
- b. A request is made for **financial** reasons. Either a letter from the employer, or proof of a company policy concerning pay while serving as a juror, must accompany your request or advising of any other viable issue that presents a financial hardship.
- c. A request is made for being a **student**. Some proof of enrollment in a college/university/trade school must accompany your request.

If the request was submitted online, this additional documentation can be supplied to the Jury Office using one of the submission methods mentioned above. These documents should clearly identify you as the potential juror and include your participant number. Otherwise, all required documents should be sent when the original request for deferral, excuse, or partial excuse is made. While it is your responsibility to submit all requested documentation, a member of the Jury Office staff may contact you for additional or missing information.

Once all your documentation is submitted, it will be processed and reviewed by the Court. Please wait at least ten (10) days after you submit your request before checking on the status. You can do so by either calling the automated phone system at 1-866-498-8562 or by checking online through the eJuror system. You will need to have your nine (9) digit participant number to check on the status of any request.

JUROR PAY AND PROOF OF ATTENDANCE

Jurors receive \$50.00 for each day in attendance. Jurors also receive compensation for travel as measured in round trip miles from their residence to the courthouse at the current government rate. Parking and hotel stays can also be reimbursed (see below). Please be aware that you will not receive reimbursement on your day of service. Instead, a check will be mailed to the address where your summons was sent.

When you are dismissed from service, or after any day that you serve, the Jury Office staff can issue attendance letters to you as proof to any employer or agency of your service in our court. These letters will also indicate the amount of attendance fee(s) you will receive as compensation for your service. You can also print these letters after you depart the courthouse by logging into the eJuror system through our Court’s website, www.pawd.uscourts.gov.

JURORS RESIDING 60 MILES OR MORE AWAY FROM THE COURTHOUSE

Any juror who resides **sixty (60) or more one-way miles** from the courthouse will qualify for a subsistence reimbursement for an overnight stay. This includes the night before your first reporting date, such as a Sunday before a Monday reporting date. Be advised that Jury Office staff cannot make hotel accommodations for jurors. If eligible to stay over, you will have to contact a hotel to make a reservation. At the time you check in, you may need to present your summons as proof to the hotel, and the hotel is permitted to make a copy for their records. Please retain your original summons and bring it with you to the courthouse when you are directed to report.

When making a reservation, you should advise the agent that you are requesting the “federal government rate,” as your summons from our court allows you to receive such a rate. If a hotel cannot provide this rate (or a lower one), you may want to contact another hotel that will. The reimbursement will only be made at the current government subsistence rate. An expense over that amount is not eligible for reimbursement and thus would become your responsibility. Booking at the lowest room rate will reduce the chances that you will incur any out-of-pocket expenses.

You should request that the hotel provide you with an itemized invoice for each day that you stay as these receipts are required to receive the proper amount of per diem. In addition, some taxes and expenses associated with your stay may qualify for reimbursement. Those items should be clearly indicated on any invoice you receive and submit to the Jury Office. Jurors are **strongly encouraged** to submit any receipts to the Jury Office daily to ensure prompt processing.

As an alternative, jurors who qualify for an overnight stay at a hotel can stay with family or friends. Upon identification of the person(s) they are staying with to the Jury Office, they will receive a reduced subsistence payment, also at the current government rate.

PLEASE NOTE: If your residence is fewer than sixty (60) one-way miles from the Courthouse, and you elect to stay at a hotel, the Court CANNOT reimburse you for this expense. If you have any questions concerning this policy or want to confirm your mileage, please contact the Jury Office BEFORE you make any reservations.

LOCALS HOTELS AND LODGING (Not intended as a complete listing or endorsement)

Courtyard by Marriott - Downtown	412-434-5551
Doubletree Hotel - Downtown	412-281-5800
Drury Hotel – Downtown	412-281-2900
Fairfield by Marriott – Downtown	412-515-2100
Marriott Hotel - Downtown	412-321-3000
Omni William Penn Hotel - Downtown	412-553-5100
Westin Convention Hotel - Downtown	412-281-3700
Hampton Inn - Smallman Street (“The Strip”)	412-288-4350
Sheraton Hotel - Station Square	412-261-2000
Hyatt Place - North Shore	412-995-4244
Holiday Inn Express & Suites Pittsburgh -South Side	412-488-1130
Hampton Inn - Greentree	412-922-0100 (Shuttle service available)

PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

There is no on-site parking, handicapped or otherwise, available at the Courthouse. However, there are many parking options available nearby. Below is a list of parking and transportation resources that service downtown Pittsburgh. The Court has no affiliation with, nor explicitly endorses, any of the following transportation options. Please note that parking rates are set by each individual operator and those rates may exceed the maximum reimbursable amount of \$15.00 per day. Any expense over that amount would be your responsibility. Therefore, if you have questions about the rate at a facility, you are advised to consult their website or contact them directly:

Alco Parking Corporation (412) 323-4455 (www.alcoparking.com)

Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (412) 566-4190 (www.downtownpittsburgh.com/parking)

Pittsburgh Parking Authority (412) 560-7275 (www.pittsburghparking.com)

ParkPGH (412) 423-8980 (www.parkPGH.com)

Port Authority of Allegheny County (412) 442-2000 (www.portauthority.org)

Beaver County Transit Authority (724) 728-8600 (www.bcta.com)

Butler Transit Authority (724) 283-1783
(<http://www.butlertransitauthority.com/bus-routes/service-to-pittsburgh/>)

Fayette Area Coordinated Transportation 1-800-321-7433 (www.factbus.com)

Freedom Transit (724) 223-8747 (www.freedom-transit.org)

Lenzner Coach Lines 1-800-342-2349 (www.coachride.com/Scheduled-Services)

Mid Mon Valley Transit (724) 489-0880 (www.mmvta.com)

New Castle Area Transit Authority (724) 654-3130 (www.newcastletransit.org)

Westmoreland Transit 1-800-221-9282 (www.westmorelandtransit.com)

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

412-208-7540 (Jury Office Voice)

412-208-7545 (Jury Office Fax)

1-866-498-8562 (Automated Juror Information System-AJIS)

1-866-602-3219 (Automated Emergency Message)

THANK YOU

The Court greatly appreciates your time and service. We trust that your experience in our courthouse will be pleasant, rewarding, and memorable.