

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA
ERIE JUROR INFORMATION GUIDE
(Email: ejuror1@pawd.uscourts.gov)**

Welcome to jury service in the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania. This is a federal court. Your participation is vital to the American system of justice and an important privilege of being a U.S. citizen. The Court is grateful for your service and trusts that you will find your experience rewarding. **Please read the following information carefully.** If you have any questions after reading it, please feel free to contact us at 814-844-6251.

RESPONDING TO YOUR SUMMONS All jurors are required to complete and return the Jury Information Form located on the bottom of the summons. This can be done online through eJuror, by emailing a photo of the completed form to ejuror1@pawd.uscourts.gov, by faxing the completed form to 814-464-9607, or mailing it via the U.S. Mail. This form **MUST** be completed and returned, even if you are requesting an excuse or postponement. The Court recommends electronic submission to save time and postage, and to make your response easier to process.

REPORTING INFORMATION Your reporting date, time, location, and term of service are printed on the enclosed summons. **You are to report to Room A-170 of the Erie U.S. Courthouse at 17 South Park Row in downtown Erie.** Please have your summons with you when you report for entry to the Courthouse and juror check-in.

YOU MUST CALL THE AUTOMATED JURY INFORMATION SYSTEM AFTER 4:00 P.M. AT 1-866-498-8562 THE FRIDAY BEFORE YOUR TERM IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN TO HEAR YOUR REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS. YOU WILL NEED YOUR 9-DIGIT PARTICIPANT NUMBER, LOCATED ON YOUR SUMMONS, TO HEAR THOSE INSTRUCTIONS. YOU CAN ALSO CALL THIS NUMBER TO CHECK ON THE STATUS OF A REQUEST FOR POSTPONEMENT OR EXCUSE.

FULL-TIME COLLEGE STUDENTS You may request a postponement if you will be taking college classes full-time during the period covered by the summons. Proof of enrollment (e.g., a copy of your schedule, a photo of your ID) is required and can be emailed to ejuror1@pawd.uscourts.gov. Please see below for more information on postponement requests.

HOW DO I REQUEST AN EXCUSE OR POSTPONEMENT? The Court realizes that jurors may need to request an excuse or postponement from their term of service, and it makes every effort to accommodate such requests. For a request to be considered, you must first respond to your summons as noted above. Then you can submit your request, either online through eJuror, by sending an email to ejuror1@pawd.uscourts.gov, or by mailing a note through the U.S. Mail. Requests should be submitted as soon as possible, preferably at the time when responding to the summons, but **no later than 10 days before the reporting date on your summons.** All requests require a written statement **from the juror**, not someone else on the juror's behalf (e.g., a parent, doctor, or employer).

Requests due to a medical condition also require a **current** letter from your medical provider advising that jury service would pose a medical threat to your health. Travel-based requests should include the date(s) of your unavailability, destination, as well as an itinerary, if available. Childcare requests should include the age(s) of the child/children involved. To ensure prompt consideration, documents should be either emailed to our office at ejuror1@pawd.uscourts.gov, or uploaded through eJuror as an attachment.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO HAPPEN WHEN I REPORT FOR SELECTION? Jury staff will check you in and provide an orientation. You will then proceed to the courtroom. There is no set time for jury selection, so you should expect to remain for the entire day. If you are selected as a juror, the trial may begin immediately following selection. Otherwise, you will be released upon completion of the selection process with your next reporting instructions.

Additionally, you should not do any independent research on the trials or matters scheduled for your reporting date at any point before or during your jury service.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING WITH ME? You must bring your jury summons for entry to the Courthouse. Jurors are permitted to bring cell phones into the Courthouse, but the phones must be turned off while in the courtroom. Cameras, weapons, or anything that can be construed as a weapon, are **not** permitted in the Courthouse. Photographing or recording is strictly prohibited while in the Courthouse. Snacks are also permitted in the Jury Assembly Room as there is no vending available. No food or drinks are permitted in the actual courtrooms.

HOW LONG WILL MY TERM AS A JUROR LAST? As stated on your summons, you are asked to be available for selection for a period of four weeks. The selection process will take place in the courtroom before the presiding judge. At that time, the Judge will give you an idea as to how long the trial is expected to last. If selected as a juror, you will be required to serve until the trial ends. It is possible you may serve as a juror on multiple cases during your term. It is also possible you may not serve at all and have your service terminated. It is vital to call in advance for your status.

DRESS CODE Appropriate dress, reflective of the formality of court proceedings, is requested. Business casual attire is acceptable; however, tank tops, shorts, sweatpants, and flip flops are not considered appropriate. You may wish to bring a light sweater or jacket as temperatures can vary in the courtrooms.

JUROR FEES Jurors are paid an attendance fee of \$50.00 per day as well as round trip mileage at the current government rate for travel to and from the Courthouse. Jurors will also be reimbursed for any toll expenses incurred and up to the \$10.00 maximum for parking upon presentation of valid receipts. The Court will not reimburse for public transportation, nor for any taxi or ride-sharing service.

PARKING There is limited metered parking in front and back of our Courthouse, however there is no designated wheelchair-accessible parking. There are many additional parking options available including three covered parking garages operated by the Erie Parking Authority and nearby free off-street parking. Please note Garage B with the entrance on French Street between 7th and 8th behind the Courthouse may have markings designating it as lease-only parking, this is incorrect. **Garage B is open to the public** and you may enter either on the 8th street or French street sides. The Court has no affiliation with, nor explicitly endorses, any of the listed options. Parking rates are set by the Erie Parking Authority, and those rates may exceed the maximum reimbursable amount of \$10.00 per day. Any expense over that amount would be your responsibility. If you have questions about the rate at a facility, you should contact them directly <https://erieparking.com/>. We suggest downloading the MeterEZ app to your phone in advance. This local app allows you to feed the parking meters from your phone without going back to feed the meters with quarters. Please take note of the meter number and your license plate number prior to entering the building.

OVERNIGHT STAYS Jurors residing 60 miles or more from the Courthouse may stay overnight - either prior to, or during - jury service. In addition to your daily attendance fee on your date of travel, the Court will reimburse for any hotel stay at the current government rate, along with a per diem allowance to cover meals and incidental expenses. These applicable rates can be found by visiting www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates. The Court is unable to arrange hotel accommodations therefore you will need to contact a hotel of your choice. A list of local hotels may be found at <https://www.pawd.uscourts.gov/erie-hotels-motels>. Alternatively, if you qualify, you may opt to stay with a local family member or friend. If you do so, you must provide their name, address, and contact information to the Jury Office. You will then be reimbursed only for the daily per diem allowance for meals and incidental expenses (\$68.00). The mileage is calculated automatically through our Jury Management System. If you are unsure if you meet the 60-mile requirement, please contact the Jury Office at 814-844-6251.

ATTENDANCE OBLIGATIONS Title 28, United States Code, Section 1866(g) provides the following: "Any person summoned for jury service who fails to appear as directed may be ordered by the district court to appear forthwith and show cause for failure to comply with the summons. Any person who fails to show good cause for noncompliance with a summons may be fined not more than \$1,000, imprisoned for not more than three days, ordered to perform community service, or any combination thereof."

EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION Title 28 U.S.C. § 1875 provides the following: "No employer shall discharge, threaten to discharge, intimidate or coerce any permanent employee by reason of such employee's jury service, or the attendance or scheduled attendance in connection with such service, in any court of the United States." An employer who violates the provisions of this section: (a) is liable for damages for any loss of wages or other benefits suffered by an employee by reason of the violation; (b) may be enjoined from a further violation and ordered to provide other appropriate relief, including but not limited to the reinstatement of any employee discharged by reason of jury service and (c) is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 for each violation and may be ordered to perform community service.

NOTICE REGARDING IDENTITY THEFT If you are contacted by anyone claiming to be a District Court employee, do not disclose any personal information. **The Jury Office will never ask for your social security number or bank information over the telephone.** The Jury Office will also never contact you by telephone to request payment of fines or fees for failing to appear for jury service. If you have questions about such a phone call you have received, please call the Jury Office at 412-208-7540.

EXTREME WEATHER In the event of snow or inclement weather, you can call the Court's Emergency Message Center at 1-866-602-3219 for an updated message prior to leaving your residence to report. An updated message will be posted by 6:00 AM on the day you are scheduled to report as to on whether the Courthouse is closed for that day.