

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA - 2nd JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

JURORS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This fact sheet provides general information on jury trials and what you can expect when visiting the Courthouse.

I received a jury summons in the mail, now what?

We ask that you complete the Confidential Juror Qualification Form within ten days of receiving it in the mail. You may complete form online. The login and password are provided along with your Summons. Please note that you have 20 minutes to complete the form online. You will receive a confirmation after we have received your completed form. You may also complete the paper form and mail it back in the envelope provided.

You are also required to view a video prior to your jury service. The video provides an overview of your service, should answer many of the questions you have about jury service, and reduce the amount of time you spend in the Courthouse. The video can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuI-P3dd06k&ab_channel=SDUJS.

How was I selected for jury duty?

Juror names are pulled from driver licensing and voter registration pools.

Who qualifies to serve on a jury?

You must be a United States citizen.

You must be at least 18 years old.

You must be able to read, write, and understand the English language.

You must reside in Minnehaha County to serve in Minnehaha County or reside in Lincoln County to serve in Lincoln County.

Who can be excused or released from jury service?

Any person who:

- is not a United States citizen;

- no longer lives in South Dakota or in Minnehaha or Lincoln County;

- is not at least 18 years old;

- is unable to communicate in the English language;

- is a full-time college student;

- has been convicted of a felony, and has not had his or her civil right restored;

- has served as a juror within the last two years;

- is 80 years of age or older;

- has a medical condition or concerns that would prevent them from serving as a juror (you will need to provide a note from your provider);

- is a parent of a child expected to be born during or immediately prior to the scheduled jury duty; or

- is a breastfeeding mother of a child under the age of one year.

If one of these exceptions applies to you, please mark the box on the Confidential Juror Form, sign and date the form and return it in the envelope provided. Please update your address in the Special Accommodations section if you are no longer living in the state or county. If a note is required, please mail it with your form or fax it to 605-367-5979.

I was called last year for service, do I have to serve again?

No. We only require you to serve if you have not been on jury duty within the last two years. If you receive another summons within a two-year time span and have served within the last two years, mark "Served as a Juror in the past 2 years" on the Confidential Juror Qualification Form.

How long does jury service last?

In Minnehaha County we require jurors to serve for a term of 30 days or one month of service. Please note that we have all terms start on a Monday and end on a Friday (this means your service could start the month prior or end into the following month). In Lincoln County, jurors are selected for six-month terms, but they only serve for two months out of the six-month term.

If I report and am not selected for jury service am I done?

No. You will still be required to check in for the whole term of your service.

If I serve as a juror on a case am I done with my service?

No. You will still be required to check in for the whole term of your service.

What do I wear to jury service?

Dress is casual. Jeans are acceptable.

How do I know when to report for jury service?

You will receive a jury instruction letter in the mail. This letter will arrive a few weeks prior to the start of your term of service and will provide you with your assigned panel information and additional reporting instructions.

What will happen when I show up for jury duty?

You will have to go through security when entering the building. You are encouraged to not bring large bags/backpacks, as that will slow the security line. You can bring a water bottle/coffee/soda. After you exit the security line, please proceed to the Jury Check-In desk where you will be directed to the appropriate courtroom or jury room. Seating in the courtrooms and other spaces used for jury selection is spaced out so you will sit 6 feet away from the other potential jurors. Masks are optional. The Judge handling the trial will address any issues that arise or other concerns you may have in that particular case and will have the discretion to institute additional requirements.

How long will I expect to be there when I do report?

Typically, jurors will be called to report in the morning. However, there are some occasions where jurors will be asked to report in the afternoon. You should report at the time listed for your panel. Plan to be here for at least a couple of hours the first-time reporting. Trials typically run from 9 AM to noon, break for lunch, and resume from 1 PM to 5 PM, unless the jury is deliberating.

Will I be sequestered?

It is extremely rare to be sequestered and not released to go home during a trial. Typically, you will not serve jury duty on nights or weekends. However, if you are selected as a juror in a case it is possible for deliberations to go into evening hours.

The month I was summoned for jury service, doesn't work for me. Can I postpone my service dates?

Yes. You will need to contact the Jury Manager to make arrangements for a new term.

Do I get paid for jury service?

Yes. You will be reimbursed \$10 per day each time you report for jury service. You will be reimbursed \$50 per day if you are selected as a juror on a case. You are also reimbursed for mileage from your home to the courthouse at \$.42/mile (roundtrip). Checks are sent to jurors around the 15th of the month following the month of service.

I am not a potential juror, but I want to come and watch a jury trial.

If you are a member of the public that wishes to observe a jury trial, you will need to go through the security line along with all members of the public entering the Courthouse. The Judge presiding over each jury trial will determine the appropriate seating for those observing that particular jury trial, taking into account safety and spacing concerns within the courtroom, along with other factors.

Thank you.

Jury trials are a cornerstone of our justice system and are a key constitutional guarantee for all in our community. Thank you in advance for your service and contributions to our justice system.