

"In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed,..." Sixth Amendment, United States Constitution.

"I consider trial by jury as the only anchor yet devised by man, by which a government can be held to the principles of its constitution." Thomas Jefferson, 1789 in correspondence to Thomas Paine.

§5 *"The right of trial by jury shall be inviolate,..."* Article One, Section 5, The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the State of Ohio.



Dress:

Please use good judgment and report for jury duty properly dressed. Please wear business casual attire. Shorts, mini-skirts, tee shirts, tank tops, shorts, holes in pants, and flip flops are not appropriate attire. You may wish to bring a sweater or jacket as the court room temperature may vary.

Questions About Your Jury Service:

If you have any questions regarding your service, please call the Clerk of Court office Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at 419-238-1022.

YOUR JURY SERVICE



COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
VAN WERT COUNTY, OHIO

MARTIN D. BURCHFIELD
JUDGE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT JURY SERVICE

Where do I report?

Prospective jurors will receive a notice from the clerk of courts which will include instructions about where and when to report. Jurors will be directed to the Van Wert County Common Pleas Court at 121 East Main Street, Van Wert, OH. Jurors should report to the third floor of the Courthouse.

Where do I park for Common Pleas Court?

There are free city parking lots located on North Market St and on Central Ave. for parking. Please do not park in the reserved parking behind the Court House or in Two Hour spaces. The Court is not responsible for parking tickets

How long will I serve?

Jury service in Van Wert County Common Pleas Court is for the duration of one trial if you are seated as a juror.

When does court start and end for the day?

Jury trials generally start at 8:00AM and recesses for the day around 4:00 PM. The actual times are controlled by the judge and may vary depending on things like the availability of witnesses.

Will I be on criminal or civil cases?

It could be either one. You will know what type of case you are on when you begin serving on a trial.

Can I send e-mails or use Twitter or other social media while I am a juror? Can I use the Internet to research the case?

No. Once you are seated as a juror for a trial, the judge will instruct you not to have any outside contact with anyone about the case. This includes not using Twitter, Facebook, or other web sites to post updates, and it covers any sort of research or information gathering from the Internet or any other source while the trial is going on.

I can't see well or hear well. Do I still have to serve?

Only the Court can make a determination of whether or not you are disqualified from service. If the court is notified prior to your week of service, a signer/interrupter will be available to assist you. If you are hesitant to serve because of either seeing or hearing limitations, you may write a letter of explanation for the Court to consider excusing you early.

What is voir dire?

Voir dire is a question and answer session where the trial judge and the attorneys for both sides ask questions of the prospective jurors to determine who is qualified and unbiased to be on a particular jury.

Can I bring my children?

No. Childcare services are not available at the Courthouse.

Can I get something to eat at the court?

There is no food or beverage allowed in the courtroom. There is no food service available in the Courthouse. There is a pop machine available in the basement area. Jurors may bring their own items for breaks and lunch time.

I have heard of juries being sequestered. Will I be separated from my family?

Sequestering a jury is a very rare event. Generally you will be free to go home when the trial is in recess for the evening.

How much will I be paid for jury service?

Prospective jurors are paid \$15.00 for reporting for jury service and \$30.00 per day if selected to serve on a specific case.

Does my employer have to pay me while I'm on jury duty?

That is between you and your employer. The Court cannot control that. The Court will provide you with a

certificate to document your service if your employer needs one.

How do I call in to know if I am needed?

The call-in number is 419-238-2560. You should call this number each day to see if you are needed on the following day. You should check the recorded message the night before your assigned trial to listen for information.

If there is an emergency at home, how would my family reach me?

In a genuine emergency, your family can call the Court Administrator at 419-238-6935

I need to be excused from jury service. How do I do that?

State law defines the circumstances when a person can be excused. These recognized excuses were listed on the form sent with your questionnaire when your name was first drawn. Jurors seeking to be excused prior to their assigned trial should contact the Clerk of Court office to obtain a form requesting that the Judge excuse you. This must then be reviewed by the Judge before a decision is made.

