



The Judges have requested that in order to maintain the dignity and importance of court proceedings that all jurors report for jury duty in reasonable and appropriate attire. We believe you will share our view that clothing such as shorts, tank tops, sweat suits, etc., are not appropriate attire for jury duty.

Schedule

The Courts hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with lunch from 12 to 1 p.m. If there is any change in the schedule, you will be advised in advance whenever possible. At times it will be necessary to continue a trial a short time after 5 p.m. The case may continue or the jury may deliberate into the evening hours, in order to dispose of the matter. During lunch, you are permitted to leave the Courthouse. You will be admonished by the Court not to discuss the case among yourselves or others during the trial.

Voir Dire Examination

A sufficient number of jurors will be called from which 12 or 6 will be selected. A questioning process, called voir dire, is used to determine a fair and unprejudiced jury panel. The judge and counsel may participate in the questioning. The voir dire examination opens with the short statement to inform the jurors about the case, the parties involved, and their lawyers. Questions are then asked to find out if anyone has a personal interest in the case, or knows of any reason why he or she cannot render an impartial verdict. Other questions will determine whether any panel member has a prejudice, or a feeling that might influence him or her.

Conduct of the Jury During the Trial

Jurors shall pay close attention to the testimony and keep an open mind. They should not discuss the case before the testimony is complete and the case is submitted to the jury. If the jury has a question that arises during deliberations, the juror shall write down the question and give it to the Bailiff, who will submit it to the Judge presiding. Jurors should not take notes during the trial, unless approved by the court.

Main Stages of the Trial

The trial proceeds when the jury has been sworn to honestly and faithfully hear the case. The main stages of trial are:

The opening statements of the lawyers by each side. (May be omitted or waived).

The plaintiff or the State calls witnesses and produces evidence to prove its case. The defendant may cross-examine each witness.

The defendant may call witnesses and produce evidence to disprove the plaintiff's case and to prove the defendant's claims. The plaintiff or the State may cross-examine.

The plaintiff or the State may call witnesses to disprove what was said by the defendant's witnesses. (This is called rebuttal.)

The defendant may call witnesses to disprove or clarify the plaintiff's or State's rebuttal evidence. (This is called surrebuttal.)

The Judge instructs the jury as to the law.

Closing arguments are made by the lawyers on each side.

The jury deliberations occur in the jury room.

Instructions to the Jury

The instructions of the Judge to the jury are a statement of the rules of the law. It is the jury's duty to reach its own conclusion upon the evidence. As to the law, the Judge's instructions control. You will apply the law as given, to the facts as you find them to be from the evidence. The Judge may include certain questions to which he wishes an answer from the jury. This may be done when specific questions of fact must be answered to support the verdict.

In the Jury Room

After the jury hears the evidence, the instructions of the Court and the arguments of counsel, the jury retires to the jury room and first elects a presiding juror or foreman. Jurors should then enter into the

discussion with open minds. Jurors should freely exchange views and should not hesitate to change their opinion if shown to be wrong. Each juror has a duty to give full consideration to the opinion of fellow jurors. Jurors should try to reach a verdict whenever possible. In many cases, all jurors must agree upon the verdict. Should there be instances when less than a unanimous verdict is permissible, you will be specifically instructed by the Judge.

Conclusion

The performance of jury service is the fulfillment of a most important civil obligation. Jury service is one of the most valuable public services that a citizen has an opportunity to perform.