

# Winnebago County Courthouse



## Guide to Jury Service

### Welcome to Jury Service!

You have been chosen for jury service in the Winnebago County Circuit Court. As a juror, you have a vital role to play in this state's court system.

### How are jurors selected?

Trial by jury is a constitutional right. Every resident of an area served by a circuit court who is at least 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, and able to understand English, is qualified to serve as a juror unless that resident has been convicted of a felony and has not had his or her civil rights restored.

No person who is qualified and able to serve may be excluded on the basis of sex, race, color, sexual orientation, disability, religion, national origin, marital status, family status, income, age, ancestry or physical condition.

Citizens are selected for jury service at random from a list provided each year by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

### Do I have to serve?

Yes – in most instances. The law requires all qualified state citizens be available to serve as jurors. The court may excuse or defer a person from jury service if the court determines the person cannot fulfill the responsibilities of a juror at this time or would entail undue hardship, serious obstruction or delay of justice.

No profession is exempt. **Your profession is not a valid reason to be excused from jury duty.** You are required to write a letter to the Court with your reason for requesting a deferment or excusal.

### I have been summoned to jury duty... what happens next?

Your jury summons, enclosed, states the week you are summoned and the time to report, if needed. **As cases can settle prior to trial, it is very important that YOU go to the Wisconsin Court System Juror Status Page,**

**<https://juror.wicourts.gov/juror-status/search>, to check if you need to report.** You will need to have your juror ID number, located on the upper right side of your summons. **You may also call the juror information line number (920-236-4998) after 6:00 p.m. the evening BEFORE the day you are to report to make sure you need to appear.**

If selected to serve as a juror, the court will provide lunch. If you need to have food or drink with you due to a medical condition, you may bring those items but inform the bailiff to notify the Judge.

Please be advised that you will have to go through courthouse security screening. This screening will be brief and you will walk through a metal detector as well as place all loose objects through an x-ray machine. Some items **NOT** allowed are: Guns, knives, pocket knives, pepper spray, alcohol, large

backpacks, etc. A full list of items not allowed is on the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office website – click on the Courthouse Screening link on the left side.

The day you are summoned to appear you will have an orientation session with other potential jurors; this session will give you an opportunity to ask any questions prior to going into court for selection. You may bring reading materials or electronic devices with you to occupy the time before and after orientation. Complimentary Wi-Fi is also available for your use.

Dress comfortably in layers as the temperatures in the historic courthouse, built in 1937, can be unpredictable. Do not wear anything distracting such as cutoff jeans/T-shirts or clothing with inappropriate or offensive writing. There is not a dress code, but judges have the option to order people to reappear in appropriate attire.

### **How long do I have to serve?**

You will be on call for a period not to exceed one (1) week **OR** the length of the trial you are selected to serve on as a juror. After serving, you will not be asked to serve again for at least four (4) years.

The selection process will begin after orientation. If selected, you will remain for the length of the trial. Most trials are completed that same day or within a few days.

### **Do I get paid?**

Yes, the amount paid is set by the Winnebago County Board. Currently the rate is \$25/day plus mileage at \$0.51/mile for each day you report for jury duty.

### **What about my job?**

Jury service is a civic duty. State law protects your job. Your employer can't fire, demote, threaten or intimidate you because of jury service. We will provide you documentation of your service if you need it for your employer on the day you appear for service.

### **What if I have a disability?**

If you have a disability that requires an accommodation to allow you to serve as a juror, please contact the Jury Clerk at (920) 236-4853 as soon as possible so arrangements can be made for you.

### **Is childcare available?**

There is no childcare available while you serve as a juror. Please make advance arrangements for any childcare needs you may have.

### **Will I be waiting long?**

Resolving legal disputes can be complex and unpredictable. When the jury is ready to hear the case, the parties sometimes work out a last-minute compromise and the jurors

are not needed. While inconvenient to potential jurors, such settlements usually save time for all trial participants and save the taxpayers' money.

### **Where should I park?**

The parking lot is located on the corner of Church St. and Jackson St. Jurors are welcome to park in the visitor or employee permit parking spots. Parking permits are not required to park in either location. Please do not park in the **reserved** area.

### **What happens if I don't show up?**

Section 756.30 of the Wisconsin Statutes states that a fine of up to \$500 may be imposed upon an unexcused juror. The Court also has the authority to direct the Sheriff to locate you and bring you to court.

Still have questions or concerns about your jury service? Call the Jury Clerk at (920) 236-4853.

To learn more about jury service and court trials, visit the Wisconsin Court System website at

<https://www.wicourts.gov/services/juror/handbooks.htm>

***Thank you for your service!***

***Desiree M. Bongers  
Winnebago County Clerk of  
Circuit Court***