

INFORMATION ABOUT JURY SERVICE

Jury trials in the Federal Court of Australia

A jury is an important part of the justice process.

The role of the jury in both criminal and civil trials is to determine questions of fact and to apply the law, as stated by the judge, to those facts to reach a verdict.

In criminal trials, the jury's role is to determine guilt or otherwise. In civil trials, the jury's role is to decide fault and damages.

Eligibility for jury service in the Federal Court of Australia

You are eligible for jury service in the Federal Court of Australia if your name is on the jury roll for the relevant jury district for a trial and you are entitled to vote at elections for Members of the House of Representatives.

You may, however, be disqualified from jury service because of your professional status or because of your background. For more information, see [Information sheet 1 – Eligibility for jury service and disqualification from jury service](#) and flowchart [Process for jury selection](#).

If you believe that you are disqualified from jury service you should notify the Sheriff when you reply to the questionnaire or if you receive a summons to attend for jury service.

When to attend court for jury service

You should only attend court for jury service if you have received a summons. If you have received a summons, you must attend at the place and day stated in the summons unless you receive an email or a telephone call from the Federal Court of Australia telling you that you are not needed on that day. If you are told that you are needed on a different day, you must attend court on that different day.

If your summons to attend for jury service is withdrawn after it is served upon you, you will be notified by the Sheriff.

If you cannot attend court on the day stated in the summons, you should notify the Sheriff as soon as possible, using the contact details shown on the back of this pamphlet.

It is an offence for a person who has been summonsed for jury service to fail to attend court without reasonable excuse.

Requesting to be excused from jury service

The Federal Court of Australia recognises that not everyone is able to perform jury service, especially if they have been summonsed for a long trial. You may request to be excused:

1. when you receive a questionnaire
2. when you receive a summons to attend for jury service, and
3. when you attend court in answer to a summons for jury service.

During the jury recruitment process, you can ask to be excused for any of the following reasons:

- your health
- undue hardship, financial or otherwise, to you, or to another person, if you are not excused
- your recent service on a jury in any jurisdiction in Australia
- substantial inconvenience to the public resulting from you serving on the jury, or
- your inability, in all the circumstances, to perform the duties of a juror to a reasonable standard.

When the jury is being empanelled in court, and before you are selected as a juror, you should also request to be excused if you know the accused person or any of the people likely to give evidence in the matter, or if there is any other reason why you think you may not be able to consider the case impartially.

For more information, see [Information sheet 3 – Requests to be excused](#).

Payment for attending court for jury service

If you are served with a summons to attend jury service, you will be entitled to an attendance fee and may also be able to claim travel allowance. A person selected on a jury will be paid a jury allowance.

The current rates are set out in [Information sheet 2 – Jury Service Remuneration and Travel Allowance](#).

What to bring to court

If you have been served with a summons for jury service, you should bring the following things to court:

1. the summons, and
2. photographic identification (e.g. a driver's licence).

There will be signs at the court building to direct you to the jury pool room. There will also be court officers in the court building. If you are not sure where to go, you should approach a court officer and ask for directions.

Duration of jury service

While the length of a trial is difficult to predict with accuracy, the questionnaire will include details of when the trial is due to begin and an estimated duration. If you receive a summons for jury service, you will be required to attend court. Once at court you will be told whether the estimated duration of the trial has changed. If it has, you should consider whether you are still able to perform jury service.

Not everyone who has been summonsed for jury service will be selected to serve on a jury. The Federal Court of Australia will summons enough potential jurors to form a jury panel and a jury will be selected, on a random basis, from that panel.

A person who is not selected on the jury will be advised by the Sheriff if they are needed to be 'available' for further trials. A person who has not been selected on the jury can remain liable for jury service for up to three months.

Further information

Visit the Federal Court of Australia website:
www.fedcourt.gov.au/going-to-court/jury

Alternatively, you can contact the Sheriff of the Federal Court of Australia via:

- Email at sheriff@fedcourt.gov.au, or
- Telephone at **(02) 9230 8606** (ask to speak to a jury recruitment officer).