

Jury Service in the Franklin County Municipal Court has changed. We have implemented many innovations that you will find very helpful, educational and fulfilling.

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◆ **[Reporting times](#)**, which are listed below, have been changed to allow you time to accomplish necessary tasks during normal business hours. You are encouraged to visit operational courtrooms in the morning session. The afternoon session is normally completed by 4:00 p.m. The new program has much greater flexibility than in years past.

When you report in on the [first day](#), you will be given all the information you need to move through the process. There will be time for questions and answers. The Administrative Judge will welcome you and one of our trial judges will explain some of the process to you. We hope the links below will be helpful to you and if you have further questions, please call the Jury Commission at (614) 645-7726.

◆ **[General Information for Trial Jurors](#)**

If you have been summoned to the Franklin County Municipal Court, this information will be helpful to you. This section of the website is dedicated to providing information for those that will serve as trial jurors. If you don't find the specific answers to your questions, you can call the Jury Commission at (614) 645-7726. (Often times our public line is busy due to the high volume of calls received, please try back later if you find this to be the case.)

First, you should take the time to read all the information on your summons. That information was closely scrutinized to ensure it is pertinent to your service in this court. Most of the information is relevant to your first day with the court. For instance, you are required to report at 10:15 a.m. and that is so you will be present for all the information given during the orientation. (The orientation has been designed based on feedback from jurors who have served prior to you, so the questions you have right now will probably be answered.) Starting your second day, you can report anytime between 8:00 and 10:30. This will make traffic and parking much easier to deal with. If you have serious conflicts, you may request a 1:30 reporting time to start after your first day. There will be time to arrange this after lunch on your first day. The Jury Commissioner's office is right in the jury assembly room, so you have quick access for questions.

◆ General Information for Trial Jurors (con't)

You will be able to watch actual trial courts in session starting your second day. This will take place between 10:30 (approx) and 11:50 each day. *If you are impaneled (sworn) on a case you will not be able to watch courtrooms during the course of the trial.*

There are several tours scheduled for every group that reports for service.

- The Supreme Court of Ohio – (New location)
- The Statehouse
- The Franklin County Jail – only after Jury Service is complete

These and other options will be explained the morning of your reporting date.

◆ Where Is the Franklin County Municipal Court Located?

The court is located in downtown Columbus at 375 South High Street - on the Northwest Corner of Fulton and High Streets. It is a white building that is 18 stories in height with an elevated bridge running across High Street. Printable map link: <http://www.fcmclerk.com/directions/index.php>

◆ Where Is the Franklin County Municipal Court Jury Assembly Room Located?

The jury assembly room is located at 375 South High Street; Columbus, Ohio on the **9th floor**. Signs are posted directing you to the Jury room when you get off the elevator.

◆ What Time Do I Need to Arrive?

Your first day you will need to arrive by 10:15 a.m. for orientation. Starting from the second day forward you can check in anytime between 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Arrangements can be made to report later in the day if you have a valid reason. If you are impaneled (sworn) on a jury, the judge will let you know what time to reconvene the following day as this time may be different than your regular reporting times.

◆ Are There Bus Routes That Will Get Me to the Courthouse?

Any information you need concerning bus routes can be obtained from COTA. Their general information number is (614) 228-1776. You can set a trip planner of COTA routes at the following link: <http://infoweb.cota.com/hiwire?.a=iScheduleLookup>

◆ Is There a Parking Facility near the Courthouse?

There are two parking garages, both operated by Franklin County. The cost per day is currently \$5.00. Please refer to the map link for their location. You may also park at the City Center location which is only \$5.00 per day with a validated pass. You can validate your parking pass in the jury assembly room. The City Center parking garage, as well as directions to find it are at the following link: <http://www.fcmclerk.com/dept/court/jury/parking.php>

◆ Does the Court Pay for the Cost to Park?

You will receive \$20.00 (per diem compensation) for each day you are in attendance. There is no provision for payment of this fee for any day that you are excused from service. You will receive this fee by mail approximately 10 days AFTER your service with this court is ended.

◆ What Types of Cases Does this Court Hear?

The Franklin County Municipal Court has jurisdiction over misdemeanors, criminal and traffic. We also hear civil actions involving no more than \$15,000.00. Cases that most often go to trial are OVI (operation of a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs or both) and domestic violence.

◆ What Is the Difference Between a Civil and a Criminal Case?

A civil case for which a jury is involved is generally a dispute between two or more parties that does not involve a criminal matter. In a civil matter, in order for a plaintiff to win a case, it is only necessary for the plaintiff to prove his or her case by a preponderance of the evidence.

In a criminal matter, the defendant has a right to a trial by jury. The defendant is also constitutionally entitled to be presumed innocent of the charges until the jury finds otherwise. More proof is required to find a person guilty of a crime than to return a verdict for a plaintiff in a civil case. In order to return a verdict of guilty in a criminal trial, the charges must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

In both a civil and criminal case, the judge instructs jurors on the standards to be applied in the case. In most civil cases, eight jurors sit to hear a matter. In all criminal cases, eight jurors are impaneled. To accommodate situations in which additional jurors may be needed, such as if a juror needs to be excused after the trial has begun, more than the required number of jurors are initially selected in both civil and criminal trials. These individuals serve as alternate jurors. They do not participate in deliberations but may be asked to remain at the courthouse until deliberations are completed. Those selected as alternate jurors perform a valuable function by participating at trial and being available to replace excused jurors, if necessary. In a civil trial, two thirds are needed to return a verdict in favor of one party or the other. In a criminal case the verdict must be unanimous.

◆ Will I Be Called to Be an Actual Juror? Could this Happen More than Once?

You will be called to take part in a voir dire exam (selection of the jury) only if the defendants (or litigants in a civil case) decide to exercise their constitutional right to a jury trial. Many potential jury trial cases are decided without jurors being needed, but the court needs a qualified pool of jurors in the event cases do not settle. This court has an average of 110 potential jury trial cases each day, Monday through Thursday. Even with this high potential for trials, you will only see 3 to 6 cases that will actually need jurors in a given two week period. This is why we bring a minimum number of jurors each day. We rely on statistical data to show us trends that dictate how many jurors we will need according to the time of year, rotation of the judges and prosecutors. We will be glad to show you how we compile this data and how we use it to discover new correlations.

◆ Are There Locations Close to the Courthouse to Eat?

There are several locations close to the courthouse where you can eat while you are on jury duty. There is a cafeteria located at 373 South High (located right next door to the Municipal Court) on the 16th floor that has a full range of menu items that are highly recommended by our jurors. Keep in mind, you will have 90 minutes to eat so you can leave this building or even the downtown area for lunch if you prefer.

◆ Special Accommodations

Persons called for jury service who may require special accommodations such as hearing assistance should call the Jury Commissioner's office as soon as the summons is received to advise the court of their needs prior to the summons date. Depending upon the availability of hearing assistive devices and or sign language interpreters, it may be necessary to reschedule your reporting date to some time in the near future.

Approved by Court Administrator September 2, 2004