

DISTRICT CLERK - JURY INFORMATION

Jurors are randomly selected by the county computer system from a source which combines current Madison County voter registration list and residents of the county that hold a valid Texas driver's license, or a valid personal identification card or certificate issued by the Department of Public Safety. Rhonda Savage, District Clerk serves as the Jury manager for Madison County.

Jurors may be selected to serve in the District Courts, County Court, or in the Justice Courts. For questions about jury service in the County Court, please contact the County Office at 936-241-6200 ext, 1042 and for Justice Courts, please contact 936-241-6200 ext. 1261 or 1248.

I am not a resident of the county. What should I do if I am called for jury duty?

Only jurors that are residents of Madison County should appear. If you have received a summons and are not a resident of the county, circle number 2 under the qualification section of your summons, sign and return to Rhonda Savage, Madison County District Clerk

Where do I go for jury duty?

All jurors summoned for District Court report to the District Courtroom located in the Madison County Courthouse at 101 West Main, Suite 216 in Madison County, Texas. Jurors summoned for County Court or Justice Courts should report as directed on their summons.

Where can jurors park?

The entrance to the Courtroom is on the second floor of the Courthouse Building. Parking is available around the Courthouse square or in the back of the Madison County Annex Building.

How long should I plan to be there on the day I am summoned?

The general panel process and voir dire or questioning of the jury may take most of the morning after which time the jurors are selected and seated this may take the remainder of the day.

How will I know if the jury panel has been cancelled?

For current information concerning jury service for the District Courts, call (936) 241-6250 for a recorded message after 5:00pm on the day before you are scheduled to appear. You must report for jury duty unless you have a qualified exemption. For special accommodations, call the District Clerk's Office at (936) 241-6212.

Who do I contact about a jury excuse?

If you have been summoned for a District Court jury, contact the District Clerk's office, at the information below. For information regarding a summons from the county court or a justice court, contact the appropriate court.

Office Location and Contact Information

The District Clerk's office is located at the 101 West Main Street, Suite 226
Madisonville, Texas 77864

Telephone number: (936) 241-6212

Fax: (936) 349-1893

Status update on District Court jury information: (936) 241-6250

Jury email address: rhonda.savage@madisoncountytexas.org

Jury Handbook As Authorized by Chapter 23 of the Government Code

Why Is Jury Service Important?

The United States Constitution and the Texas Constitution guarantee all

people, regardless of race, religion, sex, national origin, or economic status, the right to trial by an impartial jury. Justice ultimately depends to a large measure upon the quality of the jurors who serve in our courts.

What Is My Duty as A Juror?

As a juror, you must be fair and impartial. Your actions and decisions must be free of any bias or prejudice your actions and decisions are the foundation of our judicial system.

How Was I Selected?

You were selected at random from a list of voter registrations and a list of driver registrations from the county in which you live.

Am I Eligible?

Jurors must:

- Be a citizen of the United States
- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Reside in the county of jury service.
- Be able to read and write.
- Be of sound mind and moral character
- Not have served as a petit juror for six days during the preceding three months in the county court or during the preceding six months in the district court.
- Have never been convicted of a misdemeanor theft or felony, or be under indictment or other legal accusation for, misdemeanor theft or felony.

You cannot serve on a jury if:

- You have been convicted of a felony or of any type of theft (unless rights have been restored)
- You are now on probation or deferred adjudication for a felony or for any type of theft; or

- You are now under indictment for a felony or are now under criminal charges for any type of theft.

If you are in doubt or think you may not be qualified to serve on a jury for one of the above or any other reasons, please appear for jury service to speak with the judge.

Who Can Be Exempted from Jury Service?

You are entitled to be exempted as a juror if you:

- For Petit Jury - Are over 75 years of age; or Grand Jury - Are over 70 years of age
- Have legal custody of a child under 12 years of age and jury service would leave the child unsupervised.
- Are a student at a public or private high school.
- You are enrolled and in actual attendance at the an institution of higher education.
- You are an officer or an employee of the senate, the house of representatives, or any department commission, board, office, or other agency in the legislative branch of state government.
- You are the primary caretaker of a person who is unable to care for themselves (this exemption does not apply to health care/hospice workers)
- Actively serving in the U.S. military forces on active duty and stationed out of your County of residence.

What Are the Different Types Of Cases?

There are two basic types of cases, criminal and civil (including family cases).

Criminal Cases:

A criminal case results when a person is accused of committing a crime. You, as a juror, must decide whether the person charged is guilty or not guilty. The

accused person is presumed innocent, and the State, represented by the District or County Attorney, must prove guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt."

Civil Cases:

A civil case results from a disagreement or dispute between two or more parties. In a civil case, you, as a juror, must answer questions of disputed facts based upon the testimony and evidence admitted by the judge. The answers to these questions are called the verdict.

Will I Be Paid For Being A Juror?

Yes.

Must My Employer Pay Me While I Am On Jury Duty?

Your employer is not required to pay you while on jury duty; however, employers are prohibited by law from firing an employee for serving as a juror.

Are There Rules About Jury Conduct?

Yes. The Texas Supreme Court has rules to assist you in your conduct as a juror, which will be given to you by the judge.

What If I Have a Special Need or Emergency?

After you have been selected as a juror on a trial panel, if you have a special need or an emergency, let the bailiff know as soon as possible.

Order Of Events Of The Trial

Opening Statements:

The lawyers for each side may explain the case, the evidence they will present, and the issues for you to decide.

Presentation of Evidence:

The evidence consists of the testimony of witnesses and the exhibits allowed

by the judge. Exhibits admitted into evidence will be available to the jury for examination during deliberations. You have a right to ask for them. You will be asked to make decisions regarding disputed facts; therefore, your attention at all times is critically important. The judge will determine juror note taking or the use of any notes.

By the Judge:

The judge may be asked to decide questions of law during the trial. Occasionally, the judge may ask jurors to leave the courtroom while the lawyers make their legal arguments. The jurors should understand that such interruptions are needed to make sure that their verdict is based upon proper evidence, as determined by the judge under the Rules of Evidence. You may give the evidence whatever weight you consider appropriate.

Instructions to The Jury:

At the close of all the evidence, the judge may submit to the jury the Charge of the Court. This will include legal instructions on this particular case and the questions that the jury is to answer from the evidence admitted.

Closing Arguments:

After the Charge of the Court, the lawyers have the opportunity to summarize the evidence in their closing arguments and to try to persuade the jury to accept their client's view of the case.

Deliberations And Verdict Of The Jury:

Following closing arguments, the jury is sent to deliberate. When the jury has answered the questions asked of them, they shall return their verdict. The verdict must be based solely on the evidence presented by the parties, the Charge of the Court, and the rules of law provided by the judge.

When in Doubt, Ask The Judge:

You have the right to communicate with the judge regarding any matters affecting your deliberations, including but not limited to:

- Physical comfort.
- Special needs.
- Any questions regarding evidence; or
- The Charge of the Court.

During deliberation, if it becomes necessary to communicate with the judge, the bailiff or the officer of the court will deliver jurors' notes to the judge. The information in this Handbook is not intended to take the place of the instructions given by the judge in any case. In the event of conflict, the judge's instructions will prevail.

Note: Not all of these rules apply in Justice or Municipal Courts.

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For reprint information call the State Bar of Texas at 1-800-204-2222.