

# A FEW THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT GRAND JURY DUTY...

## QUALIFICATIONS

To be a juror, you must be a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age or older, and speak and understand English.

You must live in the county in which you have been called to serve, and you cannot have served in the last 3 years.

Please review the **Reasons For Disqualification** on the back for more information.

## WHAT IS A GRAND JURY

The grand jury hears evidence presented by a prosecutor. It does not determine guilt or innocence, but instead it determines if there is enough evidence to indict or charge a person or corporation with a crime. A grand jury consists of 23 people as compared with the 6 or 12 people who comprise a trial jury. The length of grand juror service varies and depends upon the number of pending criminal matters that are brought before it. A grand jury usually sits sporadically for 3 months, with varying schedules by county. Statewide grand juries, in contrast, sit for 6 months.

## COURT LOCATION

Because grand juries are convened at only one site within each judicial district, grand jurors may not change their court location.

## DEFERMENT

If you have a hardship, you may request deferment of your date of service to a different date within 12 months of your originally scheduled date. To request a deferment, complete Section 3A of the Grand Juror Confirmation Form or the appropriate section of the Form online. Prospective grand jurors may request deferment of their service to either January, April, July, or October (most grand juries are convened only during those months). You must provide a detailed explanation of your hardship.

## MAP & DIRECTIONS

You will receive a map and directions to the courthouse about ten days before you are to serve. Maps, directions, and other information about your courthouse are also available online.

## COMPENSATION

By law, your Massachusetts employer must pay you for work hours you miss during the first three days of jury service. This applies to all employees: full-time, part-time, temporary and casual. Failure to compensate employees is a crime. Please consult with your employer regarding its compensation policy and **complete the enclosed CONFIDENTIAL FINANCIAL QUESTIONNAIRE** on the other side of this brochure so that the amount of compensation you receive from the Commonwealth (maximum of \$50 per day) for each day after your 3rd day of service may be determined.

## RESIDENTS / INHABITANTS / STUDENTS

Regardless of whether you are a registered voter, you are qualified to serve if you are a resident of a county OR an inhabitant of a county for more than 50% of the time. Examples: (1) Students who study in Massachusetts (inhabitants) must serve, even if they are residents of another state; (2) Students who live in one Massachusetts county (residents) but study in another (inhabitants) can be summoned to serve in either county; (3) Massachusetts residents who study out of state must serve in their home county when they return to Massachusetts.

## STUDENTS / PARENTS / CHILDCARE

There are no exemptions from grand jury service. Everyone is eligible, including students and parents of young children. Only a judge can excuse you from service for hardship. If you are seeking to be excused for hardship, you must report to the courthouse on your scheduled date of service and speak with a judge. Remember: you can postpone your service for up to a year to minimize conflicts with your academic schedule, childcare responsibilities, or other personal issues.

## SELF-EMPLOYED

There are no occupational exemptions from jury service. Everyone is eligible, including the self-employed. Only a judge can excuse you from service for hardship. If you are seeking to be excused for hardship, you must report to the courthouse on your scheduled date of service and speak with a judge. You can request a deferment of your service to minimize conflicts with your schedule.

## AGE

If you are 70 or older, you may choose to serve or not. If you choose not to serve, please complete the Grand Juror Confirmation Form online, or by mail as follows: #2A: fill in Circle 2. #2B: provide your date of birth. #7: sign your name, and mail. If you are under 18, follow the same procedure but fill in Circle 3.

## HEALTH

If you are ill or disabled, you may request a deferment of your date of service or request to be disqualified from service. If you seek disqualification, please see REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION, REASON 9 on the other side of this brochure.

## FELONY CONVICTION

If you have been convicted of a felony within the last 7 years, or are currently charged with a felony, or are presently in the custody of a correctional institution, please see REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION, REASON 7 on the other side of this brochure. If you were convicted more than 7 years ago, you are eligible to serve.

## ACCESSIBILITY

The Trial Court and the Office of Jury Commissioner are committed to making the courts accessible to all. Accessibility includes the right and the obligation to perform jury service. Please visit our website at [www.MAJury.gov](http://www.MAJury.gov) and click on "Accessibility" for more information. You can also contact us at JurorHelp@jud.state.ma.us, or 1-800-THE-JURY (843-5879). Deaf and hard of hearing callers can contact us either through their preferred Video Relay Service (VRS) provider or via TTY/TDD to the Massachusetts Relay Service at 711. If you require an FM Assistive Listening Device, please complete #5 on the Juror Confirmation Form.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION...

...be sure to review ALL of the information contained in this summons packet: this brochure, the summons, and the Grand Juror's Handbook. Most of our frequently-asked questions are answered here. You can get more information on our website at [www.MAJury.gov](http://www.MAJury.gov) or by calling us at 1-800-THE-JURY (843-5879) (within Massachusetts only) or 617-338-6409 (out-of-state callers only). The OJC takes calls M-F, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, and pre-recorded information is always available. You can e-mail us at [JurorHelp@jud.state.ma.us](mailto:JurorHelp@jud.state.ma.us), or write to us at:

**OFFICE OF JURY COMMISSIONER  
560 HARRISON AVENUE, SUITE 600  
BOSTON, MA 02118**

You can also visit our **website** at  
**[www.MAJury.gov](http://www.MAJury.gov)**

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
**OFFICE OF JURY COMMISSIONER**

# GRAND JUROR INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

Our jury system is fundamental to the fair administration of justice in the Commonwealth. By responding to your summons - whether or not you are eligible to serve - you are contributing to the cause of justice and the preservation of our democracy. Thank you for your participation.

- Chief Justice Kimberly Budd  
Supreme Judicial Court

## Information About:

- Completing the Juror Confirmation Form
- Qualifications and Disqualifications
- Deferrals
- Parents, Students, Self-Employed Jurors
- Accessibility
- Compensation

YOU CAN GET

MORE INFORMATION AT  
**[www.MAJury.gov](http://www.MAJury.gov)**

