



United States District Court

EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

JUAN R. SÁNCHEZ
CHIEF JUDGE

UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE
601 MARKET STREET
SUITE 14613
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

Dear Prospective Juror:

You are receiving this letter because you have been summoned to report for jury service in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly presented new challenges for all, and this court is no exception. In response to the pandemic, jury trials were temporarily suspended for several months to protect the health and safety of all participants, including jurors. As conditions in the counties in our district have improved, we have begun to resume some essential court operations, including jury trials, on a limited basis with a number of additional precautions in place to protect health and safety.

Jurors perform a vital role in our system of justice. The right to a jury trial is one of the fundamental rights protected in our Constitution. Jurors are constitutional officers who serve as ultimate decisionmakers in criminal and civil cases, applying the law as instructed by the judge to the evidence presented in the case. Even in these challenging times, the participation of jurors is critical to the administration of justice.

As we move forward, we want to assure you that the health and safety of everyone who comes into the courthouse is our first priority. We are closely following the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, and state and local public health authorities. Based on the available guidance, we have implemented a number of precautions to protect health and safety. These precautions include:

1. **Face Masks:** Everyone entering the James A. Byrne U.S. Courthouse is required to wear a face mask. You will be required to wear your mask at all times while you are in the building. If you arrive at the building and realize that you forgot your mask, a Court Security Officer will provide you one.
2. **Public Space:** All public areas of the Courthouse have been outfitted with hand sanitizer stations and social distancing signage, which indicates where to stand while waiting to enter the building and limits elevator occupancy to two people at a time.
3. **Jury Selection Space:** To limit the number of people in one room at a time and to ensure adequate room for social distancing, incoming jurors will be divided among several different rooms for the jury voir dire process. In addition, only one jury will be selected at a time to limit the number of jurors in the courthouse.
4. **Trial Space:** To ensure adequate room for social distancing, multiple courtrooms will be used for each trial. In the primary courtroom, jurors will be seated six feet apart in the gallery area of the courtroom, rather than in the jury box. We will not be using our usual jury rooms, which are small. To allow jurors space for social distancing, a second courtroom on the same floor will be used for jury breaks and deliberations. Hand sanitizer will be available for juror use in both courtrooms.
5. **Parking,** as always, will be reimbursed if you would prefer to drive over taking public transportation.
6. **Daily Health Assessment:** Jurors are asked to review the attached Daily Health Assessment each day before reporting for jury service. Court staff are also asked to perform the Daily Health Assessment each day before reporting to work.
7. All court spaces are being thoroughly cleaned and sanitized at regular intervals.

We continue to monitor the situation in our district and make any necessary adjustments as we resume this important constitutional function in partnership with our jurors. Thank you for your patience, your cooperation, and, most of all, your service.

Sincerely,

Juan R. Sánchez
Chief Judge