

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I received a jury summons in the mail. What do I do next?

To begin, make sure to read the summons and the accompanying documentation carefully. The summons contains information that is of great benefit to you regarding your term of service. Then complete the jury questionnaire and return it to the court as directed. If you have questions that are not addressed by the summons or our website, feel free to contact the court during regular business hours. *Remember that a summons is a court order.*

How long will I serve and how will I know when I need to report?

As a juror in the Chillicothe Municipal Court, you are assigned for one day or one trial. You should call the court on Monday after 5:00 p.m. (740-772-9651) the day before you are scheduled to report to see if you will be required to report for service on Tuesday, the next day. The court only schedules jury trials on Tuesdays.

You can like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/ChillicotheMunicipalCourt) or follow us on Twitter (www.twitter.com/ChilliMuniCourt) to be reminded when you are required to report. The information will also be available on our website, www.chillicothemunicipalcourt.org.

Please remember your juror number. You will need it when you call in or when you receive a reminder via Facebook or Twitter.

Where is the Chillicothe Municipal Court?

The address of the Chillicothe Municipal Court is 95 East Main Street, Chillicothe, Ohio. It is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and Mulberry Streets. Regular business hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We are closed for major holidays which may be found on our website.

What do I wear?

The Chillicothe Municipal Court has adopted a dress code which can be found in Local Rule (I)(13)(D). A good rule of thumb is “business casual.” Remember that you will be sitting for periods of time, so dress comfortably.

Where should I park?

There is free parking available on the court lot. None of the spaces are reserved, so you may park in any available space. If all the spaces are taken, you will have to find parking elsewhere. There is street parking available nearby and some public parking lots in the area, but they will require that you do some walking. The court does not have any parking designated for jurors only.

Are there things that I should or should not bring to court with me?

You will be required to go through a security check point when you enter the court, so it is wise to bring as few things as possible. Obviously, no weapons or dangerous items, no drugs, etc. are permitted. Please bring your jury summons and your I.D. You can bring reading materials, newspapers, magazines, and so forth. There will likely be some time spent waiting. You can bring your cell phone, and you can use it in the jury assembly room, but it must be turned off at all times while in the courtroom. See Local Rule (I)(13) for more information. It is found on the court website - www.chillicothemunicipalcourt.org.

What should I expect when I arrive at court?

You should enter the court at the front door and tell the security officer that you are a juror. You will be required to go through a metal detector and to have any bags inspected. Once inside you will be directed to the jury assembly room which is located in the basement of the court building where you will be checked in. You will wait there until you are called to the courtroom. While in the jury assembly area, you can read or talk with other jurors. A short jury orientation video will be played to provide you additional information about what to expect. Restrooms are available on that floor.

It is not unusual to have several cases set for trial on the same day. While you are waiting, the judge and attorneys are in the courtroom discussing which case will be tried. The wait could seem a bit long, but it is normally less than an hour and some days it might be very short.

As soon as it is decided which case will be tried and everything is ready, you will be asked to leave the jury assembly room and move to the courtroom. Some of you will be seated in the jury box while others will be seated in the gallery. The first part of the trial will be to select eight jurors. During this selection process, the judge and the attorneys will ask you a number of questions. The questions will concern a number of different subjects and are designed to make sure that you can be fair and impartial in a particular case. This part of the trial might last one to two hours. At the end of the juror questioning, the judge and attorneys will pick eight jurors to remain for the trial. At that point the other jurors will normally be excused and will be allowed to leave.

If you are chosen as one of the eight jurors, you will be required to stay for the entire trial. Most trials will conclude the same day, but it is possible that it could last into the evening or continue into the next day. After the attorneys have presented their evidence, the judge will explain the law, and after that you will be asked to decide the outcome of the case.

How long will I be required to stay when I report to court?

Most of the jurors will be allowed to leave before noon on the day that they report. If you are selected as one of the eight trial jurors, you will be required to stay until the trial is completed. This is usually the afternoon or evening of the same day that you reported. Sometimes a trial will last into a second day. If this happens, you will be allowed to leave court at the end of the first day, but you must return the next day to finish the trial. Multi-day trials are very rare in municipal court.

What should I do if I have an emergency that prevents me from coming to court when I am scheduled?

Unless you have been excused by the judge, you are expected to report to the court when your number is called. If there is a dire emergency that prevents you from coming, you should contact the court (740-773-3515) at the earliest possible time and explain to one of the deputy clerks why you cannot attend. They will report the matter to the judge, who may or may not excuse you.

What happens if I do not show up for jury service?

Jury service is an important civic responsibility. It is the backbone of our entire system of self-governance. It is therefore very important that you come to court when you are asked to do so. If you do not appear for service, you will likely be ordered to appear before a judge to explain why you were not there. If the judge is not satisfied with your reasons, then you could be found in contempt of court, and you could be fined an amount of money and/or sentenced to jail.

Can I serve as a juror if I have vision problems, difficulty hearing, or other health conditions?

Every case is different. You may be able to serve as a juror if you have vision limitations or some difficulty hearing and only the court can make that determination. Please let the court know in advance if you will need special accommodations. You may also submit a letter of explanation along with documentation from a health care provider for the court to consider excusing you.

Can my jury service be postponed to a later date?

Under certain circumstances, a judge can postpone an individual's term of jury service. A request to postpone service must be submitted in writing to the court as early as possible, preferably with the return of your jury questionnaire.

Are there restrooms available?

The court has plenty of restrooms available. There are restrooms near the jury assembly room and a restroom in the jury room adjacent to the courtroom.

What will I do about eating?

The court provides coffee and tea in the morning for jurors. Once you are in the courtroom, a water cooler is available in the jury room. You will be on your own for lunch. The court will try to break for lunch around 12:00 noon. The lunch break will be for about one hour. You will be on your own for dinner unless you are in the middle of deliberating. In that case, the court will provide dinner and drinks.

Are childcare services provided?

They are not. Please arrange for childcare prior to your arrival at the court.