

Frequency Asked Questions

Why have I been picked for jury service?

All Jurors are selected at random by computer from the electoral register. Everyone on the electoral register from the ages of 18 to 70 may be selected even if they are not eligible to serve on a Jury. Some people never get called, others get called more than once.

Do I have to serve?

Jury service is a public duty. Unless someone is disqualified, has the right to be excused or has a valid reason for discretionary excusal then they must serve.

Who is disqualified from jury service?

For a full list of those who are disqualified please refer to your '[Guide to Jury summons](#)' which you received with your summons.

Who is qualified for jury service?

You are qualified for jury service if:

- you will be at least 18 years old, and under 70 years old, on the day that you start your jury service; and
- you are registered as a parliamentary or local government elector; and
- you have lived in the United Kingdom, or the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for any period of at least 5 years since you were 13 years old.

Can I be excused from Jury Service?

Jury service is an important civic duty and the normal expectation is that everyone summoned for jury service will serve at the time for which they are summoned.

However, there will be occasions where it is not reasonable for a person to serve at the time for which they are summoned. In these circumstances, you must apply to the Jury Central Summoning Bureau and ask to be deferred to a later date or excused from jury service altogether.

If you believe that you cannot serve as a juror at any time during the next 12 months you must clearly state in full, your reasons why on your reply to the jury summons form. You may be asked to provide evidence to verify your claim.

Can I have my Jury Service deferred?

You can apply for deferral of Jury Service. You will need to explain the reasons why you want to be deferred on the summons reply.. You must also provide any other dates when you cannot attend within the next twelve months so a new date can be arranged.

Jury service can only be deferred once up to a maximum of twelve months from the original date.

How long will jury service last?

In most cases jury service lasts about two weeks, but given the nature of some criminal cases this cannot be guaranteed. If a trial is likely to last longer than two weeks, jurors will be asked at Court if this will be difficult for them.

Will I get paid for being on Jury Service?

- Courts can pay for loss of earnings, travel costs and a subsistence rate in accordance with the rates payable to jurors are contained in an [Allowances sheet](#) sent to all those summoned for jury service
- No payment is made to third parties such as employers.

What happens if I have difficulty paying my fares to court while on jury service?

If you have difficulty paying fares to and from court while on jury service then please speak to the Jury Manager. They can organise for you to be reimbursed with your travel costs at the end of each day. You will need to provide proof of the amount of fares you paid.

Can my employer stop me from doing jury service?

With effect from 5th April 2005 employers are required by law to let you have unpaid time off work to complete jury service. If you are concerned that jury service will conflict with work commitments, you can apply for deferral or excusal at first. You are likely to be offered deferral in the first instance. Your employer cannot apply for deferral or excusal on your behalf, only the person summoned for jury service.

Can I continue to work night shifts or weekends?

It is important that jurors are sufficiently fit and alert in order to carry out their important public duty. Therefore we would recommend that you should not work night shifts before you are due in Court, or work weekends if this means you do not have a break from either jury service or your job for seven days.

Do I have to go back to work early if their service is less than 10 working days?

Where it is practical, you should return to work if your jury service is shorter. However, we accept that this is not always possible. In some cases, arrangements may be in place for temporary cover that cannot be cancelled for the whole two week period, in the same way that jurors sometimes cannot return to work if not required by the Court on a half or whole day .

Will the Court pay for someone to cover my duties whilst I am on jury service?

No. The Court does not pay compensation to third parties. However, some companies' insurance policies include provision for employees' absence for jury service.

How do I tell my employer how many days I have actually served as a juror?

You can obtain a certificate of attendance from the Jury Manager at the Court when you have been fully discharged from jury service as confirmation of attendance.

I am in receipt of benefits, what do I need to do?

The loss of earning certificate would only need to be completed by your local Job Centre Plus if your Jury service lasts more than 8 weeks.

I am self employed, do I have to serve as a juror?

Yes. Jury service is a public duty, unless someone is disqualified, has the right to be excused or has a valid reason for discretionary excusal then they must serve.

If you have valid business reasons, then applications of this type can be looked at closely and granted only if there would be unusual hardship. However, a deferral will be offered in the first instance. If you wish to be deferred then you will need to clearly state in full, your reasons why on your reply to the jury summons form. You may also be asked for further supporting evidence.

What should I do if I have concerns during my jury service?

If you have any concerns whilst on jury service, please raise your concern with the jury manager straight away. The jury manager may have to escalate your concern to the judge to deal with. If you feel that that your concern has not been dealt with to a satisfactory level, please ask to speak to the Court Manager.

Can I discuss details of the case with friends and family?

No. You are reminded throughout their service by the trial Judge that discussions are private to the jury. You are reminded not to disclose or discuss of any aspects of the trial with anyone who is not a member of their jury. Once your service is concluded you are still subject to the Contempt of Court Act 1981 as follows:

“Section 8 of the Contempt of Court Act 1981 provides that it is a contempt of court punishable with a fine or imprisonment for a juror to disclose to any person any particulars of statements made, opinions expressed, arguments advanced or votes cast by members of the jury in the course of their deliberations in any legal proceedings. This section does not apply to any disclosure for the purpose of enabling the jury to arrive at their verdict or in connection with the delivery of that verdict or in evidence in any subsequent proceedings for an offence alleged to have been committed in relation to the jury. “