



Brian York
Talladega County
Circuit Clerk

On behalf of the Talladega County Circuit Court, I would like to thank you for your willingness to serve as a juror. You are making it possible for our courts to provide each citizen with a trial by jury, a constitutional right that we would be unable to provide without your service.

I hope this brochure will help you understand the things that happen and the terms that are used during a trial and to let you know what is expected of you. It is hoped that this information will make you better able to do your part in administering justice.

In each case on which you act as a juror, the judge will give you instructions applicable to that case. The information in this brochure is not intended to take the place of and must not encroach on those instructions.

I want to assure you that my staff and I and everyone associated with the courts will do everything within our power to make your service as pleasant as possible. We hope your service is both rewarding and educational.



In order for you to be properly paid for your Jury Service it is important that we have your correct mailing address. I try to pay each Juror on the last day of their service. When this is not possible, I mail a check the next business day. If you do not receive a check for your service within 7 days, please call me so that I can correct the problem.

If you have any difficulty with your employer as a result of your Jury Service, you can call me at 256-761-2103 . We will gladly assist you in correcting any misunderstanding.

TALLADEGA COUNTY
CIRCUIT CLERK'S OFFICE

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TALLADEGA COUNTY
CIRCUIT CLERK'S OFFICE
BRIAN YORK

JUROR
INFORMATION



Justice for All.

Tel: 256-761-2103

JUROR RESPONSIBILITIES

A Juror's top responsibility is to be fair to all parties. With that goal in mind it is vitally important that a Juror refrain from doing anything that would cause people to question the Juror's fairness. A Juror should avoid talking to any party that is set for trial.

A Juror should avoid talking to attorneys that have cases set for trial.

A Juror should immediately report to the Circuit Clerk or the Circuit Judge if the Juror is approached by a party, an attorney or someone representing the party or attorney.

A Juror should inform the Circuit Judge if the Juror knows of any reason the Juror's fairness could be called into question.

A Juror should avoid any outside information about the case the Juror is called to decide. Jurors should avoid newspaper articles, internet articles, discussions with friends, etc. if the subject matter includes the case the Juror is deciding.

While you are a juror the Clerks office can provide coffee or water for your convenience. Please visit my office on the first or second for these items.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- How long will my service take? Most Jurors finish in 1 day. Rarely is a Juror needed for more than 3 days.
- What can I bring?

Cell phones, pagers and laptops are permitted in the courthouse. **YOU ARE REQUIRED TO TURN THEM OFF WHEN YOU GO INTO A COURTROOM.** Please feel free to bring a book, reading materials, sewing, knitting, etc. to occupy you while you wait. **Do not leave any personal belongings in the courtroom.** You need to take all of your personal belongings with you when you leave the courtroom or go to lunch.

Sequence of Trial Events

1. The **opening statements** are made at the beginning of the trial and outline the facts expected to be presented to the jury. **Opening statements are not evidence** but are only explanations of what each side expects the evidence to prove.

2. After the opening statements from both sides, the plaintiff's or state's case is presented in the form of evidence. This presentation is intended to prove the claims made. Evidence can be testimony given by a witness at trial or a physical exhibit such as a gun or photograph. The presentation of the case begins with the plaintiff's or the district attorney's direct examination of a witness. Direct examination discloses points important to the case. Next, the defendant's attorney may cross-examine the witness to disclose facts favoring the defendant; the defendant's attorney may demonstrate

there is a reason to doubt the testimony given by the witness on direct examination. Upon completion of cross-examination, the plaintiff's attorney or District Attorney may, on redirect examination, clarify statements previously made by the witness.

3. The defendant's case is presented after the plaintiff's or state's case. The defendant's case presentation follows the same format as the plaintiff's or state's case.

4. After the defendant's case, the plaintiff or state may present rebuttal witnesses or evidence designed to disprove the testimony and evidence presented by the defendant.

5. Closing arguments follow evidence presentation, at which time both sides summarize the case from their viewpoint. **Closing arguments are not evidence** but are the attorneys' summaries of the evidence presented during the trial.

6. The judge's charge to the jury follows closing arguments. **The charge instructs the jury on the issues to be decided and the rules of law that apply to the case.**

7. After listening to the judge's oral charge, the jury leaves to begin jury deliberations. Selection of a foreman is the jury's first duty. This person presides over the discussion of the case, acting as chairman and spokesman for the jury.

8. Jury deliberations generally conclude when a unanimous verdict has been reached. If the jury is unable to agree upon a verdict after lengthy deliberations, the foreman must notify the judge. If the jury cannot reach a verdict, referred to as "deadlock," a mistrial must be declared and a new jury selected to try the case over.

After reaching a verdict, the foreman records the verdict and calls for the bailiff to escort the jury to the courtroom. The verdict is read by the judge, circuit clerk, or foreman.