

THE CLERK OF THE COURT YOUR PUBLIC TRUSTEE

JULY 2007 – JURY DUTY SELECTION PROCESS

Ken Burke,
Clerk of the Circuit Court
Pinellas County

Q. I was recently summonsed for jury duty. How was my name picked and how long will I be there? And what if I have already booked my vacation for the date I am scheduled to report for jury duty?

A .Your name was selected at random from a list provided by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. This list includes all licensed drivers and persons who possess a Florida Identification Card who are eighteen years old and older and reside in Pinellas County. This list is updated each quarter and is sent to the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

You are eligible for jury selection once every year. You do not need any knowledge of the legal system to be a juror. The duty of the jury is very important. The jury's duty is first to decide the disputed issues of fact, and then to reach and return a true verdict that is based solely and exclusively on the evidence, testimony and law that is presented during the trial.

You should plan on the spending the entire day at the courthouse for your jury service. Jury service in the State of Florida is for one day or the length of one trial. Some trials take longer than one day. Reporting for jury service, even if not selected to sit on a jury, will count as completing your duty for jury service. There is not a specific time of day that the courts conclude. Most frequently the Court will conclude around the "dinner hour", but this varies with each trial.

Most jurors are required to report for their jury service at 8:15 AM at a specific courthouse location. In Pinellas County, jury trials may be held in one of three locations: the Clearwater Courthouse at 315 Court St.; the Criminal Justice Center at 14250 49th St. N; or the St. Petersburg Judicial Building at 545 1st Ave. N. You may check the Clerk's website at <http://www.pinellasclerk.org>, before you report for jury duty for more information about parking and personal comfort at each facility. The Criminal Justice Center now has WIFI in the jury assembly room for those who wish to bring their laptop computers.

There are some specific reasons a person can be excused from reporting for jury service. The list of reasons is on your jury summons. If you feel you qualify for one of these reasons, you may complete your excuse request form, SIGN IT and

return it to the Clerk of the Circuit Court by mail or fax. Some excuse requests can be processed “on-line” at the Clerk’s website, <http://www.pinellasclerk.org>.

If the date you have been summoned creates a conflict in your schedule, **you may request to be rescheduled to a future date ONE TIME. You can select the new date of your jury service “on-line” at the Clerk’s website.**

I suggest that anyone who has been summonsed for jury duty in Pinellas County, visit my website, <http://www.pinellasclerk.org>, before they report to get any further information they may need.