



Jury Service FAQs

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Policies

Please note: These are general questions and answers. Each court location has their own procedures and policies. Always check with your local jury office with any specific questions.

The Maryland Court of Appeals [Administrative Order Clarifying COVID-19 Health Measures in Courthouses and Judicial Branch Facilities](#) requires that anyone entering a courthouse, including employees, are required to wear a mask or face covering, submit to a written or verbal questionnaire regarding any COVID-19 related symptoms, and submit to a contactless thermometer temperature check. These measures are in place as safety precautions to help protect the well-being of everyone during the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, please visit the [Maryland Judiciary Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Updates](#) page.

1. What do I need to do before appearing for jury service?

As instructed in your summons, you must check the local juror website or Information Line after 5:00 p.m. on the day **before** you report to determine if you are required to report on your summons date and each day thereafter. Watch the [Jury Service Orientation video](#) prior to the day you report.

2. What should I expect when arriving at the courthouse on my reporting date?

You will be required to go through a security screening area. This has an x-ray machine to scan personal items, a metal detector, and a security station. The bins where you place your items are sanitized regularly.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), [Maryland Department of Health](#) (MDH), and local health departments, any person who seeks entrance to courts and judicial facilities shall be:

- **subject to COVID-19 screening questions,**
- **subject to non-contact temperature checks,**
- **required to wear face masks or coverings,**
- **required to maintain social distancing (remain 6 feet apart).**

A person may be denied entrance or asked to leave the facility because of an issue with the screening process or by refusing to comply with the requirements to wear a face mask or maintain social distancing.

After the initial screening, you should report to the designated room stated on your summons, the Juror Information Line, or in other communications from the court. Have your summons and photo identification readily available.



3. Is the court in compliance with Governor Hogan’s public health mandates?

We follow the basic mandates outlined by the state governor, and have the flexibility to resume jury trials.

4. Why is Maryland calling in jurors during a pandemic? Have any other states resumed jury trials?

The Maryland Judiciary provides fair, efficient, and effective justice for all. As we are phasing reopening efforts, the court is resuming jury trials to hear cases. Many states have resumed jury trials. We are learning from those situations to help protect the health and safety of court personnel and visitors.

5. What can I bring to the courthouse?

- **Aerosol Spray:** No, not permitted
- **Electronic Devices:** Depends on the local court
- **Mask:** Yes, required
- **Pen and Paper:** Yes, encouraged
- **Reading Material:** Yes, encouraged
- **Summons:** Yes, required if reporting for jury service
- **Travel Size Sanitizer, Disinfectant Wipes, Gloves:** Yes, encouraged
- **Water and Snacks:** Depends on local court

6. Who is responsible for enforcing the security screening?

The Sheriff’s Department enforces the security protocol. A person may be denied entrance or asked to leave the facility due to failing the screening process or not complying with the requirements of wearing a face mask or maintaining social distancing.

7. Will there be COVID-19 testing performed?

No, COVID-19 testing will *not* be performed at the facility.

8. If I have a fever will I be sent home? If so, will I still get paid?

This is decided on a case-by-case basis. If denied entry, your service will not be satisfied, and you will not be given credit or payment for the day.

9. Are only prospective jurors and essential personnel allowed in the building?

No, the courthouse is open to the public, however we are restricting the number of people who come into the building and limiting the number of cases heard. Additionally, many of our cases are being held remotely.

10. What happens if I do not appear for jury service or do not complete my service?

- **If you do not appear** for jury service at the date and time directed by the summons, you may be fined for up to \$1,000, put in jail for up to 60 days, or both.
- **If you do not complete** jury service, you can be fined for up to \$1,000, put in jail for up to 90 days, or both.



- There are also **penalties** for failing to complete the Juror Qualification Form accurately or for not returning the form.

Refer to Courts & Judicial Proceedings Article, Sections [8-504](#) and [8-505](#).

11. How long is the day?

If you are asked to report, you should expect to be here during normal business hours (check with your court location). If you are selected for a trial, you will be required to serve for the duration of that trial.

12. A household member or I have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days, do I need to report?

Do not report if you or a member of your household has tested positive for COVID-19 or if you are experiencing flu-like symptoms. Contact your local [jury office](#) with your concerns.

13. What happens if I or anyone I encounter tests positive for COVID-19 while I am serving?

Following the CDC guidelines, a potential exposure means a household contact or having close contact within six (6) feet of a person with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. The timeframe for having contact with an individual is 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic.

Contact tracing is the process of identifying people who may have met an individual with COVID-19. The contact tracer reaches out by phone to someone who has tested positive for the virus to determine their whereabouts and close contacts for the two-week period when they may have been infectious. For more information, visit Maryland's contact tracing at [covidLINK](#).

14. I have issues with childcare or I am a caregiver and need to stay home, what do I do?

Each court has their own policies and evaluate postponements or excuses on a case-by-case basis. Many courts require requests in writing with supporting documentation. Please contact the local [jury office](#) for guidance on how to reschedule your service, or reschedule online.

15. Will I lose my unemployment benefits if I serve on a jury?

No. Under Maryland Annotated Code, Labor & Employment Article, Sections [8-101\(z\)\(3\)\(x\)](#), [8-907\(a\)](#) and [8-1108\(a\)\(1\)](#), law, you will not be denied unemployment benefits because of jury service. For more information, you can contact the [Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation](#).

16. Will there be any remote or virtual options for trials?

Yes, the court is considering holding parts of civil trials remotely for those persons who have the technological ability to participate virtually. Those who may lack the technology, or who choose not to participate online, may come into the courthouse for the duration of the trial.

If asked to participate remotely in a civil trial, it will be communicated by the trial judge before your date of service. Visit [Maryland's virtual courtrooms](#) for more information.



17. If I am scheduled to appear remotely, what will happen if I can't log in, have technical difficulties, or cannot securely isolate in my house?

Those issues will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the trial judge. If you believe you will not have an isolated and quiet space to log in, please express those concerns to the trial judge on your date of service.

18. How will I be paid if I opt in for a virtual jury trial?

If selected and given the option of attending a virtual jury trial, jurors should still report daily to the jury office to obtain their per diem, sign in, and receive credit for attendance. Those arrangements will be coordinated at the beginning of the trial.

19. Can I schedule a virtual meeting with the jury commissioner's office to discuss my concerns with serving?

No, remote meetings will not be held by the jury commissioner's office. You may wish to communicate in writing or speak with the supervisor at the jury office.

20. How can we ensure a juror is impartial remotely? Can I record the testimony?

The trial judge will ensure that all proceedings are fair and impartial. You may not record any proceedings.

21. Are people required to sit and stand 6 feet apart?

Yes, everyone must maintain a distance of at least six (6) feet. Social distancing markers may be placed around the facility. In addition, staff will conduct paperless or touchless interactions when possible.

22. How many people can be in the elevator at one time?

This depends on the facility. People must practice social distancing in the elevators. There will be signage indicating the maximum capacity allowed.

23. Will I be required to wear a mask all day?

Yes, everyone over two (2) years old must wear a mask or face covering that covers both the nose and mouth completely. If you arrive at a courthouse without a face covering or mask, one will be provided to you. If you have difficulty breathing or have a respiratory condition, you must have a licensed physician complete a medical form in advance of your service date or speak to the trial judge upon your arrival. Please contact the local [jury office](#) to discuss your health concerns.

24. Will defendants and witnesses be unmasked while speaking?

No, everyone needs to keep their mask on, even while speaking.

25. Can I remove my mask when speaking?

No, you should not remove your mask while speaking.



26. What happens to people who remove their mask or wear it inappropriately?

Masks must be worn properly covering both the nose and mouth completely. A person may be denied entrance or asked to leave the facility due to failing the screening process or because of refusing to comply with the requirements to wear a face mask or covering.

27. Can I wear an alternative facemask or one with political or inappropriate language?

No, masks must follow guidelines outlined by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC). As per your summons, proper attire is required, and this includes masks. You may be asked to replace your mask if thought to be inappropriate.

28. Can I wear a face shield instead of a mask?

No, you may wear a face shield, but it must be worn along with a mask.

29. Is eye protection provided by the court?

No, eye protection is not currently provided.

30. Are touchscreen self-check-in kiosks available?

Some court locations have touchscreen self-check-in kiosks. Using the touchscreen self-check-in kiosks reduces the amount of time spent face to face with jury staff and allows you to register more efficiently. If you wish to register with a staff person, or have difficulty using the kiosk, staff will assist you. The touchscreens are cleaned as needed.

31. How often are chairs and surfaces wiped down?

At some court locations, wipes are provided to wipe chairs and tables as needed. Handles or touch points” are wiped daily by staff.

32. Are there assigned seats?

Not assigned, but jurors should keep the original seat they occupied the entire day.

33. Are there plexiglass barriers between the jurors or staff and jurors?

Some courts may have partitions (check with your local office) in between jurors. In many areas, jury staff are behind plexiglass barriers.

34. Will there be tables in a quiet room so that I can do personal work?

Some court locations have a quiet room for jurors. In those locations, tables are available for use during the day and while waiting.

35. How is the air circulated inside of the courthouse?

The Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) unit has an outside air intake that brings air into the building.

36. Can I drink water? Can I bring food?

You can lower your mask to drink or take oral or nasal medications. Replace your mask upon completion. Each court has their own policy about food, so contact your local jury office to find out what you can bring before you report.



37. Will vending machines and charging stations be available?

Some court locations have vending machines (check with your local jury office) and charging stations for your convenience.

38. How often are restrooms cleaned?

The restrooms are cleaned at least once daily.