

Circuit Court for Wicomico County Jury Plan

I. Jury Judge – CJ § 8-204.

The Jury Judge for the Circuit Court shall be the County Administrative Judge of the Circuit Court, or another judge designated by the County Administrative Judge.

II. Jury Commissioner and Acting Jury Commissioner – CJ § 8-205.

A. Jury Commissioner.

The Jury Commissioner for the Circuit Court shall be an individual designated by the Jury Judge.

B. Acting Jury Commissioner.

(1) If the Jury Commissioner is temporarily unavailable or unable to perform duties, the individual holding the position of Senior Assistant Jury Commissioner or designated by the Jury Judge shall serve as acting Jury Commissioner until revocation of the designation.

(2) In this plan, “Jury Commissioner” includes an acting Jury Commissioner.

III. Juror Selection.

A. Randomness – CJ § 8-104.

Each jury for Wicomico County shall be selected at random from a fair cross section of the adult citizens of this State who reside in Wicomico County. To ensure randomness of selection, names shall be selected from the full pool of names in a manner in which no one can affect the selection or exclusion of a specific name. Computer or other means may be used for selection in accordance with the requirements for randomness.

B. Restrictions on Exclusions – CJ § 8-102(b).

A citizen may not be excluded from jury service due to color, disability, economic status, national origin, race, religion, or sex.

C. Frequency of Service – CJ § 8-216.

Notwithstanding CJ 8-310(c)2, an individual may be summoned for jury service after 1 year if the individual serves on a trial jury for fewer than 5 days in a 3-year period.

D. *Source Pool for Prospective Jurors* – CJ §§ 8-206(a) and (b) and 8-213.

- (1) The source pool shall include the names of all of the adult residents of the County on:
 - (i) a Statewide voter registration list;
 - (ii) a list of holders of driver's licenses issued by the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration; and
 - (iii) a list of holders of identification cards issued by the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration.

Section D does not preclude the use of technology and/or lists for removing duplicate or obsolete data, so long as new names are not added in the process.

- (2) The Jury Judge shall have the source pool compiled:
 - (i) by the Jury Commissioner;
 - (ii) with the agreement of the Administrative Office of the Courts, by the Administrative Office; or
 - (iii) by a contractor working on behalf of the Administrative Office of the Courts or the Circuit Court for Wicomico County.
- (3) The Statewide voter registration list shall be no older than that used in the most recent general election.

E. *Prospective Juror Pool* – CJ §§ 8-206(a), 8-207, and 8-213.

- (1) To ensure that each jury is selected in accordance with the requirements of CJ Title 8, the Jury Commissioner is to have the names of prospective jurors selected solely from the most recent source pool as provided in this Section E.
- (2) The Jury Judge shall have the names of prospective jurors selected at least once a year and at additional times when the Jury Judge directs. The Jury Judge may, however, extend the use of a list of prospective jurors beyond a one-year period during the implementation of a new jury management system until such time as the new system is fully operational or until the list of prospective jurors is exhausted.
- (3) The minimum number of names to be selected is the greater of:
 - (i) 150 prospective jurors; or
 - (ii) 0.5% of the total number of names in the source pool.

- (4) The Jury Judge shall have the names selected randomly:
 - (i) by the Jury Commissioner;
 - (ii) with the agreement of the Administrative Office of the Courts, by the Administrative Office; or
 - (iii) by a contractor working on behalf of the Administrative Office of the Courts or the Circuit Court for Wicomico County.

F. *Juror Qualification* – CJP §§ 8-103, CJP §§ 8-106(c), 8-208, 8-210, 8-212, 8-213, 8-214, 8-302, and 8-402.

- (1) Each individual whose name is selected under Section D shall be sent a juror qualification form, which may include a summons. The Jury Judge shall have the form sent:
 - (i) by the Jury Commissioner;
 - (ii) with the agreement of the Administrative Office of the Courts, by the Administrative Office; or
 - (iii) by a contractor working on behalf of the Administrative Office of the Courts or the Circuit Court for Wicomico County.
- (2) In addition to the questions set forth under CJP § 8-302(a), the juror qualification form shall ask for electronic mail address(es).
- (3) Qualification and summoning may be a single procedure or two separate procedures.
- (4)
 - (i) Summonses for jury service shall be served:
 - 1. by first class United States mail to address; or
 - 2. on failure to respond to service by mail, personally by the Wicomico County Sheriff's Office.
 - (ii) The Jury Judge shall have service effected:
 - 1. by the Jury Commissioner;
 - 2. with the agreement of the Administrative Office of the Courts, by the Administrative Office; or
 - 3. by a contractor working on behalf of the Administrative Office of the Courts or the Circuit Court for Wicomico County.

- (5) Based on the information provided on the juror qualification form or during an interview or other competent evidence, a Jury Judge shall:
 - (i) except as expressly provided otherwise in this Section F(5), decide all questions with regard to disqualifying a person from jury service, exempting an individual from jury service, excusing an individual from jury service, and postponing jury service of an individual;
 - (ii) decide all questions referred by the Jury Commissioner; and
 - (iii) act on a written request for review of the Jury Commissioner's decision as to disqualification, exemption, or postponement.

- (6) Based on the information provided on the juror qualification form or during an interview or other competent evidence, the Jury Commissioner may:
 - (i) exempt an individual from jury service:
 1. if the individual makes a written request for exemption as being 70 years old or older;
 2. while the individual is an elected official of the federal legislative branch, as defined in 2 U.S.C. § 30A;
 3. if the individual is an active duty member of the Armed Forces with documentation required under 10 U.S.C. § 982 and 32 C.F.R. Parts 144 and 516, pursuant to DoD Directive 5525.8; or
 4. if the individual is a member of the organized militia with documentation required under Maryland Code, Public Safety Article, § 13-218;
 - (ii) decide whether an individual is disqualified from jury service because the individual:
 1. is not a United States citizen;
 2. is not an adult on the day selected as a prospective juror;
 3. is not a county resident;
 4. cannot comprehend spoken English or speak English;
 5. cannot comprehend written English, read English, or write English proficiently enough to complete a juror qualification form satisfactorily;
 6. has a disability documented by a health care provider;
 7. has been convicted of a crime for which the individual was sentenced to imprisonment for more than 12 months and has not been pardoned;
 8. has pending a criminal charge with potential sentence of imprisonment for more than 12 months; or
 9. is dead; or
 - (iii) reschedule jury service for an individual not more than twice.

- (7) Notwithstanding any authority granted under this Section F(6), the Jury Commissioner:
 - (i) may refer a decision to the Jury Judge;
 - (ii) shall inform the Jury Judge immediately after the Jury Commissioner becomes aware that a qualified juror was, is, or will be disqualified for jury service; and
 - (iii) shall inform the Jury Judge and trial judge immediately after the Jury Commissioner becomes aware that a sworn juror was, is, or will be disqualified for jury service.
- (8) An individual may submit a written request for review of the Jury Commissioner's decision under this Section F(6). The Jury Judge will conduct the review of such requests.

G. *Qualified Juror Pool* – CJ §§ 8-207, 8-209, and 8-213.

- (1) To ensure that each jury is selected in accordance with the requirements of CJ Title 8, the Jury Commissioner is to have the names of qualified jurors selected as provided in this Section G.
- (2) The Jury Judge shall have the names of qualified jurors selected at intervals that the Jury Judge directs.
- (3) The Jury Judge shall determine the minimum number of names to be selected based on the needs of the Circuit Court.
- (4) The Jury Judge shall have the names selected:
 - (i) by the Jury Commissioner;
 - (ii) with the agreement of the Administrative Office of the Courts, by the Administrative Office; or
 - (iii) by a contractor working on behalf of the Administrative Office of the Courts or the Circuit Court for Wicomico County.
- (5) From among the qualified jurors, without dictating sequence of selection:
 - (i) 23 names shall be selected to serve as grand jurors;
 - (ii) names shall be selected to serve as alternate grand jurors in the number required under the Maryland Rules; and
 - (iii) the rest shall be available for selection for additional grand juries and for trial juries.

IV. *Access to Juror Information* – CJ § 8-105.

Access to juror information shall be only as allowed by rule.

V. **Grand Jury Terms** - Md. Rule 16-301(b).

A. *Term*

There shall be two terms of grand jury of six months each, beginning on the second Monday in March and the second Monday in September.

B. *Additional Grand Juries* - CJ § 8-413; Rule 16-301(b)

In addition to any grand jury serving under Section A, on petition of the State's Attorney, the County Administrative Judge may summons one or more grand juries. The term of service of any additional grand jury shall be determined by the County Administrative Judge.

C. *Extending the Term of a Grand Jury* - Rule 16-301(b)

On motion of the State's Attorney, the County Administrative Judge or the jury judge may extend the term of a grand jury or additional grand jury so that it may complete an investigation specified by the judge in the order. The grand jury shall continue until it concludes its investigation or is sooner discharged by the judge but is limited to the investigation specified in the order.

VI. **Grand Jury Forepersons** – CJ § 8-211.

The foreperson of each grand jury shall be the individual selected by the Jury Judge.

VII. **Petit Jury Term**

There shall be 12 terms of petit juries of one calendar month each, beginning on the first day of each month and ending on the last day of the month. In the event that a petit jury is impaneled in a trial that extends into the next calendar month, that jury shall remain impaneled through the conclusion of that trial.

VIII. **Donation Program** – CJ §§ 8-217 and 8-430.

A. *Authorization.*

Prospective, qualified, and sworn jurors may be asked to donate their State *per diems* to the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program.

B. *Account.*

The County Administrative Judge shall superintend the payment of juror *per diems* donated to the CASA program in accordance with appropriate accounting procedures.

C. *Materials.*

During juror orientation, a Jury Commissioner may distribute to qualified jurors material that:

- (i) describes the donation program and the recipient of the donations;
- (ii) is prepared by the recipient of the donations; and
- (iii) has been approved by the Jury Judge.

IX. **Show Cause** – CJ §§ 8-503(b), 8-504(b), and 8-505(b).

A. *Order.*

On order of the Jury Judge, the Jury Commissioner shall issue a show cause order directed to any person for whom good cause exists to believe that the person may have violated CJ § 8-503, § 8-504, or § 8-505.

B. *Hearing.*

The Jury Judge, or another judge designated by the County Administrative Judge, shall hear and decide all issues pertaining to show cause orders issued under Section A.

ENDNOTE: Modifications to this jury plan consist of the correction of citations in Section V, Grand Jury Terms, to reflect re-numbering of the Maryland Rule concerning Grand Juries from former Rule 16- 107(b) to current Rule 16-301(b). Additionally, substantive changes were made to Section III (F)(6)(ii)(7) and (8) as a result of amendments to § 8-103(b)(4) and (5) and § 8-302 of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, to modify two of the disqualifications for jury service. This Jury Plan was updated February 7, 2022 in accordance with the Administrative Order on Non-Substantive Modifications to Jury Plans, dated March 26, 2021 and the Administrative Order on Changes to Jury Plans Required by Chapter 750 (2019), dated March 26, 2021.

IN THE MATTER OF THE JURY
PLAN FOR WICOMICO COUNTY

* IN THE
* SUPREME COURT
* OF MARYLAND

ORDER

Pursuant to § 8-203 of the Court's and Judicial Proceedings Article, it is this 13th day of July 2023, by the Supreme Court of Maryland,

ORDERED that the Circuit Court for Wicomico County's revised jury plan, submitted on February 23, 2023, is approved. The Clerk shall deliver a copy of the revised jury plan and this order to the State Court Administrator for posting to the Maryland Judiciary's webpage.

/s/ Matthew J. Fader
Chief Justice

Filed: July 13, 2023

/s/ Greg Hilton
Clerk