

ONLINE JURY QUALIFICATION

Effective September 14, 2020, new procedures designed to keep jurors, other court participants and the public safe from COVID-19 have been put in place to allow jury trials to resume in the 24th Judicial Circuit (Fayette, Lamar and Pickens Counties) beginning the week of September 21, 2020. Jurors are now requested to complete a general qualification questionnaire ONLINE.

The new juror summons process has recently been developed in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic and will be the first occasion that an online jury qualification process has been used in Alabama state courts. Those individuals receiving a summons for jury duty will be instructed to log onto a dedicated juror website to complete a short questionnaire concerning their general qualifications (are you a U.S. Citizen, are you over the age of 19, etc.) using a secure PIN assigned to each potential juror. The website may be accessed by computer or on a smart phone. By completing the form, potential jurors will now qualify for jury service, or request to be excused from jury service for a recognized exception, online rather than in person. Jurors who are at a heightened risk of contracting COVID-19 due to age or an underlying medical condition may use the online form to request their jury service be deferred until a later date.

The new juror summons also directs potential jurors to <https://fayette.alacourt.gov>, <https://pickens.alacourt.gov> or <https://lamar.alacourt.gov>, the official court website for Circuit and District Courts for your county, where additional information is provided regarding safety protocols that have been implemented to make jury service safer during the current pandemic. Those new procedures include sanitizing surfaces, temperature checking for fever, social distancing measures, contactless sanitizing stations, one way travel staircases, limitations on the number of people permitted in an elevator, a newly configured jury box that will permit jurors to be seated at least six feet from other jurors, and a new jury room that permits jurors to maintain an appropriate social distance during deliberations and recesses.

Individuals who receive a juror summons and do not have internet or smart phone access that will enable them to complete the online registration may contact the office of the Circuit Clerk: Fayette – Samantha Howard – 205-932-4617; Lamar – Mary Jones – 205-695-7193; Pickens - Booty Cox – 205-367-2050.

As we restart jury trials, we want you to know that your well-being is a top priority. We would never ask you to put your health at risk by serving on a jury. Many of you have understandable fears about contracting COVID-19 due to age or underlying health conditions and the law allows you to be excused from jury service because of those health concerns. If you have worries about attending a

public event such as a jury trial, please contact the telephone number listed on this website to speak with a designated court official that has been authorized to defer your jury service to another time or excuse you altogether.

Jury service is a civic duty that the people of this Circuit have always been faithful to fulfill. Although we are facing new challenges, we are confident that we can continue to safely provide our citizens with access to the judicial process, maintain the integrity of our court system and enforce the constitutionally protected rights of our citizens. Your service ensures that we are able to accomplish these goals.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to serve as a juror! We look forward to seeing you in Court!