



NSW Sheriff's Office

# Juror Responsibilities

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## Your role

Jury service plays an essential role in our justice system and ensures that legal verdicts are impartial and in line with community standards of behaviour.

Juries are mostly used in the NSW District Court and NSW Supreme Court to hear and determine:

- more serious criminal matters where an accused person has plead not guilty to the charges or
- civil matters involving large monetary claims.

As a juror your role is to hear evidence, apply the law as directed by the judge, and decide if a person is guilty or not guilty of a crime, or to decide who is at fault.

A jury does not participate in the sentencing or penalty process.

## Attending court each day

Once you have been selected as a juror, the judge or court officer will provide you with information on times you will need to attend each day. Court usually sits from 10:00am to 4.00pm, with lunch and morning tea breaks. Staff will advise you of when you need to arrive each day to ensure the jury is ready to attend court on time.

There may be times when court will run later into the afternoon, however, the trial Judge will usually advise jurors of this.

### What to wear

You should dress in neat, comfortable clothes. Please do not wear shorts or thongs.

You do not need to wear a suit or business attire, but you may be sitting for long periods of time, so it is important to be comfortable whilst still showing respect for the court.

## Juror conduct

Jurors are expected to behave in a way that is ethical, respectful and to act in accordance with the oath or affirmation they made at the start of the trial. This means that all jurors must:

- Comply with the laws, policies, and any lawful direction issued by our staff or the Presiding Trial Judge.
- Treat everyone with respect, courtesy and fairness.
- Act honestly, ethically and with integrity, and avoid conflicts of interest.
- Decline gifts or benefits, which affect or may be seen to affect impartiality.
- Report instances of possible irregularity or misconduct by a juror to the Judge as soon as possible such as:
  - A juror making inquiries about the case outside the courtroom,



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- A juror discussing the matter with others who are not part of the jury,
- A juror conducting research about the matter outside of court,
- A juror conducting experiments or visiting the alleged crime scene outside of court,
- A juror is refusing to participate in deliberations, or
- Instances of bullying or intimidation by a juror as part of the deliberation process.

### Your responsibilities

It is your responsibility to act in a way that is open-minded, unbiased, respectful, and courteous to facilitate safe, fair, and efficient justice proceedings.

You must	You must not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Remain impartial:</b> For a trial to be fair, it is essential to remain open-minded.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✗ <b>Post case information to social media:</b> Do not post any discussions or materials relating to the trial, your role as a juror or information received on social media.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Report existing case connections or knowledge:</b> If you realise in court that you know any of the people involved in the trial, you must immediately inform the judge in a note sent via the court officer. The names of witnesses and those involved in the trial will be read out at the start of the case, so this should be raised before the jury is selected.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✗ <b>Do your own research outside of court:</b> You are not permitted to find additional information about the case, whether that be by Google search, social media, in print or through discussion with others. Your decisions must be based only on the evidence admitted or tested as part of the case or provided by the Presiding Judge.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Keep case information to yourself:</b> All jury discussions must only occur in the jury room and when all jurors are present.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✗ <b>Discuss the case with any other people:</b> If you attend work on a day when court is not sitting, be careful not to discuss any details of the trial with your colleagues or family.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Keep track of your confidential materials:</b> You will be provided with a notebook to take notes as needed. You will have to hand this in at the end of each day, and at the end of the trial. Once the matter has been finalised, all the notebooks are securely destroyed.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✗ <b>Visit the alleged crime scene:</b> You are not permitted to visit the alleged crime scene without the Judge and legal representatives</li></ul>