

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Jury Management

The Jury Management Section and Jury Assembly Room are located in Suite 6002, U.S. Courthouse, 515 Rusk Avenue, Houston, Texas 77002.

A plan for jury selection for the Southern District of Texas was adopted on July 31, 1968, in accordance with the Jury Selection and Service Act of 1968 (Pub.L.No. 90274, 28 U.S.C.A. Section B 1861, et seq.). This plan, with subsequent amendments, is hereinafter referred to simply as the "Jury Plan."

Jurors are randomly selected for jury service from a list of registered voters supplied by each County Tax Assessor from within each Division. The following is a list of divisions and the counties they encompass:

<u>Brownsville:</u>	Cameron and Willacy
<u>Corpus Christi:</u>	Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, Kennedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, Nueces and San Patricio.
<u>Galveston:</u>	Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston and Matagorda
<u>Houston:</u>	Austin, Brazos, Colorado, Fayette, Fort Bend, Grimes, Harris, Madison, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker, Waller and Wharton
<u>Laredo:</u>	Jim Hogg, La Salle, McMullen, Webb and Zapata
<u>Victoria:</u>	Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca, Refugio and Victoria
<u>McAllen:</u>	Hidalgo and Starr

A separate Master Jury Wheel is maintained for each division for the Southern District. The Master Jury Wheel is comprised of a selected percentage of names from the voter registration lists in each division.

A Juror Qualification Questionnaire which has been approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States is then mailed to randomly chosen names. The names of persons qualifying for jury service in federal court, based on the requirements as set forth on the questionnaire form, are then placed on a Qualified Jury Wheel.

The Qualified Jury Wheel is the source of prospective jurors for both grand and petit juries. Upon an order signed by the Chief Judge (Houston Division) or the judge assigned this responsibility in a division office, summonses are mailed to a randomly selected number of persons whose names are on the Qualified Jury Wheel.

In accordance with Federal Statutes and the Jury Plan, the Master Jury Wheel is used for a period of four years at which time a new wheel is created and the old one is abandoned. The Qualified Jury Wheel is replenished periodically as needed in the manner described above.

Prospective jurors are summoned to report to the Federal Courthouse for a brief orientation to the Federal Court system and impanelment which consists of swearing an oath to give true answers to questions put to them as prospective jurors. An information sheet giving jurors phone numbers, directions for parking, location of courtrooms and other helpful information is given to each prospective juror as they appear for orientation/impanelment. Orientation/impanelment procedures vary somewhat from one division to the next depending upon the particular needs and type of docket in each court. For instance, the Houston Division conducts orientation/impanelment for jury trials on the day of jury selection; whereas the Brownsville Division (with one active judge and a heavy criminal docket) conducts orientation, impanelment and jury selection once each month on the same day for all jury trials commencing that month. The particular method of orientation/impanelment employed in any given division is designed to be as efficient as possible, in an effort to conserve judicial time as well as juror time and expenses.

Grand Juries - Grand jurors are selected randomly from the same source and in the same manner as petit jurors. The number of grand juries and the frequency with which they meet varies from one division to the next depending on their respective case loads. Grand jurors serve anywhere between twelve and eighteen months depending on the need for their service. Grand juries meet at least once per month for as little as one day or as much as five days. The Houston and Galveston divisions share grand juries as do the divisions of Corpus Christi and Victoria, and Brownsville and McAllen. Prospective grand jurors are summoned from the Houston/Galveston, Corpus Christi/Victoria, and Brownsville/McAllen divisions by court order as new grand jurors are needed.

The usual number of jurors summoned to be voir dired for a civil case is eighteen. There may not be less than six, and no more than twelve members in a civil jury panel, and all jurors shall participate in the verdict unless excused from service by the court. Unless the parties stipulate, the verdict shall be unanimous and no verdict shall be taken from a jury reduced to less than six members. (Under Rule 48 F.R.C.P., alternate jurors abolished in civil cases.)

The usual number of jurors summoned to be voir dired for a criminal case is thirty-five. More jurors may be summoned at the judge's request for notoriety cases, multiple defendants,

etc. Juries in a criminal case will consist of twelve members, but at any time before the verdict the parties may stipulate in writing, with the approval of the court, that the jury will consist of any number less than twelve and return a verdict. The court may direct that not more than six alternate jurors in addition to the regular jury be called and impaneled. (Rules 22 and 23 F.R.C.P.)

In their discretion, judges may also choose to select one or sometimes two alternate jurors, particularly if the trial is expected to last for several weeks.

Jurors are paid for their services at rates established by the Judicial Conference. Currently the rates are as follows:

Attendance:	\$40.00 per day
Mileage:	\$.36 cents per mile
Bus Fare:	Actual Cost
Parking Fees:	Actual Cost
Subsistence Allowance:	Rates vary among the divisions from \$85.00 to \$129.00

Note: Subsistence allowance is only paid in circumstances such as when the distance a juror must travel from home to the place of holding court is so great as to make commuting impractical. In the case of a sequestered jury, the actual expenses incurred will be paid upon receipt of an order by the court.