

## WHAT IS A JUROR QUALIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE?

The addressee was randomly selected from the State of Virginia's voter registration list to be included in the United States District Court-Western District of Virginia master jury wheels and to receive one of the Juror Qualification Questionnaires. Refilling the master jury wheels is something that is done by the USDC-WDVA every odd-numbered year. After the addressee's Juror Qualification Questionnaire has been reviewed by the Court, **he/she may or may not be called** for federal jury service within the **two year** time frame. Qualified jurors who are summonsed to report are selected entirely at random.

## HERE ARE SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT JUROR QUALIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRES

### **What should I do with the Juror Qualification Questionnaire?**

Please read it carefully. You can now submit your answers using our new on-line **eJuror** system. Visit <http://www.vawd.uscourts.gov/jury> to access **eJuror** today. If you complete the information on-line, you do not need to return the questionnaire form.

If you decide to complete the form, please fill it out and return it to the Clerk's Office **within 10 days**. If another person fills out the Questionnaire for you, please indicate that person's name, address, and reason why, in the "Remarks" section.

### **What should I do if the Juror Qualification Questionnaire is for someone else who previously lived at my address, or is deceased, or has moved out of state?**

Please write this information on the Questionnaire or on the outside of the envelope and return it to the Court. If the person has moved and you know their new address, you can forward the Questionnaire to them.

### **What should I do if the Juror Qualification Questionnaire is for someone who is currently out of state?**

If the person is away from home for a short period of time (less than one month) you may either forward it to the person or hold the Questionnaire for his/her return at which time he/she can fill it out and return it to the Court.

If the person will be away from home for more than one month and you do not have an address for him/her, please write that information on the Questionnaire and return it to the Court.

### **What should I do if I don't feel that I can serve as a juror?**

Please review the Juror Qualification Questionnaire carefully. There is information on the Questionnaire which may address your concerns. You may also include information under the "Remarks" section on the back of the Questionnaire when you send it in.

### **Am I qualified to serve?**

The statutory qualifications for federal jury service (28 U.S.C. §1865) are:

- You must be a citizen of the United States of America, at least 18 years of age, who has resided for a period of one year within the judicial district;
- You must be able to read, write, speak, and understand the English language;
- You must be physically and mentally capable to render satisfactory jury service; and
- You must not have felony charge(s) pending against you, or have been convicted of a felony and your civil rights have not been restored.

If you do not meet all the qualifications for jury service, you must provide details on the back of the Questionnaire.

### **Am I exempt from jury service?**

The Jury Act (28 U.S.C. §1863(b)(5)(B)(6)) specifies that the following persons are barred from jury service on the ground that they are exempt:

- Members in **active service** of the Armed Forces of the United States;

- Members of any governmental fire or police departments; and
- Public officers of the United States, state or local governments (elected to public office or directly appointed by one elected to office) who are actively engaged in the performance of official duties.

### **Can I be excused from jury service?**

The Juror Qualification Questionnaire simply allows the Court to determine if a person is **qualified** to serve as a juror. If a person is selected to serve and receives a summons to report, he/she may ask to be excused at that time. There are limited permanent excuses that may be granted at the Qualification Questionnaire stage. If you fall under one of these categories and you wish to be excused, please complete the answers on-line or fill in the appropriate bubble on the form and provide the necessary additional information required on-line or on the back of your Questionnaire.

#### GROUNDS FOR REQUESTING A PERMANENT EXCUSE

- Persons over 70 years of age [you must provide date of birth];
- Persons who have, within the past two years, served on a federal grand or petit jury panel (see 28 U.S.C.§1866(e)) [you must provide date served and court name];
- Persons having responsibility for providing in-home care and custody of a child or children under the age of ten (10) whose health and/or safety would be jeopardized by their absence for jury service [you must provide ages of child(ren)];
- Persons who are essential to the care of aged or infirm persons [you must specify your relationship to the person requiring care and whether they are aged or infirm];
- Persons who work full-time as an attorney;
- Persons who work full-time as a physician;
- Persons who work full-time as a dentist;
- Persons who work full-time as a registered nurse;
- Persons who are full-time members of the clergy or of a religious order; or
- Voluntary safety personnel serving a public agency as a non-compensated firefighter or a member of an ambulance or rescue squad [you must provide name of agency and your position]; or

### **Why are there questions about race, ethnicity, and gender on the Juror Qualification Questionnaire?**

These questions may seem inappropriate but they are not. In fact, this information is solicited from you in order to protect and preserve our constitutionally guaranteed right to a trial by a jury of our peers randomly selected from a fair cross-section of the community.

Federal law requires you, as a prospective juror, to indicate your race. Further, the law states, in part: “No citizen [of the United States of America] shall be excluded from service as a grand or petit juror in the district courts of the United States . . . on account of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or economic status.”

In order to preserve the integrity of the jury selection process, the Court follows a system of checks and balances designed to reveal any systematic bias or discrimination. The Court needs your assistance in compiling this data, so please take the time to completely answer this question.

Thank you in advance for your prompt response to your Questionnaire.