



State of Connecticut - Judicial Branch
Performance Management Unit
Jury – Performance Measures

Accomplishments Overview

The public's participation in the jury process is one of the foundations of our democratic society and, as such, is fundamental to our system of justice in which people are entitled to a jury of their peers. The judicial system needs people who are willing and able to serve as jurors. Unless people are educated on the importance of jury service, provided with clear information on the process, and given resources they need ...to serve, they will be reluctant to participate. (Strategic Plan for the Connecticut Judicial Branch, Public Service and Trust Commission, 2008)

The Judicial Branch Public Service and Trust Commission established the Jury Committee and its subcommittees to study and evaluate the Branch's jury system under the Strategic Plan's Outcome Goal: Delivery of Services. This outcome goal states "The Judicial Branch will provide effective, uniform and consistent delivery of services by enhancing the management of court practices."

The Jury Committee defined its mission as determining whether the Judicial Branch uses best practices for jury utilization while ensuring that sufficient jurors are available to meet the needs of the judicial system. The committee pursued this mission by: studying the jury systems of other states and localities as well as the federal system to identify best practices, examining the Judicial Branch's jury system in the context of the American Bar Association (ABA) Principles for Juries and Jury Trials, evaluating the appropriateness of expanding the Jury Administrator's role in the oversight of the jury process, and identifying the different practices used by each of the 19 court locations that summon jurors and making recommendations for standardization of those procedures.

In 2009, the Jury Committee and its subcommittees released 35 recommendations that addressed topics impacting potential jurors, including: Before Court Appearance, Arrival, Voir Dire, and Juror Selection. More than one subcommittee identified the following topics as

significant: pre-screening of jurors, methods of providing information to jurors, confidentiality and privacy, and juror orientation.

In addition, the Jury Communications and Review Committee (JCRC) was formed to: develop procedures; review, maintain, update and recommend revisions of forms, publications and all other relevant media; and provide timely and accurate information regarding jury service.

Ongoing jury activities are organized into the following three measurable areas: improving jury utilization, providing assistance to potential jurors, and performing outreach activities.

Improving jury utilization

Most Connecticut residents who experience our state court system will do so as jurors. More than 550,000 individuals are randomly selected each year from source lists obtained from the State Departments of Motor Vehicles, Labor and Revenue services, as well as the central voter registry of the Secretary of the State. Of the total number of individuals summoned each year, about 87,000 will serve. More than 90 percent will complete their service in one day.

The Judicial Branch must balance its statutory responsibility to provide the judicial system with an adequate number of jurors, while simultaneously minimizing juror and employer inconvenience, thus enhancing the juror experience while mitigating costs borne by their employers. The impact of accurate, reliable data cannot be overstated given the number of Connecticut citizens who are summoned annually. The utilization of those summoned should be as efficient as possible, for the convenience of the juror, mitigation of the employer burden, and fulfillment of the Branch's legal obligation. Utilization is the measure used to evaluate effective and efficient jury administration and is the standard recommended by the National Center for State Courts. CT Superior Courts had a utilization rate of 32% in Jury Year 2013.

Providing assistance to potential jurors

Since its inception, the JCRC has completed many tasks that assist jurors, including the development of a jury handbook. In 2012, the JCRC expanded online services to allow jurors to confirm or postpone their service through the Branch website. The page entitled "Answer Your Jury Summons" provides sixteen areas of information to potential jurors.

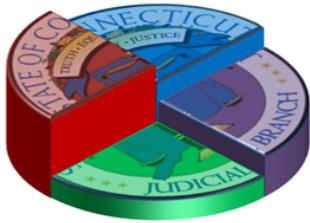
<http://www.jud.ct.gov/jury/answer.htm>

Jury Administration manages the Jury Call Center that is staffed until 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, to answer questions from the thousands of Connecticut residents who are summoned for service. Each year, the Call Center handles more than 100,000 calls from those summoned, and answers questions ranging from postponing service to employment concerns.

Performing outreach activities

Public education is an integral part of the jury administration process. A potential juror educated on the importance of jury service is a juror who is more likely to serve, more likely to understand the importance of their role and more likely to benefit from the experience. Jury Administration staff is dedicated to educating the community on the importance of jury service. In this role staff makes presentations at schools and civic organizations. Staff has also been featured on local radio shows. Through these efforts there has been an increase in the level of awareness of and knowledge about the jury function in our democratic legal system.

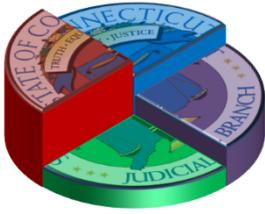
The collection and evaluation of jury-related data is ongoing, as the Branch strives to improve jury services. Specific performance measures related to improving jury utilization, providing assistance to potential jurors and performing outreach activities can be found on the following page.



State of Connecticut Judicial Branch
Performance Management Unit
 Jury Administration - Performance Measures

		Jury Court Year		
		2011 9/1/10 - 8/31/11	2012 9/1/11 - 8/31/12	2013 9/1/12 - 8/31/13
Activity 1: Activity 1: Improve jury utilization				
Performance Measures:	(a) Number of summons issued	546,224	537,041	560,908
	(b) Number of jurors who served*	96,404	92,851	87,600
	(c) Cancelled by Court	148,307	128,915	141,140
	(d) Total disqualified (Disqualified and Undeliverable)	251,974	261,336	275,372
	(e) Excused by Court	3,407	3,008	2,513
	(f) Served but Not Voir Dired - Count	11,384	14,276	12,269
	(g) Served but Not Voir Dired - Rate (i.e., Served Not Voir Dired/Jurors Who Served)	12%	15%	14%
	(h) Utilization Rate (i.e., Jurors Served/Jurors Scheduled to Appear)	33%	35%	32%
Activity 2: Provide assistance to potential jurors				
Performance Measures:	(a) Annual Jury call center volume	126,021	123,224	N/A
	(b) Monthly average Jury call center volume	10,502	10,269	N/A
	(c) Daily average Jury call center volume	468	456	N/A
Activity 3: Perform outreach				
Performance Measures:	(a) Schools visited	26	26	N/A
	(b) Presentations given	100	77	N/A
	(c) Number of Students	2,927	2,128	N/A

*includes individuals who postponed service from previous year



State of Connecticut – Judicial Branch

The Jury Process

Observations, Trends and Recommendations

Observations:

- 87,600 individuals served at least one day in Jury Year (JY) 2013.
- In JY 2013, over 140,000 individuals scheduled to appear were cancelled by the court (72% of the CT state courts cancelled more than one-half of the potential jurors).
- Bridgeport maintains both a relatively low cancellation rate (25% in JY 2013) and a low rate of individuals who are scheduled to appear and are not voir dired (9% in JY 2013).
- The “No Show” rate for jury service is higher in the large urban areas.

Trends:

- For the past three years, New Haven has maintained the highest rate of jurors required to appear that were sent home without being voir dired.
- Over the past three years, on average, 50% of the individuals required to appear statewide have had their jury service cancelled.
- The total number of jurors who have served at least one-day has declined 4 consecutive years.

Recommendations:

- Reduce the population of potential jurors that appear and are subsequently not voir dired.
- The Branch should examine the feasibility of increasing notice to jurors who will not be utilized for their upcoming juror service from 1 day to 2 or more days before the required service date.
- The Jury Utilization Rate, as constituted, encourages court locations to require the appearance of jurors rather than cancelling the juror the night before (i.e., despite not needing the juror the following day). New Haven had the highest Utilization Rate among the 19 courthouses. It also had the highest rate of jurors who appeared and were not voir dired. Consistent with other states, the Performance Measurement Unit recommends that the formula be modified to avoid treating cancellations as a negative event.