

# COVID-19 Juror Info

The Judges and staff of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana are committed to taking all reasonable measures to protect the safety and well-being of jurors called to serve during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are closely following and reinforcing guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local and state health authorities and have taken precautionary measures to limit the potential spread of COVID-19 while also ensuring that we are able to continue with essential judicial proceedings.

The following are some of the preventative measures the Court has taken to "stop the spread" of COVID-19 and keep the public safe.

- By Order of the Court, **all vaccinated and non-vaccinated persons** summoned for jury service, and court staff interacting with people reporting for jury service, must wear face coverings while in rooms and public spaces designated for juror check-in, orientation, and related activities until entering a courtroom.
- Once jurors arrive in the courtroom, the presiding Judge will instruct you on face covering policies that are in effect in the courtroom, jury room, and other spaces. Judges are authorized to ask about individuals' vaccination status.
- All other persons entering any courthouse in the Southern District of Indiana, who are not fully vaccinated are required to wear a face covering at all times, unless they provide a written exemption by a medical professional or a Judge orders otherwise. By the CDC's definition, a person is fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines; or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.
- All visitors are required to answer [health screening questions](#) before being allowed to enter a courthouse in the Southern District of Indiana, and employees conduct self-health screenings each morning before reporting to work.
- The courthouse's janitorial staff conduct enhanced cleaning in all public spaces at least once per day.

Please review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), provided below, for more information relating to the Court's COVID-19 protocols, prevention, and juror protection efforts.

## COVID-19 Symptoms and High-Risk Individuals - FAQs:

### What are COVID-19 Symptoms?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the recognized symptoms of COVID-19 include:

▪ Fever over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit

▪ Diarrhea

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cough</li> <li>▪ Sore throat</li> <li>▪ Shortness of breath</li> <li>▪ Unexplained fatigue</li> <li>▪ New loss of smell or taste</li> <li>▪ Congested/runny nose different from pre-existing allergies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>▪ Abdominal pain</li> <li>▪ Headache</li> <li>▪ Chills</li> <li>▪ Unexplained muscle aches</li> </ul> |
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## Who is considered to be at "high risk" for illness related to COVID-19?

The categories of individuals that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considers to be "high risk" for severe illness from COVID-19, include:

- People in their 50s are at higher risk for severe illness than people in their 40s. Similarly, people in their 60s or 70s are, in general, at higher risk for severe illness than people in their 50s. The greatest risk for severe illness from COVID-19 is among those aged 85 or older.
- People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:
  - People with cancer
  - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - People who have serious heart conditions
  - People who are immunocompromised. Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications
  - People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
  - People with diabetes
  - People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
  - People with liver disease

## Receiving a Summons to Appear for Jury Service During the COVID-19 Pandemic - FAQs:

### If I receive a Summons to Appear for jury service during the COVID-19 pandemic, how can I safely pre-check-in for jury service?

If you receive a Summons to Appear, issued by the United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, please follow the steps below to safely check-in for jury service:

STEP 1: Confirm your appearance either [online](#) or by telephone at [\(877\) 803-2073](tel:8778032073).

STEP 2: Within 48 hours **PRIOR** to your reporting date & time: Complete a self-health screening and inform the jury office of any COVID-19 related symptoms or exposure, including:

New loss of taste or smell	Fever or chills	Cough
Sore Throat	Shortness of breath	Muscle Pain
Nausea or Vomiting	Diarrhea	Congestion
Headache	Fatigue	Runny Nose

Also, please indicate if you believe you have recently been exposed to a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or who is showing any of the symptoms listed above. If any of the above does apply to you, please send a detailed email to [jury@insd.uscourts.gov](mailto:jury@insd.uscourts.gov) or send your explanation via FAX to 317-229-3727 immediately. Please be sure you include your name and participant number in the email or FAX.

STEP 3: The evening prior to your reporting date: After 6:00 p.m., call and confirm via telephone that the trial is scheduled to proceed as planned, and provide the Court with updated information regarding any COVID-19-related exposure or symptoms.

### **How do I safely and physically check-in on the day jury service is scheduled to begin during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Upon entering the courthouse, a court staff member will meet you inside the door to conduct a contactless ID check and a COVID-19 health screening. That court staff member will be wearing a mask.

Consistent with the Court's General Orders and policies related to COVID-19, you are required to wear a face covering during the jury check-in process. Once you enter a courtroom to begin your jury service, the judge will instruct you on masking in the courtroom and other spaces.

### **Deferring Jury Service – FAQs:**

**May I request to be excused from Jury Service for circumstances related to COVID-19?**

**Yes.** If you wish to defer your jury service due to circumstances related to COVID-19, you must first complete the supplemental questionnaire that was mailed to you with the Notice of Term of Service Letter. You can submit the supplemental questionnaire either [online](#) or by mail at 46 East Ohio Street, Room 105, Indianapolis, IN, 46204.

Once you have submitted your supplemental questionnaire, you may then request a deferral of jury service based on circumstances related to COVID-19. Please submit your request for deferral to [jury@insd.uscourts.gov](mailto:jury@insd.uscourts.gov) or by mail at 46 East Ohio Street, Room 105, Indianapolis, IN, 46204. Your deferral request should specifically include details if you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, if you fall in a "high risk" COVID-19 category, or if any other COVID-19-related circumstances are applicable to you.

### **What are other COVID-19 circumstances for which I may request to defer jury service?**

- You are a healthcare provider or caregiver to a COVID-19 patient
- You are quarantined due to exposure to COVID-19
- You are unable to wear a face covering and/or maintain social distancing during the time you are physically present in the courthouse (please indicate specific medical reasons)
- You develop symptoms before the date you are scheduled to appear
- Any other COVID-19 related circumstance applies to you

Keep in mind that while a circumstance related to COVID-19 is a basis to request a deferral, your deferral request must be evaluated by the Court.

### **I think I or someone in my household may have COVID-19. Should I really be serving as a juror?**

If you believe you or someone in your household may have contracted COVID-19, you should not serve as a juror. Before requesting a deferral of jury service, you must first complete the supplemental questionnaire that was mailed with the Notice of Term of Service Letter. You can submit the supplemental questionnaire either online or by mail to Jury Administration, 46 East Ohio Street, Room 105, Indianapolis, IN, 46204.

Once you have submitted your supplemental questionnaire, you should then request a deferral based on your belief you or someone in your household may have the COVID-19 virus. Please submit your request for deferral to [jury@insd.uscourts.gov](mailto:jury@insd.uscourts.gov). Please keep in mind that your deferral request must be evaluated by the Court.

### **I just received a "Notice of Term of Service" letter, telling me that I could be called to serve as a juror. But, due to COVID-19, my children attend school remotely or virtually. There is no one who can be home with them to care for them during the day. What can I do?**

The Court certainly understands this concern. You may wish to seek a deferral from jury service on this basis, but you must first complete the supplemental questionnaire that was mailed to you with the

Notice of Term of Service Letter. You can submit the supplemental questionnaire either [online](#) or by mail to Jury Administration, 46 East Ohio Street, Room 105, Indianapolis, IN, 46204.

Once you have submitted your supplemental questionnaire, you may request a deferral or excuse based on the details of your specific situation. Please be sure to give as much detail as possible so that a Judge can fully consider your request, including the age of your children and your employment status. Submit your request for deferral or excuse to [jury@insd.uscourts.gov](mailto:jury@insd.uscourts.gov).

If you are called for jury service through a "Summons to Appear," your request for deferral or excuse will be submitted to a Judge for consideration.

## **Face Coverings and Enhanced Cleaning Efforts - FAQs:**

### **What are the Court's face covering requirements?**

Consistent with the Court's General Orders and policies related to COVID-19, **all fully vaccinated and non-vaccinated** persons summoned for jury service, and court staff interacting with you, must wear face coverings while in rooms and public spaces designated for juror check-in, orientation, and related activities. **Once you enter a courtroom to begin your jury service, the judge will instruct you on masking procedures in the courtroom and other spaces.**

### **Will Personal Protective Equipment ("PPE") be available?**

Face coverings will be available for all persons who enter the courthouse, including individuals who are called to serve as jurors. For court proceedings, the Judge may order that certain individuals (attorneys, parties, witnesses, and/or jurors) wear a clear, plastic face shield rather than a face covering. If you are asked to wear a face shield, the court will provide one to you.

In addition, hand sanitizer, wipes, and /or cleaning solution and paper towels will be placed at frequently used places in the jury assembly areas and the courtroom.

### **Does the Court have in place an enhanced cleaning regimen during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The courthouse's janitorial staff conduct "enhanced cleaning" in all public spaces at least once per day. Enhanced cleaning includes wiping down all frequently used surfaces with disinfectant, including tabletops, handrails, light switches, doorknobs, microphones, etc. In between enhanced cleaning sessions other court staff will wipe down frequently touched surfaces using disinfectant wipes and sprays. Please do your part by washing your hands or using hand sanitizer frequently.

### **How often are restrooms cleaned? What about vending machines and break areas?**

All public restrooms and break rooms are disinfected twice a day. Vending areas are disinfected regularly.

## **Serving on a Jury During the COVID-19 Pandemic: - FAQs**

## **I am healthy but serving as a juror right now makes me really nervous. Is there anyone I can talk to?**

The Court completely understands that many people may be nervous or have concerns about being asked to serve as a juror in the middle of a pandemic. Please take a moment to read about what the Court is doing to keep its employees, litigants, jurors, and any members of the public safe. If you still have concerns after reviewing the Court's protocols related to COVID-19 prevention, please contact the jury office by phone at [\(317\) 229-3743](tel:3172293743), email at [jury@insd.uscourts.gov](mailto:jury@insd.uscourts.gov), or by mail at Jury Administration, 46 East Ohio Street, Room 105, Indianapolis, IN, 46204.

## **What should I do if I feel I have been exposed to the virus while serving on jury duty?**

If you are selected to serve as a juror and, while serving, you believe you were potentially exposed to the virus, you become symptomatic of the virus, and/or receive a positive diagnosis of the virus, please contact the Court's Jury Administrator at [\(317\) 229-3747](tel:3172293747) or email [jury@insd.uscourts.gov](mailto:jury@insd.uscourts.gov).

## **What about lunch?**

The Court may order the Clerk to provide jurors with a lunch. If not, individuals called for jury service are allowed to bring a cold lunch, packed in a cooler (upon entrance to the building, you will need to advise the security officers that you are a juror, and your lunch and cooler will be inspected). You will be able to leave your lunch with your personal effects while you are in the courtroom. Or, you may obtain lunch from one of the many restaurants that are available within walking distance of the Courthouse.

You will be able to eat your lunch either in the courthouse or outside, as you prefer. If you eat in the courthouse, jury staff will provide you with a clean eating space for lunch.

## **What if I am sequestered?**

If an Order is entered to sequester jurors during trial, the Clerk's Office, at the direction of the Court, will provide and pay for meals and/or lodging for jurors during the trial and deliberations.