



Superior Court of California County of Orange ***News Release***

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Orange County Superior Court Celebrates Special Juror Appreciation Week October 26–30, 2020

Santa Ana, CA – The Orange County Superior Court will celebrate and recognize our county’s citizens who answered the call of duty and stepped up to serve on juries during the pandemic, with a special Juror Appreciation Week from October 26 to October 30.

“The fact that we held 100 jury trials since the partial reopening of the Court in May is a testament to the commitment of our citizens to the Constitution and our shared values. Jurors are an integral part of our justice system, they guarantee the right to a trial where all can be heard and judged by their peers,” said **Orange County Presiding Judge Kirk Nakamura**. “We could not have provided access to justice through jury trials during this pandemic if not for the great response of our citizens,” he added.

The Court resumed criminal trials in May, kicking off the “**Safe Access to Justice Initiative**,” a program designed to assure strict enforcement of safety precautions in order to protect jurors and all members of the public who enter Court facilities.

“I was impressed by the way everyone went out of their way to do their best during these trying COVID times,” said **Jodi Greenbaum, an Orange County citizen**, who answered the call to serve our community as a juror. “First, Judge Cynthia Herrera set a professional and caring tone by speaking to us about our duty as jurors. Twice, Judge Jeannie Joseph called us in to tell us that even though we weren’t chosen as jurors, we served an important purpose,” Ms. Greenbaum added.

“It wasn’t just the judges. Everyone in the courthouse showed kindness, from the deputies at the entrance to the workers, who smiled, cleaned down the courtroom and explained simple directions as if they were doing it for the first time,” she stressed.

Judge Thomas Delaney, who leads the “**Safe Access to Justice Initiative**,” noted the Court’s commitment to keeping everyone healthy and safe. “As we conduct jury trials, we are also implementing strict cleaning procedures and physical distancing protocols to support the health and wellness of everyone that enters Court facilities,” he said.

Meanwhile, the Court is capitalizing on the use of technology to significantly reduce the number of jurors summoned to serve.

“We are using cutting edge technology and data analysis to create efficiencies that will allow the Court to reduce the overall number of jurors needed to provide access to justice,” said **Court Executive Officer and Jury Commissioner David Yamasaki**. “We will be able to reduce the numbers of jurors

summoned to the point that fairly soon, any citizen who serves in Orange County can expect to be called to serve no more than once every two years.”

As the pandemic is continuing to hamper Court operations, and to alleviate concerns regarding physical distancing, the Court recently implemented a mobile device self-check-in process for jurors. “Our jurors may now choose to skip the check-in line altogether and have a seat directly in the jury assembly room,” said **Jury Services Manager Pete Hernandez**, adding “By accessing a dedicated Court network for jurors on their mobile device, they can self-check-in for service and obtain access to the free WiFi. All they need to use is their 9-digit juror ID number that is printed on their summons. It’s as simple as that.”

In pre-COVID times, millions of Californians statewide participated in jury service. Last year:

- About 9 million people were summoned to jury service, over 652,000 in Orange County alone;
- Over 4 million prospective jurors were eligible and available to serve;
- Approximately 80 percent of prospective jurors completed service in one day; and
- In Orange County, more than 900 jury trials (criminal and civil) were held in the past few years.

The recognition and appreciation for jurors usually takes place the second week of May, established as Juror Appreciation Week by a special resolution passed by the California Legislature in 1998 to acknowledge the important contributions of citizens who devote their time and effort in making the cherished right of trial by jury a reality. The pandemic forced the Court to forego the planned celebrations in May and move them to October.

For more information on jury service, visit www.occourts.org and click on “Jury Service,” or visit the [Jury Service section](#) of the California Courts website.

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