

**SUPERIOR COURT  
OF THE  
STATE OF WASHINGTON  
FOR PIERCE COUNTY**

GAROLD E. JOHNSON, PRESIDING JUDGE  
Linda Schramm, *Judicial Assistant*  
DEPARTMENT 10  
(253)798-7572

334 COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
930 TACOMA AVENUE SOUTH  
TACOMA, WA 98402-2108

May 8, 2020

The month of May has historically been jury appreciation month at the County-City Building. We use this opportunity to express our gratitude to our jurors who participate in the jury process throughout the year. It is also an opportunity to celebrate the critical role juries have in American justice. During May Superior Court Judges and Administration staff attend a County Council meeting where we acclaim the work and recognize the personal sacrifice of our jurors. The Council formerly signs a proclamation declaring the month to be Jury Appreciation Month. Throughout the rest of May, we hand out small tokens to our jurors as a symbol of our appreciation.

This May is of course, unique. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, jury service is more problematic than ever before.

Prior to March 16, 2020, it was quite common to have more than 350 jurors attend orientation each Monday morning at the County-City Building. However, with the necessity of COVID spacing we are limited to about 25 jurors in our jury orientation room. Jury trials have been suspended by order of the Washington State Supreme Court until after July 6, 2020. We are using the intervening time to prepare to safeguard our facilities and adopt practices that limit the risk of pandemic exposure to our jurors.

The Superior Court is blessed to be working with dedicated stakeholders who are doing their best to assist. Facilities Management, Security, Sheriff's Office, Jail, Prosecutor, Department of Assigned Counsel and the Tacoma-Pierce County Bar Association are working with us daily to find short, medium and long-term solutions to juror safe spacing requirements. Together we have toured several buildings to locate off sight facilities that can be secured from a law enforcement standpoint, allow for access needs from the jail's perspective, can be cleaned and maintained to Facilities standards and allow for the proper jury questioning requirements for attorneys. The collective goal is to provide a safe environment for jurors.

Our justice system cannot function without the help of our citizens who serve as jurors. Justice in our Municipal, District and Superior courts depends on jury participation. We certainly miss our jurors. We look forward to the day when they are welcomed back. In the meantime, the entire team is working very hard to ensure the facilities they come back to are clean, healthy and safe.

Hope to see you in July.

Sincerely,



Garold E. Johnson  
Presiding Judge  
Pierce County Superior Court