

**Hear it From the Judge**

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## **Juror Questionnaire Now Available Online**

As I have written in the space previously, jury service is indeed as much an honor as a duty. However, such honor includes responsibilities. One basic responsibility of jury service is completion of the Juror Questionnaire when one is first selected for a jury term. A new development is that citizens now have the option of completing the jury questionnaire online.

Minnesota citizens who receive a summons for jury service are required by law to complete a Juror Qualification Questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine if the summoned citizen possesses an exception to serve on a jury.

Among the more common exceptions to the obligation of jury service are the following: the summoned citizen does not reside in the county from which that citizen was summoned; the citizen is under age 18; the citizen is over age 70 years of age and desires not to serve; the citizen has served on a jury within the past four years; or the citizen has a physical or mental disability which may preclude the person from serving on the jury. There are other exceptions. One such exception - which applies to few citizens but has occurred to this writer - is that judges are excused from jury service.

Traditionally these and other questions must be answered by the citizen on a written questionnaire which must be returned to the county which issued the summons. Now, citizens in all 87 counties in Minnesota have the option of completing this questionnaire online.

Hennepin County piloted this online questionnaire over the past two years. Approximately 60% of the over 40,000 Hennepin County residents chose to complete their questionnaire online. This new online service is part of the Judicial Branch's efforts to increase its use of technology to become more efficient and to become more accessible to the citizens.

To complete the juror questionnaire online citizens will be directed to the Judicial Branch website at

. Once here, the citizen will be prompted to click on the Juror Qualification Questionnaire option. Once the citizen reaches this location, the citizen will be prompted to enter his or her name, juror number and a PIN number. This information will be provided to the citizen on the jury summons they receive from the county from which they are asked to serve. Once fully logged in, the questionnaire will explain the questions and give the citizen an opportunity to provide an-

swers.

At the Judicial Branch jury website, citizens will observe additional information which explains jury service. Included at this site is a video citizens may watch, a list of frequently asked questions, an overview of jury service as well as other helpful information.

Because the Judicial Branch understands that, though jury service is indeed an honor for citizens, there are inconveniences inherent in the system. Therefore, the goal is to provide some potential way to reduce such an inconvenience with the online Juror Qualification Questionnaire.