



Jury service is more manageable than ever for California employers. With our one-day or one-trial jury system, as well as increased access to telephone and web services, it's easy to understand and plan for your employee's absence during jury service.

It's Different. Recognizing the realities of the workplace, the California courts have implemented the one-day or one-trial system to make jury service as manageable as possible for everyone. It works like this:

Your employee is summoned and appears at the courthouse at a designated time (or, at some courts, simply telephones or visits a website). If the employee is not selected for a jury that day, they are excused and have satisfied their obligation for at least a year. Or if the employee is selected for a jury, service in that trial satisfies the employee's obligation for at least a year.

It's Better. The one-day or one-trial system has taken the waiting out of jury service, streamlining the process to minimize the impacts on your business and your employees. In most cases, potential jurors report for one day and they've completed their service for at least a year. For employees, this reduces unproductive waiting time and the potential for lost income. The system also works for employers because it reduces the uncertainty of when and for how long your employees will be unavailable for work, and minimizes the economic and operational inconvenience of employee absences.

It's the Law. One-day or one-trial jury service is a major reform for the state's court system. What hasn't changed is that jury service is a duty under state law. It remains a legal obligation for employers to allow employees to serve without fear of harassment or dismissal resulting from their jury service. The California Labor Code prohibits employers from firing or harassing an employee who is summoned to serve as a juror.

Please weigh all these factors when considering your company's jury service compensation policy. It's another way to show support for American ideals, for your community, and for your employees.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about an employer's role in the judicial system, please visit the California Courts website at www.courts.ca.gov/juryinfo.htm

On the employer pages of the site, you'll find a sample policy and more information about the benefits of the one-day or one-trial system.

Send your comments and questions to JuryInfo@jud.ca.gov

ONE DAY OR ONE TRIAL— IT'S BETTER FOR BUSINESS

Information for Employers About California's Jury System

Judicial Council of California
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688
415-865-4200

www.courts.ca.gov

ONE-DAY OR ONE-TRIAL JURY SERVICE

*It's Different.
It's Better.
It's the Law.*

Frequently Asked Questions

Can an employee seek a postponement of jury service?

Yes, recognizing that some businesses may be seasonal, the courts will allow in most cases one postponement of service to a date chosen by the employee. The deferred date usually must be within 90 days of the original date. This flexibility enables employees to select a more convenient time to serve.

My business can't afford to let our employees serve. What can I do to get my employees out of their jury service?

The courts understand that jury service may pose challenges to both employers and their employees, and that is why the one-day or one-trial system has been adopted. However, the employer has a legal obligation to let the employee serve without fear of harassment or dismissal resulting from jury service. The California Labor Code prohibits an employer from firing or harassing an employee who is summoned to serve as a juror. Employees who are harassed or fired can file a claim with the Labor Board, and employers can also be prosecuted criminally and face a misdemeanor charge if found guilty.

Is it mandatory for my firm to pay an employee during jury service?

Employers are not required by law to compensate employees while they serve on a jury, but many do. These employers recognize that without juries our legal system will come to a halt and that financial hardship may discourage employees from fulfilling their civic duty.

Will the state reimburse me if I compensate my employees to fulfill their jury service?

California pays jurors \$15 every day starting on the second day of service, except employees of governmental and other public entities who receive full pay and benefits from their employers while on jury service. In addition, jurors receive 34¢ for each mile they travel to and from court, starting on the second day of service. Alternatively, jurors who take public transit are eligible to receive up to \$12 per day, starting on the first day of service. Ask your local jury office for information about your court's payment process.

Are human resources guidelines available to help my firm adopt a jury duty compensation policy?

The California court system wants to make it as easy and convenient as possible for businesses to adopt an employee compensation policy. Please check the California Courts website to download a sample policy, as well as to find additional information about the one-day or one-trial system.

Can I stay in communication with my employee during a trial?

You are free to communicate with your employee during trial recess at the employee's discretion. However, you are not permitted to communicate in any way about the trial with your employee.

Why Compensate?

It's an Investment in America

Many prospective jurors cite a loss of pay as a legitimate reason for not serving on a jury. Yet juries play an important and crucial role in our country's democratic process. Without them, the legal system would grind to a halt. Your help is essential to ensuring that all citizens are available to serve on juries when called. One of the ways you can help is to consider compensating your employees during jury service if you don't already.

It's an Investment in Your Employee

Lack of compensation while performing jury duty, which after all is an important civic duty and honor, places a financial burden on many employees. Paying your staff during their service could contribute to boosting morale as they recognize that their employer values their civic service. Offering paid jury service is a values statement about your company and may differentiate your business in offering a competitive employment package.

It's an Investment in Your Business

Businesses benefit from the jury system, too! Civil litigation in particular is filled with a variety of business-related disputes, including contracts, environmental issues, product defects, malpractice, intellectual fraud, and wrongful termination. Wouldn't you want people like yourself and your employees deciding these cases?

FACTS ABOUT JURY SERVICE

FACT: Four out of five people who appear at the courthouse in response to a juror summons are excused after just one day. Many of those who are excused may not even need to appear at the courthouse.

FACT: Statewide, some 10 million residents may receive a juror summons this year; of those, just 180,000 will actually serve on a jury.

FACT: The average length of a jury trial in California is just three to five days.

FACT: Loss of income is a primary concern for prospective jurors.

DO THE MATH. Try thinking about it this way: Employee John makes \$35,000 per year. What do you think is the most important benefit your company provides John?

Benefits	Total Annual Cost
14 vacation days	\$1,900
10 sick days	\$1,350
8 paid holidays	\$1,100
vision, dental, and medical insurance	\$3,600
tuition reimbursement	\$1,900
1-day jury service or 5-day trial	\$100-\$700