



Superior Court of California
County of Mendocino
100 N. State St., Ukiah, CA 95482
www.mendocino.courts.ca.gov/

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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JUROR COMPLIANCE HEARINGS HAVE BEGUN IN UKIAH

Judge Keith Faulder has presided over the first two juror compliance calendars in April and May. A random sample of potential jurors who had disregarded their jury summons were ordered to appear before the court to explain why they did not comply with repeated attempts to summon them for jury duty. For the first two calendars, the court ordered 87 people to appear at these hearings. Those who appeared at the hearings were given an opportunity to explain to the judge why they did not comply with their summons. Some had legitimate reasons for not appearing and were dismissed by the court. Many simply did not understand that jury service is a requirement of every U.S. citizen unless there is a legitimate medical or other reason to be excused. Judge Faulder gave jury appearance dates to the jurors who appeared at the hearings and were eligible to perform jury duty and ordered them to come to the courthouse ready to serve on those dates.

Even with a direct order from the court, a number of jurors did not come to the hearings as ordered. These potential jurors are now subject to a monetary sanction and will be receiving notices that they must pay a fine of \$600 for disregarding a direct order to appear from the court. These fine notices will be mailed out by the middle of June. California Code of Civil Procedure section 209 gives courts the authority to impose monetary sanctions on individuals that fail to show up for jury duty.

Court Executive Officer Kim Turner stated, "The goal of these hearings is to impress upon the public the importance of jury service and the obligation of U.S. citizens to participate in the jury system. Every person ordered to appear at a juror non-compliance hearing had received at least three summons and had never communicated with the court. The number of people that have failed to appear for jury service in the last couple of years has been so significant that the court has been unable to move forward with some jury trials and has had to postpone them for lack of a sufficient jury pool. We hope that by raising awareness about the importance of jury service, we will have better turnout and fewer delays in bringing court cases to resolution." Ms. Turner continued, stating, "Our goal is not to collect fines from members of the community but simply to encourage Mendocino residents who are U.S. citizens to take the summons seriously and to fulfill this obligation. This is a chance to participate in a meaningful way in the Mendocino community. In fact, most people who serve on a jury report that the experience was worthwhile, interesting, and a rare opportunity to participate in ensuring a fair and impartial outcome for defendants, victims and the general public."

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