



**Judicial Branch of Arizona
in Maricopa County**

Contact:

Vincent Funari, Public Information Officer

Vincent.Funari@jbazmc.maricopa.gov

602.506.7032

Maricopa County Superior Court Celebrates Jury Appreciation Week *Jurors are a Vital Part of American Democracy*

PHOENIX (April 27, 2022) - The American justice system depends on citizens to serve as jurors.

To show appreciation and recognize the contributions of jurors performing their civic duty, the Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa is celebrating Juror Appreciation Week beginning on May 2. For jurors who report for service during Juror Appreciation Week, the Court has planned special activities that include in-person greetings from judges twice per day as well as food and refreshments for jurors. Also, one seated jury panel will receive \$15 gift cards for lunch at a nearby restaurant of their choosing.

“Our democracy relies on the active participation of citizens to ensure and protect the freedoms we all enjoy,” said Raymond L. Billotte, Maricopa County Superior Court administrator and jury commissioner. “One of the most important responsibilities we all share is to willingly participate when called as a prospective Juror. By doing so, we serve our democracy and our fellow citizens and affirm our system of justice is ‘of the people, by the people, and for the people.’”

Jury service is often perceived by the public as time-consuming and inconvenient. To overcome those negative feelings and barriers, the Court launched a campaign, *Fair Because I Was There*, to promote the importance of jury participation and eliminate jury service misperceptions. That theme – and appreciation for the service of all jurors – will be promoted on Valley media throughout Jury Appreciation Week.

The Court is continually looking for ways to make the jury selection process more efficient. In June of 2020, the Court launched a prescreening program where jurors can request a hardship online before reporting in-person. The requests must be submitted to the Jury Commissioner’s Office in writing prior to the prospective juror’s service date. The excuse may also be [faxed or emailed to the jury office](#).

“Roughly 80 percent of all jurors who walk through our doors have been prescreened for hardships. This saves jurors a trip to the courthouse and from missing a day of work. The prescreen process has been a major time saver for judges because they have fewer people to screen for hardships,” Jury Administrator Matthew Martin said.

Jurors are a vital part of American democracy, and all citizens must fulfill their duty and respond to their summons. If a person receives a summons in the mail, they must fill out the juror questionnaire at <https://superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/jury> prior to their arrival. Also, jurors must call after the 5 p.m. the night before they are expected to report to verify if they are needed.

The United States Constitution and the Arizona State Constitution guarantee the right to trial by jury. All Maricopa County residents are obligated by state law to serve as a juror unless they are under the age of 18, not a citizen, do not possess sufficient knowledge of the English language, and/or have been convicted of a felony and their civil rights have not been restored.

#

The Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County is comprised of Superior Court, Adult Probation and Juvenile Probation, which includes juvenile detention. The Judicial Branch in Maricopa County is the fourth largest trial court system in the nation and, along with its 3,000 employees, is dedicated to providing a safe, fair and impartial forum for resolving disputes, enhancing access to services, and providing innovative, evidence-based practices that improve the safety of the community and ensure the public's trust and confidence in the Judicial Branch. For more information, visit www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.