



# Step 1

# How Federal Jurors are Selected in the Southern District of Iowa

Step 4

## Creating the Master Jury Wheel

The names and addresses of residents presumed eligible for jury duty are *randomly* selected from a data base that includes registered voters, licensed drivers, and state identification card holders who are at least 18 years old and reside in one of the 47 counties that comprise the Southern District of lowa. The resulting list, known as the Master Jury Wheel, consists of names drawn proportionally from each of the 47 counties.

# Step 2

## **Qualifying Jurors**

After the master wheel is created, juror qualification questionnaires are sent to a randomly selected group of potential jurors in the district. The completed questionnaires are reviewed, and those that qualify are placed on a list of qualified jurors.

# Step 3

#### Summoning Qualified Jurors for Jury Duty

Once a month a randomly selected group of these qualified jurors are ordered to make themselves available for jury duty for a specific one month period. Prospective jurors are instructed to contact the Southern District of Iowa each Friday to find out whether they will need to report for a trial the following week.

## Conducting the Voir Dire Process

During the voir dire (juror questioning) process, a judge interviews small groups of prospective jurors to pick a jury for a specific case. Some judges may also allow the lawyers for each side to ask the prospective jurors questions. Jurors who are generally qualified to serve may be excluded from a case for a cause because of factors unique to that case, such as personal acquaintance with an attorney or party.

# Step 5

## **Exercising Peremptory Challenges**

Attorneys for both the plaintiff and defendant are typically afforded the opportunity to excuse a limited number of otherwise qualified jurors without disclosing their reason for doing so. The judge may deny a peremptory challenge if the court believes that a juror is being excluded solely on the basis of their race or ethnicity.

# Step 6

### Seating the Jury

As many as 14 jurors may be seated to hear a case. Sometimes the court will select additional jurors, called alternates, so that the trial can continue if one of the originally selected jurors becomes ill or needs to be excused before the proceedings have finished.



"I am no idealist to believe firmly in the integrity of our courts and in the jury system...A court is only as sound as its jury, and a jury is only as sound as the men and women who make it up" - Harper Lee

