



**Colorado Justice: Celebrating 42 years of fair  
and impartial courts through merit selection**

# news

Colorado Judicial Branch  
Mary J. Mullarkey, Chief Justice  
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April 3, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Jury System Standing Committee of the Colorado Supreme Court survey  
finds jurors feel apprehensive before serving, respected and appreciated after**  
*Court urges employers to encourage employees to serve when called for jury duty*

DENVER, Colo. – Every year thousands of Coloradans are called to serve as jurors in courtrooms across the state. While many who are called for jury duty understand that it is a civic responsibility and happily report when called, others view jury duty as an inconvenience or undue burden. To better understand jurors' attitudes and opinions, the Jury System Standing Committee of the Colorado Supreme Court, chaired by Justice Michael L. Bender, recently conducted a juror survey.

The survey polled nearly 300 individuals who had just completed jury duty and found that prior to serving, many jurors felt “worried,” “irritated” and “frustrated.” The survey found that more than half of the jurors who expressed negative feelings also reported that their attitude had changed by the end of the trial. Of those individuals who reported an attitude change, 98 percent reported the change was for the better.

“The jury system is a critical component of our judicial system,” said Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Mary Mullarkey. “Our goal is to ensure that jurors have a positive experience and leave the courtroom with a feeling a pride and respect for our system of justice.”

The survey also showed that jurors felt respected by the judges and court staff and they appreciated being told what they could expect during the trial and what was expected of them. Many jurors went so far as to state that their faith in the justice system had been renewed during the course of their service.

“I am proud of our judges and jury commissioners for the professionalism they display in working with and communicating with jurors to welcome them and engage them in the process,” Chief Justice Mullarkey said.

The chief justice also noted one area of concern that arose from the survey – a significant number of jurors said one of their top concerns about jury service stemmed from missing work and the reactions of their employers to their being summoned for jury duty. A handful of those surveyed even indicated their employers discouraged them from responding to the jury summons.

“I would like to take this opportunity to ask employers to reflect upon the important role a jury plays in helping others resolve disputes in court,” Chief Justice Mullarkey said. “I hope that all employers will encourage all employees to serve on a jury when called to do so.”

The chief justice reminds all employers that, by law, they must pay their employees regular wages up to \$50 per day for the first three days of jury service. Also under state law, employees who receive a jury summons cannot be threatened, coerced or discharged by their employer for reporting for jury duty as summoned.

The Colorado Judicial Department has created a pamphlet to explain the rights and obligations of both employers and employees regarding jury service. The pamphlet is available online at <http://www.courts.state.co.us/exec/pubed/brochures/jurysystem.pdf>.