

Take Care of Yourself

Your reactions are normal, and healing takes time. Allow yourself time to adjust at your own pace.

Many people who have experienced vicarious trauma find it helpful to spend time with others who are supportive. Consider keeping in touch with other jurors and talking openly about your reactions.

Try to remember that you do not have to work through your feelings on your own. Talk with a friend, family member, clergy member, or mental health professional if you have concerns.

Helpful Tips

- Recognize your symptoms might be from vicarious trauma
- Nurture yourself (call a friend, read a book, take a walk, watch an upbeat movie)
- Exercise (trauma is held in the body, so body movement helps release it)
- Debrief (talk with a mentor or meet with a therapist or counselor)
- Spend time with family/friends (plan a picnic)
- Limit exposure to trauma (refrain from watching violence on TV)
- Utilize spiritual resources

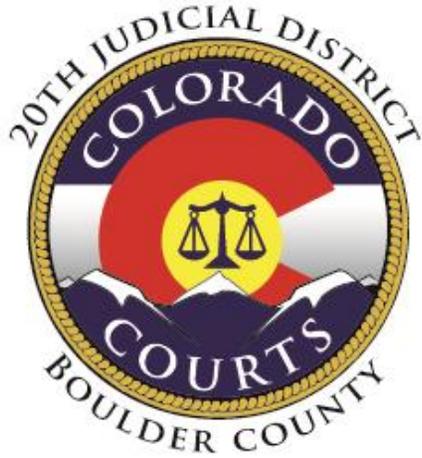
Resources

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Maintaining Your Wellbeing During Difficult Jury Service



Information for Jurors



Jury Duty

Thank you for your participation as a juror. Jurors are a vital and necessary part of our justice system. Being a juror is a unique experience that may be challenging and stressful. Your normal routines were interrupted. You were placed in the company of strangers and were asked to take on the responsibility of making a decision that affects the lives of others. You may have also been exposed to evidence that was graphic, shocking, gruesome, or emotional.

Many jurors have reported having reactions following jury service. These reactions are normal. This pamphlet provides some common reactions and tips for dealing with them.

Common Reactions to Difficult Trials

When a juror listens to testimony about a crime, or sees photographs and other exhibits during a trial, he/she might have vicarious trauma as a result of that exposure.

Having served, you may experience none, some, or all of the following reactions. You may have reactions immediately afterward, or days or weeks later. Your reactions may come and go, and at times be more or less troublesome.

Physical Reactions

- Sleep changes
- Changes in appetite
- Headaches
- Stomach problems
- Increased tension

Behavioral Reactions

- Withdrawal
- Taking increased safety measures for self or loved ones
- Easily startled
- Distressing dreams or nightmares
- Thinking a lot about the trial

Emotional Reactions

- Anxiety or Fear
- Sadness or Depression
- Irritability or Anger
- Numbness
- Overwhelmed
- Helplessness
- Grief or Guilt

Cognitive Reactions

- Thinking a lot about the trial
- Concerns or doubts about the decisions you made
- Repeated thoughts about the evidence that was presented
- Problems with attention, concentration, and memory
- Repeated thoughts about other traumas that you or your loved ones have experienced

Spiritual Reactions

- Anger that bad events are allowed to occur
- Doubts about spiritual beliefs