

JURY DUTY

May a physician be excused from jury duty?

Yes. A state court may excuse a physician from jury duty upon a showing of undue hardship, extreme inconvenience, public necessity or for any reason deemed sufficient by the court for a period of time that the courts deems necessary.¹

What must a physician do to be excused from jury duty?

Upon receiving a summons for jury duty and prior to the date on which the physician is to appear, a physician should call the court clerk's office with an explanation of the extreme inconvenience and public necessity.² The court may require the physician to provide a written explanation of the reasons for the request to be excused from jury duty. The physician should promptly complete and return any forms sent from the court.

What is the penalty for failing to appear for jury duty when summoned?

Intentional failure to appear for jury duty without being excused is a misdemeanor.³

Must physicians provide employees with leaves of absence from employment to serve as jurors when summoned to do so?

Yes. Employers must provide employees with a sufficient leave of absence from employment to serve as jurors when summoned to do so.⁴ Moreover, employers are prohibited from depriving employees of employment, threatening, coercing, or harassing employees, or denying employees promotional opportunities because the employees receive or respond to summons for jury service, serve as jurors, or attend court for prospective jury service.⁵

An employer who intentionally fails to provide an employee a sufficient leave of absence to serve as a juror or who intentionally engages in any prohibited conduct because an employee receives or responds to a summons for jury duty, serves as a juror, or attends court for prospective jury service is guilty of a misdemeanor⁶ and may be liable to the affected employee for civil damages, including reasonable attorney fees⁷.

¹ RCW 2.36.100.

² See, for example: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/SuperiorCourt/Juror/ejuror.aspx>; see also: http://www.courts.wa.gov/newsinfo/resources/?fa=newsinfo_jury.faq#Q5

³ RCW 2.36.170.

⁴ RCW 2.36.165.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ RCW 2.36.165(4).

⁷ RCW 2.36.165(5). See also: http://www.courts.wa.gov/newsinfo/resources/?fa=newsinfo_jury.employers.