

## **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUMMONED JURORS**

Under our Constitution, anyone requesting a jury trial is entitled to an OPEN PUBLIC TRIAL BY A FAIR AND IMPARTIAL JURY.

In order for our jury system to work as intended, absolute impartiality on the part of all jurors is necessary. Such impartiality is achieved by carefully restricting the information upon which jurors will base their decision to that which is presented in open court.

In this regard, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court has adopted Special Rules to be followed by all persons reporting for jury service. These rules require that until service as a prospective or selected juror is concluded, summoned jurors SHALL NOT:

- Discuss any case in which they have been chosen as prospective jurors or selected jurors with others, including other jurors, except as instructed by the Court.
- Read, view or listen to any news reports about any such case.
- Use a computer, cell phone, or any other electronic device with communication capabilities, or any other method, to obtain or disclose any information about any case in which they have been chosen as prospective or selected jurors.

Information about a case includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Information about a party, witness, attorney, judge or court officer.
- News reports of the case.
- Information collected through juror's research using such devices on any topics raised or testimony offered by any witness.
- Information collected through juror's research using such devices on any other topic the juror might think would be helpful in deciding the case.

These rules also require that all prospective and selected jurors have an obligation to inform the Court immediately of any violation of these requirements.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court has authorized sanctions for violation of these Rules or the trial court's instructions or restrictions on the use of electronic devices during court proceedings. These sanctions include being held in contempt of court and the confiscation of the electronic device that is used in the violation of these Rules.

We ask for your complete cooperation in following these common-sense rules so that we can guarantee the right to an open public trial by a fair and impartial jury to all who come before us.