

Juror participation is essential to our justice system. We understand that prospective jurors have unique challenges and concerns during this time. The Court and the Tribe take the health of all court users and community members very seriously and are following public health guidelines in their use of court facilities. Because our regular courtroom is small, during this time of public health emergency caused by Covid-19, jury trials will be conducted at the Wa Walton Event Center at the Swinomish Casino and Lodge. Jurors should arrive at the Lodge entrance.

The Casino and Lodge have instituted strict cleaning protocols of all of the facilities to ensure the health and safety of all guests. The Swinomish Tribal Court will comply with these protocols while using the Event Center. At this time anyone appearing for court at the Event Center, including jurors, will follow the Casino and Lodge requirements, including:

- Temperature checks for all team members and guests upon entry into the building
- The use of approved face masks is required by all team members and guests
- Masks are available upon request
- Hand sanitizer stations are readily available and frequent handwashing is encouraged
- Bi-weekly mandatory COVID-19 testing of all team members

The event center space is large and will be arranged to allow safely distanced seating for everyone that appears. The court will establish clear social distancing of jurors, court personnel, witnesses, and parties. The public will be allowed to observe proceedings on-line, but will not be allowed in the courtroom. Prospective and seated jurors will have their own chairs that are marked and distanced at safe intervals. Once a jury is selected, seated jurors will recess and deliberate in a separate courtroom that is designated for their breaks to allow for safe distancing during the entire trial process.

Everyone in the meeting space, including jurors are required to wear masks that adequately cover their nose and mouth. During jury trials, the health department has recommended that all jurors and court users wear surgical-style face masks, which will be provided to all jurors for each day of their jury service. Protective facial coverings must be put on before people enter the Casino and Lodge. Since masks must be worn at all times in the courthouse, longer recesses will be taken to allow jurors an opportunity to go outside and remove their masks.

If you or one of your household members falls into a high-risk category, you may be excused for jury service during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you request to be excused from jury duty for those reasons, please fill out the “Juror Questionnaire” on your summons and return it to Tribal Court for consideration of your request. The current identified high-risk factors identified include people:

- **Are age 60 and older**
- **Have underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes**
- **Have weakened immune systems**
- **Are pregnant**

If you or a household member fall under any of these categories and you wish to be excused from jury service at this time, please return the completed summons with that request.

DAILY HEALTH SCREENINGS

In addition to the above precautions, no person who is showing signs of illness or who feels ill may enter the court facilities, including the Event Center during a trial. We understand that you do not know in advance what your health status will be on the date of the trial. Before coming to the courtroom each day, we ask that each juror make an assessment of their health status and that of their household members and other individuals with whom they have had close contact.

If a juror or their household member tested positive for COVID-19 or exhibited symptoms associated with COVID-19 within 14 days of the trial, that person may not physically enter the Event Center or the Casino and Lodge. This also applies to individuals who are in isolation or quarantine following contact tracing. If any of these apply to you at the time of your jury service, DO NOT come to the Event Center. If this occurs during the period of your jury service, please call (360) 708-3029 for further instruction related to your jury service.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN REPORTING FOR JURY SERVICE

There will be signage and court personnel available at the Casino Lodge entrance to direct jurors to a room that will be prepared as a juror waiting room. Chairs will be set up in the waiting area safely separate everyone in the room. Court staff will circulate in the room to answer questions, ask basic health screening questions, and provide face masks. During this time jurors will be given numbers and given further instructions. Court staff will guide jurors throughout the day to create a smooth process and safe environment.

THANK YOU

The Swinomish Tribal Court thanks you for your willingness to serve and your understanding of these additional procedures and precautions to enable the justice system to move forward as seamlessly as possible while also protecting the health of this community.