Frequently Asked Questions

Q. *What is the AB 1981 Jury Pilot Program?*

A. The program is a two-year pilot being conducted by the Judicial Council of California as required by Assembly Bill 1981, enacted in 2022. The pilot will explore whether increases in juror compensation and mileage reimbursement rates increase juror diversity and participation.

Q. *What are the new juror compensation and mileage reimbursement rates?*

A. Juror compensation will increase from $15 to $100 per day and juror mileage reimbursement will increase from $0.34 to $0.67 per mile roundtrip. Juror pay will still begin on the second day of in-person service and will be applied for each subsequent day of in-person service.

Q. *What courts are participating in the pilot program?*

A. Seven courts are participants in this pilot program. The Superior Court of Alameda County is required to by law, and the remaining six are volunteers. They are the Superior Courts of El Dorado, Fresno, Imperial, Monterey, San Bernardino, and Shasta Counties.

Q. *When does the pilot program end?*

A. The pilot program is planned to end by early 2026. The increased rates will last until funding is exhausted or until January 1, 2027, whichever occurs first.

Q. *What are the eligibility criteria for people to participate in the pilot program?*

A. There are none. The pilot program applies to all jurors and prospective jurors who serve in person at the participating courts after their first day of service.

Q. *How will demographic diversity and participation information be collected?*

A. The Judicial Council and its contracted consultants from the National Center for State Courts, a nonprofit organization focused on improving the administration of justice, are providing access to an online survey to all individuals summoned for jury service at the participating courts. You can view the survey online at the link on the back of this brochure or by scanning the QR code.

Q. *How are the new juror compensation and mileage reimbursement rates being funded?*

A. Funding specifically for this pilot program has been provided to the Judicial Council through general funds by the California State Legislature.

Q. *Will there be any tax issues with the new juror compensation and mileage reimbursement rates?*

A. Yes, there may be. The IRS considers juror attendance fees to be "Other Income" that must be reported on Line 21 of your Form 1040. A Form 1099-MISC will be mailed to all jurors who earn $600 or more in attendance fees in the taxable year. However, mileage reimbursements are not considered reportable income. This means any juror or prospective juror who serves at least 7 days (with the first day being unpaid) will be issued a Form 1099-MISC to include with their taxes. In order to accomplish this, the court may ask you to complete a Form W-9 (taxpayer ID) when you are at the courthouse and serving on a case expected to last for 7 or more days. Follow the court's instructions on what information to provide and how to return the form for processing.

Q. *What if I do not want to deal with any tax issues?*

A. Individuals are allowed to waive their receipt of any juror per diem pay if they wish. Further, if any individual's service is fewer than 7 days, they will not need to be issued a Form 1099-MISC. Otherwise, the court must comply with all applicable tax laws and make a good faith effort to obtain the necessary information to do so; this includes obtaining Social Security numbers.

Q. Will civil litigants need to pay more for their jury trials during this pilot program?

A. No, there will be no increased costs for civil litigants pursuing a jury trial as a result of this pilot program. The increased juror per diems for civil cases, just like for criminal cases, are coming from general funds allocated specifically for this pilot program. Civil litigants will continue to pay the same fees as they currently do for civil jury trials.

Q. *How will the public learn about the pilot program?*

A. Information about the program will be included on each participating court's jury summons and on their online jury web portal. The Judicial Council will also be providing informational materials to promote the pilot program. Local courts will be implementing their own outreach efforts as well.

Q. *Where can I find more information about the law that created this pilot program?*

A. You can find information about Assembly Bill 1981 on the California Legislative Information website at **https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov.**

Q. *Where can I learn about the results of the pilot program?*

A. The final report will be published on the California Courts website on or before September 1, 2026, at **www.courts.ca.gov/7466.htm.**

Q. *What if I have more questions or want to give feedback?*

A. Questions or feedback about day-to-day court operations should be directed to the staff at your local court. Contact information for all California trial courts is available on the California Courts website at **www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm.** For questions or to provide feedback about the juror pilot program, contact the Judicial Council's Jury Improvement Program staff at **JuryInfo@jud.ca.gov.** We will respond as soon as practicable to any correspondence.

AB 1981 JURY PILOT PROGRAM

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