

Tips for Using the Sample Questionnaire / Application Form for Regular (Civil) Grand Jurors

Jury Managers and Commissioners: This tip sheet accompanies the sample questionnaire/application form for regular (civil) grand jurors. This tip sheet contains general guidance about how to draft a civil grand jury questionnaire/application form and additional suggestions about particular items that should and should not be included in this type of questionnaire/application form.

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO encourage a demographically representative cross-section of grand jury applicants from your county population. • DO draft your questionnaire in plain language. Your questionnaire should ask pertinent questions without being unnecessarily long or complex. For example, instead of the word “discharged,” use “completed service on a grand jury.” For some applicants, “discharge” may erroneously imply that a person was dismissed from a grand jury because of misconduct. See question 10 of the model questionnaire. • DO limit the questionnaire to a maximum of 3 to 4 pages. Applicants may be discouraged if it takes an hour or more to complete the application. • DO determine if the applicant meets the eligibility requirements of Penal Code section 893 (see question 4 in the model questionnaire). You can quickly determine the applicant’s initial eligibility by grouping together questions related to the statutory requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DON'T ask questions that could be unnecessarily intimidating to an applicant. For example, a question regarding the ability to analyze financial charts or other financial information may lead applicants to think that they are not qualified to serve if they have not performed that kind of task in the past. • DON'T ask the applicant if he or she has a physical or other disability or has difficulty climbing stairs. Asking these types of questions could violate the Americans With Disabilities Act. A person with a disability cannot be disqualified from serving as a grand juror solely because he or she has a disability. (See Cal. Rules of Court, rule 1.100.) • DON'T tell applicants that they must agree to a credit check or that the court will request their credit reports. Credit checks are not required and are inappropriate for civil grand jurors because the applicant’s credit status is not relevant to whether he or she is competent to serve.

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DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO include a statement that alerts the applicant to the expected time commitment if he or she is selected to serve on the grand jury. • DO ask if a disability accommodation will be needed if the applicant is selected to serve, and the nature of the accommodation the applicant will need. With a few exceptions, the court has a duty to provide reasonable accommodations that allow those jurors to participate in the process. (See Cal. Rules of Court, rule 1.100.) If your court conducts interviews, the applicant may be more comfortable providing such information in the interview setting. • DO indicate on the questionnaire that the information requested for race, ethnicity, gender, and age is for statistical purposes only and is optional. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DON'T include a declaration <i>under oath or penalty of perjury</i> that the responses provided on the questionnaire are true. Prospective grand jurors are <i>not</i> required to swear under oath regarding the veracity of their answers on the questionnaire. Courts may include a signature line after a statement that the information provided is true and correct to the best of the applicant's knowledge.

For recruiting strategies, please refer to *Recruit Grand Juries* and *A Practical Guide to Supervising Civil Grand Juries* on JRN at <https://jrn.courts.ca.gov/programs/jury/> as well as the California Grand Jurors' Association at <http://cgja.org/grand-jury-resources>.

For general information and training materials for court officers, please refer to *Grand Jury Resources* page on JRN at <https://jrn.courts.ca.gov/programs/jury/>

