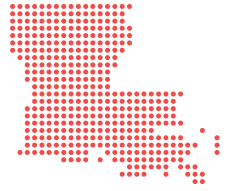


JURY SIT-INS



Training Fact Sheet

 Louisiana

1  Lists used to contact residents to serve
(Voter Registration, DMV Records, Volunteers)

2  Qualifications to serve on a jury
(La. Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 401):



Be a U.S. Citizen and a resident of the state and parish where the trial is taking place for at least one year prior to jury service.



Be able to read, write, speak and understand the English language.



Be at least 18 years old.



Not be under interdiction (a court order declaring a person lacks the mental capacity, or is unable to, consistently make and communicate reasoned decisions for themselves).



Not be under indictment, incarcerated under an order of imprisonment, or on probation or parole for a felony offense within the five-year period immediately preceding the person's jury service.

3



VOIR DIRE: The conversation that takes place in the courtroom between the jurors and lawyers to determine which jurors will serve on the trial.

Lawyers can remove jurors from serving during the trial in two ways.

A. CAUSE STRIKES:

These are used when a juror has a demonstrated inability to be fair or impartial, has a scheduling conflict or language barrier, or some other reason makes them unable to sit for the trial. Attorneys have an unlimited amount of Cause Strikes and must provide the reason for the strike.

B. PEREMPTORY STRIKES:

These are used at the discretion of the attorneys often connected to the strategy of the case. Attorneys have a limited amount of Peremptory Strikes and, generally, do not have to provide the reason for the strike.

Batson v. Kentucky (1986)

Supreme Court case designed to prevent juror discrimination based on race by applying a “Batson Test.”

“BATSON TEST” HAS THREE STEPS:

Step 1 Lodge an Objection.

When an attorney suspects the opposing attorney of using their peremptory strikes in a racially discriminatory way, they must object and raise a “Batson challenge.”

Step 2 Provide Strike Explanation.

The attorney who has had their juror strikes challenged must provide an explanation for why they struck the jurors in question.

Step 3 Judge Rules on Explanation.

After the attorney provides their explanation, the judge must rule whether the explanation was race-neutral. If explanation is race neutral, then the Batson Challenge is denied. If explanation is based on race, then the challenge is granted and the juror is seated back on the jury panel.

In *Taylor v. Louisiana*, 419 U.S. 522, 528 (1975), the Supreme Court held that an essential component of the Sixth Amendment right to an impartial jury is that it be made up of a representative cross-section of the community. Securing a representative cross-section of the community in diverse jurisdictions has direct impacts on the deliberation process.

According to a study by Psychologist Samuel Sommers at Stanford University, juries make better decisions when they’re racially diverse. That same study concluded, diverse juries: 1) evaluate evidence more thoroughly; 2) deliberate longer; 3) discuss more facts about the case; 4) made fewer factual errors than all-white juries; 5) and were more open to talking about the role of race in the case.

**Diverse juries make better decisions and your presence on the jury contributes to a more fair criminal legal system.
Thank you for your jury service!**