

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 56th Legislature (2018)

HOUSE BILL 2567

By: Ford (Ross)

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to jurors; amending 38 O.S. 2011, Section 28, as last amended by Section 11, Chapter 242, O.S.L. 2015 (38 O.S. Supp. 2017, Section 28), which relates to juror qualifications; exempting certified municipal, county and state law enforcement officers from jury service; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 38 O.S. 2011, Section 28, as last amended by Section 11, Chapter 242, O.S.L. 2015 (38 O.S. Supp. 2017, Section 28), is amended to read as follows:

Section 28. A. It is the policy of this state that all citizens qualified for jury service pursuant to this section have an obligation to serve on petit juries when summoned by the courts of this state, unless excused.

B. All citizens of the United States, residing in this state, having the qualifications of electors of this state, are competent jurors to serve on all grand and petit juries within their counties; provided, that persons over seventy (70) years of age and persons who have served as a grand or petit juror during the last five (5)

1 immediately preceding calendar years shall not be compelled to serve
2 as jurors in this state and the court may excuse or discharge any
3 juror drawn and summoned as a grand or petit juror if:

4 1. The prospective juror has a mental or physical condition
5 that causes him or her to be incapable of performing jury service.
6 The juror, or the juror's personal representative, shall provide the
7 court with documentation from a physician licensed to practice
8 medicine verifying that a mental or physical condition renders the
9 person unfit for jury service for a period of up to twenty-four (24)
10 months; or

11 2. Jury service would cause undue or extreme physical or
12 financial hardship to the prospective juror or a person under his or
13 her care or supervision. A judge of the court for which the
14 individual was called to jury service shall make undue or extreme
15 physical or financial hardship determinations. The authority to
16 make these determinations is delegable only to court officials or
17 personnel who are authorized by the laws of this state to function
18 as members of the judiciary. A person requesting to be excused
19 based on a finding of undue or extreme physical or financial
20 hardship shall take all actions necessary to have obtained a ruling
21 on that request by no later than the date on which the individual is
22 scheduled to appear for jury duty. For purposes of this section,
23 "undue or extreme physical or financial hardship" is limited to
24 circumstances in which an individual would be required to abandon a

1 person under his or her personal care or supervision due to the
2 impossibility of obtaining an appropriate substitute caregiver
3 during the period of participation in the jury pool or on the jury,
4 incur costs that would have a substantial adverse impact on the
5 payment of the individual's necessary daily living expenses or on
6 those for whom he or she provides the principle means of support, or
7 suffer physical hardship that would result in illness or disease.
8 Undue or extreme physical or financial hardship does not exist
9 solely based on the fact that a prospective juror will be required
10 to be absent from his or her place of employment. A person
11 requesting a judge to grant an excuse based on undue or extreme
12 physical or financial hardship shall be required to provide the
13 judge with documentation, such as, but not limited to, federal and
14 state income tax returns, medical statements from licensed
15 physicians, proof of dependency or guardianship, and similar
16 documents, which the judge finds to clearly support the request to
17 be excused. Failure to provide satisfactory documentation shall
18 result in a denial of the request to be excused.

19 After two (2) years, a person excused from jury service shall
20 become eligible once again for qualification as a juror unless the
21 person was excused from service permanently. A person is excused
22 from jury service permanently only when the deciding judge
23 determines that the underlying grounds for being excused are of a
24 permanent nature.

1 C. Persons who are not qualified to serve as jurors are:

2 1. Justices of the Supreme Court or the Court of Civil Appeals;

3 2. Judges of the Court of Criminal Appeals or the district
4 court;

5 3. ~~Sheriffs or deputy sheriffs~~ Municipal, county or state law
6 enforcement officers certified by the Council on Law Enforcement
7 Education and Training;

8 4. Licensed attorneys engaged in the practice of law;

9 5. Persons who have been convicted of any felony or who have
10 served a term of imprisonment in any penitentiary, state or federal,
11 for the commission of a felony; provided, any such citizen
12 convicted, who has been fully restored to his or her civil rights,
13 shall be eligible to serve as a juror; and

14 6. Legislators during a session of the Legislature or when
15 involved in state business.

16 D. Jailers or federal law enforcement officers, ~~municipal,~~
17 ~~state or federal,~~ shall be eligible to serve on noncriminal actions
18 only.

19 E. Upon his or her request, a person shall be exempt from
20 service as a juror if the person is:

21 1. A member of the Armed Forces of the United States who is
22 serving on active duty during a time of war or declared hostilities;
23 or

24 2. A mother who is breast-feeding a baby.

1 F. The district court may provide electronic resources for
2 persons summoned for jury duty to obtain information about their
3 jury service and to submit information to the court, including but
4 not limited to communications via telephone, text message,
5 electronic mail and website. The court may utilize an approved
6 electronic jury management system to record, process, respond to,
7 and maintain juror communications. The court clerk and the trial
8 court administrator, under the supervision and control of the
9 presiding judge or chief judge, or any district judge acting as his
10 or her designee, may be authorized to make determinations regarding
11 juror excusals, exemptions, disqualifications, postponements and
12 deferrals. However, determinations regarding extreme physical or
13 financial hardship shall be made as provided in paragraph 2 of
14 subsection B of this section.

15 G. Information provided to the court pursuant to this section
16 by persons summoned for jury service shall be used exclusively for
17 purposes of determining jury disqualifications or excusals. No
18 person shall disclose, copy or permit any person to copy this
19 information for purposes other than jury management.

20 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2018.
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