SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE

PRESS RELEASE

To: Local Media

From: Hector X. Gonzalez, Jr., Court Executive Officer

Date: May 25, 2023

Re: Court to Implement New Program to Encourage Persons to Do Jury Duty

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The Superior Court of the State of California, County of Tuolumne, is announcing a new program to ensure that those summoned to appear for jury service fulfill their legal obligation to complete their jury duty.

The court's goal is to make sure that jury service is shared fairly among all eligible citizens of our County. California has made jury service much easier in recent years with the one-day or one-trial program. Despite jury service being easier, there are citizens who do not respond to their jury summons, making it difficult for the courts throughout California to provide enough jurors for all trials. When potential jurors fail to appear as summoned, an unfair burden is placed on those citizens who do report for jury service.

Potential jurors who do not appear when summoned may not understand how important their jury service is to the smooth functioning of the judicial system. Some potential jurors may not be aware that they can reschedule their jury duty, if there is a valid reason to do so. Simply not showing up is not a valid option. The court routinely excuses those with medical or other legal hardships, once they provide an explanation to the court.

Starting on Tuesday June 20, the court will send a postcard to persons who failed to appear for jury service and instruct them to contact the court to schedule a new time to serve or face possible penalties.

Under the new program, the court may hold persons who fail to appear for jury service in contempt of court, which is punishable by fine and/or incarceration. The court may also impose reasonable monetary sanctions in lieu of a finding of contempt. At any point during the process the court is implementing, a summoned juror can decide to serve as a potential juror and avoid the consequences of failing to appear.

The court intends that this program will encourage persons summoned for jury duty to appear for jury service, rather than to punish them. That is why the new program gives persons numerous opportunities to fulfill their jury service and avoid the consequences of failing to appear.

For further information contact Presiding Judge, Kevin M. Seibert, or Court Executive Officer & Jury Commissioner, Hector Gonzalez, at (209) 533-5650.

For information about California jury service, go to:

https://www.courts.ca.gov/juryservice.htm

End of Press Release