



PA 21-170—sHB 6548

Judiciary Committee

Appropriations Committee

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JURY
SELECTION TASK FORCE**

SUMMARY: This act adjusts the method for summoning jurors from each town to reflect how many complied with the summons in the past year. Beginning October 1, 2022, the act requires the jury administrator to compile the number of jurors summoned from each town who complied with the summons. And beginning July 1, 2023, the number of jurors chosen from each town must reflect the proportional representation of each town’s population within the judicial district, based on the data collected and a specified formula.

The act establishes temporary procedures for the jury administrator to follow before the data is collected. From July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, whenever there is an undeliverable jury summons, a replacement summons must be sent to a prospective juror in the same zip code.

The act expands eligibility for jury service (e.g., to certain permanent residents and certain convicted felons). It also requires (1) additional questions on the juror questionnaire and (2) the judicial branch to compile demographic information on those who participate in the jury process.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2021, for the eligibility expansion provision; July 1, 2022, for the zip code replacement summons provision; October 1, 2022, for the juror data compilation and questionnaire provisions; and July 1, 2023, for the proportional representation provision.

§§ 2-4 — JUROR SUMMONS

The act adjusts the method for summoning jurors from each town to reflect each town’s juror summons compliance rate in the past year.

Beginning October 1, 2022, the act requires the jury administrator to annually compile the number of jurors summoned from each town who complied with the summons and appeared for jury service.

Beginning July 1, 2023, the act requires the number of jurors chosen from each town to reflect the proportional representation of each town’s population within the judicial district. This is calculated by dividing each town’s proportional share of the judicial district’s population by the town’s “yield ratio.” Under the act, the “yield ratio” is the number of jurors from the town who were summoned the previous court year and complied and appeared for jury service, divided by the town’s proportional share of the judicial district’s population multiplied by the total number of jurors summoned in the judicial district in the previous court year. A “court year” is the one-year period beginning on September 1 and ending on

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August 31 the following year.

As under existing law, the jury administrator must use population data from the most recent decennial census.

The act also establishes temporary procedures for the jury administrator to follow before the above data is collected. Specifically, from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, for each undeliverable jury summons, he or she must send an additional, randomly generated summons to a juror with the same zip code as the undeliverable summons.

§ 1 — EXPANDED JURY POOL

The act expands jury service eligibility by (1) including permanent residents as allowed under federal law (8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(20)) and (2) shortening, from seven to three years, the timeframe for barring someone with a felony conviction from serving on a jury.

The act also increases the minimum age, from 70 to 75, for when someone may claim an exemption from being summoned and makes a conforming change to the lists the jury administrator must keep. As under existing law, jurors must be Connecticut residents having permanent residence in the state who are at least age 18.

§ 5 — JURY QUESTIONNAIRE

Under prior law, the jury administrator had to send a prospective juror a confidential questionnaire with certain questions about his or her personal information (e.g., age, race, occupation). The act requires the questionnaire to also have questions on gender and other demographic information the judicial branch deems appropriate. It requires the administrator to provide, rather than send, the questionnaire.

Additionally, the act requires the judicial branch to compile a record of the demographic characteristics of all individuals who (1) are summoned for jury service; (2) participated in a panel; (3) are subject to a preemptory challenge (i.e., objection to a prospective juror without needing a reason); (4) are subject to challenge for cause (i.e., objection to a prospective juror for a stated reason, such as bias); and (5) serve on a jury. The record must exclude personally identifiable information (i.e., identifying information linked or linkable to a specific person) and be maintained in a way that provides free and open access to the information on the internet.