

Draft - Meeting Minutes (to be voted on at the 3/12/26 meeting) Task Force on Removing Barriers to Jury Service

Date: January 22, 2026

Time: 11:45 a.m.

Location: Webex Webinar

Members in Attendance: Representative Tom Andersen, Representative Kim Wallan, Bryan Brock, Kia Tolbert, Tim Dooley, Honorable Matthew Shirtcliff, Royce Williams, Honorable Tucker Rossetto, Keren Farkas, Chair Kimberly McCullough, Senator James I. Manning, Jr., Nansi López

Members Not in Attendance: Senator Kim Thatcher, Derek Sangston, Honorable Chanpone Sinlapasai

Presenters/Speakers: State Court Administrator Nancy Cozine, Chief Justice Meagan Flynn, Aaron Knott, Director of Government Relations and Communications, Sam Dupree, Senior Assistant General Counsel, and Lindsey Detweiler, Deputy General Counsel, Oregon Judicial Department

Quorum: Yes (8 voting members present)

Welcome

- State Court Administrator Cozine thanked everyone for their service and contributions and noted statistics about the number of Oregonians that do not attend or request excusal from jury service
 - Barriers include cost and declines in civic education, public perception, and trust in the legal system
 - State courts have started taking steps to improve response rates and ensure jury pools are representative, but there is more that can be done
- Chief Justice Flynn thanked the members and noted the importance of the right to a trial by jury, the right to a fair trial, and public understanding of our justice system
 - Jury service can involve sacrifices of time and money, potential costs of care for children or family members, securing transportation, parking fees, and more

Introductions of Task Force Members

- Representative Tom Andersen (House District 19)
 - Trial lawyer for 50 years
 - Previously called for a grand jury
 - Noted the importance of civic education for jurors
- Representative Kim Wallan (Medford)
 - Previously called for jury service, but has not served on a jury
 - Practiced law for a few years but never in front of a jury

- Bryan Brock (Executive Director of the Oregon District Attorneys' Association)
 - Former prosecutor in Clackamas County, tried over 100 cases involving juries
 - Formerly worked for the Department of Justice and the Judicial Department
 - Responsible for coordinating and supervising juries
 - Summoned many times for jury service, but has not served on a jury
- Kia Tolbert (attorney at Umpqua Valley Public Defenders)
 - Member of the Legislative, DEI, and Education committees with the Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association
 - Has worked on many criminal cases with jury trials
 - Noted the importance of jury pools being representative of the clientele
 - Interested in homeless/unhoused population involvement in the jury process and civic education
- Tim Dooley (Legislative Affairs Manager at the Association of Oregon Counties)
 - Background in law enforcement administration
 - No jury experience, but familiar with circuit and municipal court juries and the issues with that process
- Honorable Matthew Shirtcliff (Baker County Circuit Court Judge)
 - Has conducted many civil and criminal jury trials
 - Former district attorney and deputy district attorney for Baker County
 - Interested in improving juror access and engagement
 - Concern about getting a representative cross-section of the community in juries
- Royce Williams (Senior Deputy General Counsel for TriMet)
 - Civil practice for 10 years with trials in Oregon and Washington
 - Editor for The Verdict for the Oregon Association of Defense Counsel (former board member)
- Honorable Tucker Rossetto (Beaverton Municipal Court Judge)
 - Never summoned for jury service
 - Presided over five jury trials, and involved in more as a prosecutor
 - Wants to increase the desire to go to jury service and juror engagement
- Keren Farkas (Oregon State Bar)
 - Worked as a public defender at several organizations in a different jurisdiction
 - Has not litigated a jury trial but has had many clients where the impact and meaning of being before a jury of their peers was apparent
- Senator James Manning, Jr. (Chief Sponsor of SB 1175)
 - Summoned for jury service multiple times
 - Concerned about juror engagement
 - Question of how idle wait time in a room of strangers impacts a person's perspective on jury service
- Chair Kimberly McCullough (Senior Counsel for Government Relations at OJD)
 - Compiling research to help the task force move forward
- Nansi López – present, but mic/audio issues

Overview of SB 1175

- Aaron Knott, Director of Government Relations and Communications for OJD presented a PowerPoint giving an overview of SB 1175 (slides available in meeting materials)
 - SB 1175 (2025) was introduced by Senator Manning

- OJD supported the bill
 - Last legislative session, the bill was a non-partisan issue
 - Downward trend of jury service has accelerated since the pandemic
- Task Force members were appointed by the Senate Speaker (2), House President (2), Governor (5), and the Chief Justice (5 plus Chair)
- Task Force Charge
 - Reviewed the task force's purpose/goals under SB 1175
 - Proposed recommendations may be broad and may go beyond compensation
- Quorum and Voting
 - 10 voting members (quorum is 6), legislators and the chair are nonvoting
 - If you can't attend a meeting or continue serving, notify the Chair ASAP
- Task Force Report
 - Opinions of nonvoting members are important, helpful, and welcome
 - Due December 15, 2026
 - Will be submitted to the Governor, Chief Justice, and judiciary committees
 - Dissenting/minority opinions can be added as an addendum, or as an additional report
 - Members may be asked to present about the Task Force during legislative session
- Miscellaneous Provisions
 - Discussed when and how meetings will be scheduled
 - OJD will provide staff support
 - Task Force may consult with local or national experts and other states/agencies
 - Task Force can adopt rules, but they don't need to be extensive or formal
- Representative Wallan noted fewer civil cases seem to go to trial and asked to look at the numbers of parties choosing not to go
 - Chair McCullough noted OJD analysts can assist with providing data

Task Force Rules

- Chair McCullough proposed two rules:
 - Raising hands to speak (but if there are technical issues feel free to speak up)
 - For voting, especially on the report:
 - A member makes a motion
 - Another member seconds the motion
 - Discussion
 - Vote
- No objections were raised

Task Force Website

- Chair McCullough walked through the Jury Task Force website
 - Form for submitting public comments, asking questions, and requesting accommodation
 - Can use this to request to be added as an interested party to the Task Force

- Homepage includes the membership list, link to Contact Us page, and upcoming meeting information
 - Meeting links sent to Task Force members are different than the one on the public website
 - If members have technical difficulties, they can enter through the public link and staff can change their role to panelist
- Meetings Archive has PDF and text copies of agendas and meeting materials

Discussion of Public Records and Open Meetings Law

- Lindsey Detweiler, Deputy General Counsel, and Sam Dupree, Senior Assistant General Counsel, for OJD presented a PowerPoint on public records and open meetings law (slides available in meeting materials)
 - Task Force meetings are public meetings and the Task Force is subject to public records law
 - Oregon Public Meetings Law (Detweiler)
 - Outlined the purpose of the public meetings law and the definitions of “public body” and “governing body”
 - Reviewed requirements for how public bodies may gather or meet to discuss official business or make decisions
 - Discussed the definitions of a “meeting” and “convening”
 - Discussed serial communication and electronic written communication
 - Members may not use serial communications or intermediaries for deliberating or making a decision on official business
 - Did the communication ultimately involve a quorum of members? What was the subject and purpose of the communications? Did it involve delivering decisions?
 - Reviewed some exemptions to public meetings law
 - Oregon Public Records Law (Dupree)
 - Every record created related to the task force is subject to public inspection, including records created by private citizens
 - Reviewed definition of “public record” and examples
 - Creating/storing records on personal devices or emails doesn’t exempt them from public records law and public records requests
 - Reviewed record retention requirements
 - Public Records Exemptions
 - Discussed unconditional vs. conditional exemptions with examples
 - Record Request Procedures
 - Coordinate records requests with OJD
 - Forward requests to the Task Force via email or the Jury Task Force website ASAP
 - We have to acknowledge the request within 5 days and respond with records within 15 days, if possible
 - Members’ organizations may have their own processes, but it should be a collaborative process
 - Coordinate responses with OJD and the entity you work for
 - Tips/Takeaways

- Communicate thoughtfully and intentionally
 - Try to avoid using personal devices or accounts
 - If you get a records request reach out to OJD to coordinate a response
- Williams requested information on the rules around receiving gifts

Where We Are Going From Here

- Generally, meetings will be for 1.5 hours once a month
 - Let Chair McCullough know if you have different thoughts about the timing, frequency, and cadence of the meetings
- We are aiming to have the next meeting after legislative session ends
- Kiely Lyons will notify Task Force members and interested parties of meetings
 - If you'd like someone added to the interested parties list, provide them with Chair McCullough's or Lyons' contact information or direct them to the website form
- Next meetings:
 - Right to a jury trial and details of how jury trials work
 - Relevant statutes and authorities will be in the meeting materials
 - Overview of how jury service works in Oregon circuit courts, grand juries, municipal courts, and justice courts
 - Tolbert asked that the presentation on the jury process include what the notification and administrative processes behind informing jurors they've been selected looks like
 - Chair McCullough replied that the statewide jury coordinator can include that in her presentation
 - Barriers to jury service (Task Force can decide which barriers to focus on)
 - We can bring in experts and people from other jurisdictions
 - If you have ideas about experts who could speak with the Task Force, let Chair McCullough know at future meetings or via email
 - Dooley asked how we can make sure we're communicating appropriately to folks with different backgrounds, language abilities, etc. in regard to the jury summons form and if OJD has a forms group that works on that
 - Chair McCullough replied OJD does have a forms group and that we can talk about the forms (for circuit courts, grand juries, and local courts)
 - Tolbert asked:
 - If there is an Oregon-specific report discussing why people do not show up to jury service, that the Task Force receive a copy
 - If there's a report of the expenses associated with the administrative side of the jury process
 - For background on the jury process during COVID

Public Comment

- Mabelle Briggs-Mayfield (Justice of the Peace for Douglas County)
 - One of five justices that hold jury trials
 - Resource for how justice courts handle jury trials and some of the barriers they see at the justice court level
- Received written public comment from HK Kahng through the Jury Task Force website form (included in the meeting materials)

- Task force members are encouraged to look at the written public comments we receive

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