

Juror Outreach Toolkit

What you'll find:

- [Overview of the tool](#) (page 2)
- [Tool #1: Guest Column \(Op-Ed\)](#) (page 3)
- [Tool #2: Community Presentation Materials](#) (page 5)
- [Tool #3: Juror Appreciation Week](#) (page 8)
- [Additional Materials & Resources](#) (page 9)

Overview

To improve jury response rates and help increase public trust in the courts, it may be helpful to build general community awareness about the importance of jury duty.

Potential key questions to answer may include:

- Why is jury service critical in the first place? (History, constitutional and statutory rights, role in democracy, true cross-section of the community, access to justice, essential service)
- How does jury service actually work?
- Why is it important that we recruit diverse juries?
- Why should people serve despite the barriers? (Distance, cost, inconvenience, etc.)

This toolkit is designed to offer road maps, templates, and examples of a few different types of outreaches. This toolkit is non-exhaustive to what type of outreach you may do in your local court, and we encourage you to reach out if you have any additional tools or examples, you would like added to this guide.

For questions, requests, or assistance in juror outreach, reach out to Office of the State Court Administrator's (OSCA) Statewide Jury Coordinator or Communications Team. Contact information is provided below.

Sarah Evans (she/her)
Communications Coordinator
(971) 372-1850
Sarah.j.evans@ojd.state.or.us

Molly Harvis (she/her)
Statewide Jury Coordinator
(971) 718-1425
Molly.t.harvis@ojd.state.or.us

Laura Kerns
Public Information Officer
Laura.F.Kerns@ojd.state.or.us

Tool #1: Placing a guest column (op-ed) in the local paper

What is an op-ed?

Opinion editorials, known as “op-eds” or guest columns, are short commentary pieces written by third parties rather than the staff of the publication. An op-ed is an excellent way to communicate your messages, directly and unfiltered, to target audiences.

Drafting a guest editorial/op-ed

1. **Confer and coordinate with the Office of the State Court Administrator (OSCA) communications team** before developing and submitting an op-ed to make sure data is accurate and current and that the focus fits with OJD priorities.
2. **Check your local paper’s website for guest opinion/op-ed guidelines.** These are often different depending on the publication, and they include things like word counts and methods for submitting. If they do not list a word limit, best practice is to keep it shorter than 700 words. It’s important to adhere to newspapers’ word limits, or else your op-ed will be heavily edited before publication. Only send your op-ed to publications where you or your topic will be of interest to readers in your local area.
3. **Decide who will be the author of the op-ed.** The choice of an author is critical; people with highly recognizable names or positions in your community are more likely to have their articles published. Even if several people work on writing the piece, it’s more likely to be published if the listed author has a high position.
4. **Write the op-ed or use the template provided and include local examples when possible.** The more you can localize an issue, the more likely the newspaper is to publish it. Examples of local information to include would be a description of how jury service works and how many people serve in your county. In addition to the main messages about jury duty, also keep in mind ways that you can weave in the Oregon Judicial Department’s key messages: justice for all, protecting our rights and our democracy, service to Oregonians, and participation by citizens.
5. **Include a short cover note with your op-ed.** The note should include the author’s name, title, organization (or other descriptive credential), contact information, and why the piece is important.
6. **Only submit your op-ed to one publication at a time.** Many papers will insist that your submission to be unique to them. Also, do not post your op-ed on a blog or your webpage before it is published in the paper (you can post a link to it after it is published).

From Washington Presiding Judges Tool Kit, adapted with permission of the Washington Courts, originally drawn from NAPTA (with permission). Additional permission granted by Valley Regional Transit 9/13/17.

Additional Source: [Justice at Stake and NAWJ Informed Voters Project](#), with permission from NAWJ.

7. **Be prepared to submit a headshot photo of the author if asked.** Some papers require this for guest opinions, but others do not. You don't need to provide the photo in advance unless it is asked for in the submission process.
8. **After the op-ed is published, share it online and with your networks.** Post a link to the actual newspaper site where it is published in the News section of your court's webpage. Share it with justice and other community partners who might post it to their social media. You should also share it with your staff and send it to the OSCA communications team.

Resources

- Op-ed template about the importance of jury duty (page 9)

Tool #2: Making a community presentation

For many members of your local community, the justice system is shrouded in mystery. Local civic groups are delighted to have a speaker discuss topics that impact all citizens, like jury duty.

Here are some possible speaking opportunities in your community. Some may be meeting in person, and others may be virtual.

- **Local Rotary Club:** Local Rotary Clubs are always looking for speakers. If you belong, contact your Rotary president to schedule a presentation, or visit Rotary International at www.rotary.org to find your local Rotary Club and meeting location.
- **League of Women Voters:** The League is a non-partisan political organization focused on encouraging informed and active participation in government, increasing understanding of major public issues, and influencing public policy through citizen education and advocacy. The League has more than a dozen [chapters in Oregon](#).
- **Local Senior Center:** Depending on how active your community's senior center is, this can provide a great opportunity to explain how the jury system works and the importance of jury service or solicit ideas for improving jury response rates.
- **Local Kiwanis Club:** Similar to Rotary, Kiwanis clubs are service organizations which often hold breakfast or luncheon meetings each week. To locate your chapter, visit Kiwanis International at www.kiwanis.org/clubs.
- **Local Chambers of Commerce:** The focus here is mostly on small business, economic development, and community vitality. Meetings are often at lunch time and guest speakers may be incorporated into a panel or theme-based presentation. Find out more by contacting your local chamber(s) directly.
- **High school, community college, or university civics/government/politics classes:** These can be a great way to help educate young people about the importance of jury service, how it works, and how they can be part of this important service.

Using Technology in Presentations

If the community organization is meeting virtually, make sure to ask in advance about the tools they use (Zoom, Teams, etc.) and the technical details for sharing your PowerPoint slides, if you have any.

When considering whether to include a PowerPoint or other technology in your presentation, ask these questions:

- Does the venue have a projector and screen or large TV monitor you can use?

- Do they have a laptop, or do you need to bring one? Is their computer a Mac or PC?
- Does the site have wi-fi or another type of internet connection?
- If your presentation depends on music, video, or other sound to be effective, does the venue have a speaker system you can tap into?
- Does the host group have someone who can help you get your presentation set up at the site?
- If you have a slide show, is the number of slides realistic for the time available? A good rule of thumb is plan for 1-2 slides per minute, depending on the complexity of the information.
- If the time available for your presentation is really short (10-15 minutes), is it worth using a PowerPoint at all? It might be better to engage your audience with a question or two and then just talk through your main points.
- If you are presenting virtually, has the meeting been set up so that you can present your materials? (Presenter visual and audio privileges, recording settings)

Tips for Community Presentations and Q&A Sessions

1. **Know your audience.** Tune your comments to their needs, interests, and values. Avoid using examples that will needlessly arouse passions, divide, or distract the audience when a more neutral option is available.
2. **Use plain language and avoid legal terminology as much as possible** so everyone will know what you're talking about.
3. **Think of the Q&A session as a one-on-one conversation with a reasonable person.** Find a different face every few seconds but maintain your one-on-one attitude.
4. **Anticipate tough questions and plan your responses.** List every question, comment, or challenge that could come your way. In relation to jury duty, these questions could be related to bad personal experiences ("When I had jury duty, it was a waste of time, the court did not respect my time, they did not keep my informed, and they had terrible facilities.") Decide how you'll respond to the items on your list, and how you'll "bridge" your response back to your key messages.
5. **Always plan a "second close" for your presentation.** Don't just let your presentation end when time runs out on the last question. Allow time to finish with a memorable, wrap-up point you want to make, and a thank you.

6. **Practice** with an audience that's willing and able to critique you fairly and honestly.
Then practice again.

Resources

- PowerPoint template about the importance of jury service (available on Sharepoint)

Tool #3: Juror Appreciation Week

A **Juror Appreciation Week** (or month) can provide opportunities to:

- Directly thank current or recent jurors with letters, certificates, refreshments, official declarations, or other recognition (improving word of mouth in the community about jury duty).
- Place a guest editorial in the local paper noting the critical role of juries and the importance of responding when called.
- Solicit local media for a feature story highlighting the critical roles juries play, the personal experiences of recent jurors, and any improvements you may have made in juror facilities or services. (The OSCA communications team can assist with this.)
- Hang student-created posters or banners and honor the student artists.
- Organize lunch-hour presentations or concerts in or near the courthouse.
- Conduct the ABA's Dialogue on the American Jury ([available at this link](#)) at local colleges or high schools
- Show juror orientation videos at local community centers, colleges, or high schools.

While **Juror Appreciation Week** is customarily recognized in the first full week of May, it can be planned for any time of year in your local jurisdiction.

Resources

- **[Juror Appreciation Kit](#) from the American Bar Association:** This kit includes sample press releases, op-eds, juror appreciation certificates, and other materials.
- Sample proclamation, certificate for jurors, juror questionnaire, activities, and posters (pages 11-19)

Additional Materials and Resources

Guest Editorial/Op-Ed Sample Template

Jury service is more than an obligation — it changes lives

By the Honorable **JUDGE NAME**

Each week in **COUNTY NAME** County, juries make decisions that change lives. They provide justice for victims and families, ensure that businesses honor their obligations, award damages to people injured through the negligence of others, and determine whether an individual will be imprisoned or set free.

This fundamental pillar of our democracy — the right to a trial by a jury of our peers — depends entirely on those who answer the call to service.

I know it can be tempting to see a jury summons as an inconvenience, particularly during a pandemic, but jury service is one of the most important civic duties you can participate in. When you report for jury duty, you are helping our courts ensure that everyone in our community receives the rights they are guaranteed by the Constitution.

The first week of May is Juror Appreciation Week, and your local judges and court staff would like to extend their gratitude to those who have responded for jury duty. In **COUNTY NAME** County, that is nearly **AVERAGE NUMBER OF JURORS WHO REPORT FOR JURY DUTY IN YOUR COUNTY ANNUALLY** people each year. Numerous citizens served even during the early stages of the pandemic, when our courts remained open and jury trials continued to happen with extensive COVID precautions in place to keep everyone safe.

Beyond serving out of obligation, many who answer their jury summons also see the opportunity as an interesting learning experience. Jury service is a unique opportunity to witness firsthand the inside of our courthouse and how court proceedings work.

Additionally, jury service is not a long commitment for most people. **(ADD A SENTENCE HERE ABOUT LENGTH OF SERVICE IN YOUR JURISDICTION.)** For most of those who do serve, trials typically last one to two days. The vast majority of those who report for service do not actually serve on a jury. However, just their presence in the jury assembly room helps move many cases to resolution. The prospect of a trial becomes very real when parties know that jurors are ready and waiting.

Also, Oregon law protects workers by barring employers from firing, threatening to fire, intimidating, or coercing employees because of their jury service. We would like to thank the many private companies, government agencies, small businesses, school districts, and all those who encourage and support their employees when they are called to jury service.

Your local courts — and your fellow community members — depend on your service. Thank you for doing your duty!

*The Honorable **JUDGE NAME** is the presiding judge for the **COUNTY NAME** County Circuit Court.*

Sample Juror Appreciation Week Proclamation for local government

(NOTE: Some cities and counties will have proclamation guidelines noted on their websites, or you can simply contact the offices of the city council or county commission.)

WHEREAS, the right to trial by a jury of one's peers is an important and unique part of our system of justice and a cornerstone of our form of government; and

WHEREAS, the Sixth and Seventh Amendments to the U.S. Constitution preserve the right to trial by jury and give the jury the responsibility to defend, with its verdict, all other individual rights enumerated or implied by the U.S. Constitution, including its amendments; and

WHEREAS, the State of Oregon (in Article I, Sections 11, 16 and 17 of the Oregon Constitution) recognizes these rights in both criminal and civil cases; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon Judicial Department and the XXX County Court recognize the vital role played by nearly xxx citizens who take time away from their families and businesses to serve as jurors in XXX County each year; and

WHEREAS, as partners in justice, businesses and other employers across the state cooperate to assure our courts have a ready and representative pool of jurors;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Official name, official title, do hereby proclaim the week of May xx-xx, 20xx, as

Juror Appreciation Week

in the county of XXX/city of XXX, and I urge all citizens to recognize this event and to honor those individuals and businesses who continue to contribute to this vital part of our democratic way of life.

Signed this xx day of Month, Year



(Name) County Circuit Court

Certificate of Appreciation

Let the record show that...

trial by jury is the foundation of our system of justice. Through your service, you ensure that the right to a trial by jury is guaranteed for everyone.

***Juror Appreciation Week
May xx – xx, 202x***

The _____ Court hereby takes this opportunity to extend our appreciation and recognition of the important and vital role you play as a juror.

(Presiding Judge)



Thank You for serving as a juror.

We want to know more about your experience, so that we can make service as rewarding as possible for future jurors. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions and return the form to (designate area)

1. The amount of time I spent waiting was: ____ too much ____ just about right

2. The information I received during my service was:

____ not enough ____ just right ____ too much

3. If you did not receive enough information, what more could we have provided?

4. What did you like most about your service? _____

5. What did you like the least about your service? _____

6. Were you treated with courtesy by all court staff? ____ yes ____ no

7. If no, please explain: _____

8. Were court facilities clean and organized? ____ yes ____ no

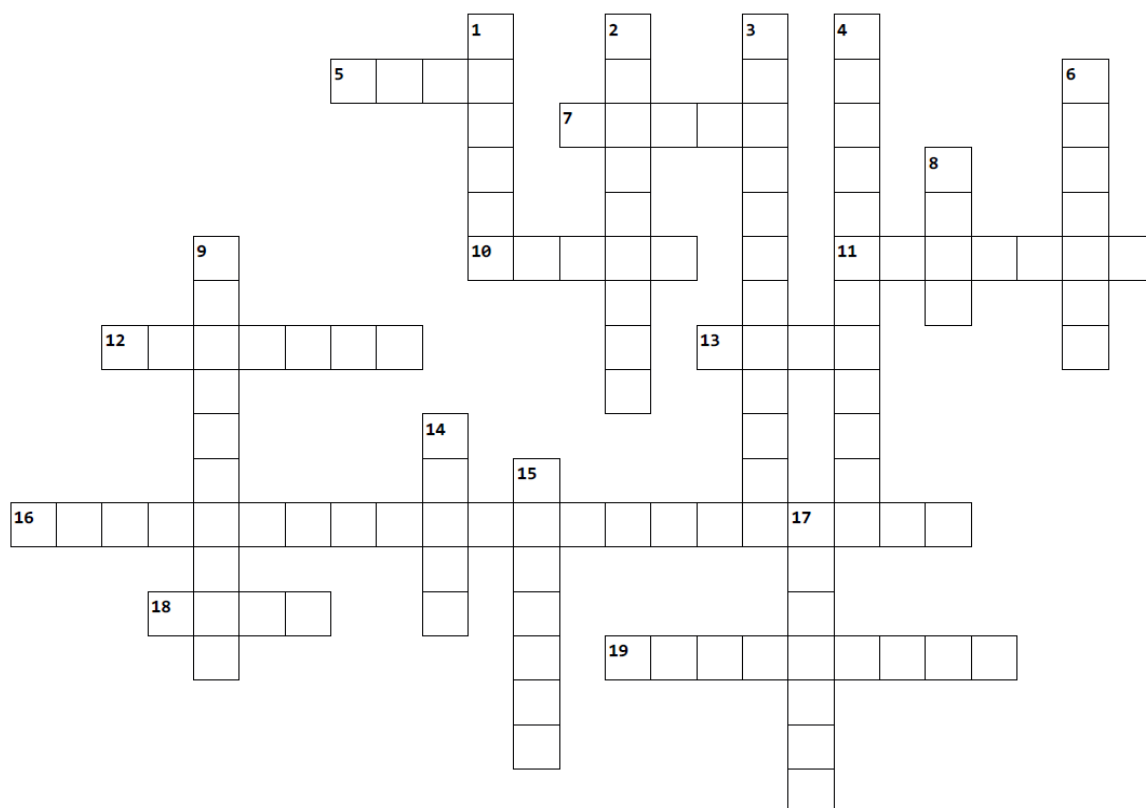
If no, please explain: _____

On behalf of the Court, thank you for your service!

(Please return this questionnaire to...)

Jury Service Crossword

How much do you know about Oregon state trial courts and jury duty? Test your knowledge!



Crossword Clues (*Answers on back of page*)

Across

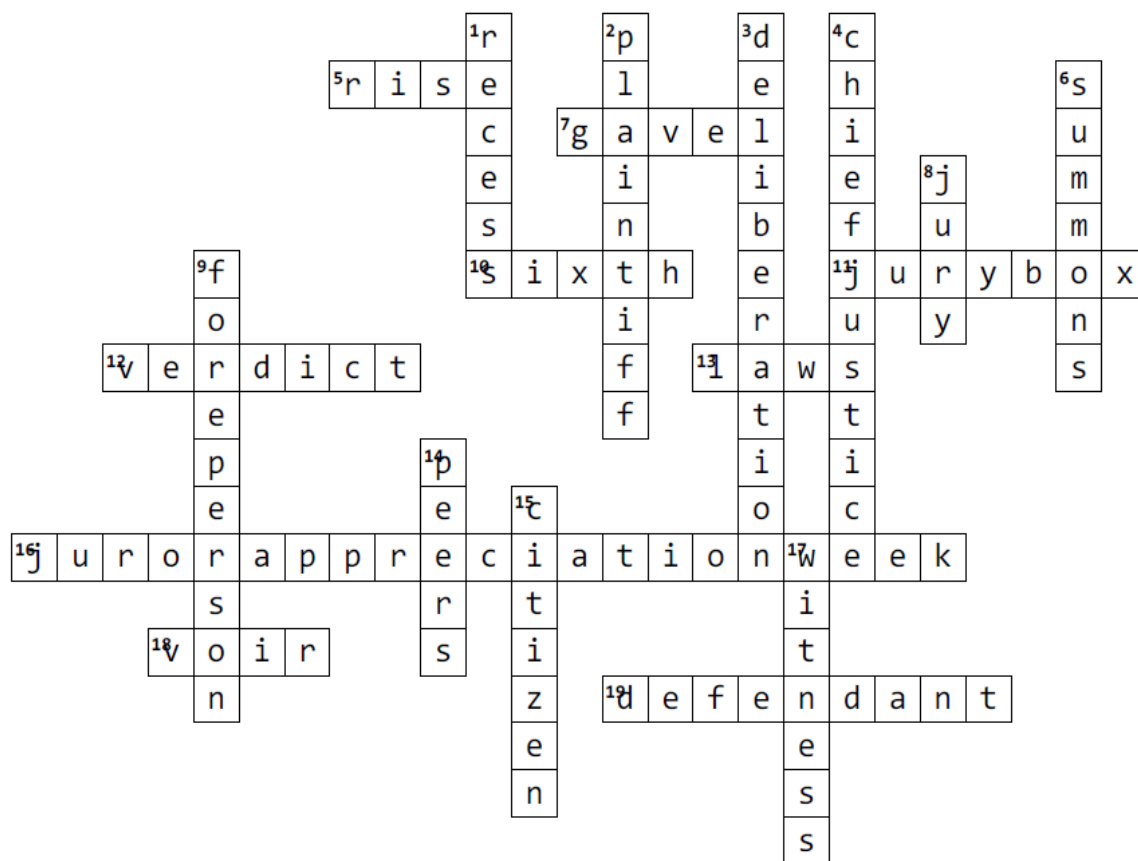
- 5. All ____!
- 7. Legal hammer
- 10. The amendment to the constitution that guarantees a right to a fair trial
- 11. Courtroom enclosure for jurors
- 12. Have you reached a _____?
- 13. Rules established by the government
- 16. Annual celebration of jurors (3 words)
- 18. ____ dire (juror examination) or French for "to speak the truth"
- 19. A person who is being sued or accused of a crime in court

Down

- 1. Courtroom break
- 2. A person who brings a case against another in court
- 3. Jury room debate
- 4. Head of the Oregon Judiciary Branch (2 words)
- 6. A court order received in the mail to appear for jury duty
- 8. Twelve people (usually) sworn to render a verdict in court
- 9. Spokesperson for a jury
- 14. A jury of one's ____
- 15. Potential juror
- 17. Person who may speak from the stand

Jury Service Crossword

Answers



Thank you for playing and for fulfilling your civic duty as a juror.

For information on jury service visit the Oregon State Courts' website at www.courts.oregon.gov

or scan the QR code.



Jury Word Search Puzzle

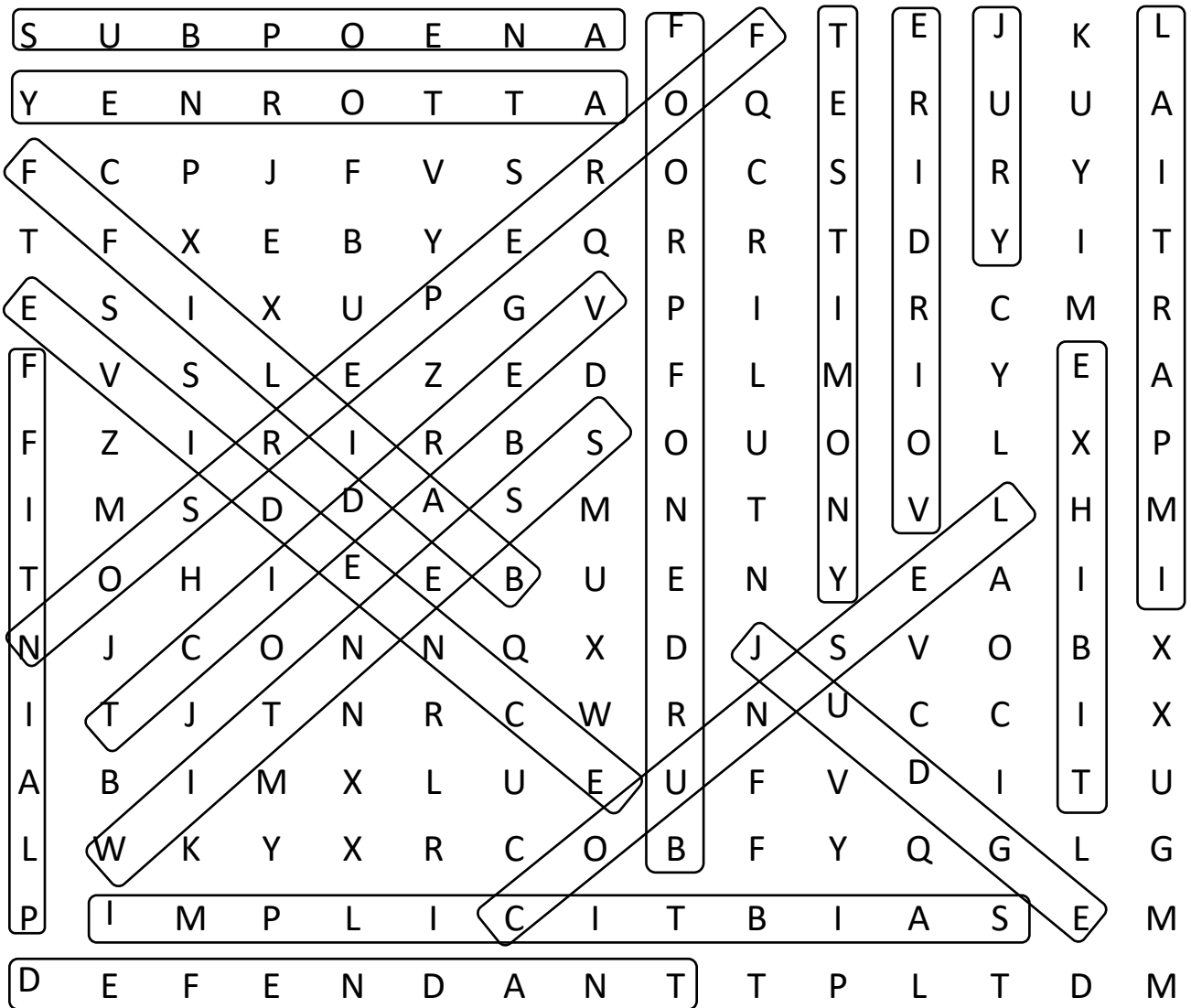
S	U	B	P	O	E	N	A	F	F	T	E	J	K	L
Y	E	N	R	O	T	T	A	O	Q	E	R	U	U	A
F	C	P	J	F	V	S	R	O	C	S	I	R	Y	I
T	F	X	E	B	Y	E	Q	R	R	T	D	Y	I	T
E	S	I	X	U	P	G	V	P	I	I	R	C	M	R
F	V	S	L	E	Z	E	D	F	L	M	I	Y	E	A
F	Z	I	R	I	R	B	S	O	U	O	O	L	X	P
I	M	S	D	D	A	S	M	N	T	N	V	L	H	M
T	O	H	I	E	E	B	U	E	N	Y	E	A	I	I
N	J	C	O	N	N	Q	X	D	J	S	V	O	B	X
I	T	J	T	N	R	C	W	R	N	U	C	C	I	X
A	B	I	M	X	L	U	E	U	F	V	D	I	T	U
L	W	K	Y	X	R	C	O	B	F	Y	Q	G	L	G
P	I	M	P	L	I	C	I	T	B	I	A	S	E	M
D	E	F	E	N	D	A	N	T	T	P	L	T	D	M

To solve the puzzle, find and circle these words in the chart above:

Attorney	Exhibit	Plaintiff
Bailiff	Foreperson	Subpoena
Burden of proof	Impartial	Testimony
Counsel	Implicit bias	Verdict
Defendant	Judge	Voir dire
Evidence	Jury	Witness

Jury Word Search Puzzle

Answers

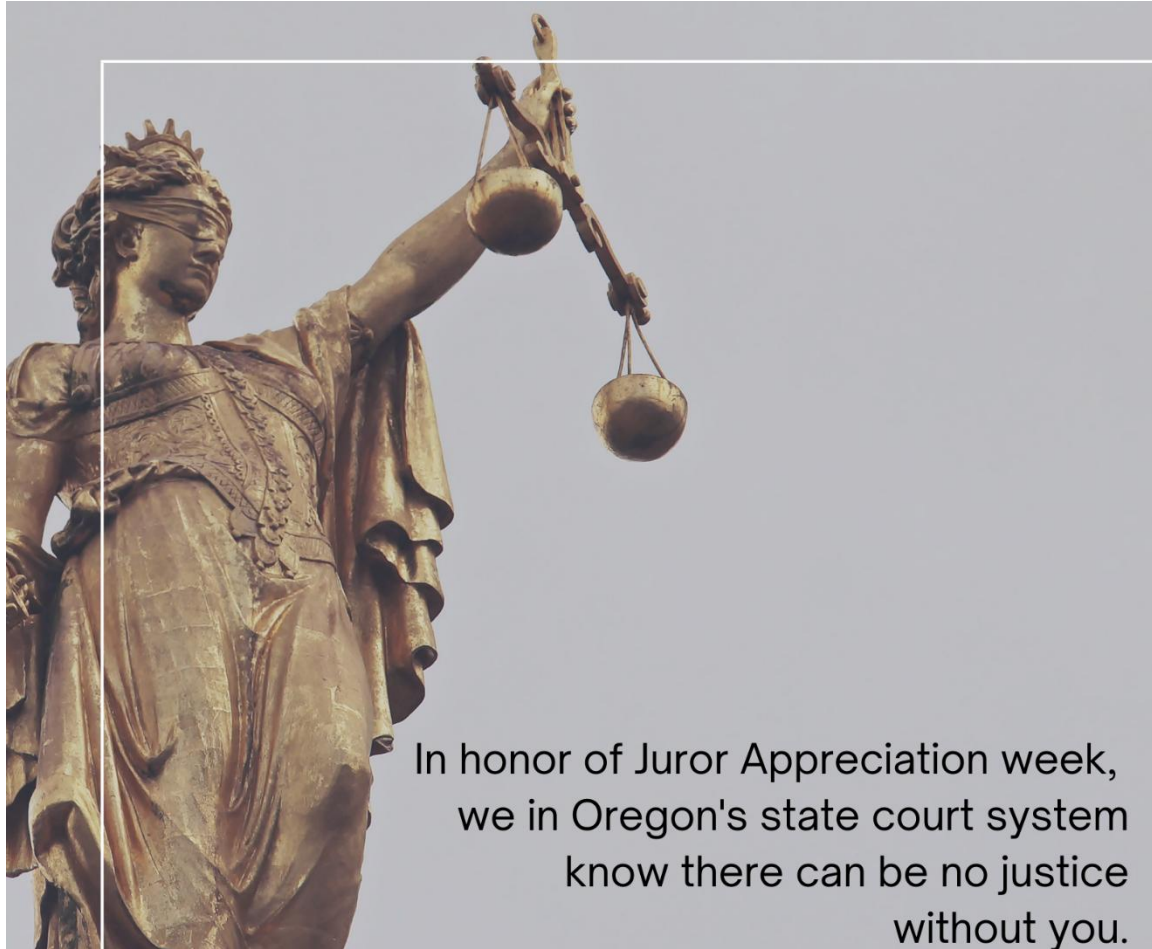


Thank you for playing and for fulfilling your civic duty as a juror.

For information on jury service visit the Oregon State Courts' website at www.courts.oregon.gov

or scan the QR code.





In honor of Juror Appreciation week,
we in Oregon's state court system
know there can be no justice
without you.

Thank you for serving Oregon.



For information visit the Oregon Judicial
Department website at
www.courts.oregon.gov
or scan the QR code using the camera
on your smartphone.



The jury is the heart of the American justice system.



Through your service, you have ensured that the right to trial by jury is guaranteed for all in our community.

We recognize the responsibility and commitment of serving in Oregon and would like to extend our sincere gratitude to those of you who have served on jury duty.

We would also like to thank the many agencies, businesses, schools, and all those who encourage and support their employees when they are called to jury service.



Visit the Oregon Judicial Department website at www.courts.oregon.gov or scan the QR code using the camera on your smartphone.

