



*SUPERIOR COURT OF
CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SOLANO*

Executive Office
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533
Phone (707) 207-7475
Fax (707) 426-1631

Press Release

Contact: Brian K. Taylor
Court Executive Officer
Phone: (707) 207-7373

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Date: February 9, 2022
Fairfield, California

SOLANO COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY ANNOUNCES RECRUITMENT FOR 2022-2023

The Solano County Board of Supervisors has declared February as Civil Grand Jury Month, celebrating a history of Civil Grand Juries that precedes our nation's history. Civil Grand Juries were established to oversee the functions of local governments to ensure they are functioning to the best advantage of the community.

During its tenure in Solano County, the Civil Grand Jury has been instrumental in awakening a conversation regarding dangerously overprescribed opiates. That conversation continues today as members of the Grand Jury that produced that report continue to travel throughout the country, discussing their findings with health professionals and decision-makers. In addition, the Civil Grand Jury has been responsible for leading the charge in saving the county thousands of dollars in wasted or misplaced funds. The jury investigates complaints about fire districts, law enforcement, and any other city or county department that is part of a citizen complaint.

The idea of a Civil Grand Jury is often confusing even for those who have legal careers. When we hear about a Grand Jury, thoughts often turn to criminal actions and courts. However, the Civil Grand Jury in Solano County does not handle such cases. Its involvement is as a "watchdog" group that oversees county and city governments and how they function. The process begins when the 19 volunteers on the jury receive a complaint from a Solano County citizen. The jury reviews the complaint to determine if it falls within its jurisdiction. If the jury determines the complaint is viable, it conducts research, interviews, and tours to determine the root of the "problem" and makes recommendations to resolve the issue. The jury sends the reports to the Solano County Superior Court and the department or agency under investigation for further action.

Every county in California has a Civil Grand Jury. Although the Solano County Grand Jury has nineteen members, each grand jury varies in size. Members serve for one year and can extend their term for one more year at the pleasure of the presiding Superior Court Judge. After they serve their term, Grand Jurors must take a year off before serving again. Persons interested in participating in the Solano Civil Grand Jury must be citizens of the United States and must be 18 years of age or older. In addition, they must have resided in the county for at least one year immediately before being sworn in by the Presiding Superior Court Judge.

Due to the uncertainty of COVID and the need to rely on technology to conduct the jury's business, it is also advantageous to have some proficiency and access to technology. Civil Grand Jurors come from all walks of life, so it is beneficial for volunteers, to be in good health, to have good writing skills, to be

open-minded, to work effectively with others and to possess a sufficient knowledge of the English language. In addition, it is important to have a genuine interest in community affairs, have a curious mind, have a willingness to research issues, and have reliable transportation.

Anyone interested in joining the Solano County Civil Grand Jury can access an application at <https://solano.courts.ca.gov/divisions/grand-jury/apply/> or call (707) 435-2575.