

STANDARD VOIR DIRE QUESTIONS IN CIVIL MATTERS

U.S. Magistrate Judge Alison S. Bachus

1. This trial is anticipated to last ___ days, including time for deliberation. The Court holds trial from 9:00 a.m. to approximately 4:30 p.m., with breaks at mid-morning, lunch, and mid-afternoon. Is there anything about the anticipated length or daily schedule of trial that presents a problem, whether it be personal, business, or health, that is significant enough that you feel the need to be excused from service on this jury?
2. Do any of you have difficulty understanding the English language?
3. Do any of you have a physical condition that may make it difficult for you to sit here, or hear or understand, the evidence as it is being presented during this trial? [Please note the Court makes accommodations for individuals with disabilities.]
4. Do any of you know, or think you might know, me or any of the members of my staff or the courtroom clerk?
5. Do any of you know, or think you might know, counsel or any member of counsel's law firm or legal team?
6. Do any of you know, or think you might know, the plaintiff, defendant, or any member of his/her family, or have had dealings with this [corporate party]?
7. Have any of you ever seen, heard, or read anything about this case, or have any of you ever heard anyone express an opinion about it?
8. Have you, or any members of your family or close friends, ever been involved in any way in a case such as this?
9. Is there anything about the nature of this case that would make it difficult for any of you to serve as a fair and impartial juror?
10. I am now going to read a list of witnesses who may be called to testify during the trial. All of these persons may not be called to testify, but any of them might be. Please raise your hand if you know, or think you might know, any of these people. [Read list of witnesses and third parties.]
11. Have any of you, or any members of your family or close friends, ever served as a [relevant title]?
12. [If relevant] Have any of you, or has anyone in your family, ever studied or practiced [law] [medicine] [other relevant area of expertise]?
13. In deciding the facts of the case, the jury will have to evaluate the testimony of the witnesses.

- Is there anyone who could not judge the testimony of each witness by the same standards?
- By this I mean, for example, is there anyone who is likely to give more or less weight to the testimony of a [relevant title] than to the testimony of another witness, simply because one is employed as a [relevant title] and one is not?

14. Would the heritage, race, or ethnicity of any party or witness affect your ability to sit as an impartial juror in this case?

15. Is there anyone who feels, for moral or religious or whatever reason, that they cannot sit in judgment of another person?

16. Is there anyone who believes they cannot be fair and impartial?

17. As a juror, you are required to follow the law that I give you in the jury instructions, which will be given to you at a later time. You will be instructed to disregard your own notions of what you believe the law is, or what you think the law should be. Are there any of you who believe you would not be able to follow the law as it is given to you by the Court?

18. As a juror, you are required to render your verdict based solely on the evidence that is admitted at trial. You are not allowed to do any outside research, like looking up something on Google or another website, and you may not do any of your own investigation. If selected to sit on this case, would any of you be unable or unwilling to render a verdict solely on the evidence presented at trial?

19. Please take a look around at your fellow potential jurors. Do any of you know other members of the jury panel?

20. Ladies and gentlemen, there are some questions on the back side of your number card that I am going to ask each of you to answer.

- If you or your spouse/partner is retired, please tell us the occupation prior to retirement. If you have served on a jury before, please tell us the kind and type of case it was, if you remember. Please also tell us when and where the case was tried, whether there was a verdict and what it was (if you can recall), and whether you served as foreperson of the jury.
- Questions on the back side of jurors' cards:
 - a. Your juror number
 - b. Your occupation
 - Name of your employer

- How long employed there
- Type of work you do

c. Family

- Marital status
- Number of children and their ages if under 18

d. Spouse's/partner's occupation

- Name of his or her employer
- How long employed there
- Type of work he or she does

e. Have you ever sat as a juror before?

- If so, what kind of case was it? (Civil trial? Criminal trial? Grand Jury?)
- What was the verdict or outcome?

21. Have you ever been involved in a lawsuit of any type?

22. Sometimes, by the time we get to the end of the questioning, jurors will have remembered additional answers to questions that were asked earlier. They then wonder if they should give the answers or not. Please give the answers now.

23. Finally, the Court will ask its last question. Is there something you thought should be asked because it was important to you and your ability to serve as a fair and impartial juror in this case? If it is a private matter, you may indicate that and we may speak privately with you.