

Juror Pay

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Issue

This report summarizes Connecticut law on juror pay and employer responsibilities regarding employees who serve as jurors.

Summary

Under Connecticut law, an employer generally must pay an employee's regular wages for his or her first five days of jury service if he or she is employed full-time. In certain circumstances, the state covers the cost (up to \$50 per day) of certain necessary juror expenses during that time. After five days of service, the state pays jurors \$50 per day.

The law also prohibits employers from taking certain actions against employees who serve jury duty (e.g., firing them or threatening their employment) and provides employees with legal recourse if the employers take such actions.

Part-Time and Full-Time Employment

By law, a full-time employed juror is someone who works at least 30 hours per week, and the job is not temporary or casual (but it can be a job through a temping agency if the employee has held that job for over 90 days and works at least 30 hours per week).

A part-time employed juror is someone who works at a position less than 30 hours per week or who works on a temporary or casual basis ([CGS § 51-247](#)).

The Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA) provided data for this report on juror pay and reimbursement for court year 2017.

For more information, see the "Jury Service in Connecticut" [pamphlet](#) published by the Judicial Branch and the Department of Labor.

Juror Pay

Under Connecticut law, an employer generally must pay a full-time employee's regular wages for his or her first five days of jury service. Employers must make these payments in the same manner and time as they would have paid the juror if he or she had been at work.

After five days of service, the state pays jurors \$50 per day. The state also pays between \$20 and \$50 a day for necessary expenses during the first five days of jury service for a juror (1) who is full-time employed but not paid by his employer for a particular day of jury service, (2) part-time employed, or (3) unemployed. Necessary expenses include 20 cents per mile for travel but exclude food. An employee who works full-time for an employer and part-time for another employer on a particular day is considered a full-time employee and must be paid by the full-time employer. An employer is not required to pay a full-time employee for a day of jury service if the employee would not (1) receive regular wages for that particular day or (2) work more than one-half of a shift that extends into another day ([CGS § 51-247](#)).

An employer has up to 15 days after receiving proof of jury service from an employee to file an application with the court to waive the requirement that the employer pay the employee for the first five days of jury service. If the court finds that the payment would cause extreme hardship, it can excuse the employer from the duty to pay the employee for his or her jury service. It can also excuse a self-employed juror from the duty to pay his or her own wages on that basis. When a waiver is granted, the state pays the juror his or her regular wages up to \$50 per day for up to five days. If the waiver is denied, the applicant may apply for a hearing up to 20 days after the court issues its finding ([CGS § 51-247c](#)).

Employer Prohibited Conduct and Employee Recourse

The law prohibits employers from firing an employee, or threatening or otherwise coercing an employee regarding his or her employment, because the employee receives a jury summons, responds to such a summons, or serves as a juror. An employer may not require an employee who serves eight hours of jury duty in a given day to work in excess of those hours. Violation of these laws constitutes criminal contempt, and an employer convicted for such a violation may be fined up to \$500, imprisoned for up to 30 days, or both.

If an employer fires an employee for receiving or responding to a jury summons or serving jury duty, the employee may, within 90 days, sue the employer for job reinstatement and to recover up to 10 weeks' worth of wages lost as a result of the discharge. An employee who prevails in such an action must also be allowed a reasonable attorney's fee.

An employer who fails to compensate an employee for serving the first five days of jury service, unless exempt, is liable to the employee for damages and is also subject to the criminal penalties in place for nonpayment of wages, which may include fines, imprisonment, or both. (The criminal penalty varies depending on the amount of wages the employer failed to pay.) The court may award triple damages and reasonable attorney’s fees to the juror upon finding that the employer willfully refused to pay him or her. The employer’s extreme financial hardship is not a defense to such an action. The Labor Department may also bring a civil action against the employer to recover twice the amount of unpaid wages, with the recovery distributed to the employee (CGS §§ [51-247](#), [51-247a](#)).

Judicial Branch Payments

OFA provided the following information from the judicial branch regarding juror reimbursement and pay during court year 2017. (A court year runs from September 1 – August 31.)

Table 1: Juror Reimbursement and Compensation for Court Year 2017

	Statute	Statutory Per Diem	Amount Paid
Reimbursements for out-of-pocket expenses	51-247(a)	\$20 - \$50	\$220,192.75
Payments to jurors for service after five days	51-247(c)	\$50	\$238,950
Payments of wages to jurors when employer’s obligation to pay is waived	51-247c	Up to \$50	\$16,131
TOTAL			\$475,273.75

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