

General Voir Dire Procedure and
Court's Proposed Voir Dire

1. The Clerk will swear in prospective jurors.
2. The Court will introduce the parties and counsel to prospective jurors.
3. The Court will read the statement of the case and preliminary instructions on elements of claims and applicable definitions of claim elements.
4. The Court will read the witness list with a list of the witnesses shown on the overhead.
5. The Court will ask the prospective jurors whether they know any of the parties, the attorneys, or the witnesses.
6. The Court will call fourteen prospective jurors into the jury box one by one, by name and number.
7. The Court will have each juror introduce himself or herself, stating name, county of residence, occupation, spouse's occupation, and adult kids' occupations.
8. The Court will ask the following questions to jurors as a group and follow up questions as necessary:

This case is expected to take __ days. Does this present a special problem to any member of the panel?

Is there anyone who has any difficulty that would make serving as a member of the jury difficult or impossible? If so, please step up for a sidebar if you prefer to discuss this privately.

Does anyone know the parties, lawyers, or any of the witnesses?

Has anyone read/seen/heard about this case?

Is there anything about the nature of this case that causes you to think that you can't be fair and impartial? When I say fair and impartial I mean that you come to the case as an ordinary citizen with an open mind and will decide the case on the evidence presented and court's instructions.

Will you be able to render a verdict solely on the evidence presented at trial, applying the law as I give it to you in my instructions?

Has anyone ever been a juror before in a criminal or civil case or as a member of a grand jury in either federal or state court? (follow up questions: type of case? Did anything occur in the trial that would tend to prejudice you in this matter? If criminal matter, note that the standard in a criminal case is different than in a civil case)

Have you, or anyone in your family, ever participated in a lawsuit as a party or in any other capacity? (follow up: is there anything about the nature of this case or the parties involved that would make you hesitate to sit on this jury?)

Does anyone have any family members who work in law enforcement or who are police officers, lawyers, or judges?

Have any of you been the victim of a crime?

Would you want yourself as a juror?

Will you be able to follow my instructions, even if you disagree or are surprised?

9. The Court will ask supplemental questions submitted by parties. The Court will allow counsel to ask follow up questions if appropriate.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS IN CRIMINAL DRUG CASES

Have you, any member of your family, or any close friend had any experience involving the use or possession of illegal drugs or narcotics?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR PRISONER PRO SE CASES

I have told you that the Plaintiff was incarcerated in _____. Is there anyone with connections to _____ or the Illinois Department of Corrections? To detention facilities, jails, or other prisons?

Has anyone been incarcerated?

Has anyone ever entered or visited a correctional facility? How many times? What was the purpose of the visit?

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