



**Superior Court of California  
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA**

# ALAMEDA COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY

The Civil Grand Jury is an arm of the court authorized to investigate local government for the purpose of ensuring that public agencies are working in the best interest of the public, and are doing so effectively and economically. Its independence gives the Grand Jury a unique role in securing local government accountability.

## FUNCTIONS

Operating under the auspices of the Superior Court and subject to the court's general supervision, the Civil Grand Jury accomplishes its mission by investigating local government operations and citizen complaints.

The Grand Jury has broad authority to examine local government agencies operating within Alameda County. The Grand Jury may:

### *"Citizens' Watchdog"*

- Determine whether public monies are being spent wisely and for appropriate purposes;
- Inquire into the conditions of jails, detention centers, and hospitals; and
- Inquire into charges that a public official or employee engaged in willful misconduct while in office.

At the end of its term, the Grand Jury issues a **final report** on results of its investigations. The public agencies that are the focus of the Grand Jury's investigations are legally required to respond to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations within 60 to 90 days.

### *Citizen Complaints*

Citizens alleging government waste or misconduct by government officials may submit confidential complaints to the Grand Jury. The Grand Jury investigates the complaints, and, if the situation warrants, recommends corrective action. It has jurisdiction to investigate any city or county agency or special district operating within Alameda County (e.g., BART, EBMUD, AC Transit, school districts, etc.).

### Distinct from Criminal Grand Jury

The Civil Grand Jury does not normally hear criminal matters. In Alameda County, criminal grand jurors are selected from the regular Superior Court jury pool.

## COMMITTEES

The Grand Jury accomplishes much of its work through the use of committees, which are formed to evaluate government operation areas such as:

- Education and Administration
- Health and Social Services
- Government
- Law and Justice

## **QUALIFICATIONS & COMMITMENT**

Grand Jurors are provided training and support throughout their service. They must be willing to participate in questioning witnesses, reading and analyzing investigative materials, and in writing their final reports. Persons selected for Grand Jury service must commit to serve a minimum of one year (July 1 through June 30), and must be available to meet on Wednesday and Thursday mornings each week.

### **Required Qualifications**

*Prospective Grand Jurors must possess the following qualifications (CA Penal Code §893):*

1. Citizen of the United States at least 18 years of age;
2. Resident of Alameda County for one year immediately before being selected;
3. Ordinary intelligence, sound judgement, and good character; and
4. Sufficient knowledge of the English Language.

### **Desirable Qualifications**

1. Interested in community affairs;
2. Able to work well with others in a group setting; and
3. Possess investigative skills and the ability to write reports.

### **Disqualifications**

*A person may not serve if any of the following apply:*

1. The person is serving as a trial juror in any court of this state;
2. The person has been discharged as a Grand Juror in any court of this state within one year;
3. The person has been convicted of malfeasance in office or any felony or other high crime; or
4. The person is serving as an elected public officer.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

Citizens who desire to be nominated for the Grand Jury, who are qualified, and who are able to provide one year of service are encouraged to apply. Applications are accepted throughout the year and are reviewed each spring for service beginning July 1.

The Superior Court finalizes a pool of at least 30 nominees (approximately six from each Alameda County Supervisorial District). The Presiding Judge can retain up to ten jurors from the previous year to serve a second term. The remaining jurors are then selected at random from the pool of prospective nominees for a total panel of 19 to serve as the Alameda County Civil Grand Jury. Soon after the selection process, impaneled Grand Jurors receive an orientation on city and county government and must complete and file a Statement of Economic Interests.

## **REMUNERATION**

Grand Jurors are paid \$15 per day for each day served, plus mileage and parking at a reduced fee.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

**Get an application:** <https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/system/files/general/cgj-application.pdf>

**Send questions to: Email:** [accivilgrandjury@alameda.courts.ca.gov](mailto:accivilgrandjury@alameda.courts.ca.gov) or **Phone:** 510-924-3800

**Website:** <https://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/general-information/jury-duty/civil-grand-jury>