

## HOW ARE CITIZENS SELECTED FOR JURY DUTY?

The Jury Commission in Georgia was formulated in 1873 to establish pools of local citizens in each county from which jurors would be selected. Early commissions consisted of three Commissioners, the county clerk, and the "ordinary" (now the probate court judge). Today, the Jury Commission in this county is composed of six citizens appointed by the Chief Judge of the Superior Court for the circuit. The Clerk of the Superior Court serves as the Clerk of the Jury Commission.

It is the duty of the Jury Commission to establish the grand jury and trial jury (also called "petit" or "traverse" jury) boxes, and to revise them periodically. Each county's commission should revise the lists at least once every two years. It is in the discretion of the Chief Superior Court Judge of the circuit to require the list to be revised on a more frequent basis.

The foremost responsibility of the Jury Commission is to make the grand and trial lists representative of the local community and the county's population. Until 1967, Jury Commissioners used the Real Estate Tax Digest as a source of juror names. At that time, the legislature adopted the voter registration list as the basic source list for jurors because they determined this list was more inclusive and representative of a county's population.

As of July 1, 2000, however, the legislature changed the statute so that the Commission must make use of not only the registered voters list but the list of residents of the county who hold drivers licenses or personal identification cards issued by the Department of Public Safety. Additionally, the Jury Commissioners are authorized to use any other list of county residents they deem appropriate as long as the resulting juror lists fairly represent the county population. Currently, the Department of Public Safety is making the drivers' license and identification card list available to the Clerk of the Commission on request. If, at any time, the Jury Commissioners find that the jury list does not contain a "fair representative cross-section of the county population," then they must supplement the lists with other sources.



Gene Johnson  
Clerk of Superior Court