

Lycoming County Law Library at James V. Brown Library
Voir Dire in Pennsylvania

Voir dire is the process of questioning prospective jurors, in order to determine a particular juror's suitability for jury service.

Voir dire [from French, "to speak the truth"] is conducted by the attorneys in a given case to obtain, at a minimum, the following information, concerning the prospective jurors and their households:

Name of juror
Date and place of birth
Residential neighborhood and zip code
Marital status
Nature and extent of education
Number and ages of children
Name, age and relationship of members of prospective juror's household
Occupation and employment history of the prospective juror, the juror's spouse, children and member of the juror's household
Involvement as a party or witness in a civil lawsuit or criminal case
Relationship, friendship or association with a law enforcement officer, a lawyer or any person affiliated with the courts of any judicial district
Relationship of the prospective juror or any member of the juror's immediate family to the insurance industry, including employee, claims adjuster, investigator, agent or stockholder in an insurance company
Motor vehicle operation and licensure
Physical or mental condition affecting ability to serve on a jury
Reasons a juror believes he or she cannot or should not serve as a juror
Relationship, friendship or association with the parties, the attorneys and prospective witnesses of the particular case to be heard
Such other pertinent information as may be appropriate to the particular case to achieve a competent, fair and impartial jury.

The court may provide for voir dire to include the use of a written questionnaire. However, the use of a written questionnaire without the opportunity of oral examination by the court or counsel is not a sufficient voir dire.

Four peremptory challenges are allowed to each party, beginning with the plaintiff, and following in the order in the order in which the party was named, or became a party to the action.

How can I find an attorney to help me?

The Lycoming Law Association offers an attorney directory at www.lycolaw.org

Source: PA Rules of Civil Procedure §220.1, 221
Black's Law Dictionary, 8th edition

NOTE: The above information is not intended to be a substitute for legal advice or representation. Consult an attorney if you have questions about how this information relates to your specific situation or circumstance.

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