

REB 23-070  
Emma Connolly  
Canadian Jurors' Experiences with Jury Duty  
FGSR Summary

Jury service is an important component of the Canadian Justice system. Although jury duty can be a positive experience for people, it can also come with challenges. Research shows that some jurors experience stress because of their jury service. Canadian jurors may also face financial challenges. Jury fees vary between each province and territory, and despite public official's advocacy for the federal government to increase juror compensation, many provinces pay jurors less than minimum wage. Our justice system expects Canadian citizens to fulfil their civic duty; however, jurors receive minimal financial compensation and limited resources are available for jurors who wish to seek mental health support. The present study invited former Canadian jurors to share details of their jury duty experience with us by completing an online survey. Participants (N=7) completed measures of financial challenges, juror stress, and answered open-ended questions about how jury duty impacted their lives. Results show mixed reports on juror expenses incurred as a result of jury duty; there was no evidence of serious financial hardship. Despite these results, it is possible that prospective jurors may experience financial barriers that prevent them from serving on a jury. These financial barriers could be overcome if jurors received fair compensation. In terms of juror stress, the top three sources of juror stress were: (1) Deciding on a Verdict, (2) Fear of Making a Mistake, (3) Jury Deliberations. In addition, some participants reported that jury duty was a stressful experience for them, whereas others reported having a positive jury duty experience overall. We hope the results of this study will shed light on how jury duty affects Canadian jurors' lives.