

JUROR QUESTIONNAIRES

Diane Collins – Mendocino

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I have a question about questionnaires used by the court for specific cases. Our judges use a "case specific" questionnaire for long, highly publicized, sensitive (sex or molest cases) or murder cases. These questionnaires are usually about 15-20 pages long, asking many of the same questions asked during voir dire. They feel jury selection goes faster if the attorneys have previewed the answers on those forms. The judge and attorneys agree on what questions to ask and the format of the questionnaire.

My questions are: Does any other county use this type of form and if so who pays for everything? Right now, I copy the questionnaires to give to the jurors. After they have completed the forms I take them to an outside vendor for copying as each attorney gets a copy for preview. The court pays all costs involved. Is there a way we can charge the attorneys for this service? They are the ones requesting this information/service in the first place. Why does this have to come out of my budget?

Any ideas or answers? Thank you for your help.

1	Diana Tuggle-Gifford	Shasta we have had a number of these type of cases and the defense attorneys do pay for their portion of the copy work. This can be a major hit on any budget.
2	Edwina Harper	Yolo County, the attorneys make the copies. If there are multiple groups coming in for the trial, one attorney will take those questionnaires and make copies for everyone and then the other attorney will make copies for the next group.
3	Amy Seydel	Monterey County has recently implemented a policy where all cases in which a questionnaire is requested must first be approved by our Presiding Judge. In cases where a questionnaire is used, the jury manager and/or supervisor meets with the trial Judge in advance and encourages as short of a questionnaire as possible. We have been able to reduce the questionnaire in many cases to just one page which saves a lot of time and money. Our county does provide and copy all questionnaires in criminal matters; however, counsel is responsible for the copying of questionnaires in civil matters.
4	Sherry Spears	Fresno will always have a questionnaire agreed to by the attorneys and approved by the judge for a capital murder case. Sometimes on other cases, but rarely. The copying and costs are picked up by the county.
5	Lynda Pierini	In Madera Court, on capital murder cases we will use questionnaires that are pre-approved by judge and attorneys. The blank questionnaires are delivered to us by the attorneys on the case. On rare occasion we will have a short questionnaire on possibly a civil trial, the blank questionnaires are delivered to the jury division for distribution to the jurors, the completed questionnaires are copied by jury division staff. The cost is picked up by the court. It is rare that this occurs.
6	Sherri Adelstein Texas	We will always have a questionnaire agreed to by the attorneys and approved by the judge for a capital murder case. Sometimes on other cases, but rarely. The copying and costs are picked up by the county.
7	Keri Shane	In El Dorado County, the attorneys pay for copies. We do not.
8	Debbie Cravea	Napa is the same as Madera.