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"Trial by jury is part of the  
bright constellation which  
leads to peace, liberty and  
safety."

— President Thomas Jefferson

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## AFTER YOUR JURY SERVICE

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*Sources consulted during the development of this brochure include the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Center for Jury Studies at the National Center for State Courts, the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law and the American Psychological Association.*

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# Tips for After Jury Service

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## THANK YOU FOR YOUR JURY SERVICE

Jury service is an essential part of our criminal justice system and can be very rewarding. Being on a jury can also be stressful. Your jury service probably disrupted your work and home schedule. It is possible you were asked to hear graphic testimony or review graphic evidence or images. People react differently to being exposed to such materials. For some, it may cause stress reactions which can occur hours, days or even months later.

## SOME TEMPORARY SIGNS OF STRESS MAY INCLUDE:

**Physical reactions**, such as muscle tension, changes in sleep patterns or a lack of energy.

**Mental reactions**, such as difficulty concentrating or remembering things or having a hard time making decisions.

**Emotional reactions**, such as moodiness, guilt, fear or dwelling on the details of the case.

**Behavioral reactions** such as not wanting to talk with or be around people, a change in eating habits or increased use of drugs/alcohol.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR MANAGING STRESS REACTIONS

Remember that stress symptoms are a very normal response to being in a stressful situation and for most people, they will go away on their own. The following tips may be helpful:

- Be aware that you are under no obligation to discuss the trial with anyone, including the media. You do not have to discuss your jury's decision at all if you don't want to.
- Maintain your normal schedule and routine, if possible.
- Try relaxation techniques, such as meditation or yoga. There are many free resources online.
- Take care of your health with good nutrition, by getting adequate rest and drinking plenty of water.
- Think about how you have overcome other challenges. Use the same coping skills that have worked for you in the past.
- Moderate exercise helps your body process stress hormones and may ease some stress reactions.
- Maintain important and supportive relationships. Do things you enjoy with people you trust; don't isolate yourself.

- Keep in mind that nicotine, caffeine and alcohol can make stress reactions worse and may interfere with your ability to fall asleep and/or the quality of your sleep.
- Be patient with yourself. Stress reactions can come and go and sometimes may take you by surprise. Everyone heals at their own pace, do not put yourself on an artificial timeline to heal.

## IF YOU NEED MORE ASSISTANCE

It can be very unsettling to be impacted by crime and violence even when the crime is not directed against you personally. It may affect how you view your community or your own safety. If you have been a victim of a crime, the jury experience may bring up memories or reactions related to your own victimization. You are not alone. This is a very normal reaction to being exposed to the victimization of others.

In most cases, these feelings will resolve on their own. However, if you are worried or have questions about any of these reactions, talk with your doctor about the resources available to help you through it.