

Arizona White-Collar Crime FAQ: How Is a Grand Jury Selected?

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A defendant facing any charge, including white-collar crimes, wants to understand how the juries they face are chosen. The [Jury Selection and Service Act](#) establishes the process for selecting jurors for federal criminal trials, as well as the grand juries that issue indictments to initiate such proceedings. Although both types of juries serve an important role in our criminal justice system, the grand jury is often the least understood.

Grand juries serve a very specific function—their job is to determine whether there is “probable cause” to believe that an individual has committed a crime and should be put on trial. If the grand jury decides there is enough evidence, it will issue an indictment against the defendant.

Federal law requires that a grand jury be selected at random from a fair cross-section of the community in the district or division in which the federal grand jury convenes. To accomplish this, the names of prospective grand jurors are drawn at random from lists of registered voters, lists of actual voters, or other sources when necessary. The goal is for jurors to represent a cross-section of the community, without regard to race, gender, national origin, age, or political affiliation.

Individuals selected are then summoned to appear for duty as grand jurors, provided that they are not exempt or excused from service. For instance, members of the armed forces on active duty, members of professional fire and police departments, and public officials are exempted from federal jury service.

When these persons appear before the court, the presiding judge may consider any further requests to be excused. Many courts approve excuses from service, on individual request, to designated groups or occupational classes, including to persons over age 70, persons who have served on a federal jury within the past two years, and persons who serve as volunteer fire fighters and on search-and-rescue or ambulance crews.

The Jury Act also allows courts to permanently excuse a juror from service at the time he or she is summoned on the grounds of “undue hardship or extreme inconvenience” if the distance to the courthouse makes it difficult for the juror.

Grand jurors must also be impartial. Therefore, a member of the grand jury who is related by blood or marriage to a person under investigation, who knows that person well enough to be biased, or who is biased for any reason may not participate in the investigation of that person or in the return of the indictment.

Source: [Department of Justice](#)

About Ashley D. Adams, PLC

At Ashley D. Adams, PLC, we have a well-established track record of success that can make a difference, whether in defending charges of white-collar crime, health care fraud, financial fraud, general fraud charges, other criminal or civil matters, or representing our clients during a government investigation.

*We practice excellence, one client at a time. That means each of our clients is given personal attention and aggressive representation. Contact us today at **info@azwhitecollarcrime.com** or **1-480-646-4956** to schedule a free 30-minute consultation with one of our attorneys.*