

# Superior Court of California County of Santa Clara

191 North First Street  
San Jose, California 95113  
(408) 882-2700

Chambers of  
HONORABLE DEBORAH A. RYAN, Presiding Judge

CONTACT  
Britney Huelbig, Deputy Manager Civil Grand Jury  
(408) 882-2721



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## Court Seeks Candidates for Public Watchdog Agency *Recruitment begins for 2021 Civil Grand Jury panel*

Presiding Judge Deborah A. Ryan has announced that the Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara, is seeking volunteers to serve on the 2021 Civil Grand Jury.

The Civil Grand Jury, an arm of the Superior Court, is a part of the judicial branch of government. It serves as the county's civil watchdog agency and may examine all aspects of county and city government, special districts, and school districts. It is authorized to inspect and audit books, records, and financial expenditures, to ensure accountability of public funds. The Grand Jury may also inspect jails and juvenile detention facilities.

Grand Jury service affords citizens the unique opportunity to contribute to the efficiency of local government and play an integral part in ensuring that government officials are accountable to residents. Applicants must be 18 years of age or older, United States citizens, and residents of Santa Clara County. Service on the grand jury does require a time commitment of an average of 25 hours per week, or as determined by the Grand Jury.

Due to the challenges posed by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and in line with California Penal Code §905.5(b), the Court determined it is in the best interest of the institution of the Civil Grand Jury to transition from a fiscal year term to a calendar year term. This change was considered and approved by the County Board of Supervisors and has necessitated that the next term of the Civil Grand Jury begins on January 4, 2021.

Additionally, the Civil Grand Jury Ceremony to honor and discharge the 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury, and impanel the newly selected 2021 Civil Grand Jury, has been rescheduled to Thursday, December 17, 2020, at 4 pm, and will be held remotely.

"The Civil Grand Jury plays an important watchdog function for Santa Clara County. It is vitally important that we have a diverse group of people with different experiences, skills and abilities who are willing to assume the important task of serving on the grand jury," said Presiding Judge Deborah A. Ryan. "We need civic minded citizens willing to critically assess the operations of local governmental entities and to recommend improvements, as necessary, to benefit our community. We are grateful to past and present grand jurors for their tremendous service and seek others who are similarly interested in serving in this capacity for the 2021 Civil Grand Jury."

Persons interested in applying may obtain an application online at [www.scscourt.org](http://www.scscourt.org) under "Civil Grand Jury". Questions may also be directed to Britney Huelbig, Deputy Manager for the Civil Grand Jury, at 408-882-2721 or [CGJ@scscourt.org](mailto:CGJ@scscourt.org).

**The deadline to submit applications is September 25, 2020.**