



Legislative Services Agency

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Fiscal Services Division

Fiscal Topic

Jury Trials

August 27, 2026

Juror Selection

In Iowa, residents are selected at random for jury service from the master jury list. The master jury list consists of licensed drivers, state identification card holders, and registered voters residing in the county where the court is located. To serve or be considered for jury service, a person must meet the following criteria:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Be a citizen of the United States.
- Be a resident of the county in which the person was summoned.
- Be able to understand the English language in a written, spoken, or manually signed mode.
- Be able to receive and evaluate information such that the person is capable of rendering satisfactory juror service.
- Have not served as a grand or petit (trial) juror within the past two years.
- If convicted of a felony, the individual cannot be under the supervision of the Department of Corrections, Judicial District Department of Correctional Services, or the Board of Parole.
- If convicted of a felony, the individual cannot be currently registered as a sex offender under Iowa Code chapter [692A](#) or required to serve a special sentence under Iowa Code chapter [903B](#).

Individuals selected for jury service can request postponement for up to 12 months for hardship, inconvenience, or public necessity; temporary physical or mental illness or infirmity; active educational pursuit; or scheduled vacation.

Types of Juries

There are two types of juries in Iowa: grand juries and petit juries. A grand jury consists of a group of seven citizens convened to determine whether there is sufficient evidence for a person accused of a crime to be brought to trial, rather than the county attorney filing a criminal charge. A grand jury may meet at times specified by order of a district court judge, at the request of the county attorney, or at the request of the majority of the grand jurors. The prosecuting attorney is responsible for presenting evidence to the grand jury. Grand jury proceedings are closed to the public. A petit jury acts as the fact finder when a party in a civil case or a defendant in a criminal case has requested a jury trial. In criminal trials, 12 jurors sit on a jury. In civil trials, eight jurors comprise a jury. If a jury trial has not been requested, the judge acts as the fact finder.

Reimbursement and Costs

Reimbursement for both grand and petit jurors includes pay, mileage, and parking. Grand jurors and petit jurors in all courts receive \$30 compensation for each day of service or attendance, including the selection process, and \$50 per day in excess of seven days. Grand jurors and petit jurors in all courts

also receive reimbursement for mileage expenses at a rate (currently \$0.50) set by the Supreme Court for each mile traveled each day to and from the residence of the juror and the place of service or attendance and receive reimbursement for actual costs of parking. Employers must allow employees time off to serve on a jury. Employers are not required to pay the salaries of employees on jury duty but may choose to do so in recognition of the importance of jury service.

The county pays all costs and expenses incurred by a grand jury. Costs and expenses for a petit jury are paid from the Jury and Witness Fee Revolving Fund. Moneys are transferred from a General Fund appropriation to the Judicial Branch and deposited into the Jury and Witness Fee Revolving Fund. Clerks of court request moneys as needed to pay jury and witness expenditures.

Jury Trial Statistics

Figure 1 shows the number of jury trials in Iowa district courts from 2011 through 2025.

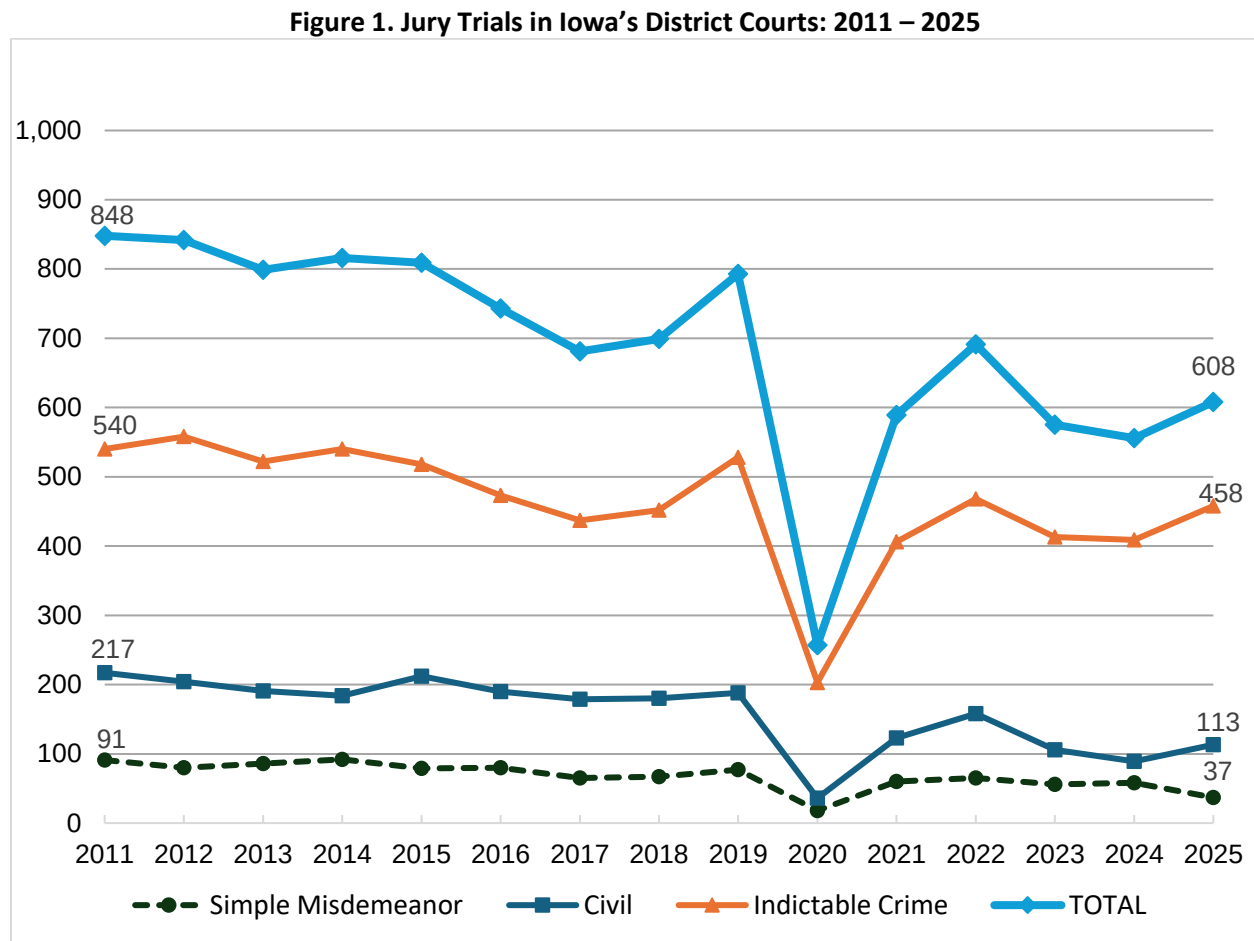


Figure 2 provides the number of jury trials in Iowa district courts by case type from 2011 through 2025.

Figure 2. Jury Trials in Iowa District Courts by Case Type, 2011–2025

Year	Simple Misdemeanor	Civil	Indictable Crime	Total
2011	91	217	540	848
2012	80	204	558	842
2013	86	191	522	799
2014	92	184	540	816
2015	79	212	518	809
2016	80	190	473	743
2017	65	179	437	681
2018	67	180	452	699
2019	77	188	528	793
2020	18	36	203	257
2021	60	123	406	589
2022	65	158	468	691
2023	56	106	413	575
2024	58	89	409	556
2025	37	113	458	608

Trends in the Number of Jury Trials

In 2020, the number of jury trials dropped sharply to 257 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Jury trials were postponed for much of the year by supervisory orders issued by the Iowa Supreme Court in response to health and safety concerns for jurors and other participants. The Iowa Supreme Court created the [Jumpstart Jury Trials Task Force](#) in May 2020 to recommend policies and procedures that would allow jury trials to resume while protecting the health and safety of participants and preserving the right to trial by jury.

Jury trials resumed in 2021 with the number increasing to 589 and reaching 691 in 2022. Since then, the number of jury trials has fluctuated, declining to 575 in 2023 and 556 in 2024 before increasing to 608 in 2025. The number of jury trials in 2025 remained below the 793 trials conducted in 2019, the last full year before the pandemic, and below the previous high of 848 trials reported in 2011.

Additional Information

For additional information, visit:

- Judicial Branch at iowacourts.gov
- Iowa Court Rules at legis.iowa.gov/law/courtrules/courtruleslistings

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Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code chapters [602](#) and [607A](#)

Iowa Code sections [602.1302](#) and [602.1303](#)

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