

Voluntary work as jurors

We are currently looking for jurors for the upcoming term of office from 2024 to 2028. Are you interested? Then please use our application form under "Further information".

Competent Department

- [Statistisches Landesamt Bremen - Wahlen](#)

Basic information

Lay assessors ...

participate in the main hearing on an equal footing. They participate in the verdict as well as in all other decisions concerning the proceedings and thus bear the same responsibility as professional judges.

have an influence on the proceedings and the verdict. During the taking of evidence, the lay judges have the right to ask questions of the defendant, witnesses and experts, they decide on motions for evidence and make their own suggestions for the taking of evidence. Decisions on the question of guilt and the legal consequences of the offense require a two-thirds majority. The following applies both in the lay judges' court and in the criminal divisions of the regional court: no one can be convicted against the votes of both lay judges. Lay jurors must form an opinion on every decision; abstentions are not permitted.

are not liable, but punishable breaches of duty are punished. The lay assessors cannot be held civilly liable for a "wrong" verdict that has been overturned or amended on appeal or revision. They are only held liable for damages if they have committed criminal breaches of duty (for example, for bribery, obstruction of justice or persecution of innocent persons).

have protective rights as employees. Lay judges may not be restricted or disadvantaged by the assumption or exercise of their office. They must be released from work by their employer for the duration of their term of office. In addition, termination of the employment relationship because of the juror's activity is inadmissible.

Requirements

Only German citizens are entitled - but also obliged - to serve as jurors. Those who have been elected to the office are only entitled to refuse for certain reasons regulated by law. Lay jurors must have a command of the German language.

Lay assessors must be at least 25 years old and no older than 69 when they take office. The key date by which age is to be calculated is January 01, 2024 for the term of office 2024 to 2028.

Applicants must be resident in Bremen at the time the list of proposed candidates is drawn up. A secondary residence under registration law is also sufficient if the applicant mainly resides in Bremen.

Lay assessors must be in good health, i.e. mentally and physically fit to perform the office. They must not be in financial collapse (insolvency, over-indebtedness, private insolvency).

Lay assessors should in principle have the following skills:

- social competence
- knowledge of human nature and empathy
- logical thinking and intuition
- professional experience
- freedom from prejudice even in extreme situations
- knowledge of the basics of criminal procedure, the meaning of crime and punishment, and the importance of the role of jurors
- courage to judge people, sense of responsibility for intervening in other people's lives
- Sense of justice, thinking in just categories
- steadfastness and flexibility in representing one's own opinion
- Communication and dialogue skills

In addition, juvenile jurors should have competence in educational matters.

Excluded are persons

- who have been sentenced to a custodial or juvenile sentence (including suspended sentences) of more than six months for an intentional act,
- against whom preliminary proceedings are pending for an offense that may result in the loss of the ability to hold public office,
- have violated the principles of humanity or the rule of law, have served as full-time or unofficial employees of the GDR's State Security Service, or have actively fought against the constitutional order.

Also excluded from jury service are persons from top political offices and judicial or justice-related professions, such as state and district attorneys, police enforcement officers, attorneys, notaries, court enforcement officers, employees of the penal system, court assistants, juvenile court assistants or probation officers.

Procedure

The presidents of the district or local courts determine the number of chief and assistant lay judges required for the coming term of office in their district, as well as the corresponding numbers in the juvenile justice system, on the basis of the days on which the courts are in session and the requirement that chief lay judges should not be called upon for more than twelve days of sessions.

The municipal authorities shall publicize the election, organize publicity, receive applications and compile the lists of nominees. The municipal councils decide on the inclusion of candidates on the nomination lists. The municipal representative body for the City of Bremen is the City Parliament (Stadtbürgerschaft) and for the City of Bremerhaven the City Council (Stadtverordnetenversammlung). The youth welfare committees decide on the inclusion of applicants on the proposal lists in the juvenile justice system.

The lists of nominees are then put on public display. Anyone may object to individual nominations. The lists (together with the objections, if any) are sent to the relevant local court. The chairperson of the jury selection committee prepares the meeting.

The jury selection committees decide on the objections to the lists of nominees and elect the jurors who are to serve as main and assistant jurors in adult and juvenile criminal cases at the district and regional courts for the next five years.

The elected lay assessors are checked for possible obstacles to their election and the lists of main and auxiliary lay assessors in general and juvenile criminal cases are sent to the respective court.

The district courts and regional courts draw lots for the main jurors assigned to them on all dates for the main hearing of the trial panels for the respective year. The assistant lay judges do not receive any appointments. They are used when a chief juror is unavailable or when substitute jurors are required in particularly large proceedings. The assistant jurors are drawn by lot for the entire coming term of office in a fixed order on the list of assistant jurors. The elected applicants shall be notified of their assignment by the respective courts. Applicants who are not elected shall be notified by the municipal authorities.

More information

Information on the exercise of the office of juror

Office of the Lay Lay Assessors of the Bremen Regional Court

+49 421 361-4847

office@landgericht.bremen.de

Office of the Lay Lay Assessors at Bremen Local Court

+49 421 361-76633 and -4186 (juvenile jurors)

office@amtsgericht.bremen.de

Administrative office of the Bremen-Blumenthal Local Court

+49 421 361-7410

office@amtsgericht-blumenthal.bremen.de