

# DISTRICT COURT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS CLERK'S OFFICE

**Glenda L. Lake, Esquire**  
Clerk of Court



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Unresponsive Jurors Subject to Contempt Powers of the District Court**

On Monday, July 23, 2012, District Judge Wilma A. Lewis issued Orders to Show Cause to jurors who failed to appear for jury service on July 3, 2012, July 16, 2012 and/or July 23, 2012 at the District Court of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix Division, after being summoned to appear.

Pursuant to Title 28 U.S.C. § 1866, any person summoned for jury service who fails to appear may be ordered by the district court to show cause for their failure to comply with the jury summons. The statute further provides that any person who fails to show good cause for noncompliance with the jury summons may be “fined not more than \$1,000, imprisoned not more than three days, ordered to perform community service,” or any combination of those penalties.

The Court’s Juror Selection Plan requires the Court to issue an order to show cause if a person summoned for jury duty fails to appear. A large number of the jurors summoned for jury duty on July 16, 2012 did not report, which caused the postponement of a criminal trial. A number of those jurors also failed to report on July 23, 2012. While the Court is sympathetic to the sacrifices jurors make in order to appear for jury duty, jury service is the cornerstone of our democratic process and our system of law. It is one of the most important civic duties that a citizen can perform to protect our rights and liberties.

Attorney Glenda L. Lake, Clerk of Court, added that “it is unfortunate that the Court has to resort to orders to show cause to catch the attention of those citizens who ignore their civic responsibilities, but this is an extremely serious matter. We hope that this will be the last time the Court will have to serve orders to show cause.”

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