



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Statewide Jury List in Use for First Time AOPC Gives Expanded Jury Data to Pennsylvania Counties**

**HARRISBURG, October 1, 2008** - For the first time in Pennsylvania all counties in the Commonwealth today are being given names of potential jurors from a central statewide jury list compiled by the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC).

The statewide list, containing more than 11.5 million names, is designed to considerably expand existing county jury pools by identifying more citizens who are eligible to serve as jurors.

"There has never been a statewide list of this kind in Pennsylvania," said Chief Justice of Pennsylvania Ronald D. Castille. "In the past, each county has developed its own jury list using voter information, PennDOT records and other data. We anticipate that our new data will improve on existing lists everywhere. If you vote, pay taxes, drive a car or receive welfare or food stamps, your name is on our list."

The statewide jury list was created after passage of a 2007 Pennsylvania statute that enabled the AOPC to receive citizen information from the files of the Pennsylvania departments of Revenue, Transportation, Welfare and State.

More than 24 million names of state taxpayers, drivers, voters and others were sent to the AOPC from those departments. The lists were "scrubbed" by the AOPC's Judicial Automation Department to eliminate as much duplication as possible, and reduced to an 11.5 million-name master list. The master list, in turn, was broken down on a geographic basis, county by county.

The AOPC today made available to each county the names and addresses of prospective jurors living within that county. No confidential information about individuals from the original departmental source lists is included on the final scrubbed statewide jury list or the lists provided to counties.

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Citizens are summoned for jury duty at the county level to serve on juries in civil and criminal trials in county Courts of Common Pleas.

"As with all multiple source lists, some duplication of information is inevitable, but we feel certain that the statewide jury list will provide the counties with larger and more diverse jury pools," said Zygmunt A. Pines, court administrator of Pennsylvania. "Had it had not been for the sophisticated capability of our Judicial Automation Department, the statewide jury list would not have been possible."

Each county will retain the option of using the data provided by the AOPC or using its own data to identify and summon prospective jurors. New lists will be provided by the AOPC each year.

"We created the statewide jury list with the aim of helping county courts identify more potential jurors to include in their jury pools," said Chief Justice Castille. "We hope this program will enhance the administration of justice and bolster one of the most basic rights held by all our citizens, that of trial by jury."

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