

Introduced by Senator Harman

February 25, 2009

An act to amend Section 209 of the Code of Civil Procedure, relating to jury service.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 319, as introduced, Harman. Jury service.

Under existing law, a prospective trial juror who has been summoned for jury service and fails to attend as directed or respond to the court may be compelled to attend, as specified. In addition, after an order to show cause hearing, the court may find the prospective juror in contempt of court, which is punishable by fine, incarceration, or both. Until January 1, 2010, existing law permits the court, in lieu of imposing penalties for contempt, to impose reasonable monetary sanctions of no more than \$250 for a first violation, \$750 for a 2nd violation, and \$1,500 for the 3rd and any subsequent violation, upon a prospective juror who has failed to respond and who has not been excused, after first providing the prospective juror with notice and an opportunity to be heard, as specified.

This bill would make a technical, nonsubstantive change to these provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 209 of the Code of Civil Procedure, as
- 2 amended by Section 5 of Chapter 567 of the Statutes of 2006, is
- 3 amended to read:

209. (a) ~~Any~~ A prospective trial juror who has been summoned for service, and who fails to attend as directed or to respond to the court or jury commissioner and to be excused from attendance, may be attached and compelled to attend. Following an order to show cause hearing, the court may find the prospective juror in contempt of court, punishable by fine, incarceration, or both, as otherwise provided by law.

(b) In lieu of imposing sanctions for contempt as set forth in subdivision (a), the court may impose reasonable monetary sanctions, as provided in this subdivision, on a prospective juror who has not been excused pursuant to Section 204 after first providing the prospective juror with notice and an opportunity to be heard. If a juror fails to respond to the initial summons within 12 months, the court may issue a second summons indicating that the person failed to appear in response to a previous summons and ordering the person to appear for jury duty. Upon the failure of the juror to appear in response to the second summons, the court may issue a failure to appear notice informing the person that failure to respond may result in the imposition of money sanctions. If the prospective juror does not attend the court within the time period as directed by the failure to appear notice, the court shall issue an order to show cause. Payment of monetary sanctions imposed pursuant to this subdivision does not relieve the person of his or her obligation to perform jury duty.

(c) (1) The court may give notice of its intent to impose sanctions by either of the following means:

(A) Verbally to a prospective juror appearing in person in open court.

(B) The issuance on its own motion of an order to show cause requiring the prospective juror to demonstrate reasons for not imposing sanctions. The court may serve the order to show cause by certified or first-class mail.

(2) The monetary sanctions imposed pursuant to subdivision (b) may not exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for the first violation, seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750) for the second violation, and one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) for the third and any subsequent violation. Monetary sanctions may not be imposed on a prospective juror more than once during a single juror pool cycle. The prospective juror may be excused from paying sanctions pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 204 or in the

1 interests of justice. The full amount of any sanction paid shall be
2 deposited in a bank account established for this purpose by the
3 Administrative Office of the Courts and transmitted from that
4 account monthly to the Controller for deposit in the Trial Court
5 Trust Fund, as provided in Section 68085.1 of the Government
6 Code. It is the intent of the Legislature that the funds derived from
7 the monetary sanctions authorized in this section be allocated, to
8 the extent feasible, to the family courts and the civil courts. The
9 Judicial Council shall, by rule, provide for a procedure by which
10 a prospective juror against whom a sanction has been imposed by
11 default may move to set aside the default.

12 (d) On or before December 31, 2008, the Judicial Council shall
13 report to the Legislature regarding the effects of the implementation
14 of subdivisions (b) and (c). The report shall include, but not be
15 limited to, information regarding any change in rates of response
16 to juror summons, the amount of moneys collected pursuant to
17 subdivision (c), the efficacy of the default procedures adopted in
18 rules of court, and how, if at all, the Legislature may wish to alter
19 this chapter to further attainment of its objectives.

20 (e) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2010,
21 and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that
22 is enacted before January 1, 2010, deletes or extends that date.

23 SEC. 2. Section 209 of the Code of Civil Procedure, as
24 amended by Section 6 of Chapter 567 of the Statutes of 2006, is
25 amended to read:

26 209. ~~Any~~ A prospective trial juror who has been summoned
27 for service, and who fails to attend the court as directed or to
28 respond to the court or jury commissioner and to be excused from
29 attendance, may be attached and compelled to attend. Following
30 an order to show cause hearing, the court may find the prospective
31 juror in contempt of court, punishable by fine, incarceration, or
32 both, as otherwise provided by law.

33 This section shall become operative on January 1, 2010.