

Jury Duty and the Kirpan



The Constitution of the United States of America guarantees an individual has the right to a trial by jury. This means that being called to serve as a juror is an incredibly important civic responsibility. When you are called to serve, you must appear. Failure to respond to a jury summons can result in fines and even jail time.

But what happens if you are a baptized Sikh? Sikhs that carry the kirpan, may face obstacles to fulfilling their civic duty. Court security may mischaracterize the kirpan – considering it a weapon – and not allow a Sikh to carry the kirpan into the building. The court’s security policy may force a Sikh to choose between fulfilling a civic duty and contravening a basic tenet of the Sikh faith. This is not acceptable.

[Federal law](#) prohibits the exclusion of jurors on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or economic status. On multiple occasions, UNITED SIKHS has advocated to ensure that the summoning court allow the individual to carry the kirpan. This assurance is called a religious accommodation and is one of the many ways UNITED SIKHS helps ensure the religious rights of American Sikhs are respected.

Have you experienced a problem with jury duty? UNITED SIKHS can help.

Please reach out to our team at contact@unitedsikhs.org

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