

Atlanta Criminal Attorneys Discuss New Jury Selection Procedure

Georgia rolled out its new procedure for jury selection on July 1st, and some [Atlanta criminal attorneys](#) are questioning whether the new procedure could lead to misrepresentation of the general population. By using a master list compiled from driver's licenses and voting registration records, some lawyers fear that the process will exclude many Georgia residents who are not traditionally documented.

So far, four court cases have taken issue with the new jury selection process, and one in particular is gaining state-wide attention. Damon Jolly, a Macon man on trial for the 2006 murder of a Bibb County man, and his [Atlanta criminal attorneys](#), are challenging the updated method. They claim that selecting jurors who have a valid state driver's license and are registered voters discriminates against and underrepresents "black people, women, young adults aged 18 to 30, Latinos, and Asian-Americans," according to court documents. The Bibb County Superior Court is set to hear testimony and make an official decision about the challenge this month.

In the previous jury selection process, which had been in place for over 200 years, jurors were chosen through "forced balancing," a method used only by Georgia. Jury selection committees narrowed down a list of eligible residents in a county, eliminating candidates based on age, gender, or race to match the demographics of that county according to the most recent census. Forced balancing was supposed to ensure that the jury would be composed of a variety of people, but after [Atlanta criminal attorneys](#) questioned the constitutionality of such a method, the state courts adopted an updated procedure.

The Georgia Supreme Court ruled that the master list method was more constitutionally correct. Anyone over the age of 18 who has not been deemed incompetent or a convicted felon is eligible for jury duty, and from this list, court clerks will make random selections to fill a jury. As Georgia's new procedure is challenged, the decision made by the Bibb County Superior Court could impact every criminal case heard by a jury.

[Atlanta criminal attorney](#) Andrew B. Margolis has devoted his entire career to the practice of criminal law, and has represented defendants in thousands of criminal cases throughout the State of Georgia. If you are facing criminal charges, Margolis Legal Group can help. Don't hesitate to contact our firm for a free consultation today.