

# JOHNSON COUNTY DISTRICT COURT ACTIVITY PACKET

GRADES 7 - 12



10th Judicial District

Johnson County

## **ABOUT THE COURTS**

- Kansas state government, like our federal government, is composed of three branches: the legislative branch, which makes laws; the executive branch, which enforces laws; and the judicial branch, which interprets and applies laws.

## **ABOUT DISTRICT COURTS**

- District courts are created by the Constitution. They are the trial courts of Kansas, for both civil and criminal cases. These cases include divorce and domestic relations, damage suits, probate and administration of estates, guardianships, conservatorships, care of the mentally ill, juvenile matters, and small claims. It is here, at the courthouse, that the criminal and civil jury trials are held.

## **JOHNSON COUNTY DISTRICT COURTHOUSE**

- There are 22 judges.
- There are 4 magistrate judges.
- The courthouse has seven floors and 356,821 square feet of space.
- The courthouse will meet Johnson County's judicial needs for more than 75 years.
- The Johnson County Jail is connected to the courthouse by an underground tunnel.

## **JUDICIAL DISTRICTS**

- There are 31 judicial districts in Kansas, each with a varying number of judges. There is a district court in each county, and each court has a clerk of the court where cases are filed.

## **DISTRICT JUDGES**

- Judges of the district court must be lawyers. Some counties have district magistrate judges, who may or may not be lawyers, and whose authority is limited. By state law, there is at least one resident judge in each county.



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# JOBS YOU CAN HAVE AT THE COURTHOUSE

Administrative Assistant to a Judge: Also called an AA, their tasks include data entry and coordinating court calendars. They also manage judges' caseloads, prepare dockets, and court files for the court.

Clerk: Clerks take in court filings, keep records, set court calendars, and process legal paperwork. Their foremost duty is the filing and preservation of court papers.

Court Administration: DCA (District Court Administration) provides support to the courts and staff by offering personnel guidance, career development, organizational improvement, and fiduciary responsibility.

Court Reporter: A court reporter administers oaths, marks and maintains exhibits, and is responsible for producing a complete, accurate, and secure transcript of trials and other legal services.

Court Services: Carry out the orders of the court in a timely, professional, and ethical manner. They complete the responsibilities of court reports, supervision (which holds offenders accountable for their behavior), promotes public safety, and improves the ability of offenders to live more productively and responsibly in the community. Court Service Officers supervise individuals that have been placed on probation by 10th Judicial District. This includes domestic (custody), juveniles, and pretrial.

Defense Attorney: The lawyer who represents the defendant in a civil or criminal case.

Deputy: Deputies serve summonses, warrants, and subpoenas on behalf of the court. They also patrol the courthouse, transport inmates, and provide security for proceedings and the courthouse. They work for the Sheriff's office.

Judge: Judges manage the selection of jury and give jury instructions in civil and criminal trials. They rule on admission of evidence, pleas in criminal cases, resolve issues on the acceptance of a verdict, and sentence the defendant if the trial results in a conviction.

Prosecuting Attorney: Prosecuting attorneys are lawyers employed by the government to represent the people of their jurisdictions in criminal trials. Some judicial districts use the term District Attorney.

Public Defender: An attorney appointed by the court to represent criminal defendants who are unable to afford to hire a private attorney.



# Judicial Word Search

P F X X Y Q J T G F E N A A G A V Z S Q O Q E X Z  
W L D Q P V N D T R D U D X N N P D U R T T Y D J  
G P F W W L E P N U K W M S T K R D B X Q Q O P F  
Q F Q X S Y A R H R P Z I W H W P G P D Y V Y R D  
H A N P R V N N D F C M N R C C Q K O Q B R Z O Q  
F N V C U E A Z Y I O T I J Q G E M E B I K K S W  
J M A I L B U C Z B C M S E F O R Q N Z B J P E I  
U M Y H K R L E Z K I T T C Y C M E A R F G L C T  
D B O D Y D R I Z Y D J R S I Y L N O C N Q E U N  
G N R W E O I U C K Y U A Q X E R W N W A X A T E  
E T C I C V Q G K D I R T Z Y P U A G Z M Q D I S  
B K Y E V L I I K I E Y I W C P K U O M G C I N S  
O E O X W W E D W E K F V R G C F E M S N O N G V  
J E Y O R U P R E K R C E L Y R P M T G M U G A K  
W H M P L Y O K K N Y V A N R G B J F R W R G T T  
F C I I V D U E Y O C H S U D S Q G C X I T V T R  
E O U I M E P V D X H E S O L E V N C E X R T O H  
M U C L Z B T O G B G N I R B H R T Q B O E U R S  
U R Y W B K S M O H J Z S E I W V L G Y B P U N Y  
Q T K B C O H X J D J Q T K A A B B A S G O X E J  
K R T U S E N T E N C E A T F Q V L G D H R R Y R  
T O W R M F F S K Z N I N Z D E I G W Q D T T M U  
Q O R Y I R D V N I C Q T D P L U S F M U E D R O  
R M V U U A G F U Q D E F E N S E A T T O R N E Y  
B W D P K Q L H B A Q N W E S T Y M Q S I L A B T

administrative assistant

defense attorney trial

public defender

court room

subpoena

clerk

sentence

pleading

prosecuting attorney

evidence

judge

verdict

jury

court reporter

witness



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# Legal Plain Language

**Evidence:** Evidence is an item or information offered to make the existence of a fact more or less probable. Evidence can take the form of testimony, documents, photographs, videos, voice recordings, DNA testing, or other tangible objects.

**Pleading:** One party's (person or business) complaint against another party.

**Sentence:** Consequence (punishment) for a crime if found guilty.

**Subpoena:** A written order to appear in court.

**Trial:** Legal proceeding presided over by a judge. A trial is held to resolve a dispute in a court of law.

**Verdict:** Decision by a judge or jury in a trial. Guilty or not guilty.

**Witness:** A witness is a person who testifies under oath at a trial, or in a deposition, regarding experiences of which they have personal knowledge.



If you were to take a job at the courthouse, an attorney, a judge, or a court reporter, which job would you want and why? Support your choice with at least two reasons.



# District Court Fill-in-the-Blank

1. The Deputy Sheriff delivers \_\_\_\_\_ to people; ordering them to appear in court.
2. When a judge issues a \_\_\_\_\_ you have the decision of the court for that case.
3. This type of attorney represents the people of their jurisdiction in criminal trials. \_\_\_\_\_
4. These people improve the ability of offenders to live more productively and responsibly in the community.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. These people manage a judge's caseload and prepare the docket: \_\_\_\_\_.
6. If you testify in court regarding experiences of which you have personal knowledge you are called a \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Filing and preserving court papers as well as setting court calendars is the primary job of \_\_\_\_\_.
8. A \_\_\_\_\_ is an attorney appointed by the court to someone who can't afford to hire an attorney.

