

Law Day Job Shadowing Orientation Supplemental Information

District Court (Nebraska) – District courts have original jurisdiction in all felony cases, equity cases, domestic relations cases, and civil cases where the amount in controversy involves more than \$51,000. District courts also have appellate jurisdiction in certain matters arising out of county court. They also serve as appellate courts in administrative appeals, where they review the record of testimony and evidence from the lower court or tribunal and issue an opinion and ruling in the case. District court decisions may be appealed to the Nebraska Court of Appeals and/or to the Nebraska Supreme Court.

Evidence - something that furnishes or tends to furnish proof

Hearing – a court proceeding usually involving a judge listening to evidence or arguments

Judgment - a formal decision or determination on a matter or case by a court

Jurisdiction - the limits or territory within which authority may be exercised

Jury - body of individuals sworn to give a decision on some matter submitted to them

Jury Box – the area in the courtroom where the jury sits

Motion - a proposal for action

Oath - a promise (as to perform official duties faithfully)

Objection - a statement of opposition to an aspect of a judicial or other legal proceeding

Petition/Petitioner - a formal written request made to an official person or body (as a court or board)/ a person who makes a petition

Plaintiff - the party who institutes a legal action or claim

Pleadings - a process or system through which the parties in a legal proceeding present their allegations

Probate - the process of administering an estate

Respondent - one who answers or defends in various proceedings

Rules of Evidence – body of rules establishing what testimony and other evidence is relevant, pertains to the issue to be decided, and should be allowed; also establishing what evidence is not relevant, may prejudices one side or the other, and should not be allowed.

The Rules of Evidence make trials fair!

Rules of Procedure – the way a trial is conducted...who goes first, what happens at each state of the proceeding or trial

Sentence - the punishment that one convicted of a crime is ordered to receive

Small Claims Court - a special court intended to simplify the resolution of minor disputes involving small claims

Subpoena - a demand for a designated person to appear in court under a penalty for failure to comply

Trial - a judicial examination of issues of fact or law disputed by parties for the purpose of determining the rights of the parties

Verdict – The decision of a jury or judge either for one party or the other in a civil trial; the decision of guilt or innocence in a criminal trial

Voir Dire - the process of questioning prospective jurors to determine which are qualified and suited for service on a jury

Witness - one who is called on to be present at a transaction so as to be able to testify to its occurrence



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and the **Nebraska State Bar Foundation**



COURTHOUSE TECHNOLOGY

Here are some items you may want to look for or inquire about on your Job Shadowing adventure. Please be aware that not all courthouses have all technologies.

Court Reporter's Transcription Machine
Monitors (for jurors)
Computers (for judges, bailiffs and prosecutors)
Projection screen
LCD projector
TV Cameras
Recording equipment
Metal detector
Radio communications (law enforcement)
Patrol cars
 Radar
 TV Cameras
 BAC Testing
Corrections
 Video monitors
Teleconferencing/Interpreting
 Skype
Paying Fines
 E-payment
Filing
 E-filing
Online Case Look-up (JUSTICE computer system)
PDAs/IPhones (for personal calendaring and organizing)

COURTROOM PROCEDURES

Following are the procedures followed to ensure fair trials in civil and criminal cases.

1. Bailiff calls Court to order
2. Judge announces the case
3. Judge addresses jurors (jury trial only)
4. Lawyers question jurors (voir dire – jury trials only) (Selection of jury panel)
5. Lawyers give opening statements
6. Lawyers call witnesses
7. Direct Examination
8. Cross Examination
9. Lawyers give closing arguments
10. Judge gives jurors instructions (jury trial only)
11. Jury deliberates (jury trial only)
12. Verdict is announced
13. Sentencing of defendant (criminal trial only)

JOBS AT THE COURTHOUSE

These are some of the jobs you may observe on your visit to the courthouse.

Judge
Lawyer
 Prosecutor/Plaintiff's Lawyer
 Public Defender/Defense Lawyer
Bailiff
Clerk
Court Reporter
Interpreter
Sheriff
Deputy
State Patrol
Dispatcher/Communications
Drug Dog

Vocabulary

Appeal - a proceeding in which a case is brought before a higher court for review of a lower court's judgment for the purpose of convincing the higher court that the lower court's judgment was incorrect

Arraignment – initial appearance

Bench - the place where a judge sits in court or the body of persons who hold positions as judges

Bar - the whole body of lawyers

Civil - relating to private rights and to judicial proceedings in connection with them

Civil Case – a case which involves civil remedies, not criminal penalties

Complaint- a document sworn to by a victim or police officer that sets forth a criminal violation

County Court (Nebraska) – The jurisdiction of the county court is established by state law which provides for exclusive original jurisdiction in probate matters, actions based on a violation of a city or village ordinance, juvenile court matters without a separate juvenile court, adoptions, preliminary hearings in felony cases, and eminent domain proceedings. The county courts have concurrent jurisdiction in civil matters when the amount in controversy is \$51,000 or less, criminal matters classified as misdemeanors or infractions, some domestic relations matters, and paternity actions. County judges also hear all small claims matters filed within the court system. County judges in all counties except Lancaster, Douglas and Sarpy have the same duties as judges of separate juvenile courts.

Appeals from the county court are made to the district court, although in certain probate and juvenile cases, appeals are made directly to the Court of Appeals

Criminal - relating to, involving, or being a crime or a person who has been convicted of a crime

Criminal Case – a case which criminal penalties may be assigned to the party found guilty of the crime

Defendant - the party against whom a criminal or civil action is brought

Discovery - the disclosure of information held by the opposing party in an action