



ARKANSAS JUDICIARY

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## District Courts



**Standing (l-r):** Judge Stephen Peer/Van Buren, Judge Chaney Taylor/Batesville, Judge Van Gearhart/Mountain Home and Judge Reid Harrod/Hamburg

**Seated:** Judge Mike Robinson/Benton, Judge Alice Lightle/Little Rock.

**Not pictured:** Judge Mark Pate/Searcy

District courts are the state's courts of limited jurisdiction. There are two types of district courts: 1) State district courts and; 2) Local district courts.



State district courts are served by twenty-five full-time judges in fifteen counties comprising fifteen numerical districts, effective July 27, 2011. Additional state district courts are created in January, 2013 and January, 2017. State district courts exercise territorial jurisdiction within judicial districts established by the General Assembly that is city, county or district wide. These courts have subject matter jurisdiction over misdemeanors and violations of state law and local ordinances, preliminary felony cases and civil cases involving contracts, damage to personal property and recovery of personal property in matters less than \$25,000. A small claims division provides a forum in which citizens represent themselves to resolve contracts and personal property matters of less than \$5,000. Supreme Court Administrative Order Number 18 authorizes state district court judges to hear certain matters filed in circuit court upon referral by the circuit court or the consent of the parties.

The remainders of the state's district courts are designated as local district courts. Local

district courts are served by part-time judges who may engage in the private practice of law. Local district courts have territorial jurisdiction as established by the General Assembly, most of which is county wide. Their subject matter jurisdiction includes misdemeanors and violations of state law and local ordinances, preliminary felony cases and civil cases involving contracts, damage to and recovery of personal property in matters less than \$5,000. A small claims division also exists in local district courts.

The Arkansas District Judges Council [1] is made up of all district court judges in the state. The council acts as the general body representing the state's limited jurisdiction courts. Formal business by the council is conducted in the spring and fall meetings each year. The 2012 ? 2013 term District Court Judges Council President ? Hon. Alice Lightle, Criminal Division judge of the Little Rock District Court.

The Arkansas District Court Clerks' Association is responsible for the certification of these limited jurisdiction court clerks and works to represent their interest. The 2012-2014 term District Court Clerks Association President ? Debbie Drake, Chief of Clerk of the Jefferson County District Court, Pine Bluff Department.

<b>Attachment</b>	<b>Size</b>
 <u>AOC Provisional Guidelines for Digital Audio Recording in State District Courts</u> [2]	42.03 KB
 <u>District Court Administrative Plans 2016</u> [3]	8.92 MB

**Source URL:** <https://courts.arkansas.gov/courts/district-courts>

**Links:**

[1] <http://arkansasdjic.org/>

[2] <https://courts.arkansas.gov/sites/default/files/tree/guidelines.pdf>

[3] <https://courts.arkansas.gov/sites/default/files/tree/Administrative%20Plans%202016.pdf>