

# Who We Are

The 16th Circuit Court serves all the residents of Jackson County, a population of approximately 675,000 in 18 municipalities, including Kansas City, Independence, Blue Springs, Lee's Summit, Raytown, Grandview and Oak Grove.

The circuit court is a court of original jurisdiction, which means most cases are initially filed with this court.

# The Judges

There are 19 Circuit Judges, nine Associate Circuit Judges and eight Commissioners in the 16th Judicial Circuit of Jackson County. Judges and Commissioners preside over civil, criminal and family court cases. One judge is elected Presiding Judge for a two-year term by the judges as a group.

Prior to 1940, judges in Missouri were chosen in partisan elections which were often heavily influenced by the political bosses of the time. The independent judiciary as we know it today was created when citizens passed the Non-Partisan Court Plan in 1940.

Under the plan, a commission of laypersons, lawyers and a judge choose three candidates for an open judgeship. The governor then appoints one nominee to fill the vacancy. After serving a full year on the bench, judges must go through a retention election and receive more than 50 percent affirmative votes to earn a full term. Thereafter, judges stand for retention at the end of each full term.

This plan allows our courts to protect the rights of individuals, minorities and the disenfranchised by remaining free of political persuasion.

# 16th Judicial Circuit Court Judges

Division 1	Judge Sandra Midkiff
Division 2	Judge Michael Manners
Division 3	Judge David M. Byrn
Division 4	Judge Justine E. Del Muro
Division 5	Judge James F. Kanatzar
Division 6	Judge J. Dale Youngs
Division 7	Judge Ann Mesle
Division 8	Judge Peggy Stevens McGraw
Division 9	Judge Joel F. May
Division 10	Presiding Judge Charles E. Atwell
Division 11	Judge W. Brent Powell
Division 12	Judge Edith L. Messina
Division 13	Vacant
Division 14	Judge John Torrence
Division 15	Judge Robert M. Schieber
Division 16	Judge Marco A. Roldan
	Family Court Administrative Judge
Division 17	Judge Jack R. Grate
Division 18	Judge Brian C. Wimes
Division 19	Judge Kathleen A. Forsyth
Division 25	Judge Richard Taylor Standridge
Division 26	Judge Kenneth R. Garrett III
Division 27	Judge Gregory B. Gillis
Division 28	Judge Vernon E. Scoville III
Division 29	Judge Margaret L. Sauer
Division 30	Judge Twila K. Rigby
Division 31	Judge Christine T. Sill-Rogers
Division 32	Judge Robert L. Trout
Division 33	Judge Jeffrey L. Bushur
Division 40	Comm. Geoffrey Allen
Division 41	Comm. Martina Peterson
Division 42	Comm. Sherrill L. Rosen
Division 43	Comm. Patrick W. Campbell
Division 44	Comm. Molly M. Merrigan
Probate	Comm. Daniel Wheeler
Probate	Comm. Margene Burnett
Division 50	Comm. David J. Fry

# The Trial Process

## Opening Statements

- Informative presentation
- Tell stories about the case and outlines evidence
- Suggest remedies for the dispute

## EVIDENCE

- Includes exhibits, like written documents
- Also includes physical objects, like weapons, photographs or clothing
- May come in the form of oral testimony

## Closing Arguments

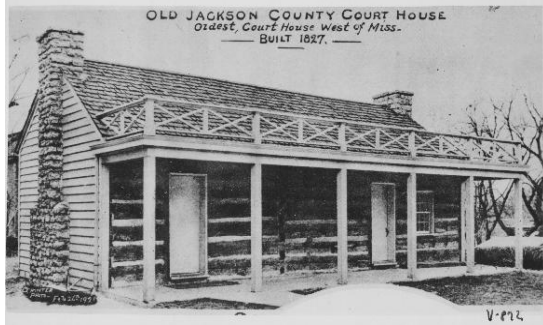
- Summarize the case
- Again suggest remedies for dispute
- Present reasons for the jury to decide a certain way

## THE VERDICT

- The jury's decision
- Reached after instructions from the judge and deliberation

# History

The 16th Judicial Circuit, which includes Jackson County, was created by an act of the Missouri General Assembly on December 15, 1826. A temporary log courthouse was built in Independence until the building that stands today was erected in late 1828 at 104 West Kansas on the Independence Square.



*The original Independence courthouse*

The first Kansas City Courthouse was located at the corner of 2nd and Main Streets, in a building that was originally intended as a hotel. In 1931, \$4 million was appropriated for the present Kansas City Courthouse at 12th and Oak. It was completed in 1934 and dedicated by County Judge Harry S Truman.



*The original Kansas City Courthouse*

## For Additional Information

Please see the Court's website at:

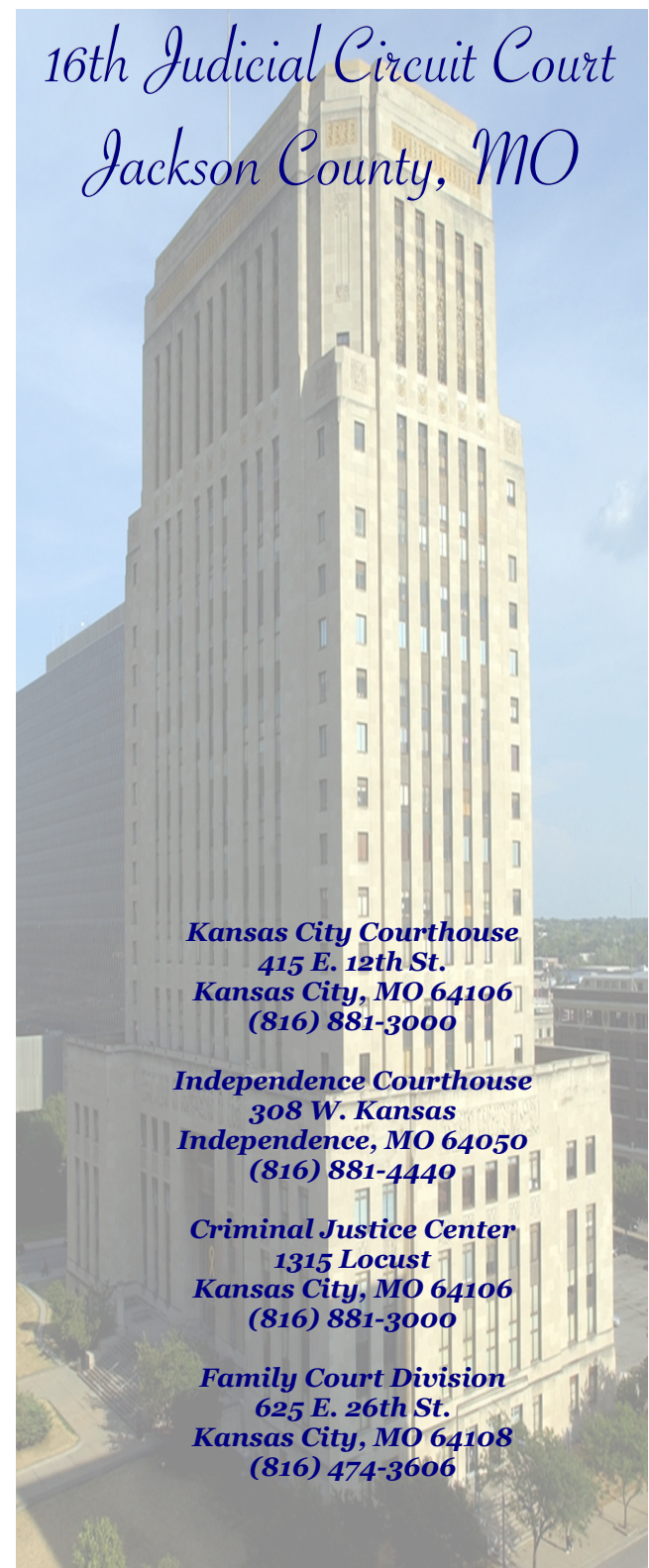
**[www.16thcircuit.org](http://www.16thcircuit.org)**

Links to Case.net, the Missouri court system's case management network, can be accessed via the website.



Public Information Office  
Mary Jacobi, Public Information Officer  
Designed by Carly Burd, Intern  
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# 16th Judicial Circuit Court Jackson County, MO



**Kansas City Courthouse**  
415 E. 12th St.  
Kansas City, MO 64106  
(816) 881-3000

**Independence Courthouse**  
308 W. Kansas  
Independence, MO 64050  
(816) 881-4440

**Criminal Justice Center**  
1315 Locust  
Kansas City, MO 64106  
(816) 881-3000

**Family Court Division**  
625 E. 26th St.  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
(816) 474-3606