

## FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OVERVIEW – JANUARY 2021

The First Judicial District (1<sup>st</sup> JD) encompasses all of Jefferson and Gilpin Counties. Jefferson County is approximately 773 square miles and contains twelve incorporated cities. Many communities occupy unincorporated portions of the county as well, which make up approximately 650 square miles. Jefferson County is the fourth largest county in Colorado with a population estimated at 590,476 as of July 1, 2020. Gilpin County has four cities (2 incorporated) and its population is approximately 6,028.

The district is the fifth largest in the state by caseload volume, trailing the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial Districts. In fiscal year 2020 (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020), 41,782 new county court cases and 20,211 new district court cases were filed in the 1<sup>st</sup> JD. Our judges heard 156 court and jury trials in district court (4<sup>th</sup> highest in the State) and 367 court and jury trials in county court (2<sup>nd</sup> highest in the State) during the fiscal year. Overall, 45,632 summonses were sent for jury duty in Jefferson and Gilpin counties during that timeframe.

There are fourteen judges and 8.5 magistrates assigned to the District Court within the 1<sup>st</sup> JD. Magistrates are judicial, non-elected officers who are responsible to the District's Chief Judge. District Court Magistrates primarily handle juvenile matters (including juvenile delinquency, dependency and neglect, adoptions, and support) and preliminary domestic relations matters. One full-time Magistrate presides over four problem-solving courts and one half-time Magistrate is dedicated to Probate and Mental Health matters. District Court Judges handle a mixed caseload of domestic relations, criminal, and civil cases. Currently one judge handles all juvenile matters for the District Court and one judge handles all Probate matters.

There are nine full-time judges and one half-time magistrate in Jefferson County Court, and a 0.85 judge in Gilpin County Court. The half-time magistrate handles small claims actions, traffic infractions, and protection orders. County Court judges handle a mixed caseload of traffic, misdemeanor and civil cases. County judges in this jurisdiction also process most felony cases through preliminary hearing proceedings.

The District operates from two courthouses: one located in Golden, CO (Jefferson County) and the other in Black Hawk, CO (Gilpin County). In addition to the judges and magistrates, there are approximately 135 support staff positions in the courts, and an additional 125 personnel in the Probation department.

The First Judicial District is also home to several specialized courts. The primary focus of these specialized courts is to provide individualized services to participants with the goal of treating their chemical dependency and/or mental health issues in order to increase community safety, reduce criminal recidivism, and improve the lives of the individuals. These courts are a collaborative effort between many agencies, including the First Judicial District, Court Support Jeffco, the Jefferson County District Attorney's

Office and Office of the Public Defender, law enforcement, the Veterans Administration, and community-based treatment providers.

One District Court Magistrate presides over four problem-solving courts, including Adult Recovery Court, Adult and Juvenile Mental Health Courts, and Veterans Treatment Court. The 1<sup>st</sup> JD also has a family dependency court. FIT (Family Integrated Treatment) Court is a special track of dependency and neglect cases where parents voluntarily participate, acknowledge their substance abuse problem(s) and are willing to engage in treatment immediately. FIT Court is presided over by our District Court Juvenile Judge. For specific information on the First Judicial District's specialized courts, please visit our website at:

[https://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/District/Custom.cfm?District\\_ID=1&Page\\_ID=668](https://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/District/Custom.cfm?District_ID=1&Page_ID=668)

Court proceedings are open to the public; however, in-person proceedings are currently limited due to COVID-19 public health restrictions. To participate in or observe court proceedings, please visit the 1<sup>st</sup> Judicial District homepage at:

[https://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/District/Index.cfm?District\\_ID=1](https://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/District/Index.cfm?District_ID=1)

for virtual courtroom information. You may also access court dockets, online payment options and other available resources at this site.

For additional information contact: Gail Pickarts, Court Executive  
Jefferson County Courts and Administration Bldg.  
100 Jefferson County Parkway  
Golden, CO 80401-6002  
(720) 772-2741