

2024
FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT—COURT OVERVIEW

The Fifth Judicial District is comprised of the four central mountain counties of Clear Creek, Summit, Lake, and Eagle. Situated along the I-70 corridor, the Fifth District contains some of the State's most popular ski and recreational areas. These include Loveland and Arapahoe Basin, Keystone, Breckenridge, Copper Mountain, Vail, and Beaver Creek, as well as boating on Lake Dillon, and hiking and mountain biking in several National Forests.

The number of year-around residents within the district is just over 103,000, but the population nearly triples during ski season with the influx of recreational enthusiasts and seasonal workers. The summer season now rivals the ski season with the number of visitors to the district enjoying the many recreational opportunities. The goal of the Fifth Judicial District is to ensure the fair and expeditious administration of justice to this growing and highly transient population, while projecting the best possible image for the State of Colorado to visitors from across the country and around the world.

In fiscal year 2024 there were 3,080 new District Court cases filed in the Fifth District and 6,379 new County Court cases. These cases are presided over by six District Court Judges and four County Court Judges. Fifty-five court employees and thirty-seven probation staff attend to the day-to-day business and operations of the Fifth Judicial District.

One County Court judge in each of the four counties is responsible for traffic, misdemeanor, and small claims cases, in addition to civil cases where the matter in dispute is less than \$25,000. All felony cases begin in County Court, where many are eventually pled down to misdemeanors and disposed of in that forum. The County Court Judges' duties consist of hearing a heavy caseload of traffic violations, infractions, and misdemeanors that are directly tied to the visitor population to the district. Volunteer mediators provide support to the small claims docket in each of the Counties greatly streamlining the process and enhancing the outcomes.

The six District Court judges hear a mixed caseload of felonies, domestic relations, juvenile delinquency and dependency matters, probate, mental health issues, and civil disputes concerning matters over \$25,000. Civil and criminal filings comprise the bulk of the District Court caseload, with family law matters strongly represented.

The 5th District provides a variety services to the public, including Self-Help Centers in the Eagle Justice Center and Clear Creek County Courthouse, a Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator to assist pro-se litigants, a Family Court Facilitator for domestic relations clients, a Protective Proceedings Monitor for probate and guardianship matters, Collections Investigators, a Language Interpreter and multiple bilingual staff. The 5th District also provides services to individuals struggling with addiction through three Problem-Solving Court programs located in Leadville and in Eagle and provides a district-wide Competency Docket that assist individuals with mental health issues navigate their competency cases.

For further information on the Fifth Judicial District, please contact Michael A. Pisciotta, Court Executive, PO Box 597, Eagle, Colorado 81631, and telephone (970) 328-4487. Court proceedings are open to the public, and you are welcome to visit the courts in Georgetown, Breckenridge, Leadville, Eagle, and El Jebel. Mr. Pisciotta can assist you with a site visit.