

# THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

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### jurisdiction noun

ju-ris-dic-tion (jur-es-'dik-shən)

Synonyms of jurisdiction >

- 1 : the power, right, or authority to interpret and apply the law  
| a matter that falls within the court's *jurisdiction*
- 2 **a** : the authority of a sovereign power to govern or legislate  
| **b** : the power or right to exercise authority : **CONTROL**
- 3 : the limits or territory within which authority may be exercised

#### I. POLICING AGENCIES (LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL JURISDICTIONS)

##### a. THE COMPLAINT

- i. THE VICTIM STATES A COMPLAINT **WITH AN AGENCY THAT HAS JURISDICTION**
- ii. AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION MIGHT NOT FILE A COMPLAINT (POLICE REPORT)
- iii. AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION MIGHT **DO ABSOLUTELY NOTHING (MOST LIKELY)**
- iv. AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION MIGHT HARASS YOU FOR COMPLAINING (REPEATEDLY)

##### b. THE INVESTIGATION

- i. IF THE AGENCY WITH JURISDICTION FILED A COMPLAINT REPORT ON YOUR BEHALF:
  - AN INVESTIGATION MAY BE CONDUCTED OR **ABSOLUTELY NOTHING (MOST LIKELY)**
    - a. INVESTIGATIONS MAY INCLUDE:
      - i. **LOOKING FOR A SUSPECT**
      - ii. COLLECTING EVIDENCE
      - iii. INTERVIEWING WITNESSES

##### c. THE ARREST

- i. IF THERE IS A SUSPECT (ANY) AND **IF THEY CAN PROSECUTE (PROBABLE CAUSE AT MINIMUM)**

#### II. COURT SYSTEMS (EACH COURT HAS DIFFERENT JURISDICTIONS AND ARE **APPOINTED OFFICIALS**)

##### a. CIVIL COURT (ONLY ONE OPEN TO THE **GENERAL PUBLIC**)

- i. A civil case involves a legal dispute between two or more parties. A civil action begins when a party to a dispute files a complaint, and pays a filing fee required by statute. The complaint describes the plaintiff's damages or injury, explains how the defendant caused the harm, shows that the court has jurisdiction, and asks the court to order relief. A plaintiff may seek money to compensate for the damages, or may ask the court to order the defendant to stop the conduct that is causing the harm. The court may also order other types of relief, such as a declaration of the legal rights of the plaintiff in a particular situation.

##### b. CRIMINAL COURT (SUSPECTS MUST **PROBABLY COMMIT A CRIME**)

- i. The court in which crimes punishable by fine or imprisonment are handled
  - THE (DISTRICT) ATTORNEY'S OFFICE (OF JURISDICTION IS **ELECTED BY THE PUBLIC**)
    - a. AFTER AN ARREST IS MADE THE (LOCAL, STATE, FEDERAL) ATTORNEY'S OFFICE **WILL THEN DETERMINE WHETHER TO FILE CHARGES** AGAINST THE SUSPECT

##### c. SUPREME COURT

- i. The highest court in LOCAL, STATE, or FEDERAL. The court is composed of a Chief Justice and four Associate Justices who are elected to set terms by the General Assembly (OF JURISDICTION)

##### d. FAMILY COURT

- i. The court that hears matters involving children and families

##### e. SURROGATE'S COURT

- i. The court that hears matters involving guardianship and administration of people and property