

Abeyance	A lapse or break in the succession of title.
Act	An expression of will or performance voluntarily done by a person and of such nature that certain legal consequences attach to it.
Action	A lawsuit or other judicial proceeding whose purpose is to obtain relief from a court of law
Administration	The collections, management, settlement and distribution of the assets of an estate
Adult	A person who has reached the age of eighteen (18) years
Adult Abuse	Acts, attempts or threatens physical injury to an adult (age 18 and older) who is a family/household member or victim of stalking by another person
Adult Abuse Act	Section 455.010(1) Missouri Revised Statutes, describes the acts, attempts or threats from which abused adults age eighteen (18) and over, or otherwise emancipated, may seek protection. Under this Act, the abused adult may file a petition in circuit court requesting a court order of protection
Affiant	A person who makes and subscribes (confirms) to the truth of an affidavit
Affidavit	A written declaration or statement of facts made under oath or before an authorized officer
Aggregate	A total of all the parts; the whole or complete amount
Aggrieved Party	One who has been injured or has suffered a loss, or whose legal rights have been threatened or damaged
Agreement	An oral or written promise between two or more parties to do something
Alias	An assumed or additional name that a person has used or is known by

Alimony	A term used in divorce proceedings meaning support for the wife. In Missouri, dissolution of marriage has replaced divorce. The term maintenance is now used in referring to support for either a male or female spouse. See also Maintenance
Allegation	An assertion or statement of a party, which they intend to prove
Alternative Dispute Resolution	Methods such as arbitration and mediation, that are used for settling a dispute by means other than a lawsuit
Amendment	A change in a pleading that is already before the court to make a correction
Answer	The defendant's (or respondent's) written respond to the claims in the complaint filed by the plaintiff (or appellant)
Answer to Interrogatories	A reply made by a party to the written questions served by another party
Appeal	Request to a higher court to review the decision of a lower court in order to correct mistakes or injustices
Appearance	The coming into court as a party to a lawsuit or action
Appellant	A person who files an appeal
Appellant Court	The courts having jurisdiction to hear appeals from lower courts. Cases from Circuit Courts may be appealed to the Court of Appeals except those cases, which are within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Supreme Court
Application	The act of making a request
Application for Letters	(In Probate Matters) Written request for the issuance of letters in a probate matter, such as Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, etc. See also Letters and Probate

Arrearage	Money which is overdue and unpaid; usually child support. See also Assigned Arrearage
Arrest	The taking of a person into physical custody to be held for appearance before the court
Asset	Property, or anything of value
Assigned Arrearage	That portion of the arrearage accrued up to the last termination of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) assignment
Assignee	The person to whom a right is assigned
Associate Circuit Court	A division of a Missouri State court, which can hear cases with amounts of up to \$25,000.00. This includes small claims cases
Attachment	A process of seizing property; a person upon the authority of a court order
Attorney	A person licensed to practice law. In Missouri, the person must be licensed by the Supreme Court of Missouri
Attorney of Record	The attorney who has entered an appearance as representing a party in a case
Bar Number	An identification number assigned to an attorney by the state bar association of attorneys.
Bail	The money or property put up by a person for release from jail until court. See also Bond.
Batterers	Persons who use force against another to induce fear or physical harm.
Bond	A certificate or evidence of a debt; money given to assure proper performance. See also Bail.
Bondsman	An agent who acts as surety on bonds.

Calendar Year	From January through December.
Certificate of Delivery	A form that shows the opposing party was given the complaint or answer in a timely and proper manner.
Certificate of Service	A form filed with a court's clerk's office stating that the opposing party in a lawsuit received copies of papers filed in the case.
Certified Copy	A duplicate of an original document, certified as an exact reproduction, usually by the officer/clerk responsible for issuing or keeping the original.
Change of Venue	The removal/transfer of a case from one county to another for trial.
Child Protection Orders Act	Section 455.500 Missouri Revised Statutes, establishes the Child Protection Orders Act to protect children who have been victims of child abuse or stalking. Under this Act, petitions requesting ex parte and full orders of protection may be filed on behalf of abused children by a parent or guardian, a guardian ad litem or court-appointed special advocate, or by a juvenile officer.
Child Support	An order by a court or administrative order by the Department of Social Services by which a non-custodial parent is required to pay the custodial parent a specified amount of money for his or her child(ren).
Circuit Court	A court in which trials occur. Within a circuit court, there are various divisions, such as associate circuit, small claims, municipal, family, probate, criminal and juvenile. Missouri is divided into 45 judicial circuits.
Circuit Clerk	The elected official responsible for maintaining the records of the circuit court.
Circuit Judge	The elected official responsible for maintaining the records of the circuit court.
Civil Action, Civil Case	A lawsuit that is not criminal in nature; relating to private rights and remedies sought by a person, company or other entity.

Claim	A demand for money or property, or its equal value; declaring that you are entitled to something.
Clerk	Officer of the court responsible for the keeping of court records. May be the Circuit Clerk, Deputy Clerk, or Chief Associate Clerk. See also Circuit Clerk and Deputy Clerk.
Closed Record	Criminal case in which the charge is nolle prossed, dismissed, the accused is found not guilty, or imposition of sentence is suspended. Closed records are not destroyed but are inaccessible to the general public, except that the court's judgment or order or the final action taken by the prosecutor shall be accessible.
Coerced	When a person is threatened or forced in some way to do or say something against their will.
Commissioner	A judicial officer of a court with limited jurisdiction.
Compensatory Damages	The exact loss suffered by the plaintiff.
Complaint	Original or initial pleadings of an action filed by the plaintiff. Also may refer to the document signed by the prosecuting attorney or the complaining witness charging a person with a criminal offense or a municipal ordinance violation.
Conservator	A person appointed by a court to manage the estate or affairs of someone who is legally incapable of doing so.
Confidential Records	Court records specified by statute (Chapter 610, Missouri Revised Statutes) as "closed records;" records that are not open for public inspection.
Continuance	The postponement of an action pending in a court to a later date.
Costs	The amount paid or charged for something. See also Fees, Miscellaneous Charges and Surcharges.

Counsel	Attorney.
Count	In pleading, the plaintiff's statement of his cause of action; each separate charge of a criminal information.
Counterclaim	A claim presented by the defendant in opposition to the claim of the plaintiff.
Court	A body in government to which the administration of justice is delegated.
Court Appointed Guardian	A person appointed by the court who has the legal authority and duty to care for a person or their property.
Court Appointed Special Advocate	A person appointed by the court to assist another person, such as a child, by representing them and their interests in matters before the court.
Court Clerk	The person whose duty it is to establish and maintain dockets and records for the court, to assist in preparing court reports, and to carry out the duties of the court on behalf of the magistrates or judges, as well as assist the public.
Court Costs	The amounts assessed against a party in litigation. Such amounts are determined by the court on a case by case basis and vary depending upon the course of litigation. Court costs are the total of the fees, miscellaneous charges, and surcharges.
Court of Appeals	An intermediate court—between the trial courts and the Supreme Court—to which a party may challenge the outcome of an action in a trial court. The Court of Appeals is divided into three geographic districts. Most challenges must go through the Court of Appeals before they can go to the Supreme Court.
Court of Record	A court whose acts and proceedings are recorded and preserved.
Court Operating Rules	Rules promulgated by the Missouri Supreme Court dealing with such issues as recordkeeping, reporting, data processing, preparation of transcripts, local court rules, personnel and records retention/destruction.

Court Rules	A set of procedures adopted by courts to be followed by parties and their lawyers. Most states have statewide rules of the court, but courts may also have local rules.
Creditor	A person or business that is owed a debt by another person who is the “debtor”.
Criminal Action	The proceeding by which a party charged with an offense is accused and brought to trial.
Custodial Parent	Parent who has primary care of a child; person to whom a child support obligation is owed. See also Child Support and Obligee.
Custody	The physical possession or keeping of something or someone.
Custodian	A person or institution that has charge or custody of property, papers, other valuables; person who has custody of another person.
Debtor	One who owes an obligation or debt to another.
Deceased	A person who has died.
Decedent	A person who has died.
Declaration	A formal statement, generally in writing. (In Probate Matters) A document that governs legal rights to certain types of real property, such as a house.
Decree	Final judgment; the written document; a declaration of the court announcing the legal consequences of the facts found.
Decree of Dissolution of Marriage	Document signed by a judge terminating a marriage. See also Dissolution of Marriage.
Default	The failure to perform a legal duty, observe a promise, or fulfill an obligation.

Default Judgment	Judgment taken against a party upon default of that party. A judgment in favor of the plaintiff because the defendant failed to show up for the trial.
Defendant	The person against whom a legal action is brought. Also used to designate the accused in a criminal case; similar to respondent. See also Respondent, Petitioner, and Plaintiff.
Delinquent	Overdue and unpaid; willfully and intentionally failing to carry out an obligation.
Dependent	One who is supported by another.
Dependent Child	Any person who has not reached the age of majority or been legally declared emancipated. See also Emancipate/Emancipation.
Deposition	The testimony of a witness taken upon interrogatories, not in open court, but in pursuance of a commission to take testimony, reduced to writing and duly authenticated under oath or affirmation, and intended to be used upon the trial of an action in open court.
Deputy Clerk	A person duly authorized by an officer of the court to exercise some or all of the functions pertaining to the office in the place of the officer of the court; responsible for the keeping of court records.
Descent	Hereditary succession; succession to the ownership of an estate by inheritance.
Descendant	Those persons who are in the blood line of the ancestor; persons who proceed from a body of another, such as a child, grandchild, etc.

Discovery	The disclosure of that which was previously unknown; the pre-trial devices that can be used by one party to obtain facts and information about the case from the other party in order to assist the party's preparation for trial; includes depositions, interrogatories, production of documents or things, permission to enter upon land or other property, physical and mental examinations, and requests for admission. See also Deposition, Interrogatories, and Production of Documents.
Dismissal	A court order or judgment that puts a case out of court; a type of disposition.
Dismissal With Prejudice	Dismissing a case without being able to file another case for the same issue.
Dismissal Without Prejudice	Dismissing the case at the present time but reserving the right to re-file a new petition on the same issue, within a specific time period.
Disposition	The result of the case; disposed
Dissolution of Marriage	The legal dissolution of a marriage by a court (does not include annulments). This is more commonly known as "divorce."
Divorce	See Dissolution of Marriage.
Dwelling	The house or another structure in which a person lives; a residence.
Emancipate/Emancipation	To release a child from the control, support, and responsibility of a parent or guardian; may include but is not limited to a child marrying or entering the military.
Eminent Domain	The power to take private property for public use by the state or municipality with just compensation.
Encumber/Encumbrance	A liability that lowers the value of a piece of property, such as a lien or mortgage.
Enjoin	Legally prohibiting or forbidding someone from carrying out a specific act.

Estate	All that a person or entity owns, including both real and personal property. (In Probate Matters) The property that one leaves after death; the collective assets and liabilities of a person that has died.
Evidence	Proof presented at a trial, which may be established by witness, testimony, records, or documents.
Exclusion	The act of denying entry or admission.
Execution	(In Civil Matters) A court order directing a sheriff or other officer to enforce a judgment usually by the seizing and selling of the judgment debtor's property. An order for the sheriff to attach any property of a judgment debtor in the amount that will satisfy the judgment. See also Garnishment. (In Criminal Matters) The carrying out of a death sentence.
Executor	(In Probate Matters) A person specifically named in another's will to carry out the directions of the will. See also Will.
Exempt Property	(In Probate Matters) Personal property that a surviving spouse is automatically entitled to receive from the deceased person's estate.
Exhibit	A document, record, or other object formally introduced as evidence in court.
Ex Parte	An order made by the court upon the application of one party to an action without notice to, or argument from, the other party. For example, an Ex Parte Child Protection Order might be issued in an emergency situation for purposes of protecting the child from harm or abuse.
Ex Parte Order of Protection	An order of protection from the court which takes immediate effect until a hearing can be held for a full order of protection.
Expunge	Physically destroying records upon an order of the court.
Family Court	A court that has authority to hear cases involving dissolution of marriage, child custody, visitation, support, paternity and domestic violence.

Fees	An amount charged for services performed by the court.
File	The complete court record of a case; “to file” a paper is to give it to the court clerk for inclusion in the case record, endorsed upon the document by the clerk is the date the document is filed.
Filing Fee	The amount of money required by local court rule to be collected at the time of an initial filing on a particular type of petition.
Financial Statement	A statement showing the details of income and expenses for a given period of time.
Fine	A monetary penalty imposed upon a person convicted of an offense.
Foreign Judgment	A judgment, order or decree rendered by the courts of another state, the transcript of which is filed at a court in this state for the same effect and enforcement or satisfaction in the same manner as if the judgment had been rendered in this state.
Foreign Order of Protection	An order of protection issued by another state, territory, or possession of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the District of Columbia that shall be given full faith and credit in the state of Missouri. See also Full Faith and Credit.
Forfeiture of Bond	Process by which a person loses their right to a bond that had previously been posted.
Full Faith and Credit	A state’s enforcement of another jurisdiction’s laws or judicial decisions; to treat as if such had originated from a court within the state of Missouri. U.S. Const. Art. IV, Sec. 1
Garnishee	A third party, such as an employer or bank, that collects or holds money for the losing party, and is ordered to give the money to the court rather than to the losing party. See also Garnishment.

Garnishment	A means of obtaining satisfaction of a judgment by acquiring a court order for possession of goods, monies, and effects of a debtor that are in possession of another party, such as an employer.
General Execution	A court's written order commanding an officer to satisfy a judgment out of the property of a debtor. See also Execution.
Good Cause	Sufficient grounds from a legal point of view; substantial and convincing reason.
Guardian or Guardianship	One appointed by the court who has the legal authority and duty to care for another person, such as a minor or an incapacitated person. A "limited guardian" is one whose duties or powers are limited.
Guardian Ad Litem	A special guardian appointed by the court, usually a lawyer, to act on behalf of the minor or incompetent. The guardian ad litem is considered an officer of the court and represents the interests of the minor or incompetent in court and legal matters.
Harassment	Words, conduct, or action, usually repeated or persistent that, being directed at a specific person, annoys, alarms, or causes substantial emotional distress in that person and serves no purpose.
Hearing	A proceeding in court or with a hearing officer where each party presents their side's evidence and arguments, and a decision is made based on the information presented and the law as it applies to the facts.
Heir	(In Probate Matters) One who inherits property from another.
In Forma Pauperis (Fee Waiver and Fee Waiver Form)	A sworn statement used to determine whether someone meets the income guidelines so that they are not required to pay court fees.

IV-D	(In Child Support Matters) IV-D refers to Title IV, Section D of the Federal Social Security Act and is labeled “Child Support and Establishment of Paternity”; the authority and responsibility for enforcing this law in Missouri is delegated to the Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) of the Department of Social Services (DSS).
Incident	An occurrence or happening.
Independent Administration	(In Probate Matters) Administration of an estate without the adjudication, order or direction of the court. See also Probate.
Inheritance	(In Probate Matters) An estate or property which a person has by descent or which descends to an heir on the intestate death of another. See also Descendant, Estate, and Heir.
Instrument	A written legal document.
Interest	The amount owed to the lender in return for the use of borrowed money.
Interested Person	(In Probate Matters) Heirs, devisees, spouses, creditors or any others having a property right or claim against the estate of a decedent being administered and including children of a protectee who may have a property right or claim against or an interest in the estate of a protectee. See also Protectee.
Interrogatories	Written questions from one party to another which must be responded to in writing with answers sworn under oath. See also Discovery.
Judge	A public official who hears and decides cases brought before a court of law.
Judgment	The official decision of the court. Judgments may be appealed.
Judgment Creditor	Person who has obtained a judgment against another.
Judgment Debtor	A person who owes money to someone else, as directed by a court.

Judgment Lien	A lien on the real estate of a judgment debtor; the judgment must be satisfied before the debtor may sell the property.
Judgment of Dissolution	Judgment that terminates an agreement or contract. Often refers to the termination of a marriage. See also Decree of Dissolution of Marriage.
Jurisdiction	The geographical area within which a court has the right and power to operate; persons about whom or subject matters about which a court has the right and power to make decisions.
Just Cause	A legal or lawful reason.
Juvenile Officer	A juvenile court employee who works with the judge to direct and develop the court's child-welfare work.
Lawyer	A representative of clients, an officer of the legal system, and a public citizen having special responsibility for the quality of justice. As a representative of clients, a lawyer performs various functions. As Advisor, a lawyer provides a client with an informed understanding of the client's legal rights, and obligations and explains their practical implications. As advocate, a lawyer zealously asserts the client's position under the rules of the adversary system. As negotiator, a lawyer seeks a results advantageous to the client but consistent with requirements of honest dealing with others. As intermediary between clients, a lawyer seeks to reconcile their divergent interests as an advisory and, to the a limited extent, as a spokespersons for each client. A lawyer acts as evaluator by examining a client's legal affairs and reporting about them to the client or to others. The Supreme Court licenses lawyers in the State of Missouri.
Legal Separation	A legal written agreement whereby a husband and wife live apart from each other while remaining married, either by mutual consent or by judicial decree.

Letters	(In Probate Matters) Official designation of authority by the court, in the form of a written instrument, that a person has the authority to act for a deceased person, ward or protectee's estate or well being. See also Decedent and Probate.
Levy	To execute, seize; obtain money by seizure and sale of property; collect a sum of money on an execution. See also Execution.
Lien	A claim on another person's property. See also Encumber/Encumbrance and Mechanic's Lien.
Limited Scope Representation	When a lawyer helps with only certain parts of a case—such as helping a client to draft a pleading or reviewing a legal document prepared by the client—typically in family law matters. Sometimes referred to as "unbundled legal services" or "discrete task representation."
Litigant	A party in a lawsuit.
Litigation	The process of carrying on a lawsuit; a civil action in which a controversy is brought before the court.
Maintenance	Financial support of either the male or female spouse during and following dissolution of marriage proceedings.
Majority	Full age; legal age; the age at which, by law, a person is entitled to the management of his own affairs and to the enjoyment of civil rights.
Mechanic's Lien	A claim that may be filed by a person for labor and materials furnished in constructing or repairing a building which amount is still due and owing.
Mediation	A method of solving problems without going to court.
Mediator	A person who helps resolve disputes between two or more parties.
Minor	A person who is under the legal age.

Miscellaneous Charges	An amount charged for the performance of a particular service by a person or organization other than the court. These charges are specified by statute.
Modification	A change or alteration.
Molest	The act of making unwanted and indecent advances to someone, especially for sexual gratification.
Motion	A request that a judge make a ruling or take some other action; an application for a ruling or order to a court or judge in favor of the party making the motion; generally made in reference to a pending action or may address a matter in the court's discretion or concern a point of law; may be oral or written.
Natural Guardian	A parent of a minor.
Natural Parent	The biological father or mother of someone.
Nature of Action	Description of the type of civil case being filed; e.g., contract, dissolution, small claims.
Next Friend	A person or agency appointed to act on behalf of a minor in a court action.
Nickname	An alternate name someone uses, or others use, to refer to that person instead of using that person's real or complete name; another name a person goes by.
Noncustodial Parent	Parent who does not have primary care of a child; person who pays a child support obligation. See also Child Support and Obligee.
Notary Public	A public officer whose function is to administer oaths, to attest and certify by his hand and official seal.

Notice	Knowledge of certain facts; formal receipt of the knowledge of certain facts; information required by a party in a case to give to another party in the case; usually made by either mail, posting or through a publication, such as a newspaper. (i.e. Notice of Hearing)
Notice of Hearing	An official notice telling the parties when a hearing is scheduled.
Obligee	(In Child Support Matters) A person, state or political subdivision to whom a duty of support is owed. See also Custodial Parent.
Obligor	Person(s) obligated under a bond. (In Child Support Matters) A person who owes child support. See also Noncustodial Parent.
Offense Cycle Number (OCN)	A tracking number, preprinted on a state tracking card and it's carbon copies, used to track the arrest, filing of charges and disposition of charges in a criminal case.
Open Case	A pending case; a case that has not had a final judgment rendered.
Opening Statement	A summary of the case and the evidence that will be presented. This summary is given by each side of a case at the beginning of a hearing.
Order	A written decision of a judge or court commissioner.
Order of Protection	A court order protecting the affected or injured party by prohibiting or restricting another party from engaging in acts, attempts or threats to a family, household member or a child, or from acts of stalking.
Original Jurisdiction	Jurisdiction to take control of a cause at its beginning, try it, and pass judgment upon the law and facts.
Parenting Plan	A plan that states which parent will be responsible for the children and decision-making, and how disputes will be decided between parents.

Party/Parties	The person(s) involved in any legal proceeding; in a judicial proceeding, a person directly interested in the subject =matter of the case; one who could assert a claim, make a defense, control proceedings, examine witnesses, or appeal a judgment.
Payee	One to whom money is paid or payable. (In Child Support Matters) Used interchangeably with obligee or custodial parent; designates to whom payment should be directed.
Payor	One who pays. (In Child Support Matters) Used interchangeably with obligor or non-custodial parent; designates who must pay.
Perjury	The act or an instance of a person's deliberately making false or misleading statements while under oath.
Petition	A formal written request to the court for a specific action. Additionally, in a civil case, written statements stating the claims against the defendant.
Petitioner or Plaintiff	In a civil case, the person who files a claim against another person. In divorces, this is the person who files or who starts the divorce. See also Plaintiff, Defendant, and Respondent.
Plaintiff	Person who initiates a legal proceeding against another person. See also Plaintiff, Defendant and Respondent.
Plea	The defendant's formal answer to a criminal charge.
Pleadings	Documents filed in a case; statement of facts, presented in a logical and legal form, which constitute a plaintiff's cause of action or defendant's grounds of defense.
Political Subdivision	A division of a state that exists primarily to discharge some function of local government.
Principal	The amount of a debt, investment or other fund, not including interest, earnings or profits.

Pro Se	To act on one's own behalf; appearing for oneself; representing oneself; to represent oneself in a court action without an attorney.
Probate	The legal process of recording a will with the court.
Probate Court	A division of the Circuit Court that handles matters dealing with wills, administration of estates, guardianships, conservators, mental health procedures, sexually violent predator actions, and inheritance.
Proceeding	A case or business in court; the form and manner of conducting judicial business before a court or hearing officer.
Process	The court document in the delivery of service. See also Service of Process.
Production of Documents	The process or act of providing copies of documents or other written material at the request of another party in a case. See also Discovery.
Prosecutor or Prosecution	One who represents the state or government in a criminal action; a proceeding instituted and carried on by due process of law for the purpose of determining the guilt or innocence of a person charged with a crime.
Protectee	(In Probate Matters) A person for whose estate a conservator has been appointed, or with respect to whose estate a transaction has been authorized by the court without appointment of a conservator or limited conservator.
Pursuant to	In compliance with; in accordance with; as authorized by.
Real Property	Land and generally whatever is erected or growing upon or fixed to the land.
Record	To commit to writing, printing, or such; make an official note of; written account of act, court proceeding, transaction, or instrument, drawn up, under authority of law, by a proper officer and designed to remain as a permanent part of the matter to which it relates.

Refusal of Letters	(In Probate Matters) A process used to transfer a deceased person's real and personal property to a surviving spouse, unmarried minor children, or creditors.
Remedy	The relief given or ordered by a court to enforce a right or wrong, such as returning property or the monetary value of a loss.
Renounce	To give up or abandon formally, a right or interest, such as renouncing an inheritance.
Restitution	Returning to the proper owner property or the monetary value of a loss.
Residential Address	The address where a person lives. Cannot be a post office box number.
Respondent	An individual against whom proceedings are initiated.
Responsive	Pleadings Answering pleadings.
Restitution	Returning property or the monetary value of a loss to the proper owner. Putting someone back into the position he or she was in before a loss or injury.
Restraining Order	Order made upon application of one party forbidding the other party to do something. Temporary Restraining Order - Restraining order while case is pending. Permanent Restraining Order - Restraining order made in final judgment.
Retainable Arrearage	(In Child Support Matters) The portion of the assigned arrearage that can be retained by the state. See also Assigned Arrearage.
RSMo	Abbreviation for Missouri Revised Statutes.
Satisfaction (of Judgment)	Taking care of a debt or obligation by paying it; an entry made on the record, by a party in whose favor a judgment was rendered, declaring that the judgment has been paid.

Sentence	Judgment imposing penalty for offense. Penalties may include but are not limited to imprisonment, fine, a suspended imposition of sentence, a suspended execution of sentence, restitution, community service, or attendance at education programs.
Sequestration	A written order of the court commanding the sheriff or other officer to seize the goods of a person named in the written order. Sometimes issued against a civil defendant or public employer.
Service of Process	The legal methods of delivering documents to an opposing party in a lawsuit and proving to the court (by filing a Certificate of Service) that the papers were received. The delivery of an official court document is done by an authorized official, such as a sheriff. See also Process.
Settlement	An oral or written agreement to resolve a problem, especially before going to court.
Small Claim	The inexpensive adjudication of a case when the amount of claim does not exceed \$3000.00. Proceedings are conducted informally before a judge without a jury, and the parties may represent themselves without an attorney and the formal rules of evidence do not apply.
Special Process Server	A person at least 18 years of age, appointed by the court to deliver official court documents.
Spousal Support	Court ordered support of an ex-husband or ex-wife (or a spouse while a divorce is pending) ordered by the court. More commonly called maintenance or alimony. See also Alimony or Maintenance.
Stalking	When an adult purposely and repeatedly harasses or follows another with the intent of harassing.

State Debt	(In Child Support Matters) The amount of AFDC/TANF paid out reduced to a specific amount by a judicial/administrative order. When reduced to a specific amount by order, it is the equivalent of retainable arrearage. When not reduced to a specific amount by order, it is equivalent to unreimbursed assistance. (URA)
Statute	A law.
Statutory	Required or created by statute.
Stay	To stop or hold off; to hold in abeyance. See also Abeyance.
Stay of Execution	Stopping the execution of a judgment for a limited time.
Subpoena	A court's order to a person that he or she appear in court to give testimony or produce documents.
Subsequent	Occurring later; occurring after something else.
Substance Abuse	The abuse of alcohol or drugs.
Summons	A written notice informing a person of a lawsuit against him or her, and tells them when and where to appear in court.
Supreme Court of Missouri	The highest court in Missouri where seven Supreme Court Justices hear appeals of decisions made in lower courts and interpret the laws and constitutions of Missouri and the United States.
Surcharges	Additional charges allowed by statute for specific purposes.
Surety	A person or company that insures or guarantees that another person will fulfill their obligation.
Suspended Execution of Sentence (SES)	A sentence is given, but not imposed, and the defendant is placed on a term of probation.

Suspended Imposition of Sentence (SIS)	A sentence is not given and the defendant may be placed on probation.
Taking Against A Will	(In Probate Matters) The rejection by a surviving spouse of the provisions of a will and the election to receive one-half of the estate if there are no lineal descendants of the deceased, or one-third if there are descendants. See also Will.
Temporary Restraining Order	See Restraining Order.
Temporary Orders	Orders made by the judge to last for a limited time; such as maintenance or restraining orders.
Tenant	A person who occupies real estate belonging to another.
Terminate	To end.
Testimony	A solemn statement made under oath.
Trial	The proceedings in a court where the issues between the parties are heard, and decision upon the issues is made.
Trial De Novo	A new trial before another judge.
Unassigned Arrearage	(In Child Support Matters) The portion of the arrearage that has accrued since the last termination of the TANF assignment.
Unbundled Legal Services	An agreement between a party and a lawyer for the lawyer to provide limited representation, i.e. reviewing documents prepared by a party representing himself or herself in court.
Uncollected Costs and Fines	The court costs and fines ordered to be paid to the court that have not been received by the court.
Uncontested	A lawsuit in which the party against whom it is filed does not dispute it.

Unsupervised Administration	(In Probate Matters) The administration by an independent personal representative of a decedent's estate without control or order of the court.
Vacate	To set aside.
Venue	The specific county, city, or geographical area over which a court has authority.
Victim	A person harmed by a crime or action.
Voluntary Support Payments	(In Child Support Matters) The parent has agreed to make payments without the suit of nonsupport being filed.
Waiver	The intentional or voluntary relinquishment of a known right, or such conduct as warrants the inference of the relinquishment of such act.
Will	(In Probate Matters) An instrument by which a person makes a disposition of their property, to take affect after their death.
Witness(es)	One who can give a firsthand account of something seen, heard, or experienced.
Writ	A written court order requiring specific action by the person or entity to whom the order is directed.
Writ of Execution	(In Civil Matters) A court's written order directing a sheriff or other officer to enforce a judgment usually by the seizing and selling of the judgment debtor's property. An order for the sheriff to attach any property of a judgment debtor in the amount that will satisfy the judgment. See also Garnishment.