



BILL LOCKE

GENERAL SESSIONS COURT

The honorable Bill Locke presides as judge over the Court of General Sessions in Warren County. Locke also fills a dual role as Juvenile Court judge for the county. He was appointed as interim General Sessions Judge by the Warren County Commission in January 2012 and was elected in August of that year.

The court of General Sessions, which serves Warren County exclusively, handles the following type cases: worker's compensation, domestic relations, civil, juvenile, traffic, and misdemeanor criminal.

Location: The General Sessions Judge's office is located at the courthouse and may be reached by calling 473-6043.

THE JURY

In all civil cases in which a jury is requested, a panel of six persons will be appointed, unless 15 days prior to the trial either litigant requests a 12-person jury.

A 12-person jury is the norm in all criminal cases where a jury is used. In addition to the regular jury, two alternate jurors are usually chosen to attend the trial to take the place of any regular juror who may become ill or is unable to fill his or her role during the course of the trial.

Normally two juries are selected every year, each for six months of service. Those juries are then usually broken down into two panels, referred to as Panel A and Panel B.

After serving their six-month term, jurors will normally not be recalled to jury duty for at least two years, usually longer.

GRAND JURY

The grand jury is a 12-person panel which normally meets in regular session on the second Friday of each month. The jurors that fill this panel are selected at random from the jury pool and usually serve six-month terms. Jeff Golden is the grand jury foreman.



LISA ZAVOGIANNIS

The grand jury's main duty is to listen to evidence in criminal cases and decide if there is enough evidence, or probable cause, for the case to go to trial. If sufficient evidence is found, jurors render an indictment against the defendant. If sufficient evidence is not found, then jurors may elect to render a no-true bill, which typically ends the charges, although the case can be presented again to the grand jury if new evidence is discovered.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The 31st District Attorney General's office is headed by Lisa Zavogiannis.

Zavogiannis was elected to her first term in 2006 and was re-elected in 2014. Prior to being elected DA, Zavogiannis was a private attorney practicing here for about five years.

The criminal aspect of the attorney general's office normally handles thousands of cases each year ranging from public intoxication to homicide. The office also handles child support enforcement cases.

The district attorney's office is located on Main Street and may be reached at 473-9572. The child support number is 473-6561.

PUBLIC DEFENDER

The 31st Judicial District's Public Defender's office is headed by John Partin, who is serving his first term in office. Partin was elected in 2014 and is serving an eight-year term.

The public defender's office offers legal defense for those who cannot afford a lawyer and are found indigent by the court. The court assigns cases to the public defender's office.

The office, which is located on College Street, may be reached by calling 473-6356.



JOHN PARTIN

CHANCERY COURT

The Honorable Judge Bart Stanley presides over the 31st Judicial District's Chancery Court.

The court is a court of equity and is based on Old English Law, which means the judge is to decide the case on what he considers is best for all.

Matters which come before the court include probate of wills, breeches of contract, boundary disputes, division of partnerships, divorces in which division of property and/or child custody need resolution and any imaginable dispute between persons.

Unlike other courts, Chancery Court matters may be heard in other courts such as General Sessions or Circuit Court, as long as they are filed in those courts.

CITY COURT

McMinnville City Court meets weekly on Monday at 4 p.m. at the police station on Red Road.

Tim Reed is city judge. Teresa Harris is city court clerk. The court hears violation of city ordinances, including areas such as building codes violations and traffic offenses.

Fines may be levied by the court, but no jail time can be assessed in city court. The court does have the power to suspend driver's licenses if fines are not paid. Many cases are settled by allowing rarely offending motorists to attend safety school which is taught by city law enforcement officers.

The court of immediate appeals for city court is Circuit Court. The city court clerk's office may be reached during regular business hours, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 473-1211.

The clerk's office is located at police headquarters on Red Road. City traffic citations may also be paid there.