FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT
OVERVIEW – JANUARY 2026

The First Judicial District (1st JD) encompassess all of the Jefferson and Gilpin Counties. Jefferson County is approximately 774 square miles and contains 12 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 580,213 in 2026. Gilpin County has four cities (2 incorporated) and its populations is approximately 6,003.

The district is the fifth largest in the state by caseload volume, trailing the 2nd, 4th, 17th and 18th Judicial Districts. In fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024 June 30, 2025), 38,069 new county court cases and 15,095 new district court cases were filed in the 1st JD. Our district court judges heard 142 court and jury trials and 515 court hand jury trials where heard by our county court judges during the fiscal year.

There are 14 judges and 9.8 magistrates assigned to the District Court within the 1st JD. Magistrates are judicial, non-elected officers who are selected by and responsible to the District's Chief Judge. District Court Magistrates primarily handle juvenile matters (including juvenile deliquency, dependency and neglect, adoptions and support) and preliminary domestic relations matters. One full time Magistrate presides over three problem-solving courts and one full 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 9 full time judges and 1.7 magistrates assigned to Jefferson County Court and a .75 judge in Gilpin County Court. The magistrates handle small claims, traffic infractions, protection orders and 48-hour bond hearings. County Court Judges handle a mixed caseload of traffic, misdemeanor and civil cases. County Court Judges in the 1st Judicial District 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 Blackhawk, CO (Gilpin County). In addition to the judges and magistrates, there are 148 support staff positions in the courts and an additional 135 personnel in the Probation Department. The probation Department served over 6500 probations in FY25.

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 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, the Office of the Public