Narrative Information—DA 400	
Division of the Budget	Agency: Kansas Judicial Council
State of Kansas	Program: Agency-Wide Information

GENERAL AGENCY INFORMATION

AGENCY MISSION:

To study the administration of justice in Kansas and make recommendations for improvement.

In completing its mission, the Judicial Council maintains a number of standing advisory committees, currently 13, with one ad hoc committee formed specifically for a study requested by the Probate Law Advisory Committee.

Studies:

The Judicial Council conducts studies on request from the Legislature, the Judiciary, attorneys, public officials, organizations, and citizens. The Judicial Council has also been instrumental in writing and/or keeping current most of the major statutory codes regularly used in Kansas courts, including: Administrative Procedure Act; Adoption and Relinquishment Act; Care and Treatment Acts; Civil Code; Code for Care of Children; Code of Criminal Procedure; Code of Procedure for Limited Actions; Criminal Code; Family Law Code; False Claims Act; Guardianship and Conservatorship Act; Informal Administration Act; Judicial Review Act; Juvenile Offender Code; Municipal Court Code; Parentage Act; Power of Attorney Act; Probate Code; Protection from Abuse Act; and Trust Code.

Publications:

In addition, the Judicial Council contributes to the administration of justice in Kansas by authoring and publishing five high-quality legal publications: *Kansas Appellate Practice Handbook*, *Kansas Judicial Council Probate Forms, Kansas Municipal Court Manual, Pattern Instructions for Kansas - Civil*, and *Pattern Instructions for Kansas - Criminal*.

Legal Forms:

The Judicial Council also drafts and provides on its website over 900 legal forms that are available at no cost for use by the general public, attorneys, judges, and court staff. Legal forms are accessed through the Judicial Council's website over 720,000 times per year.

AGENCY PHILOSOPHY:

The principles and responsibilities of the judicial system shall be maintained, and the rights and privileges associated with our system of justice shall be respected as the Judicial Council carries out its mission.

PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED TO ASSIST WITH AGENCY MISSION:

The Judicial Council operates under a single general program to carry out its mission.

STATUTORY HISTORY:

The Judicial Council was created by the Legislature in 1927, and its membership and duties are prescribed by statute (K.S.A. 20-2201 to 20-2208).

OVERVIEW

Prior to fiscal year 1993, the Judicial Council received all its funding from the State General Fund. However, the agency began managing a Publications Fee Fund in fiscal year 1993 that allowed it to receive revenue from the sale of publications. Between fiscal year 2004 and fiscal year 2023, the Judicial Council was fully fee-funded through a combination of publication sales revenue and docket fees.

Beginning with fiscal year 2024, the Judicial Council directs all revenue from publication sales to the State General Fund and receives all its funding from the State General Fund.

Current Year and Budget Year Overview:

FY2027

The Judicial Council has submitted a revised FY2027 budget including $11,751 in reappropriated funds from FY2026. The FY2027 adjusted budget request reflects a decrease in the area of salaries and wages in the previously approved FY2027 amount due to the number of committee meetings expected to be held and whether committee members have waived their statutory right to compensation. The adjusted budget request reflects an increase in the area of contractual services expenditures in the previously approved FY2027 amount due to increased costs associated with website hosting and maintenance fees, the accessibility remediation of website content required by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and professional service fees for communication and outreach.

FY2028

FY2028 includes the expected additional pay check, health insurance rate change, as well as planned step movements for employees.

The FY2028 budget request also includes approximately $93,100 in one-time expenditures to produce and publish a new edition of *Pattern Instructions Kansas—Criminal*. The Judicial Council proposes to pay these costs from existing balances in the Publication Fee Fund. These balances consist of publication revenue collected before FY 2024, when the Judicial Council transitioned from fee-funded operations to State General Fund financing. The funds were retained in the fee fund to help cover significant future publication expenses, including the cost of producing new editions.

The Judicial Council anticipates collecting more than $100,000 in revenue from sales of the new edition. The revenue will be deposited in the State General Fund. Accordingly, anticipated sales revenue is expected to fully offset the approximately $93,100 one-time cost of producing the new edition.

A new edition of *Pattern Instructions Kansas—Criminal* is essential to the future of the publication. More than 15 years have passed since the current edition was published, during which time the publication has grown substantially in size through supplements and updates. The new edition will benefit jurors and litigants by helping ensure that jury instructions are clearer, more consistent, and easier to understand. Targeted usability improvements will include guidance on adapting instructions to individual cases, additional examples for complex jury instructions, improved organization of instructions containing numerous alternatives, and updates to explanatory notes and comments. The new edition will also divide the publication into two manageable binders, allowing room for future updates and making the physical publication easier to use.

Actual Position Data:
FY 2027 - 5 FTE
FY 2028 - 5 FTE

EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION - General Government Program

Object Code 100: Salaries and Wages

Summary:

For FY2027, the Judicial Council was authorized 5.0 FTE positions, including an Executive Director, two Staff Attorneys, a Fiscal Officer, and a Legal Publishing/Accounting Specialist. Also included in this area are per diem and subsistence paid to Committee members who elect to receive these payments pursuant to K.S.A. 20-2206. In FY2027, the Judicial Council plans to hold 47 full committee meetings and 33 subcommittee meetings.

For FY2028, the Judicial Council plans to hold 50 full committee meetings and 33 subcommittee meetings. FY2028 includes the expected additional pay check, health insurance rate change, as well as planned step movements for employees.

FY 2027: $592,693
FY 2028: $639,761

Object Code 200: Contractual Services

Summary: Items funded in this area are telephone services, postage, freight, printing, photocopier rent, OITS fees, professional services, and mileage for Judicial Council and advisory committee meetings. Also included in the contractual services area is funding for the preparation, publication, and mailing of supplements to the Council's publications. Costs for the maintenance and expansion of the Council's website are contained in this object code. Additionally, the amount of sales tax the Judicial Council collects from the sale of publications and subsequently remitted to the Kansas Department of Revenue is considered a contractual expense and included in this object code.

Website: The Judicial Council's website is maintained by Granicus pursuant to Granicus' contract with OITS. The FY2027 adjusted budget request reflects an increase in the area of contractual services expenditures in the previously approved FY2027 amount due to website hosting and maintenance estimates provided by OITS. Additionally, expenses associated with the development of an online pay portal to collect revenue from the sale of publications is also included.

Communication & Outreach: The FY2027 adjusted budget request includes the FY2026 reappropriation of $11,751 in the area of professional fees. This one-time expense will be used to make Judicial Council resources easy to recognize, increase awareness of agency services, and provide an effective and consistent way to communicate with Kansans.

Hospitality: Starting in FY2027, the Judicial Council received spending authority for official hospitality expenditures in the amount of $5,000 to provide for basic beverage and lunch expenses for committee members' at Judicial Council and advisory committee meetings that are held in-person for more than three hours in length and extend beyond midday. Members travel up to 12 hours round trip from across the state in order to attend sometimes lengthy meetings. The Judicial Council requests the same spending authority for official hospitality expenditures in the amount of $5,000 for FY2028. Approximately 93% of committee members waive their right to statutory compensation, thereby volunteering their time and expertise to attend in-person meetings in Topeka.

Publication: The FY2028 budget request includes $45,100 for one-time expenditures to produce and publish a new edition of *Pattern Instructions Kansas—Criminal*. This one-time expenditure includes meeting costs, shipping, and printing costs.

FY 2027: $158,119
FY 2028: $178,119

Object Code 300: Commodities

Summary: The requests under this object code include office and computer supplies, session laws, statute books and supplements.

The FY2027 adjusted budget request reflects a decrease in the area of commodities expenditures in the previously approved FY2027 amount due to reduced office supply and computer printing needs as the Council has transitioned to providing meeting agendas and materials electronically rather than printing and mailing paper copies.

The FY2028 budget request includes $48,000 in one-time expenditures to produce and publish a new edition of *Pattern Instructions Kansas—Criminal*. This one-time expenditure includes custom, publication-grade binders needed to divide the publication into two manageable volumes and accommodate future supplements and updates.

FY 2027: $4,096
FY 2028: $50,148

Object Code 400: Capital Outlay

Summary: The capital outlay request covers computer software expenses and fees pursuant to the computer lease agreement.

The FY2027 adjusted budget request reflects a slight decrease in the area of capital outlay expenditures in the previously approved FY2027 amount due to the discontinuation of the Council's paid Zoom subscription.

FY 2027: $4,328
FY 2028: $4,366

PROGRAM NARRATIVE INFORMATION

GOAL:

To study the administration of justice in Kansas, to recommend to the Supreme Court and the Legislature improvements in the administration of justice, and to take other appropriate actions to carry out the mission of the Judicial Council.

OBJECTIVE #1:

To consider the judicial branch of the state and various substantive and procedural codes that are used by or before the judicial branch, to identify problem areas or areas of potential improvement, and to take appropriate action.

Strategies For Objective #1:

The Judicial Council will:

1. Continue to meet regularly to receive and consider study requests and suggestions relating to the administration of justice in Kansas, identify problem areas and areas of needed improvement, undertake projects and assign projects to existing or new advisory committees, receive and review the work product of the advisory committees, and take appropriate action.
2. Continue the following existing advisory committees and their respective responsibilities and current assignments as follows:

    A. The Administrative Procedure Advisory Committee monitors the Kansas Administrative Procedure Act and the Kansas Judicial Review Act.

    B. The Appellate Practice Advisory Committee monitors the area of appellate procedure and practice and recommends needed changes in the Supreme Court rules relating to appellate practice. The Committee is currently preparing a supplement to the *Kansas Appellate Practice Handbook.*

    C. The Civil Code Advisory Committee monitors the civil code and related areas of law, and is available for additional assignments in these areas. The Committee continues to collaborate with the Kansas Supreme Court's Access to Justice Committee to create and update civil legal forms used by attorneys and the public.

    D. The Criminal Law Advisory Committee monitors the Kansas Criminal Code and the Kansas Code of Criminal Procedure.

E. The Family Law Advisory Committee monitors the area of family law and is available for additional assignments in this area of law.

F. The Guardianship and Conservatorship Advisory Committee is preparing and updating legal forms to be used under the new Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act, and the Uniform Guardianship and Conservatorship and Other Protective Arrangements Act, which were passed in 2025. Additionally, the Committee has created and published a form to be used in supported-decision making agreements due to the new act passed in 2026 S.B. 84. The Committee also monitors the Care and Treatment Act for Mentally Ill Persons and the Care and Treatment Act for Persons with an Alcohol or Substance Abuse Problem and prepares and updates forms used under both civil commitment codes.

G. The Juvenile Offender/Child in Need of Care Advisory Committee continues to monitor the Revised Kansas Code for Care of Children, the Revised Kansas Juvenile Offender Code, and the forms it prepared, copyrighted, and published for use under the codes.

H. The Municipal Court Manual Advisory Committee prepares the annual supplement to the *Kansas Municipal Court Manual* and proposes to the Judicial Council any suggested improvements in related areas of the law that come to its attention while preparing the supplement.

I. The Pattern Instructions for Kansas - Civil (PIK-Civil) Advisory Committee prepares biennial supplements to *PIK-Civil 4th* and reports to the Judicial Council any suggested improvements in the area of civil law that come to its attention while preparing the supplements.

J. The Pattern Instructions for Kansas - Criminal (PIK-Criminal) Advisory Committee prepares the annual supplement to *PIK-Criminal 4th* and reports to the Judicial Council any suggested improvements in the area of criminal law that come to its attention while preparing the supplement.

K. The Probate Law Advisory Committee is conducting a study regarding the anti-lapse statute and its applicability to trusts. It is also conducting a study requested by Rep. Susan Humphries and Rep. Leah Howell regarding the admittance of lost or misplaced wills. The Committee also monitors the probate code and related areas.

L. The Tribal-State Judicial Forum was created to encourage greater understanding and exchange of information between the tribal and state judicial systems in Kansas. The Forum identifies and discusses issues regarding court practices, procedures, and administration that are of common concern to members of tribal and state judicial systems.

M. The Website Forms Advisory Committee was created to review and approve all legal forms published on the Judicial Council website. The Committee reviews each new form for style, accuracy, consistency, and ease of use. The Committee is creating formal guidelines for legal forms to promote uniformity throughout the forms.

3. Establish new advisory committees or assign new projects to existing committees as the Council's mission, goals and objectives dictate. As a part of this strategy, the Judicial Council has established many ad hoc committees to study a single issue. Ad hoc committees are generally dissolved after the assignment is complete. The current ad hoc committee is:

   A. The Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Publication of Legal Notices was formed in 2025 in response to a request from the judges and attorneys on the Probate Law Advisory Committee to study the process for the publication of legal notice in newspapers and online.

4. Continue the practice of appointing to the advisory committees capable, experienced persons from a variety of backgrounds who bring expertise to the committees.

Performance Measures for Objective #1:

OUTCOME MEASURES:
Consider the activity of the advisory committees and determine if the Council is fulfilling its obligation to consider and suggest improvements to the judicial branch and the procedural codes which are used by or before it.

Number of Meetings Held and Anticipated

COMMITTEE	FY 2026 Full Comm.	FY 2026 Sub Comm.	FY 2027 Full Comm.	FY 2027 Sub Comm.	FY 2028 Full Comm.	FY 2028 Sub Comm.
Administrative Procedure	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ad Hoc Committee on Publication of Legal Notices	5	2	5	2	0	0
Appellate Practice	0	0	0	0	2	0
Civil Code	0	12	1	10	2	12
Criminal Law	4	0	3	0	4	1
Family Law	3	0	3	2	4	2
Guardianship and Conservatorship	10	3	7	2	5	2
Judicial Council	4	0	2	2	2	1
Juvenile Offender/Child in Need of Care	7	7	3	3	3	3
Municipal Court Manual	1	0	1	0	1	0
Pattern Instructions for Kansas - Civil	5	0	0	0	5	0
Pattern Instructions for Kansas - Criminal	4	0	5	0	5	0
Probate Law	3	0	4	0	4	0
Tribal-State Judicial Forum	0	0	1	0	1	0
Website Forms	11	10	12	12	12	12
TOTAL	57	34	47	33	50	33

OUTPUT MEASURES:

Determine if the Judicial Council is performing its statutory duties by its response to requests for studies and determine if the Legislature, the Supreme Court, the bench, the bar, the public and the committee members are bringing matters to the attention of the Council for consideration.

	Requests by Legislature	Requests by Supreme Court/ Judiciary	Requests by Others	Total Requests	Requests granted/ assigned to Committee
FY 2024	1	0	3	4	4
FY 2025	5	0	3	8	7
FY 2026	1	0	6	7	7
FY 2027	2	1	3	6	6
FY 2028	3	1	3	7	7

OBJECTIVE #2:

To publish and distribute high quality publications to further the mission of the Judicial Council including publication of the *Kansas Appellate Practice Handbook 6th*, the *Kansas Judicial Council Probate Forms 3d*, the *Kansas Municipal Court Manual*, *PIK-Civil 4th*, and *PIK-Criminal 4th*; and to maintain and improve the Judicial Council's subscription-based website for Council publications and forms.

Strategies for Objective #2:

1. Continue with the existing advisory committees and their respective responsibilities as follows:

   A. The Appellate Procedure Advisory Committee will update and supplement the *Kansas Appellate Practice Handbook 6th* as needed.

   B. The Probate Law Advisory Committee and the Guardianship and Conservatorship Advisory Committee will prepare a supplement to the *Kansas Judicial Council Probate Forms 3d* in FY2027.

C. The Municipal Court Manual Committee will update and supplement the *Kansas Municipal Court Manual* annually.

D. The PIK-Civil Advisory Committee will update and supplement the civil pattern jury instructions published in *Pattern Instructions for Kansas-Civil 4th* biennially.

E. The PIK-Criminal Advisory Committee will update and supplement *Pattern Instructions for Kansas-Criminal 4th* annually.

2. Establish new advisory committees or make additional assignments to existing advisory committees if it is deemed desirable to undertake additional publication projects.

3. Continue development and expansion of the subscription-based portion of the Judicial Council website, which allows subscribers online access to Judicial Council publications.

4. Monitor the contract between the Judicial Council and West Publishing Group which provides revenue to the Judicial Council from the licensing of *PIK-Civil 4th* and *PIK-Criminal 4th* to West Publishing Group for use on Westlaw.

5. Monitor the contract between the Judicial Council and LexisNexis Publishing which provides revenue to the Judicial Council from the licensing of *PIK-Civil* 4th and *PIK-Criminal 4th* for use on LexisNexis.

Performance Measures for Objective #2:

OUTCOME MEASURES:

The following tables depict the publications that will be distributed in fiscal years 2027 and 2028.

Publications to be Printed and Distributed

FY2027
Kansas Municipal Court Manual 2026 Supplement
Kansas Probate Forms 3d 2026 Supplement
PIK-Civil 4th 2026 Supplement
PIK-Criminal 4th 2026 Supplement

FY2028
Kansas Municipal Court Manual 2027 Supplement
PIK-Criminal 5th Edition

OUTPUT MEASURES:

The following table indicates the actual and expected sales of publications:

FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
1,373	1,908	1,031	1,861	900

OBJECTIVE #3

To improve the administration of justice by providing over 900 legal forms to the public, attorneys, and the courts on the Council website. These include forms the Judicial Council is statutorily required to provide, forms the Judicial Council is required to provide under Supreme Court Rules, and forms the Council has developed in fulfilling its mission to improve the administration of justice.

The Legislature has directed the Judicial Council to prepare legal forms and make them available in the areas of adoption, civil asset forfeiture, code enforcement complaints, drug offender registration relief, eminent domain, garnishments, guardianship, Host Families Act, liens, name change at or after divorce, power of attorney, protection from abuse, protection from stalking, small claims, small estate distribution, and legal forms that were removed from volumes 4 and 4A of the Kansas Statutes Annotated.

The Supreme Court Rules require the use of Council forms in the areas of guardianship, conservatorship, guardian ad litems, limited representation, fax filing, cover sheets, juror questionnaire, waiver of parental consent requirements, child in need of care, motions under K.S.A. 60-1507, satisfactions of money judgments, bill of costs, and appeals.

In addition, the Council has prepared and posted on its website forms for use by the public and legal professionals in child in need of care, juvenile offender, divorce, parentage, expungement, eviction, limited actions, traffic, subpoenas, common civil forms for both Chapter 60 and Chapter 61 cases, execution and hearing in aid, replevin and foreclosure, and appeals. There are now over 900 forms on the Judicial Council website that are available free to the bar and the public. The Council updates these forms as necessary and they are available on the Council's website at www.kjc.ks.gov.

Strategies for Objective #3:

1. Review session laws annually to determine any new obligation for the Council to create a legal form.

2. Review session laws to determine whether changes to existing forms are required.

3. Monitor case law for holdings or opinions that impact legal form content.

4. Monitor changes to Supreme Court Rules that impact legal form content.

5. Periodically review and update existing Judicial Council forms.

6. Continue to prepare and post on the Judicial Council website new forms that improve the administration of justice.

Performance Measures for Objective #3:

OUTCOME MEASURES:

The following table depicts the number of site visits and unique visitors to the legal forms on the Judicial Council website, including estimates for fiscal years 2027 and 2028.

	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Avg. Site Visits/month	46,000	50,000	55,000
Total Unique Website Visitors - Annual	300,000	330,000	360,000

OUTPUT MEASURES:

The following table lists some of the 900+ forms drafted by the Judicial Council and maintained on its website. The columns on the right side of the table indicate the reason the forms were created.

Partial Listing of Forms on the Judicial Council's Website	Required by Statute	Required by S. Ct. Rule	Created to Improve Admin. Of Justice
Adoption, Consent and Relinquishment	X		
Case Filing Cover Sheets		X	
Chapter 61 Forms (Evictions, Replevin)			X
Child Support and Parenting Time			X
Civil Asset Forfeiture	X		
Civil Pleading Forms (Chapter 60)	X		
Code for Care of Children		X	X
Divorce Forms			X
Drug Offender Registration	X		X
Expungement	X		X

Forms for Rules Relating to Appellate Courts		X	
Forms for Rules Relating to District Courts		X	
Garnishment and Attachment	X		
Guardianship and Conservatorship	X		X
Landlord-Tenant Forms			X
Juvenile Justice Code		X	X
Miscellaneous Statutory Forms	X		
Name Change			X
Parentage			X
Power of Attorney			X
Protection From Abuse	X		
Protection From Stalking, Sexual Assault, or Human Trafficking	X		
Poverty Affidavit	X		
Small Claims	X		
Summons and Service of Process	X		
Supported Decision Making	X		