

## Meskwaki Tribal Court

**Mailing Address: Clerk of Court**

**307 Meskwaki Rd., Tama, IA 52339**

**Phone: (641) 484-9300**

**Fax: (641) 484-2221**

**Office Hours: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, Mon. thru Friday (except Holidays)**

### DEFINITIONS

- **CINA** – Child In Need of Assistance
- **TPR** – Termination of Parental Rights
- **Adjudicate** – A decision made by a Judge
  
- **Petitioner/Plaintiff** – A party who presents a petition to a court or other official body.
- **Respondent/Defendant** – The party against whom a Motion or Petition is filed.
  
- **Petition or Claim** – A formal, written request presented to a court or other official body.
- **Summons** – A writ or process commencing the plaintiff's action and requiring the defendant to appear and Answer.
- **Serve** - To present a party with a notice or process as required by law.
- **Service** - The formal delivery of a writ, summons, or other legal process, confirmed in writing and sworn to by the individual who performed the act of serving the party.
  
- **Answer** – A defendant's written response to a pleading that addresses the merits of the case, usually by denying the plaintiff's allegations; an Answer sets forth the defendant's defenses to the pleading or petition, and any counterclaims.
- **Default Judgment** - A judgment entered against a defendant who has failed to plead or otherwise defend against the plaintiff's claim, often by failing to appear at trial; the omission or failure to perform a legal or contractual duty.
- **Reply** - The plaintiff's written response to the defendant's plea or Answer.
  
- **Motion** – A written or oral application requesting a court to make a specified ruling or Order.
  
- **Pleading** – A general term for any formal document in which a party to a legal proceeding (especially a civil lawsuit) sets forth or responds to allegations, claims, denials, or defenses.
  
- **Stipulation** - A voluntary agreement in writing between opposing parties concerning some relevant point/s; a material condition or requirement in an agreement.
  
- **Order** – A written direction or command delivered by a Court or Judge.
  
- **Continuance** – Adjournment or postponement of a trial or other proceeding to a future date.
  
- **Jurisdiction** – A Court's power to decide a case or issue a decree.
- **Sovereignty** – The supreme political authority of an independent nation.
- **Sovereign Immunity** – A government's immunity from being sued in its own courts without its consent.
  
- **Dismissed Without Prejudice** – A case removed from a court's docket in such a way that the Plaintiff may re-file the same suit on the same claim.
- **Dismissed With Prejudice** – A case removed from a court's docket in such a way that the Plaintiff is prohibited from filing a suit again on the same claim.