Frequently Asked Questions

Lafourche Parish Justice of the Peace, 1st Court

Find answers to common questions about the Court's services, procedures, fees, and jurisdiction.

General Court Information

What does a Justice of the Peace do?

A Justice of the Peace handles certain civil disputes, eligible eviction proceedings, marriage ceremonies, and other duties authorized by Louisiana law.

What area does the 1st Court serve?

The Court serves the geographic area within its legally established territorial jurisdiction. Contact the Court to confirm whether your matter falls within its jurisdiction.

Can the Justice provide legal advice?

No. The Justice of the Peace cannot provide legal advice or represent either party in a dispute. Individuals seeking legal advice should consult a licensed Louisiana attorney.

Does the Court handle every type of lawsuit?

No. Justice of the Peace courts have limited jurisdiction. Certain cases, including divorce, child custody, succession matters, and disputes involving title to real estate, must be handled by a court with the appropriate jurisdiction.

Civil Matters

What types of civil cases can the Court handle?

Eligible cases may include monetary disputes, contract disagreements, property damage claims, and other civil matters within the Court's jurisdiction.

What is the monetary limit for a civil claim?

Generally, the amount in dispute cannot exceed $5,000, subject to applicable law and specific jurisdictional rules.

Do I need an attorney to file a civil claim?

An attorney is not generally required for a civil matter in Justice of the Peace court. However, you may choose to consult an attorney about your rights and legal options.

How do I file a civil claim?

Contact the Court for information about filing requirements, necessary documents, applicable fees, and procedures.

What happens after I file a claim?

The parties must follow the Court's procedures regarding notice, service, hearings, and submission of evidence. The Court will consider the matter and issue a decision as permitted by law.

What if someone owes me money?

You may be able to pursue a civil claim if the dispute falls within the Court's jurisdiction. You should bring relevant documentation, such as contracts, receipts, invoices, and records of payments or communications.

Evictions and Landlord-Tenant Matters

Can the Court handle evictions?

The Court may hear eligible eviction proceedings involving residential rental property and certain commercial or agricultural rental property within its territorial jurisdiction.

Who can file an eviction?

Generally, a landlord or other person legally entitled to seek possession of leased property may initiate an eviction proceeding, subject to applicable legal requirements.

How do I file an eviction?

Contact the Court for information about required pleadings, documentation, filing fees, and procedures.

How much notice must a landlord give before filing an eviction?

Notice requirements depend on the circumstances, the lease, and applicable Louisiana law. Landlords should verify the requirements applicable to their specific situation before proceeding.

Can a landlord remove a tenant without a court order?

Landlords must follow applicable legal procedures for recovering possession of leased property. They should not assume they can remove a tenant or personal belongings without complying with the law.

What happens if a tenant does not appear at the hearing?

The Court may proceed as permitted by law, provided applicable notice and procedural requirements have been satisfied. The outcome depends on the circumstances of the case.

Marriage Ceremonies

Does the Justice perform marriage ceremonies?

Yes. A Justice of the Peace may perform marriage ceremonies within the territorial limits authorized by Louisiana law.

How do we schedule a marriage ceremony?

Contact the Court to ask about availability, scheduling, ceremony arrangements, and applicable fees.

What do we need before getting married?

Couples must obtain a valid Louisiana marriage license and satisfy applicable legal requirements. Contact the appropriate Clerk of Court for information about obtaining the license.

Can the Justice perform a ceremony outside the 1st Court's district?

Louisiana law authorizes Justices of the Peace to perform marriage ceremonies in specified geographic areas beyond their court's immediate territorial jurisdiction. Contact the Court to confirm whether your proposed location is permitted.

How much does a marriage ceremony cost?

Ceremony fees and any additional charges should be confirmed directly with the Court before scheduling.

Notarial Services

Does the Justice provide notarial services?

Louisiana law grants a Justice of the Peace limited ex officio notarial authority within the Justice's territorial jurisdiction.

What documents can the Justice notarize?

Authorized services include administering oaths or affirmations, notarizing sworn statements and affidavits, taking acknowledgments, making protests, and notarizing certain documents affecting movable property, including eligible vehicle title documents.

Can the Justice notarize a real estate deed or mortgage?

No. Louisiana law prohibits a Justice of the Peace acting under this limited authority from notarizing documents that transfer, convey, encumber, or mortgage immovable property.

Should I bring identification?

Contact the Court before your visit to confirm identification requirements, document requirements, and whether the requested notarial act is within the Justice's authority.

Are all notarial services available through the Court?

No. The Justice's ex officio notarial authority is limited by Louisiana law. Some documents require a regularly commissioned Louisiana notary.

Fees, Payments, and Court Procedures

Where can I find the Court's fees?

Contact the Court for current filing fees, service charges, ceremony fees, and accepted payment methods. Fees may vary depending on the service requested.

Does contacting the Court officially file my case?

No. A telephone call, email, or general website contact form does not constitute an official court filing unless an authorized procedure expressly provides otherwise.

Can I submit court documents through the website?

Only if the Court has expressly authorized an electronic filing method. Otherwise, contact the Court for instructions on submitting documents.

What should I bring to a hearing?

Bring all required notices, pleadings, relevant contracts, receipts, photographs, correspondence, and other evidence applicable to your case. Confirm any specific requirements with the Court.

What if I cannot attend my scheduled hearing?

Contact the Court as soon as possible. Do not assume that a hearing has been postponed or canceled unless the Court confirms it.

Contact the Court

If your question is not answered here, contact the Lafourche Parish Justice of the Peace, 1st Court for information about its services and procedures.

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Disclaimer: This FAQ provides general information and is not legal advice. Court jurisdiction, procedures, and fees are governed by applicable Louisiana law and official Court requirements. Contact the Court to confirm current procedures before filing a case or scheduling a service.