

Court Records and County Law Libraries; SB 204

SB 204 requires the sealing of certain records relating to case information, warrants, and subpoenas in certain criminal and juvenile cases and amends law concerning the selection of attorney members of county law library (CLL) boards of trustees and fees that may be used for enhancing and facilitating the functions of the district court in the county.

Sealing of Court Records—Pending Warrant Disposition

The bill requires the sealing of a criminal case or a case pursuant to the Revised Kansas Juvenile Justice Code in which an arrest warrant is being sought until such warrant is executed or denied.

The bill requires that subpoenas issued in the above cases remain sealed unless the court finds that unsealing such subpoena is in the interest of justice.

The bill defines “seal” to mean that no information related to a case, warrant, or subpoena, including the existence of such case, warrant, subpoena, or return of service, may be made public, but allows for disclosure of warrant information, subpoenas, returns of service, or other case information to law enforcement for the purposes of executing a warrant or serving a subpoena.

In addition, information related to an arrest warrant issued for a defendant’s failure to appear as directed by a court shall not be sealed under the provisions of the bill.

The bill applies retroactively to any case, warrant information, or subpoena currently pending on the effective date of the bill, July 1, 2025.

County Law Libraries

Selection of CLL Board of Trustee Members

For CLLs located in counties other than Douglas, Johnson, or Sedgwick, the bill amends law to remove the requirement that such attorney members be elected, and instead requires the chief judge of the judicial district to appoint these attorney members to the CLL board.

Use of Fees

The bill amends law that allows CLL boards to authorize chief judges of the judicial district to use annual attorney registration fees for the purpose of facilitating and enhancing the functions of the district court of the county to allow CLL boards to authorize the chief judge to use library fees assessed in certain court cases for this same purpose.