**Civil and Criminal Justice Systems Key Terms**

* **Alternative Service:** a method of delivering to an uncooperative defendant
* **Answer:** a defendant’s written reply to a plaintiff’s petition
* **Applicant/respondent:** a party making application to the court or petitioning forsome action
* **Citation:** an official notice from a court of competent jurisdiction, issued to adefendant after a plaintiff’s petition is filed; the citation commands the defendant to answer and appear in court at a specific time
* **Contempt:** proceedings held to determine whether a person has violated a lawfulcourt order and to set punishment if a violation is found
* **Default judgment:** can result when there is a failure to perform some action requiredby law within a specified time. In a civil lawsuit, judgment by default may be rendered against a party who has failed to answer or appear as directed
* **Diligent effort:** persistent activity, prudence, or care. Diligent effort is what isproperly expected from a reasonable and prudent person under the particular circumstances
* **Judgment:** the final order of a court in a civil suit which settles all disputed issues,determines the right of the parties with regard to the subject matter of the suit, and which is subject to being forced by a writ
* **Orders:** directions from a court or judge. A mandate or command
* **Petition:** a document filed by the plaintiff with the clerk of the court which outlines thebasis of the complaint against the defendant and the relief being sought from the court
* **Plaintiff:** a party in a civil suit, mainly the one who initiates the suit by filing a petition
* **Process:** all writs and official documents issued by courts in conjunction withpending suits
* **Respondent:** the defendant, the person against which the suit is being brought
* **Service:** the delivery of a writ, notice, injunction, etc. by an authorized person to aperson who is thereby officially notified of some proceeding concerning him
* **Show cause:** a notice to the defendant to either appear in court or prepare a writtenanswer to show cause for failing to respond to a previous order of the court. It may also be known as a notice
* **Tort:** a civil wrong alleging the plaintiff failed to perform a duty required by thedefendant.