



Friday, July 12, 2019

Welcome to the KDP Weekly Rundown – the Kansas Democratic Party’s update of the biggest things going on in the state party and the state capital. What are we focused on this week? A state supreme court vacancy, upcoming local elections, and more!

## SUPREME COURT VACANCY

### • *What’s happening?*

Kansas Supreme Court Justice Lee Johnson announced on Wednesday that he will be stepping down from the bench in September. “Justice Lee Johnson has been a dedicated and distinguished public servant, first in Sumner County and then for 18 years on the bench in Kansas, to include 12 years on the Kansas Supreme Court,” Gov. Laura Kelly said in a [statement](#). “I want to thank him for his service to the state and wish him the best in his well-deserved retirement.” Supreme Court vacancies are filled by a nominating committee who selects three qualified candidates for the governor to choose from. Appointments are not subject to confirmation by the state senate though some Republicans are pushing to change this process. The new justice will stand for a retention vote in Nov. 2020.

### • *Where can I learn more?*

- [Justice Lee Johnson to retire from Kansas Supreme Court in September](#). *Topeka Capital-Journal*, July 10, 2019.
- [Kansas Supreme Court justice retiring ahead of expected GOP push to change system](#). *Wichita Eagle*, July 10, 2019.
- [Kansas Supreme Court justice targeted by right to retire](#). *Associated Press*, July 10, 2019.

## FOOD ASSISTANCE

### • *What’s happening?*

Attorney General Derek Schmidt threatened legal action this week if the Kelly Administration did not drop efforts to allow Kansans to remain on welfare without meeting work requirements. “While my team believes the policy we put in place is legally defensible, we have determined that it isn’t worth the cost to Kansas taxpayers to engage in a protracted court battle,” Kelly, a staunch opponent of the welfare work rule, said in a [press conference](#). “However, we make this decision with a renewed commitment to the values we know Kansans share: that we believe in support for our most vulnerable neighbors in their times of need.” The state Department of Children and Families released an internal analysis in June defending the legality of the change to the food assistance program. Almost 5,500 adults without children will not have access to food assistance in July, August, and September.

### • *Where can I learn more?*

- [Kansas attorney general gives Gov. Laura Kelly until Friday to drop welfare plan](#). *Wichita Eagle*, July 10, 2019.

- [Kansas Gov. Kelly drops welfare plan slammed by Republicans to avoid legal fight.](#) *Wichita Eagle*, July 11, 2019.
- [Gov. Laura Kelly rescinds food aid policy under pressure by attorney general.](#) *Topeka Capital Journal*, July 11, 2019.

## LOCAL ELECTIONS

### • *What's happening?*

Tuesday is the last day to register to vote in this year's municipal primaries! You can register to vote and apply for an advance ballot at [ksvotes.org](https://ksvotes.org). We know that some of the most important work that we do happens at the local level, so it's important to go vote this year.

### • *Important Dates To Remember:*

- **July 16** - Last day to register to vote for the Primary Election
- **July 17** - Advance voting begins for the Primary Election
- **Aug. 6** - Primary Election
- **Oct. 15** - Last day to register to vote for the General Election
- **Oct. 16** - Advance voting begins for the General Election
- **Nov. 5** - General Election

## VICTORY 2020 RECEPTION

### • *What's happening?*

Join us on July 22 for our Victory 2020 reception with Rep. Sharice Davids. The event will be held in Overland Park and starts at 6 p.m. [Click here](#) to purchase tickets and for more information.

## DEMOFEST

- *What's happening?* Join us in Wichita on Aug. 9-10 for Demofest, our summer convention! [Click here](#) to purchase tickets and to view the schedule.

Onward,  
KDP Team

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