

# Self-Guided Tour of the Kansas State Capitol



YOUR  
STORIES  
OUR  
HISTORY

KANSAS  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

KANSAS STATE CAPITOL

SW 8th and SW Van Buren • Topeka • 785-296-3966  
[kshs.org/capitol](https://kshs.org/capitol)

## Welcome to the Kansas State Capitol!

This classically-inspired building is Kansas' most important architectural treasure as well as the working offices for the governor and legislators. Completed in 1903, the Capitol is 17 feet higher than the U. S. Capitol in Washington, D. C. Restored to its early 20th-century appearance, the Capitol features a dramatic array of art, sculpture, and colorful Kansas history within its walls and on the grounds.

The Kansas State Capitol Visitor Center is the gateway to the Capitol. The visitor center includes the Capitol Store, information desk, classroom, auditorium, and exhibits.

You may also want to take our guided historic tour, which highlights events that happened here in this building and provides architectural history. Guided dome tours offer a unique bird's-eye view of Topeka.

Enjoy your visit!



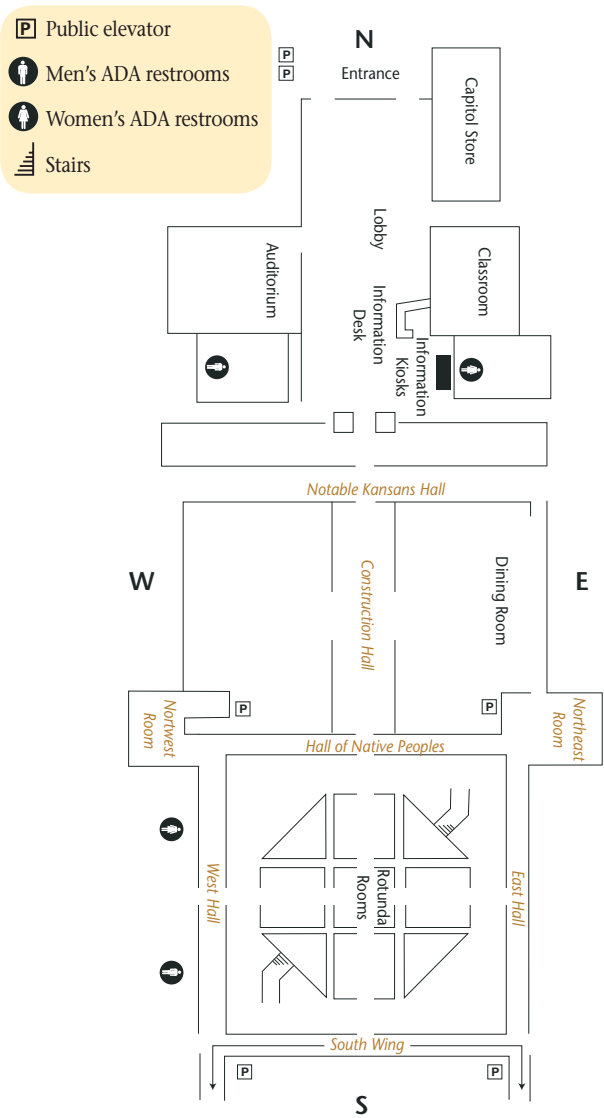
# Visitor Center

## Lobby

The 105 counties in Kansas are depicted in stone on the lobby floor. The map is placed to accurately reflect true north.

## Auditorium

Photographs reflect the diversity of the state’s heritage and traditions that continue in Kansas today.



### **Notable Kansans Hall**

For the state's sesquicentennial in 2011 a panel of historians selected 25 Kansans who made a significant impact on the state and the nation.

### **Construction Hall**

Images of workers building the Capitol and their stonemason tools.

### **Dining Room**

Current photographs depicting the Kansas landscape.

### **Northwest Room**

Promotional posters and photographs from the carnival that C. W. Parker Amusement Company brought to the Capitol grounds in 1904.

### **Northeast Room**

Photographs of exterior views from the dome in 1904 and current views from the same perspective. A dome window is also on display.



## Hall of Native Peoples

Photographs of native peoples with a Kansas connection.

## Rotunda Rooms

Exhibits include John Brown's sword, the Kansas Constitution, and photographs of the Legislative War of 1893.

## East and West Halls

Twelve events that changed Kansas and the nation.

## South Wing

Historic promotional posters encouraging citizens to support the local fairs.

## First Floor

### Cage Elevator

Installed in 1923, visitors can ride the elevator from first to fifth floor.

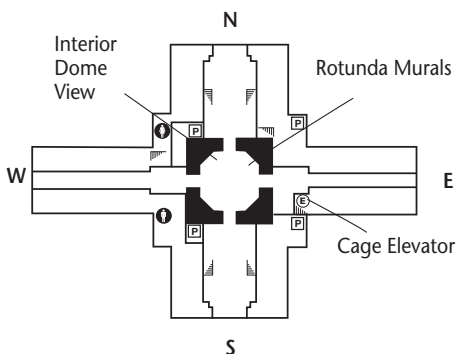


## Rotunda Murals

Illustrator, artist, and muralist, David H. Overmyer, of Topeka, painted eight significant topics in Kansas history.

## Interior Dome View

The inner dome is composed of 256 glass panels. The 900-pound chandelier is a replica of the original fixture, which was donated in 1942 to the World War II scrap metal drive.



## Second Floor

### East and West Wing Murals

John Steuart Curry, from Dunavant, created *Tragic Prelude*, featuring abolitionist John Brown, and *Kansas Pastoral*, which depicts the life of the homesteader.



## Governor's Ceremonial Office

The walnut ceremonial desk was made by students at the School for the Deaf in Olathe in the 1930s. Items on display are chosen by the sitting governor.

## Secretary of State's Ceremonial Office

The office features a fireplace, hand-carved oak details, oak floor, and a washbasin that was installed in 1896.

## Rotunda Murals

Lumen Martin Winter, from the Larned area, painted eight significant topics in Kansas history.

## Rotunda Statues

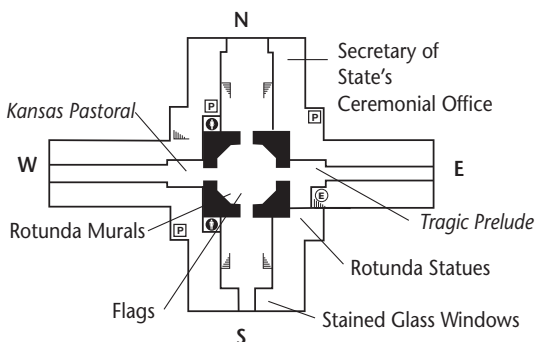
Peter F. Felten, Jr., from Hays, used limestone to create figures of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Arthur Capper, Amelia Earhart, and William Allen White.

## Stained Glass Windows

Created by Topeka artist Patrick McKinney, the windows were a gift to the state by the Kansas Chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in 1976.

## Flags in Rotunda

Representing nations or states that have claimed all or portions of Kansas: United Kingdom, the French Monarchy, the French Republic, Mexico, Spain, Texas, United States, and Kansas.

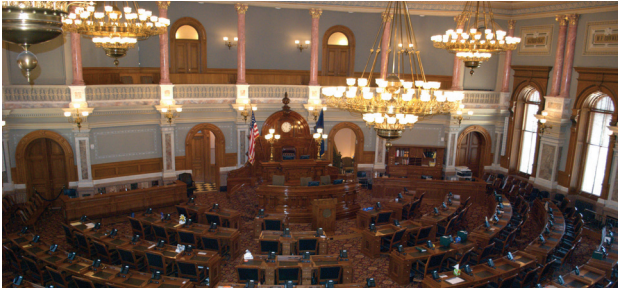




## Third Floor

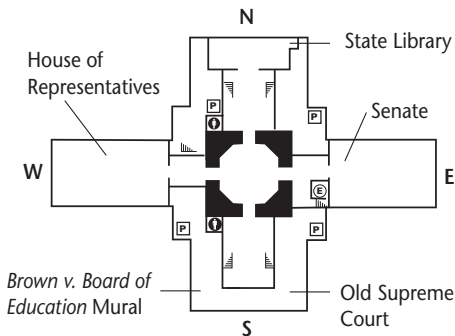
### House of Representatives

Representative Hall features marble, gold leaf, and pink columns made from a faux marble process. Allegorical murals are painted on the ceiling, along with the names of 10 prominent figures from the Kansas Territory era.



### State Library

Located on the third and fourth floors, the library features hand-carved white oak wainscoting, polished brass sunflowers, intricate stenciling and a glass floor designed to maximize the flow of light.





## Senate

The Senate chamber features several types of marble, the original native Kansas wild cherry wood desks, and massive hand-cast columns with ornate circular grills that once encouraged air circulation.



## *Brown v. Board of Education* Mural

Artist Michael Young of Kansas City created a mural in 2018 to depict the legacy of the 1954 landmark U.S. Supreme Court desegregation case, with roots in Topeka. The *Brown v. Board of Education* mural is located outside the state supreme court where earlier civil rights cases were fought, leading the way to the turning point in the history of the United States.



## Old Supreme Court

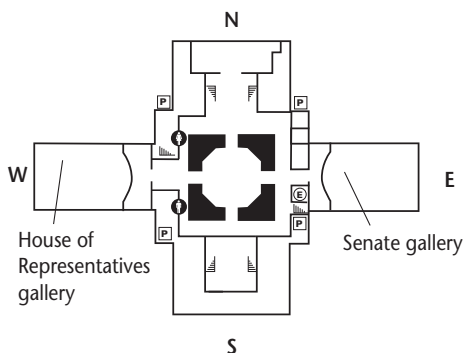
The former Kansas Supreme Court chamber has witnessed many other significant cases including the 1925 ruling that made Kansas the first state to outlaw Ku Klux Klan. The chamber, in use until 1978 when the Kansas Judicial Center opened across the street, has been restored to its original appearance with stenciling, bench, and railings.



## Fourth Floor

### House and Senate galleries

The public can view the Senate in session from the east wing gallery and the House of Representatives from the west wing gallery.

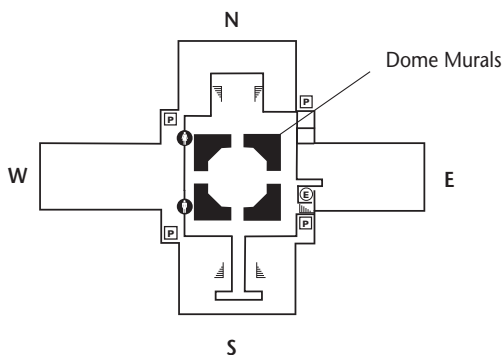




## Fifth Floor

### Dome Murals

In 1902 the firm of Crossman and Study from Chicago painted the four allegorical murals and designed the semi-relief statues and state seals located below the paintings.



## Guidelines

Because several hundred people work in the Capitol, please help to maintain an office-like work environment.

Schedule visits with legislators through their individual offices. Contact information is available through Legislative Services at 785-296-2391 or find your legislator at [kslegislature.org](http://kslegislature.org). Photographs can be taken in any part of the building except when legislators are meeting in the House, Senate, or a committee meeting room.

All visitors must enter and exit through the visitor center or the underground parking garage. Entrance is located on the 8th Avenue street level side.



*A dramatic view of the inner dome on our guided dome tour.*

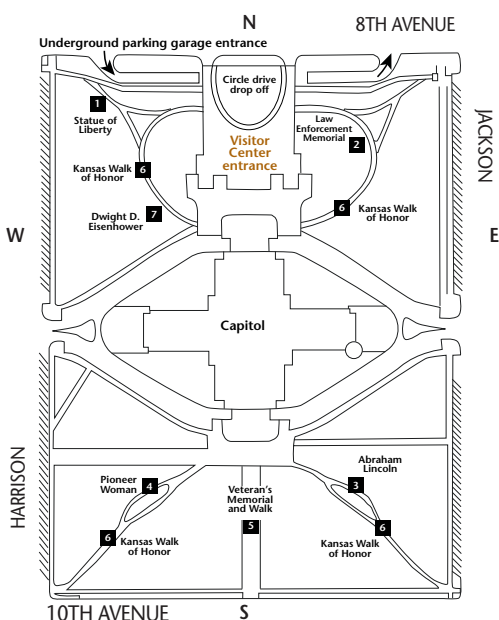
The Kansas State Capitol Visitor Center is operated by the Kansas Historical Society, a state agency.

The Capitol Store is operated by the Kansas Historical Foundation.

Kansas Historical Society • 6425 SW 6th Avenue  
Topeka KS 66615 • 785-272-8681 • [kshs.org](http://kshs.org)

## Grounds

- 1 Statue of Liberty replica** – Donated by the Boy Scouts of America in 1950 in honor of the 40th anniversary of scouting in America.
- 2 Kansas Law Enforcement Memorial** – Bearing the names of Kansas law enforcement officials who have lost their lives in the line of duty since Kansas statehood.
- 3 Abraham Lincoln statue** – Created by sculptor Robert Merrell Gage from Topeka.
- 4 Pioneer Women memorial** – Created by Robert Merrell Gage.
- 5 Kansas Veterans Memorial and Walk** – Modeled after the obelisk erected at the Freedom's Foundation in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.
- 6 Kansas Walk of Honor** – Featuring people who have contributed on a state or national level and have significant connections to Kansas.
- 7 Dwight D. Eisenhower statue** – Created by sculptor Jim Brothers from Lawrence.



## Kansas State Capitol

Building hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Friday  
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Saturday

Closed Sunday and state holidays.

Join us for a guided historic tour or guided dome tour, for groups of 20 to 25 people. Larger groups will be divided. Tour reservations can be made at 785-296-3966; [kshs.capitol@ks.gov](mailto:kshs.capitol@ks.gov).

### Historic Tours:

January – May

Monday – Friday: 9, 10, 11 a.m., 1, 2, and 3 p.m.

June – December

Monday – Friday: 9 and 11 a.m., 1 and 3 p.m.

Year round

Saturday: 10 and 11 a.m., 1, 2, and 3 p.m.

### Dome Tours:

This spectacular tour is breathtaking—literally—with 296 steps and no elevators. The climb to the top includes a series of straight, steep, narrow, spiral, and irregularly spaced landings and stairs.

Not recommended for children younger than four; women who are pregnant; persons with heart, back, neck, and knee issues; fear of heights; breathing problems; or disability that requires a cane or walker. Rest areas and restrooms are not available on the tour route.

Monday – Friday: 9:15, 10:15, and 11:15 a.m.,  
12:15, 1:15, 2:15, and 3:15 p.m.

Saturday: 10:15 and 11:15 a.m., 12:15, 1:15, 2:15,  
and 3:15 p.m.

Tour guides must accompany visitors to the dome.

The Capitol Store is open 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Monday – Friday; 10 a.m – 4 p.m. Saturday