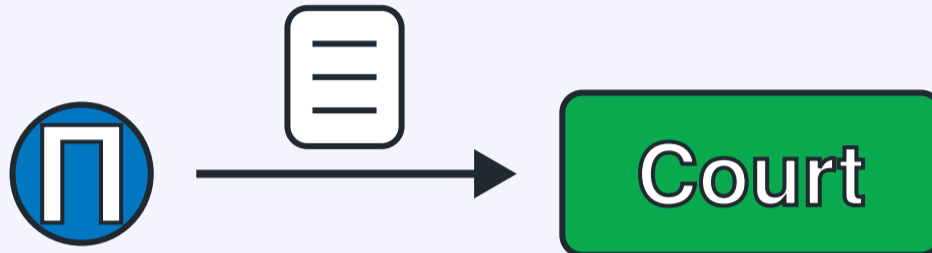


"A civil action is commenced by filing a complaint with the court."

**...FILING A COMPLAINT**

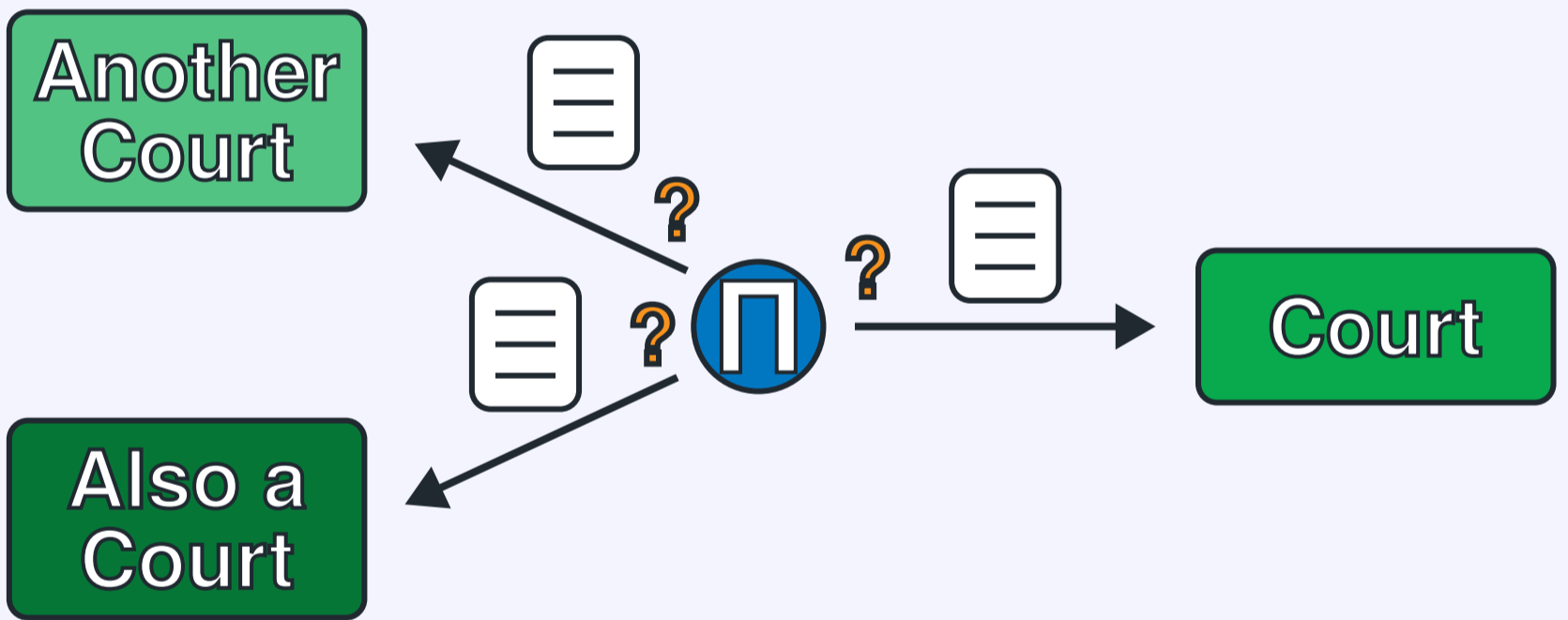
The complaint is a document that must be filed with a court to officially begin seeking resolution of a dispute.

The format and contents of a complaint depend on the rules laid out by the court with which the complaint is filed. For reference, some courts provide sample forms and file templates on their web sites that comply with the rules of the court.



**...WITH THE COURT**

When filing a complaint, the plaintiff must make sure that the court handling the case is an appropriate one. For example, it is unlikely (though not impossible) that the District Court of Kansas is an appropriate place to file a complaint about someone stealing your wallet in Florida.



**...CIVIL ACTION IS COMMENCED**

Rule 3 marks the beginning of a civil action. Filing a complaint with the court is the first step in a process that depends on the nature of the case, events that may transpire during the proceedings, and other factors.

