

## Methods of Judicial Selection

### Selection of Judges

#### Alabama

#### Number of Judgeships

Supreme Court:	9
Court of Criminal Appeals:	5
Court of Civil Appeals:	5
Circuit Court:	144

#### Number of Districts/Circuits

Supreme Court:	--
Court of Criminal Appeals:	--
Court of Civil Appeals:	--
Circuit Court:	41

#### Geographic Basis for Selection

Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Criminal Appeals:	statewide
Court of Civil Appeals:	statewide
Circuit Court:	circuit

#### Method of Selection (full term)

Supreme Court:	partisan election
Court of Criminal Appeals:	partisan election
Court of Civil Appeals:	partisan election
Circuit Court:	partisan election

#### Length of Term

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Criminal Appeals:	6 yrs
Court of Civil Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

#### Method of Retention

Supreme Court:	reelection
Court of Criminal Appeals:	reelection
Court of Civil Appeals:	reelection
Circuit Court:	reelection

#### Length of Subsequent Terms

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Criminal Appeals:	6 yrs
Court of Civil Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

#### Method of Filling Interim Vacancies

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment
Court of Criminal Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment
Court of Civil Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment
Circuit Court:	gubernatorial appointment*

#### When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment

Supreme Court:	next general election after 1 yr in office
Court of Criminal Appeals:	next general election after 1 yr in office
Court of Civil Appeals:	next general election after 1 yr in office
Circuit Court:	next general election after 1 yr in office

#### Selection of Chief Judge/Justice

Supreme Court:	popular election
Court of Criminal Appeals:	peer vote
Court of Civil Appeals:	seniority

*Mark French v. Blair Jones, No. 15-35990 archived on December 4, 2017*

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: indefinite  
 Court of Civil Appeals: indefinite  
 Circuit Court: 3 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: licensed to practice law 10 yrs; 1 yr resident; maximum age of 70  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: licensed to practice law 10 yrs; 1 yr resident; maximum age of 70  
 Court of Civil Appeals: licensed to practice law 10 yrs; 1 yr resident; maximum age of 70  
 Circuit Court: licensed to practice law 5 yrs; 1 yr resident of circuit; maximum age of 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Amendment 328 of the [Alabama Constitution](#).

\*In Baldwin, Jefferson, Lauderdale, Madison, Mobile, Shelby, Talladega, and Tuscaloosa Counties, gubernatorial appointments are made from lists of candidates submitted by judicial nominating commissions.

Alaska

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 5  
 Court of Appeals: 3  
 Superior Court: 40

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: --  
 Superior Court: 4

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: statewide  
 Superior Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: at least 3 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: at least 3 yrs  
 Superior Court: at least 3 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
 Court of Appeals: retention election  
 Superior Court: retention election

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 10 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
 Superior Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: first general election more than 3 yrs after appointment  
 Court of Appeals: first general election more than 3 yrs after appointment  
 Superior Court: first general election more than 3 yrs after appointment

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 Court of Appeals: chief justice appoints

Case in French v. Jones, No. 15-35990 archived on December 4, 2017

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 3 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 2 yrs  
 Superior Court: 1 yr

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: U.S. citizen; state resident 5 yrs; licensed to practice in state; 8 yrs active legal practice; mandatory retirement at 70  
 Court of Appeals: U.S. citizen; state resident 5 yrs; licensed to practice in state; 8 yrs active legal practice; mandatory retirement at 70  
 Superior Court: U.S. citizen; state resident 5 yrs; licensed to practice in state; 5 yrs active legal practice; mandatory retirement at 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article 4](#) of the Alaska Constitution.

Note: The court of appeals hears only criminal appeals.

Arizona

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 22  
 Superior Court: 174

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: 2 divisions  
 Superior Court: 15 counties

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: division\*  
 Superior Court: county

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Superior Court: partisan primary; nonpartisan general election/gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission\*\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: at least 2 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: at least 2 yrs  
 Superior Court: 4 yrs/at least 2 yrs\*\*

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
 Court of Appeals: retention election  
 Superior Court: reelection/retention election\*\*

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
 Superior Court: 4 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment/gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission\*\*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election after 2 yrs in office  
 Court of Appeals: next general election after 2 yrs in office  
 Superior Court: next general election/next general election after 2 yrs in office\*\*

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote

Cited in French v. Jones, No. 15-35990 archived on December 4, 2017

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 5 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 1 yr  
Superior Court: remainder of 4 yr term

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: state resident and licensed in state 10 yrs; mandatory retirement at 70  
Court of Appeals: 30 yrs of age; state resident and licensed in state 5 yrs; local resident 1 yr; mandatory retirement at 70  
Superior Court: 30 yrs of age; state resident and licensed in state 5 yrs; local resident 1 yr; mandatory retirement at 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article 6](#) of the Arizona Constitution.

\*Court of appeals judges who reside in Maricopa and Pima Counties stand for retention in those counties. Court of appeals judges who reside in counties other than Maricopa and Pima stand for retention in all of the other counties within their division.

\*\*The Arizona Constitution provides for merit selection and retention of judges in counties with populations of 250,000 or greater. Currently, this includes Maricopa, Pima and Pinal Counties. Counties whose populations are less than 250,000 may adopt merit selection through ballot initiative.

**Arkansas**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
Court of Appeals: 12  
Circuit Court: 122

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 1  
Court of Appeals: 7  
Circuit Court: 23

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
Court of Appeals: district  
Circuit Court: circuit

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: nonpartisan election\*+  
Court of Appeals: nonpartisan election\*+  
Circuit Court: nonpartisan election\*+

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
Circuit Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection  
Court of Appeals: reelection  
Circuit Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
Circuit Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment  
Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment  
Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election at least 4 mos after vacancy occurred  
Court of Appeals: next general election at least 4 mos after vacancy occurred

Entered in French v. Jones, No. 15-35990 archived on December 4, 2017

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: popular election  
 Court of Appeals: chief justice appoints  
 Circuit Court: supreme court appoints

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 4 yrs  
 Circuit Court: no set term

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: 30 yrs of age; of good moral character; learned in the law; U.S. citizen; state resident > 2 yrs; 8 yrs practice of law  
 Court of Appeals: 30 yrs of age; of good moral character; learned in the law; U.S. citizen; state resident > 2 yrs; 8 yrs practice of law  
 Circuit Court: 28 yrs of age; of good moral character; learned in the law; U.S. citizen; state resident > 2 yrs; 6 yrs practice of law

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Amendment 80](#) of the Arkansas Constitution.

\*Judicial candidates run in a nonpartisan primary election. If no candidate receives a majority of the vote, there is a runoff in the general election.

+Incumbency is designated on the ballot by including the current title of a judge.

**California**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 102  
 Superior Court: 1535

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: 6  
 Superior Court: 58\*

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: district  
 Superior Court: county

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment; \*\*confirmation by commission on judicial appointments\*\*\*  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment; \*\*confirmation by commission on judicial appointments\*\*\*  
 Superior Court: nonpartisan election\*\*\*\*+

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 12 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 12 yrs  
 Superior Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
 Court of Appeals: retention election  
 Superior Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 12 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 12 yrs  
 Superior Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment; \*\*confirmation by commission on judicial appointments\*\*\*  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment; \*\*confirmation by commission on judicial appointments\*\*\*  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment\*\*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next gubernatorial election  
 Court of Appeals: next gubernatorial election  
 Superior Court: next general election

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment;\*\*\*confirmation by commission on judicial appointments\*\*\*  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment;\*\*\*confirmation by commission on judicial appointments\*\*\*  
 Superior Court: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 12 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 12 yrs  
 Superior Court: 1 or 2 yrs, depending on county

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: 10 yrs practice of law in state or service as judge of court of record  
 Court of Appeals: 10 yrs practice of law in state or service as judge of court of record  
 Superior Court: 10 yrs practice of law in state or service as judge of court of record

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VI](#) of the California Constitution.

\*In 1998, voters approved Proposition 220, a constitutional amendment that allowed the judges in each county to merge their superior and municipal courts into a single superior court. By early 2001, all of the state's 58 counties had voted to unify their courts.

\*\*Since 1979, the legislature has required that the [State Bar of California's commission on judicial nominees evaluation](#) (informally known as the Jenny Commission) review the qualifications and fitness of prospective judicial appointees through an extensive investigation. The commission, which consists of both public members and attorneys, rates candidates as exceptionally well qualified, well qualified, qualified, or not qualified. The governor is not bound by the commission's recommendations.

\*\*\*The commission on judicial appointments consists of three members: the chief justice, the attorney general, and the senior presiding justice of the court of appeal of the affected appellate district. When a supreme court appointee is being considered, the third member of the commission is the senior presiding justice of the state's courts of appeal. The commission holds one or more public hearings to review the appointee's qualifications and may confirm or veto the appointment by majority vote.

\*\*\*\*If no candidate receives a majority of the vote in the primary election, there is a general election runoff between the top two candidates. If an incumbent judge is unopposed, s/he is automatically reelected; the judge's name does not appear on the ballot. The [constitution](#) provides that electors in each county may, by majority vote, opt for the selection of superior court judges by the method used for appellate court judges. To date, no counties have adopted an appointive process.

+Incumbency designations on the ballot are determined by each county.

**Colorado**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 22  
 District Court: 164

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 1  
 Court of Appeals: 1  
 District Court: 22

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: statewide  
 District Court: county

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: at least 2 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: at least 2 yrs  
 District Court: at least 2 yrs

**Method of Retention**  
 Supreme Court: retention election  
 Court of Appeals: retention election  
 District Court: retention election

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 10 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
 District Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election after 2 yrs in office  
 Court of Appeals: next general election after 2 yrs in office  
 District Court: next general election after 2 yrs in office

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 Court of Appeals: chief justice appoints  
 District Court: chief justice appoints

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: indefinite  
 Court of Appeals: indefinite  
 District Court: indefinite

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: qualified elector in state; licensed to practice law in state 5 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 72  
 Court of Appeals: qualified elector in state; licensed to practice law in state 5 yrs. mandatory retirement age of 72  
 District Court: qualified elector in district; licensed to practice law in state 5 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 72

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VI](#) of the Colorado Constitution.

**Connecticut**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Appellate Court: 9  
 Superior Court: 170

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 Appellate Court: --  
 Superior Court: --

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Appellate Court: statewide  
 Superior Court: statewide

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial nomination from judicial selection commission; legislative appointment  
 Appellate Court: gubernatorial nomination from judicial selection commission; legislative appointment  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial nomination from judicial selection commission; legislative appointment

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 Appellate Court: 8 yrs  
 Superior Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: governor renominates; legislature reappoints



#### Length of Subsequent Terms

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
Appellate Court: 8 yrs  
Superior Court: 8 yrs

#### Method of Filling Interim Vacancies

Supreme Court: gubernatorial nomination from judicial selection commission; legislative appointment\*  
Appellate Court: gubernatorial nomination from judicial selection commission; legislative appointment  
Superior Court: gubernatorial nomination from judicial selection commission; legislative appointment

#### When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
Appellate Court: 8 yrs  
Superior Court: 8 yrs

#### Selection of Chief Judge/Justice

Supreme Court: gubernatorial nomination from judicial selection commission; legislative appointment\*  
Appellate Court: chief justice  
Superior Court: chief court administrator

#### Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice

Supreme Court: 8 yrs\*  
Appellate Court: N/A  
Superior Court: at pleasure of chief court administrator

#### Qualifications

Supreme Court: state resident; licensed to practice in state; mandatory retirement at 70  
Appellate Court: state resident; licensed to practice in state; mandatory retirement at 70  
Superior Court: state resident; licensed to practice in state; mandatory retirement at 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article 5](#) and [Amendment Article XX](#) of the Connecticut Constitution.

\*The governor may nominate an associate justice of the supreme court to be chief justice without the involvement of the judicial selection commission. Chief justices appointed in this way serve an initial term equal to the remainder of their term as associate justice.

### Delaware

#### Number of Judgeships

Supreme Court: 5  
Superior Court: 20  
Court of Chancery: 1 Chancellor; 4 vice-chancellors

#### Number of Districts/Circuits

Supreme Court: --  
Superior Court: --  
Court of Chancery: --

#### Geographic Basis for Selection

Supreme Court: statewide  
Superior Court: statewide  
Court of Chancery: statewide

#### Method of Selection (full term)

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*  
Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*  
Court of Chancery: gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*

#### Length of Term

Supreme Court: 12 yrs



Superior Court: 12 yrs  
Court of Chancery: 12 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial reappointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*  
Superior Court: gubernatorial reappointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*  
Court of Chancery: gubernatorial reappointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 12 yrs  
Superior Court: 12 yrs  
Court of Chancery: 12 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*  
Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*  
Court of Chancery: gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: 12 yrs  
Superior Court: 12 yrs  
Court of Chancery: 12 yrs

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*  
Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*  
Court of Chancery: gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission with senate consent\*

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 12 yrs  
Superior Court: 12 yrs  
Court of Chancery: 12 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: state resident; "learned in the law"; state bar member  
Superior Court: state resident; law degree; "learned in the law"; state bar member  
Court of Chancery: state resident; law degree; "learned in the law"; state bar member

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article IV](#) of the Delaware Constitution and [Executive Order No. 4](#).

\*The Delaware Constitution stipulates that no more than a bare majority of judges of each court may be members of the same political party.

**District of Columbia**

**Number of Judgeships**

Court of Appeals: 9  
Superior Court: 63

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Court of Appeals: --  
Superior Court: --

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Court of Appeals: --  
Superior Court: --

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Court of Appeals: presidential appointment from judicial nomination commission, with senate

Confirmation  
 Superior Court: presidential appointment from judicial nomination commission, with senate confirmation

**Length of Term**

Court of Appeals: 15 yrs  
 Superior Court: 15 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Court of Appeals: reappointment  
 Superior Court: reappointment

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Court of Appeals: 15 yrs  
 Superior Court: 15 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Court of Appeals: presidential appointment from judicial nomination commission  
 Superior Court: presidential appointment from judicial nomination commission, with senate confirmation

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Court of Appeals: --  
 Superior Court: --

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Court of Appeals: designated by the judicial nomination commission  
 Superior Court: designated by the judicial nomination commission

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Court of Appeals: 4 yrs  
 Superior Court: 4 yrs

**Qualifications**

Court of Appeals: U.S. citizen; D.C. resident > 90 days prior to appointment; 5 yrs as active member of D.C. bar, professor at D.C. law school, or attorney employed by U.S. or D.C. government; mandatory retirement at 74  
 Superior Court: U.S. citizen; D.C. resident > 90 days prior to appointment; 5 yrs as active member of D.C. bar, professor at D.C. law school, or attorney employed by U.S. or D.C. government; mandatory retirement at 74

*cited in French v. Jones No. 15-35990 archived on December 4, 2017*

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by D.C. Code [1-204.31](#) and [1-204.33](#).

Note: The superior court consists of a family court and civil, criminal, probate, and tax divisions.

Federal

N/A

Florida

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 District Courts of Appeal: 60  
 Circuit Court: 597

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 District Courts of Appeal: 5  
 Circuit Court: 20

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 District Courts of Appeal: district  
 Circuit Court: circuit

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 District Courts of Appeal: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

Circuit Court: nonpartisan election\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: at least 1 yr  
 District Courts of Appeal: at least 1 yr  
 Circuit Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
 District Courts of Appeal: retention election  
 Circuit Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 District Courts of Appeal: 6 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 District Courts of Appeal: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election more than 1 yr after appointment  
 District Courts of Appeal: next general election more than 1 yr after appointment  
 Circuit Court: next general election more than 1 yr after appointment

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 District Courts of Appeal: peer vote  
 Circuit Court: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 2 yrs  
 District Courts of Appeal: 2 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: qualified elector; state resident; admitted to practice law in state 10 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 70  
 District Courts of Appeal: qualified elector; state resident; admitted to practice law in state 10 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 70  
 Circuit Court: qualified elector; circuit resident; admitted to practice law in state 5 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article V](#) of the Florida Constitution and [Title V](#), Section 43.291.

\*If two or more candidates qualify for the ballot, they compete in the first primary election. If no candidate receives a majority of the vote, the top two candidates run in the general election. The voters in each circuit may exercise a local option for merit selection and retention of circuit court judges. A circuit may initiate the local option by filing with the secretary of state a petition signed by a number of voters equal to at least 10% of the votes cast in the circuit in the most recent presidential election. The measure must then be approved by a majority of circuit voters.

**Georgia**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 9  
 Court of Appeals: 12  
 Superior Court: 202

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: --  
 Superior Court: 49

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide

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Court of Appeals: statewide  
Superior Court: county

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: nonpartisan election\*+  
Court of Appeals: nonpartisan election\*+  
Superior Court: nonpartisan election\*+

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
Superior Court: 4 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection  
Court of Appeals: reelection  
Superior Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
Superior Court: 4 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election held more than 6 months after appointment; serve remainder of unexpired term  
Court of Appeals: next general election held more than 6 months after appointment; serve remainder of unexpired term  
Superior Court: next general election held more than 6 months after appointment; serve remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
Court of Appeals: peer vote\*\*  
Superior Court: varies by circuit

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 4 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 2 yrs  
Superior Court: varies by circuit

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: state resident; admitted to practice law 7 yrs  
Court of Appeals: state resident; admitted to practice law 7 yrs  
Superior Court: state resident 3 yrs; circuit resident; admitted to practice law 7 yrs; minimum age of 30

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VI](#) of the Georgia Constitution.

\*If no candidate wins a plurality of the vote in the primary election, there is a runoff in the general election.

\*\*The chief judge is usually the most senior judge who has not yet held the position.

+Incumbency is designated on the ballot by the name of the previous occupant of the position, assuming that judge runs for reelection.

**Hawaii**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 5  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: 6  
Circuit Court: 33

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --

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Intermediate Court of Appeals:  
Circuit Court: 4

#### Geographic Basis for Selection

Supreme Court: statewide  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: statewide  
Circuit Court: island

#### Method of Selection (full term)

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation

#### Length of Term

Supreme Court: 10 yrs  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: 10 yrs  
Circuit Court: 10 yrs

#### Method of Retention

Supreme Court: nominating commission retains  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: nominating commission retains  
Circuit Court: nominating commission retains

#### Length of Subsequent Terms

Supreme Court: 10 yrs  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: 10 yrs  
Circuit Court: 10 yrs

#### Method of Filling Interim Vacancies

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation

#### When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment

Supreme Court: 10 yrs  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: 10 yrs  
Circuit Court: 10 yrs

#### Selection of Chief Judge/Justice

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
Circuit Court: chief justice appoints administrative judge in each circuit

#### Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice

Supreme Court: 10 yrs  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: 10 yrs  
Circuit Court: chief justice determines

#### Qualifications

Supreme Court: state and U.S. resident and citizen; 10 yrs state practice; mandatory retirement at 70  
Intermediate Court of Appeals: state and U.S. resident and citizen; 10 yrs state practice; mandatory retirement at 70  
Circuit Court: state and U.S. resident and citizen; 10 yrs state practice; mandatory retirement at 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VI](#) of the Hawaii Constitution.

Number of Judges:  
 Supreme Court: 5  
 Court of Appeals: 3  
 District Court: 40

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 0  
 Court of Appeals: 0  
 District Court: 7

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: statewide  
 District Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: nonpartisan election\*+  
 Court of Appeals: nonpartisan election\*+  
 District Court: nonpartisan election\*+

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
 District Court: 4 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection  
 Court of Appeals: reelection  
 District Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
 District Court: 4 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: hold office for remainder of unexpired term  
 Court of Appeals: hold office for remainder of unexpired term  
 District Court: hold office for remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 Court of Appeals: chief justice  
 District Court: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 4 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 2 yrs  
 District Court: 3 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: 30 yrs of age; U.S. citizen; state resident 2 yrs; 10 yrs practice of law in ID  
 Court of Appeals: 30 yrs of age; U.S. citizen; state resident 2 yrs; 10 yrs practice of law in ID  
 District Court: 30 yrs of age; U.S. citizen; state resident 2 yrs; resident of judicial district 1 yr; 10 yrs practice of law

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article V](#) of the Idaho Constitution and [Sec. 1-2404](#) of the Idaho Code.

\*If no candidate in the primary election wins a majority of the vote, the top two vote getters compete in a runoff election in the general election.

+Incumbency is designated on the ballot by the name of the previous occupant of the position, assuming that judge runs for reelection.

<b>Number of Judgeships</b>	
Supreme Court:	7
Appellate Court:	42
Circuit Court:	513*
<b>Number of Districts/Circuits</b>	
Supreme Court:	5
Appellate Court:	5
Circuit Court:	22
<b>Geographic Basis for Selection</b>	
Supreme Court:	district**
Appellate Court:	district***
Circuit Court:	circuit/county****
<b>Method of Selection (full term)</b>	
Supreme Court:	partisan election
Appellate Court:	partisan election
Circuit Court:	partisan election
<b>Length of Term</b>	
Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Appellate Court:	10 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs
<b>Method of Retention</b>	
Supreme Court:	retention election*****
Appellate Court:	retention election*****
Circuit Court:	retention election*****
<b>Length of Subsequent Terms</b>	
Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Appellate Court:	10 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs
<b>Method of Filling Interim Vacancies</b>	
Supreme Court:	supreme court appointment
Appellate Court:	supreme court appointment
Circuit Court:	supreme court appointment
<b>When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment</b>	
Supreme Court:	next general election more than 60 days after appointment
Appellate Court:	next general election more than 60 days after appointment
Circuit Court:	next general election more than 60 days after appointment
<b>Selection of Chief Judge/Justice</b>	
Supreme Court:	peer vote
Appellate Court:	peer vote
Circuit Court:	peer vote
<b>Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice</b>	
Supreme Court:	3 yrs
Appellate Court:	1 yr
Circuit Court:	indefinite
<b>Qualifications</b>	
Supreme Court:	U.S. citizen; district resident; licensed to practice law in state
Appellate Court:	U.S. citizen; district resident; licensed to practice law in state
Circuit Court:	U.S. citizen; circuit/county resident; licensed to practice law in state

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VI](#) of the Illinois Constitution.

\*Circuit courts are also served by 391 associate judges who are appointed by circuit judges for four-year terms.

\*\*Three justices are elected at large from the first district (Cook County) and one from each of the other four districts.

\*\*\*Eighteen judges are elected from the first district (Cook County) and six from each of the other four districts.

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\*\*\*\*Circuit judges are elected on a circuit-wide basis or from the county where they reside. In Cook County, circuit judges are elected from the entire county or as resident judges from one of the fifteen subcircuits within the county.

\*\*\*\*\*Judges must receive at least 60% affirmative votes to be retained.

Indiana	
<b>Number of Judgeships</b>	
Supreme Court:	5
Court of Appeals:	15
Circuit Court:	102
Superior Court:	196
<b>Number of Districts/Circuits</b>	
Supreme Court:	--
Court of Appeals:	5*
Circuit Court:	90
Superior Court:	71
<b>Geographic Basis for Selection</b>	
Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Appeals:	district
Circuit Court:	county
Superior Court:	county
<b>Method of Selection (full term)</b>	
Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission
Circuit Court:	partisan election**
Superior Court:	partisan election***
<b>Length of Term</b>	
Supreme Court:	at least 2 yrs
Court of Appeals:	at least 2 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs
Superior Court:	6 yrs
<b>Method of Retention</b>	
Supreme Court:	retention election
Court of Appeals:	retention election
Circuit Court:	reelection
Superior Court:	reelection***
<b>Length of Subsequent Terms</b>	
Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Court of Appeals:	10 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs
Superior Court:	6 yrs
<b>Method of Filling Interim Vacancies</b>	
Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment from judicial nominating commission
Circuit Court:	gubernatorial appointment
Superior Court:	gubernatorial appointment***
<b>When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment</b>	
Supreme Court:	next general election after 2 yrs in office
Court of Appeals:	next general election after 2 yrs in office
Circuit Court:	next general election
Superior Court:	next general election
<b>Selection of Chief Judge/Justice</b>	
Supreme Court:	judicial nominating commission selects
Court of Appeals:	peer vote
Circuit Court:	varies by circuit
Superior Court:	varies by county

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**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	5 yrs
Court of Appeals:	3 yrs
Circuit Court:	varies by circuit
Superior Court:	varies by county

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	U.S. citizen; state resident; admitted to state practice 10 yrs or served as judge of trial court 5 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 75
Court of Appeals:	U.S. citizen; state resident; admitted to state practice 10 yrs or served as judge of trial court 5 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 75
Circuit Court:	circuit resident; admitted to practice law in state****
Superior Court:	circuit resident; admitted to practice law in state****

Selection and retention methods and term lengths for appellate judges and circuit court judges are prescribed by [Article 7](#) of the Indiana Constitution. For superior court judges, see [Title 33](#) of the Indiana Code.

\*There are three geographic districts and two statewide at-large districts.

\*\*Elections for circuit court judges in Vanderburgh County are nonpartisan.

\*\*\*In Lake and St. Joseph Counties, superior court judges are appointed by the governor from lists of names submitted by local nominating commissions (except judges of the county division of the Lake County superior court, who are elected). Judges stand for retention in the first general election held more than two years after their appointment. Superior court judges in Allen County run without party designation in the general election, and vacancies are filled by the governor from a list of names submitted by the Allen County judicial nominating commission.

\*\*\*\*Some counties impose additional qualifications.

Iowa

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	7
Court of Appeals:	9
District Court:	116

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court:	
Court of Appeals:	-
District Court:	14 elective / 8 administrative

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Appeals:	statewide
District Court:	district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment through nominating commission
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment through nominating commission
District Court:	gubernatorial appointment through nominating commission

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	at least 1 yr
Court of Appeals:	at least 1 yr
District Court:	at least 1 yr

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	retention election
Court of Appeals:	retention election
District Court:	retention election

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	8 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
District Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment through nominating commission
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment through nominating commission

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**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election after 1 yr in office  
 Court of Appeals: next general election after 1 yr in office  
 District Court: next general election after 1 yr in office

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 Court of Appeals: peer vote  
 District Court: supreme court selects

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 2 yrs  
 District Court: 2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: licensed in state and member of Iowa bar; resident of state; maximum age of 72  
 Court of Appeals: licensed in state and member of Iowa bar; resident of state; maximum age of 72  
 District Court: licensed in state and member of Iowa bar; resident of district; maximum age of 72

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article V](#) of the Iowa Constitution and Chapter 46 of the [Iowa Code](#).

Note: The Unified Trial Court Act of 1973 established a unified trial court, the district court. The act abolished more than 500 justice of the peace courts, 899 mayor's courts, 14 municipal courts, and 34 police courts. In addition to district court judges, the unified district court includes district associate judges, associate juvenile judges, associate probate judges, and judicial magistrates who exercise varying degrees of limited jurisdiction. For example, district associate judges hear serious misdemeanor cases of \$10,000 or less, associate juvenile judges are limited to juvenile court matters, associate probate judges are limited to probate matters, and judicial magistrates hear simple misdemeanor cases of \$4,000 or less within their county of residence. Currently, there are 116 district court judges, 67 district associate judges, and 133 magistrates.

**Kansas**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 12  
 District Court: 167\*

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: --  
 District Court: 31

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: statewide  
 District Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment with senate confirmation  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission (17 districts); partisan election (14 districts)

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 1 yr  
 Court of Appeals: 1 yr  
 District Court: 1 yr; 4 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
 Court of Appeals: retention election  
 District Court: retention election; reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs

Court of Appeals: 4 yrs  
District Court: 4 yrs; 4 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment with senate confirmation  
District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission; gubernatorial appointment

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election after at least 1 yr in office  
Court of Appeals: next general election after at least 1 yr in office  
District Court: next general election after at least 1 yr in office; next general election

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: seniority  
Court of Appeals: supreme court  
District Court: supreme court

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: indefinite  
Court of Appeals: indefinite  
District Court: 2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: 30-70 yrs old; 10 yrs active and continuous practice of law in state  
Court of Appeals: 30-70 yrs old; 10 yrs active and continuous practice of law in state  
District Court: state and district resident; maximum age is 70; member in good standing of state bar > 5 years

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article 3](#) of the Kansas Constitution and Chapter 20 of the [Kansas Statutes](#).

\*There are also 79 district magistrate judges who preside over the early stages of criminal cases, hear limited civil actions, and handle all juvenile cases. They are not required to be attorneys.

**Kentucky**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
Court of Appeals: 14  
Circuit Court: 146

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 7  
Court of Appeals: 7  
Circuit Court: 57

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: district  
Court of Appeals: district  
Circuit Court: circuit

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: nonpartisan election\*  
Court of Appeals: nonpartisan election\*  
Circuit Court: nonpartisan election\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
Circuit Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection  
Court of Appeals: reelection  
Circuit Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs

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Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: \*\*  
 Court of Appeals: \*\*  
 Circuit Court: \*\*

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 Court of Appeals: peer vote  
 Circuit Court: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 4 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 4 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: U.S. citizen; district resident 2 yrs; licensed to practice law 8 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: U.S. citizen; district resident 2 yrs; licensed to practice law 8 yrs  
 Circuit Court: U.S. citizen; circuit resident 2 yrs; licensed to practice law 8 yrs

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Sections 117, 118, and 119 of the Kentucky Constitution.

\*The two candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the primary election compete in the general election.

\*\*If the unexpired term ends at the next annual election, the appointment is for the remainder of the unexpired term. If the unexpired term does not end at the next annual election and that election is more than 3 months away, judges are appointed until the next election. If there are less than 3 months until the next annual election, the appointment is until the second succeeding annual election. Elections are for the remainder of the unexpired term.

*cited in French v. Jones, No. 15-3990, appointed on December 4, 2017*

**Louisiana**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 53  
 District Court: 217

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 5\*  
 District Court: 41

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: district  
 Court of Appeals: circuit/district\*  
 District Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: partisan election\*\*  
 Court of Appeals: partisan election\*\*  
 District Court: partisan election\*\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 10 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 10 yrs  
 District Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection  
 Court of Appeals: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 10 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 10 yrs  
 District Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: special election\*\*\*  
 Court of Appeals: special election\*\*\*  
 District Court: special election\*\*\*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: expiration of unexpired term  
 Court of Appeals: expiration of unexpired term  
 District Court: expiration of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: seniority  
 Court of Appeals: seniority  
 District Court: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: duration of service  
 Court of Appeals: duration of service  
 District Court: varies by court

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: 10 yrs state practice; 1 yr district resident; maximum age of 70  
 Court of Appeals: 10 yrs state practice; 1 yr district/circuit resident; maximum age of 70  
 District Court: 8 yrs state practice; 1 yr district resident; maximum age of 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Article V of the Louisiana Constitution.

\*Louisiana is divided into five circuits, and each circuit is divided into districts. Judges are elected from districts or at large within their circuits.

\*\*Louisiana uses a blanket primary, in which all candidates appear with party labels on the primary ballot. The top two vote getters compete in the general election.

\*\*\*Vacancies are filled within one year by special election called by the governor. In the interim, vacancies are filled by supreme court appointment. Appointees may not run in the special election.

**Maine**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Judicial Court: 7  
 Superior Court: 17

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Judicial Court: --  
 Superior Court: --

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Judicial Court: statewide  
 Superior Court: statewide

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Judicial Court: gubernatorial appointment with senate confirmation\*  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment with senate confirmation\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Judicial Court: 7 yrs  
 Superior Court: 7 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Judicial Court: gubernatorial reappointment with senate confirmation\*  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial reappointment with senate confirmation\*

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Judicial Court: 7 yrs  
Superior Court: 7 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Judicial Court: gubernatorial appointment with senate confirmation\*  
Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment with senate confirmation\*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Judicial Court: 7 yrs  
Superior Court: 7 yrs

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Judicial Court: gubernatorial appointment  
Superior Court: chief justice

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Judicial Court: 7 yrs  
Superior Court: at pleasure of Chief Justice

**Qualifications**

Supreme Judicial Court: "learned in the law"  
Superior Court: "learned in the law"

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Articles V and VI of the [Maine Constitution](#).

\*Governor LePage established by executive order a fourteen-member [judicial selection committee](#) to "advise [him] about matters related to judicial appointments and recommend candidates to fill vacancies." Members include a representative from the attorney general's office and practicing attorneys. When a judicial vacancy occurs, the governor nominates a candidate to fill the vacancy. The [legislature's](#) joint standing committee on the judiciary recommends by majority vote that the nominee be confirmed or denied. The committee's recommendation is reviewed by the senate and becomes final unless two thirds of the senate votes to override the recommendation.

**Maryland**

**Number of Judgeships**

Court of Appeals: 7  
Court of Special Appeals: 13  
Circuit Court: 15

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Court of Appeals: --  
Court of Special Appeals: --  
Circuit Court: --

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Court of Appeals: circuit  
Court of Special Appeals: circuit  
Circuit Court: county/city

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
Court of Special Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission and/or nonpartisan election

**Length of Term**

Court of Appeals: at least one year  
Court of Special Appeals: at least one year  
Circuit Court: at least one year

**Method of Retention**

Court of Appeals: retention election  
Court of Special Appeals: retention election  
Circuit Court: nonpartisan election\*

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Court of Appeals: 10 years  
Court of Special Appeals: 10 years  
Circuit Court: 15 years

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

*Not cited in French v. Jones, No. 15-35990 archived on December 4, 2017*



Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 Court of Special Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Court of Appeals: first general election at least one year after vacancy  
 Court of Special Appeals: first general election at least one year after vacancy  
 Circuit Court: first general election at least one year after vacancy

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Court of Appeals: designated by governor  
 Court of Special Appeals: designated by governor  
 Circuit Court: seniority

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Court of Appeals: indefinite  
 Court of Special Appeals: indefinite  
 Circuit Court: N/A

**Qualifications**

Court of Appeals: U.S. and state citizen; registered to vote in state elections; state resident 5 yrs; circuit resident 6 mos; 30 yrs of age; state bar member; mandatory retirement age of 70  
 Court of Special Appeals: U.S. and state citizen; registered to vote in state elections; state resident 5 yrs; circuit resident 6 mos; 30 yrs of age; state bar member; mandatory retirement age of 70  
 Circuit Court: U.S. and state citizen; registered to vote in state elections; state resident 5 yrs; circuit resident 6 mos; 30 yrs of age; state bar member; mandatory retirement age of 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article IV](#) of the Maryland Constitution and [Executive Order 01.01.2007.08](#).

\*The names of incumbent judges and challengers appear without party affiliation on both the Republican and Democratic primary ballots. The top votegetters in each primary compete in the general election. Ballots do not denote incumbents.

**Massachusetts**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Judicial Court: 7  
 Appeals Court: 25  
 Superior Court: 82

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Judicial Court: --  
 Appeals Court: --  
 Superior Court: --

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Judicial Court: statewide  
 Appeals Court: statewide  
 Superior Court: statewide

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Judicial Court: gubernatorial appointment with approval of governor's council\*  
 Appeals Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with approval of governor's council\*  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with approval of governor's council\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Judicial Court: to age 70  
 Appeals Court: to age 70  
 Superior Court: to age 70

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Judicial Court: N/A  
 Appeals Court: N/A

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Judicial Court: N/A  
 Appeals Court: N/A  
 Superior Court: N/A

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Judicial Court: gubernatorial appointment with governor's council approval\*  
 Appeals Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with governor's council approval\*  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with governor's council approval\*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Judicial Court: N/A  
 Appeals Court: N/A  
 Superior Court: N/A

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Judicial Court: gubernatorial appointment with governor's council approval\*  
 Appeals Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with governor's council approval\*  
 Superior Court: selected by chief justice for administration and management

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Judicial Court: to age 70  
 Appeals Court: to age 70  
 Superior Court: 5 years

**Qualifications**

Supreme Judicial Court: mandatory retirement age of 70  
 Appeals Court: U.S. citizen; state resident; state bar member in good standing; 13 yrs legal experience and training\*\*;  
 Superior Court: U.S. citizen; state resident; state bar member in good standing; 10 yrs legal experience and training\*\*;

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Part II, Chapters II and III of the Massachusetts Constitution and Executive Order 500.

\*The nominating commission screens applicants for the supreme judicial court at the governor's discretion. The governor's council, also referred to as the executive council, is a constitutionally authorized body that advises the governor on Massachusetts affairs. The eight-member council is elected annually by the voters of the Commonwealth.

\*\*These qualifications are prescribed in Executive Order 500.

**Michigan**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 28  
 Circuit Court: 221

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: 4  
 Circuit Court: 57

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: district  
 Circuit Court: circuit

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: partisan nomination; nonpartisan election\*+  
 Court of Appeals: nonpartisan election\*+  
 Circuit Court: nonpartisan election\*+

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	8 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	reelection
Court of Appeals:	reelection
Circuit Court:	reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	8 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment**
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment**
Circuit Court:	gubernatorial appointment**

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	next general election; serve remainder of unexpired term
Court of Appeals:	next general election; serve remainder of unexpired term
Circuit Court:	next general election; serve remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	peer vote
Court of Appeals:	supreme court appointment
Circuit Court:	supreme court appointment

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	2 yrs
Court of Appeals:	2 yrs
Circuit Court:	2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	qualified elector; licensed to practice law in state; 5 yrs practice of law; less than 70 yrs of age
Court of Appeals:	qualified elector of district; licesed to practice law in state; 5 yrs practice of law; less than 70 yrs of age
Circuit Court:	qualified elector of circuit; licensed to practice law in state; 5 yrs practice of law; less than 70 yrs of age

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Article VI of the [Michigan Constitution](#).

\*Candidates for open seats on the supreme court or who want to challenge incumbent justices must be nominated at party conventions or by nominating petition. Incumbent justices may file an affidavit of candidacy, asking to be placed on the ballot. Candidates for other courts are nominated in nonpartisan primary elections or by nominating petition. Incumbent judges may file an affidavit of candidacy. Candidates appear without party affiliation on the general election ballot, with incumbent judges designated as such.

\*\*The [standing committee on judicial qualifications](#) of the [State Bar of Michigan](#) interviews, evaluates, and rates candidates for appointment to judicial vacancies as requested by the governor and submits a confidential report to the governor.

+Incumbency is designated on the ballot by including the current title of the judge up for reelection. The elections are also marked as incumbent positions.

**Minnesota****Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	7
Court of Appeals:	16
District Court:	289

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court:	-
Court of Appeals:	--
District Court:	10

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Appeals:	statewide
District Court:	district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court:	nonpartisan election*+
Court of Appeals:	nonpartisan election*+
District Court:	nonpartisan election*+

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
District Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	reelection
Court of Appeals:	reelection
District Court:	reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
District Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment
District Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	next general election more than 1 yr after appointment
Court of Appeals:	next general election more than 1 yr after appointment
District Court:	next general election more than 1 yr after appointment

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	nonpartisan election
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment
District Court:	peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Appeals:	3 yrs
District Court:	2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	"learned in the law;" mandatory retirement at 70
Court of Appeals:	"learned in the law;" mandatory retirement at 70
District Court:	"learned in the law;" mandatory retirement at 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VI](#) of the Minnesota Constitution.

\*The two candidates receiving the most votes in the primary election are placed on the ballot for the general election.

+Incumbency is designated on the ballot by the word 'Incumbent' underneath the name of the current judge in the position up for reelection.

**Mississippi****Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	9
Court of Appeals:	10
Circuit Court:	51

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court:	3
Court of Appeals:	5
Circuit Court:	22

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: district  
 Court of Appeals: district  
 Circuit Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: nonpartisan election\*  
 Court of Appeals: nonpartisan election\*  
 Circuit Court: nonpartisan election\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 4 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection  
 Court of Appeals: reelection  
 Circuit Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 4 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment  
 Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: \*\*  
 Court of Appeals: \*\*  
 Circuit Court: next general election held more than 9 mos after vacancy occurs

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: seniority  
 Court of Appeals: chief justice appoints  
 Circuit Court: seniority

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: duration of service  
 Court of Appeals: 4 yrs  
 Circuit Court: duration of service

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: practicing attorney 5 yrs; minimum age of 30; state citizen 5 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: practicing attorney 5 yrs; minimum age of 30; state citizen 5 yrs  
 Circuit Court: practicing attorney 5 yrs; minimum age of 26; state citizen 5 yrs; district resident

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Article 6 of the [Mississippi Constitution](#) and [Section 9-4-5](#) of the Mississippi Code.

\*Judicial candidates run in the general election. If no candidate receives a majority of the vote, a runoff election between the top two candidates is held.

\*\*According to a law passed in 2002, an appointee serves out the remainder of the unexpired term if four years or less remain on the term. If more than four years remain, the appointee runs in the next general election held more than nine months after the vacancy occurs and then serves the remainder of the term.

Missouri

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 32  
 Circuit Court: 141\*\*  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, Springfield, St. Louis)\*: -

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 1

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Court of Appeals: 3  
 Circuit Court: 45  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, -  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: district  
 Circuit Court: circuit  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, "  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Circuit Court: partisan election  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 1-3 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 1-3 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 6 yrs  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, "  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
 Court of Appeals: retention election  
 Circuit Court: reelection  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, retention election  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 12 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 12 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 6 yrs  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, "  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election after 1 yr in office  
 Court of Appeals: next general election after 1 yr in office  
 Circuit Court: next general election  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, next general election after 1 yr in office  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: rotation with peer vote\*\*\*  
 Court of Appeals: rotation with peer vote  
 Circuit Court: elected by circuit and associate judges from among circuit judges  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, "  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 2 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 2 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 2 yrs  
 Circuit Court (Kansas City, "  
 Springfield, St. Louis)\*:

**Qualifications**

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<b>Supreme Court:</b>	U.S. citizen 15 yrs; qualified state voter 9 yrs; licensed to practice in state; minimum age of 30; mandatory retirement age of 70
<b>Court of Appeals:</b>	U.S. citizen 15 yrs; district resident; qualified state voter 9 yrs; licensed to practice in state; minimum age of 30; mandatory retirement age of 70
<b>Circuit Court:</b>	U.S. citizen 10 yrs; qualified state voter 3 yrs; circuit resident 1 yr; licensed to practice in state; minimum age of 30; mandatory retirement age of 70
<b>Circuit Court (Kansas City, Springfield, St. Louis)*:</b>	"

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article V](#) of the Missouri Constitution.

\*The constitution establishes a merit selection process for circuit and associate circuit judges in the city of St. Louis and in Jackson County (Kansas City). The constitution also provides that, in other circuits, merit selection may be adopted with the approval of a majority of circuit voters. The question is submitted to the voters of a judicial circuit at the next general election upon the filing of a petition signed by 10% of the voters of each county in the circuit who voted in the last gubernatorial election. The question may not be submitted to voters more often than every four years. Merit selection has been adopted in this way in Clay, Platte, St. Louis, and Greene Counties. In circuits that have already moved to merit selection, it may be discontinued through the same process.

\*\*The circuit court consists of six divisions: a circuit division, an associate division, a probate division, a municipal division, a juvenile division, and a family court division. The circuit division exercises jurisdiction over all civil and criminal cases and is served by 135 circuit judges. The remaining divisions are served by circuit judges in conjunction with 175 associate circuit judges, 331 municipal judges, and various commissioners. Associate circuit judges are appointed in the same manner as circuit judges and serve four-year terms. Municipal judges are elected or appointed according to city ordinance or charter and serve terms of at least two years. Commissioners are appointed by circuit judges, usually to four-year terms.

\*\*\*By tradition, the court elects the most senior justice who has not yet held the position.

Montana	
<b>Number of Judgeships</b>	
Supreme Court:	7
District Court:	43
<b>Number of Districts/Circuits</b>	
Supreme Court:	--
District Court:	22
<b>Geographic Basis for Selection</b>	
Supreme Court:	statewide
District Court:	district
<b>Method of Selection (full term)</b>	
Supreme Court:	nonpartisan election*
District Court:	nonpartisan election*
<b>Length of Term</b>	
Supreme Court:	8 yrs
District Court:	6 yrs
<b>Method of Retention</b>	
Supreme Court:	reelection
District Court:	reelection
<b>Length of Subsequent Terms</b>	
Supreme Court:	8 yrs
District Court:	6 yrs
<b>Method of Filling Interim Vacancies</b>	
Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation
District Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation
<b>When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment</b>	
Supreme Court:	hold office for remainder of unexpired term
District Court:	hold office for remainder of unexpired term
<b>Selection of Chief Judge/Justice</b>	
Supreme Court:	nonpartisan election
District Court:	seniority/rotation

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**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 District Court: duration of service/1 yr

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: U.S. citizen; state resident 2 yrs; admitted to practice law in Montana for at least 5 years prior to date of appointment/election  
 District Court: U.S. citizen; state resident 2 yrs; district resident; admitted to practice law in Montana for at least 5 yrs prior to date of appointment

\*The two candidates receiving the most votes in the primary election run in the general election. If an incumbent judge is unopposed, voters are asked whether the judge should be retained in office.

**Nebraska****Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 6  
 District Court: 55

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 6  
 Court of Appeals: 6  
 District Court: 12

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide (chief justice); district (associate justices)  
 Court of Appeals: district  
 District Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: at least 3 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: at least 3 yrs  
 District Court: at least 3 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
 Court of Appeals: retention election  
 District Court: retention election

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
 District Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election after 3 yrs in office  
 Court of Appeals: next general election after 3 yrs in office  
 District Court: next general election after 3 yrs in office

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Appeals: peer vote with supreme court approval  
 District Court: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: duration of service  
 Court of Appeals: 2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	U.S. citizen; > 3 yrs state resident; district resident; minimum age of 30; > 5 yrs state practice; state bar member
Court of Appeals:	U.S. citizen; state resident; minimum age of 30; > 5 yrs state practice; state bar member
District Court:	U.S. citizen; district resident; minimum age of 30; > 5 yrs state practice; state bar member

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article V](#) of the Nebraska Constitution and [Section 24-1101](#) of the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

Nevada

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	7
District Court:	72

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court:	---
District Court:	9

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court:	statewide
District Court:	district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court:	nonpartisan election
District Court:	nonpartisan election

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
District Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	reelection
District Court:	reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
District Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission
District Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	next general election; serve for remainder of unexpired term
District Court:	next general election; serve for remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	rotates by seniority
District Court:	peer vote*

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	2 yrs
District Court:	2 yrs*

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	qualified elector; 2 yrs state resident; minimum age of 25; licensed and admitted to practice law in NV; 15 yrs licensed attorney, at least 2 in NV
District Court:	qualified elector; 2 yrs state resident; district resident; minimum age of 25; licensed and admitted to practice law in NV; 10 yrs licensed attorney, at least 2 in NV

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article 6](#) of the Nevada Constitution.

\*A chief judge is required in districts with a population of 100,000 or more, and in such districts, chief judges are chosen by peer vote. In other districts, a chief judge may be selected as needed.

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## New Hampshire

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	5
Superior Court:	22

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court:	--
Superior Court:	--

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court:	statewide
Superior Court:	statewide

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial nomination from selection commission recommendation; appointment by the executive council*
Superior Court:	gubernatorial nomination from selection commission recommendation; appointment by the executive council*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	to age 70
Superior Court:	to age 70

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	N/A
Superior Court:	N/A

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	N/A
Superior Court:	N/A

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial nomination from selection commission recommendation; appointment by the executive council*
Superior Court:	gubernatorial nomination from selection commission recommendation; appointment by the executive council*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	N/A
Superior Court:	N/A

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial nomination from selection commission recommendation; appointment by the executive council*
Superior Court:	gubernatorial nomination from selection commission recommendation; appointment by the executive council*

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	5 yrs or to age 70
Superior Court:	to age 70

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	mandatory retirement age of 70
Superior Court:	mandatory retirement age of 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Articles [46](#) and [73](#) of the New Hampshire Constitution and [Executive Order 2013-6](#).

\*The executive council is a constitutionally authorized, five-member body charged with advising the governor. Council members are chosen every two years in partisan elections.

## New Jersey

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	7
Appellate Division, Superior Court:	34
Superior Court:	371

Supreme Court: --  
 Appellate Division, --  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: 15 vicinages\*

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Appellate Division, \*\*  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: county

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment with senate confirmation  
 Appellate Division, \*\*  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment with senate confirmation\*\*\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 7 yrs  
 Appellate Division, \*\*  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: 7 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial reappointment with senate confirmation  
 Appellate Division, \*\*  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial reappointment with senate confirmation

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: until age 70  
 Appellate Division, \*\*  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: until age 70

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial reappointment with senate confirmation  
 Appellate Division, \*\*  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial reappointment with senate confirmation

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: 7 yrs  
 Appellate Division, \*\*  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: 7 yrs

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment with senate confirmation  
 Appellate Division, designated by chief justice  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: designated by chief justice

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: duration of service  
 Appellate Division, indefinite  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: indefinite

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: admitted to state practice for 10 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 70  
 Appellate Division, \*\*  
 Superior Court:  
 Superior Court: admitted to state practice for 10 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 70

\*\*The chief justice of the supreme court assigns superior court judges to the appellate division. Such assignments are for fixed terms.

\*\*\*According to [Executive Order #36](#), Governor Christie utilizes a judicial advisory panel in screening potential nominees for superior court judgeships. The judicial advisory panel is composed of up to seven members, at least five of whom must be retired judges and no more than two of whom may be non-lawyers or non-practicing lawyers. Panel members serve five-year terms.

According to a [compact](#) with the governor, the judicial and prosecutorial appointments committee of the [New Jersey State Bar Association](#) conducts a confidential review of potential candidates for appointment and reappointment to the courts and rates them as “qualified” or “not qualified.” In most counties, senators allow county bar associations to be involved in identifying and screening potential judicial candidates.

New Mexico	
<b>Number of Judgeships</b>	
Supreme Court:	5
Court of Appeals:	10
District Court:	84
<b>Number of Districts/Circuits</b>	
Supreme Court:	--
Court of Appeals:	--
District Court:	13
<b>Geographic Basis for Selection</b>	
Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Appeals:	statewide
District Court:	district
<b>Method of Selection (full term)</b>	
Supreme Court:	partisan election*
Court of Appeals:	partisan election*
District Court:	partisan election*
<b>Length of Term</b>	
Supreme Court:	remainder of unexpired term†
Court of Appeals:	remainder of unexpired term†
District Court:	remainder of unexpired term†
<b>Method of Retention</b>	
Supreme Court:	retention election**
Court of Appeals:	retention election**
District Court:	retention election**
<b>Length of Subsequent Terms</b>	
Supreme Court:	8 yrs
Court of Appeals:	8 yrs
District Court:	6 yrs
<b>Method of Filling Interim Vacancies</b>	
Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission
District Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission
<b>When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment</b>	
Supreme Court:	next general election*
Court of Appeals:	next general election*
District Court:	next general election*
<b>Selection of Chief Judge/Justice</b>	
Supreme Court:	peer vote***
Court of Appeals:	peer vote
District Court:	varies by district
<b>Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice</b>	

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Supreme Court:	2 yrs
Court of Appeals:	2 yrs
District Court:	varies by district

#### Qualifications

Supreme Court:	minimum age of 35; 10 yrs legal practice; state resident 3 yrs
Court of Appeals:	minimum age of 35; 10 yrs legal practice; state resident 3 yrs
District Court:	minimum age of 35; 6 yrs legal practice; state resident 3 yrs; district resident

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Article VI of the [New Mexico Constitution](#).

\*All judicial vacancies are filled by the governor from a list of candidates recommended by a judicial nominating commission. The appointee must then compete in a partisan election at the next general election to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

\*\*Judges must receive at least 57% in affirmative votes to be retained.

\*\*\*By tradition, the court elects the most senior justice who has not yet held the position.

#### New York

#### Number of Judgeships

Court of Appeals:	7
Appellate Division,	60
Supreme Court:	
Supreme Court:	324
County Court:	125

#### Number of Districts/Circuits

Court of Appeals:	--
Appellate Division,	4 departments
Supreme Court:	
Supreme Court:	12 districts
County Court:	57 counties outside NYC

#### Geographic Basis for Selection

Court of Appeals:	statewide
Appellate Division,	statewide
Supreme Court:	
Supreme Court:	district
County Court:	county

#### Method of Selection (full term)

Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate consent
Appellate Division,	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission**
Supreme Court:	
Supreme Court:	partisan election***
County Court:	partisan election

#### Length of Term

Court of Appeals:	14 yrs
Appellate Division,	5 yrs or through end of supreme court term, whichever is shorter
Supreme Court:	
Supreme Court:	14 yrs
County Court:	10 yrs

#### Method of Retention

Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate consent
Appellate Division,	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission**
Supreme Court:	
Supreme Court:	reelection
County Court:	reelection

#### Length of Subsequent Terms

Court of Appeals:	14 yrs
Appellate Division,	5 yrs
Supreme Court:	
Supreme Court:	14 yrs
County Court:	10 yrs

#### Method of Filling Interim Vacancies

Method of Filling Interim Vacancies  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate consent  
 Appellate Division, Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission\*\*  
 Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate consent  
 County Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate consent

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Court of Appeals: 14 yrs  
 Appellate Division, Supreme Court: serve 5 yrs or through end of supreme court term, whichever is shorter  
 Supreme Court: next general election more than 3 months after vacancy  
 County Court: next general election more than 3 months after vacancy

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate consent  
 Appellate Division, Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Supreme Court: \*\*\*\*  
 County Court: \*\*\*\*

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Court of Appeals: 14 yrs  
 Appellate Division, Supreme Court: serves through end of supreme court term  
 Supreme Court: \*\*\*\*  
 County Court: \*\*\*\*

**Qualifications**

Court of Appeals: state resident; state practice > 10 yrs; mandatory retirement age of 70  
 Appellate Division, Supreme Court: state resident; state practice > 10 yrs; minimum age of 18; mandatory retirement age of 70  
 Supreme Court: state resident; state practice > 10 yrs; minimum age of 18; mandatory retirement age of 70  
 County Court: state resident; county resident; state practice > 5 yrs; minimum age of 18; mandatory retirement age of 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Article VI of the [New York Constitution](#) and by [Executive Order No. 15](#).

\*The presiding justice of each appellate division must be a resident of the department.

\*\*Justices of the appellate division are chosen from all justices elected to the supreme court.

\*\*\*Candidates are chosen at partisan nominating conventions.

\*\*\*\*The chief administrative judge of New York appoints one deputy chief administrative judge to supervise the trial courts of New York City and one to supervise trial courts outside New York City. Administrative judges are also assigned in each judicial district and in each of the major New York City courts.

**North Carolina**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 15  
 Superior Court: 95

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: --  
 Superior Court: 65\*

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: statewide  
 Superior Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: partisan election  
 Court of Appeals: partisan election  
 Superior Court: nonpartisan election



**Length of Term**  
 Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
 Superior Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection  
 Court of Appeals: reelection  
 Superior Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
 Superior Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment  
 Superior Court: merit selection

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election more than 60 days after vacancy occurred  
 Court of Appeals: next general election more than 60 days after vacancy occurred  
 Superior Court: next general election more than 60 days after vacancy occurred; serve remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: nonpartisan election  
 Court of Appeals: chief justice appoints  
 Superior Court: seniority

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: indefinite  
 Superior Court: indefinite

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: licensed to practice law in state; mandatory retirement age of 72  
 Court of Appeals: licensed to practice law in state; mandatory retirement age of 72  
 Superior Court: licensed to practice law in state; mandatory retirement age of 72

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article IV](#) of the North Carolina Constitution.

\*The superior court is also divided into eight divisions. Every six months, superior court judges rotate among the districts within their division

**North Dakota**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 5  
 Court of Appeals: \*  
 District Court: 42

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: ---  
 Court of Appeals: ---  
 District Court: 7

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: ---  
 District Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: nonpartisan election\*\*  
 Court of Appeals: chosen from among active and retired district judges, retired supreme court justices, and attorneys  
 District Court: nonpartisan election\*\*

**Length of Term**

Cited in French v. Jones, No. 15-35990 archived on December 4, 2017

<b>Length of Term</b>	
Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Court of Appeals:	up to 1 yr
District Court:	6 yrs

<b>Method of Retention</b>	
Supreme Court:	reelection
Court of Appeals:	---
District Court:	reelection

<b>Length of Subsequent Terms</b>	
Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Court of Appeals:	---
District Court:	6 yrs

<b>Method of Filling Interim Vacancies</b>	
Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission***
Court of Appeals:	---
District Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission***

<b>When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment</b>	
Supreme Court:	next general election after 2 yrs in office; hold office for remainder of unexpired term
Court of Appeals:	---
District Court:	next general election after 2 yrs in office; hold office for remainder of unexpired term

<b>Selection of Chief Judge/Justice</b>	
Supreme Court:	selected by judges of supreme court and district courts
Court of Appeals:	---
District Court:	elected by judges in each district

<b>Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice</b>	
Supreme Court:	5 yrs
Court of Appeals:	---
District Court:	3 yrs

<b>Qualifications</b>	
Supreme Court:	U.S. and state citizen; licensed attorney
Court of Appeals:	---
District Court:	U.S. and state citizen; licensed attorney

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Article VI of the [North Dakota Constitution](#).

\*Cases assigned to the court of appeals by the supreme court are heard by three-judge panels.

\*\*The two candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the primary election run in the general election, provided that each candidate receives at least as many votes as the number of signatures required to be placed on the primary ballot.

\*\*\*In the alternative, the governor may call a special election to fill the vacancy

**Ohio**

<b>Number of Judgeships</b>	
Supreme Court:	7
Court of Appeals:	68
Court of Common Pleas:	391

<b>Number of Districts/Circuits</b>	
Supreme Court:	--
Court of Appeals:	12
Court of Common Pleas:	88

<b>Geographic Basis for Selection</b>	
Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Appeals:	appellate district
Court of Common Pleas:	county

<b>Method of Selection (full term)</b>	
Supreme Court:	partisan primary; nonpartisan general election

Cited in French v. Jones, No. 15-35990 archived on December 4, 2017

Court of Appeals: partisan primary; nonpartisan general election  
 Court of Common Pleas: partisan primary; nonpartisan general election

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
 Court of Common Pleas: 6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection  
 Court of Appeals: reelection  
 Court of Common Pleas: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
 Court of Common Pleas: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment\*  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment\*  
 Court of Common Pleas: gubernatorial appointment\*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: at the first general election held more than 40 days after the vacancy occurs; hold office for remainder of unexpired term\*\*  
 Court of Appeals: at the first general election held more than 40 days after the vacancy occurs; hold office for remainder of unexpired term\*\*  
 Court of Common Pleas: at the first general election held more than 40 days after the vacancy occurs; hold office for remainder of unexpired term\*\*

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: popular election  
 Court of Appeals: peer vote  
 Court of Common Pleas: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 1 yr  
 Court of Common Pleas: 1 yr

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs practice of law; maximum age of 70  
 Court of Appeals: 6 yrs practice of law; resident of district; maximum age of 70  
 Court of Common Pleas: 6 yrs practice of law; resident of county; maximum age of 70

Selection and retention methods and judicial term lengths are prescribed in [Article 6](#) of the Ohio Constitution.

\*In 2007, Governor Strickland created a [judicial appointments recommendation panel](#) to evaluate the qualifications of applicants for judicial vacancies and make non-binding recommendations for appointment.

\*\*When the unexpired term ends within one year immediately following the next general election, the appointment is for the unexpired term.

**Oklahoma**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 9  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: 5  
 Court of Civil Appeals: 12  
 District Court: 75\*

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 9  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: 5  
 Court of Civil Appeals: 6  
 District Court: 26

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: district

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Court of Criminal Appeals: district  
 Court of Civil Appeals: district  
 District Court: district

#### Method of Selection (full term)

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment through nominating commission  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: gubernatorial appointment through nominating commission  
 Court of Civil Appeals: gubernatorial appointment through nominating commission  
 District Court: nonpartisan election\*\*

#### Length of Term

Supreme Court: at least 1 yr  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: at least 1 yr  
 Court of Civil Appeals: at least 1 yr  
 District Court: 4 yrs

#### Method of Retention

Supreme Court: retention election  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: retention election  
 Court of Civil Appeals: retention election  
 District Court: reelection

#### Length of Subsequent Terms

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: 6 yrs  
 Court of Civil Appeals: 6 yrs  
 District Court: 4 yrs

#### Method of Filling Interim Vacancies

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Court of Civil Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

#### When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment

Supreme Court: next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term  
 Court of Civil Appeals: next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term  
 District Court: next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term

#### Selection of Chief Judge/Justice

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: peer vote  
 Court of Civil Appeals: peer vote  
 District Court: peer vote

#### Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice

Supreme Court: 2 yrs  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: 2 yrs  
 Court of Civil Appeals: 1 yr  
 District Court: 1 yr

#### Qualifications

Supreme Court: 30 yrs of age; qualified elector in district > 1 yr; licensed to practice or judge of court of record > 5 yrs  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: 30 yrs of age; qualified elector in district > 1 yr; licensed to practice or judge of court of record > 5 yrs  
 Court of Civil Appeals: qualified elector in district > 1 yr; licensed to practice or judge of court of record > 4 yrs  
 District Court: qualified elector in district > 1 yr; licensed to practice or judge of court of record > 4 yrs

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Articles 7 and 7B of the [Oklahoma Constitution](#) and Title 20, [Section 30-18](#) of the Oklahoma Statutes.

\*Number does not include district associate judges and special judges.

\*\*A nonpartisan primary is held if more than two candidates file for a district court judgeship. If a candidate wins a majority of votes in the primary, the candidate is elected and does not run in the general election.

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	7
Court of Appeals:	10
Circuit Court:	173

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court:	--
Court of Appeals:	--
Circuit Court:	27

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Appeals:	statewide
Circuit Court:	district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court:	nonpartisan election*+
Court of Appeals:	nonpartisan election*+
Circuit Court:	nonpartisan election*+

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	reelection
Court of Appeals:	reelection
Circuit Court:	reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment
Circuit Court:	gubernatorial appointment

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	next general election more than 60 days after appointment
Court of Appeals:	next general election more than 60 days after appointment
Circuit Court:	next general election more than 60 days after appointment

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	peer vote
Court of Appeals:	chief justice appoints
Circuit Court:	chief justice appoints

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Appeals:	2 yrs
Circuit Court:	2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	U.S. citizen; state resident 3 yrs; state bar member; mandatory retirement age of 75
Court of Appeals:	elector of county of residence; state bar member; mandatory retirement age of 75
Circuit Court:	U.S. citizen; state resident 3 yrs; circuit resident 1 yr; state bar member; mandatory retirement age of 75

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VI](#) (Amended) of the Oregon Constitution.

\*The two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes in the primary election compete in the general election.

Pennsylvania	
<b>Number of Judgeships</b>	
Supreme Court:	7
Superior Court:	15
Commonwealth Court:	9
Court of Common Pleas:	439
<b>Number of Districts/Circuits</b>	
Supreme Court:	1
Superior Court:	1
Commonwealth Court:	1
Court of Common Pleas:	60
<b>Geographic Basis for Selection</b>	
Supreme Court:	statewide
Superior Court:	statewide
Commonwealth Court:	statewide
Court of Common Pleas:	district
<b>Method of Selection (full term)</b>	
Supreme Court:	partisan election*
Superior Court:	partisan election*
Commonwealth Court:	partisan election*
Court of Common Pleas:	partisan election*
<b>Length of Term</b>	
Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Superior Court:	10 yrs
Commonwealth Court:	10 yrs
Court of Common Pleas:	10 yrs
<b>Method of Retention</b>	
Supreme Court:	retention election
Superior Court:	retention election
Commonwealth Court:	retention election
Court of Common Pleas:	retention election
<b>Length of Subsequent Terms</b>	
Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Superior Court:	10 yrs
Commonwealth Court:	10 yrs
Court of Common Pleas:	10 yrs
<b>Method of Filling Interim Vacancies</b>	
Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment with two-thirds senate approval
Superior Court:	gubernatorial appointment with two-thirds senate approval
Commonwealth Court:	gubernatorial appointment with two-thirds senate approval
Court of Common Pleas:	gubernatorial appointment with two-thirds senate approval
<b>When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment</b>	
Supreme Court:	next municipal election more than 10 mos after vacancy occurs or upon expiration of term**
Superior Court:	next municipal election more than 10 mos after vacancy occurs or upon expiration of term**
Commonwealth Court:	next municipal election more than 10 mos after vacancy occurs or upon expiration of term**
Court of Common Pleas:	next municipal election more than 10 mos after vacancy occurs or upon expiration of term
<b>Selection of Chief Judge/Justice</b>	
Supreme Court:	seniority
Superior Court:	peer vote
Commonwealth Court:	peer vote
Court of Common Pleas:	seniority or peer vote

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Supreme Court:	duration of term
Superior Court:	5 yrs
Commonwealth Court:	5 yrs
Court of Common Pleas:	5 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	1 yr state resident; maximum age of 70; state bar member
Superior Court:	1 yr state resident; maximum age of 70; state bar member
Commonwealth Court:	1 yr state resident; maximum age of 70; state bar member
Court of Common Pleas:	1 yr district resident; maximum age of 70; state bar member

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article V](#) of the Pennsylvania Constitution.

\*If more than one open seat is being filled, all of the candidates run at large and the top vote getters fill the open seats.

\*\*By tradition, interim appointees to the appellate courts do not stand for election.

**Rhode Island**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	5
Superior Court:	22

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court:	1
Superior Court:	1

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court:	statewide
Superior Court:	statewide

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with house and senate confirmation
Superior Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	life
Superior Court:	life

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	N/A
Superior Court:	N/A

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	N/A
Superior Court:	N/A

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with house and senate confirmation
Superior Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	N/A
Superior Court:	N/A

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with house and senate confirmation
Superior Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	life
Superior Court:	life

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	attorney; licensed in state; state bar member in good standing
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Cited in French v. Jones, No. 15-35990 and filed on December 4, 2017



Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article X](#) of the Rhode Island Constitution.

**South Carolina**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	5
Court of Appeals:	9
Circuit Court:	46

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court:	--
Court of Appeals:	--
Circuit Court:	16

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Appeals:	statewide
Circuit Court:	circuit & at-large

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court:	legislative election
Court of Appeals:	legislative election
Circuit Court:	legislative election

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	legislative reelection
Court of Appeals:	legislative reelection
Circuit Court:	legislative reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	legislative election*
Court of Appeals:	legislative election*
Circuit Court:	legislative election*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	upon completion of unexpired term
Court of Appeals:	upon completion of unexpired term
Circuit Court:	upon completion of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	legislative election
Court of Appeals:	legislative election
Circuit Court:	designation by chief justice of the supreme court

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 months

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	U.S. citizen; 32-72 yrs of age; state resident 5 yrs; licensed attorney 8 yrs
Court of Appeals:	U.S. citizen; 32-72 yrs old; state resident 5 yrs; licensed attorney 8 yrs
Circuit Court:	U.S. citizen; 32-72 yrs of age; state resident 5 yrs; licensed attorney 8 yrs

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article V](#) of the South Carolina Constitution.

\*If the length of the unexpired term is less than one year, the governor may fill the vacancy.

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 cited in French

South Dakota

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 5  
 Circuit Court: 39

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 5  
 Circuit Court: 7

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: district appointment; statewide retention  
 Circuit Court: circuit

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Circuit Court: nonpartisan election\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: at least 3 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
 Circuit Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election after 3 yrs in office  
 Circuit Court: hold office for remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 Circuit Court: chief justice appoints

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 4 yrs  
 Circuit Court: at pleasure of chief justice

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: U.S. citizen; state resident; voting resident within district; licensed to practice law in state; mandatory retirement age of 70  
 Circuit Court: U.S. citizen; state resident; voting resident within circuit; licensed to practice law in state; mandatory retirement age of 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article V](#) of the South Dakota Constitution.

\*If more than two candidates file for a judicial position, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the primary election run in the general election. If no more than two candidates file for a judicial position, no primary election is held for the position.

Tennessee

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 5  
 Court of Appeals: 12  
 Court of Criminal Appeals: 12  
 Chancery Court: 35  
 Criminal Court: 33  
 Circuit Court: 85  
 Probate Court: 2

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

**Number of District/Circuit**

Supreme Court:	1
Court of Appeals:	1
Court of Criminal Appeals:	1
Chancery Court:	27
Criminal Court:	13
Circuit Court:	31
Probate Court:	1

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Appeals:	statewide
Court of Criminal Appeals:	statewide
Chancery Court:	district
Criminal Court:	district
Circuit Court:	district
Probate Court:	district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment with joint House/Senate confirmation
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment with joint House/Senate confirmation
Court of Criminal Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment with joint House/Senate confirmation
Chancery Court:	partisan election*
Criminal Court:	partisan election*
Circuit Court:	partisan election*
Probate Court:	partisan election*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	until next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred
Court of Appeals:	until next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred
Court of Criminal Appeals:	until next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred
Chancery Court:	8 yrs
Criminal Court:	8 yrs
Circuit Court:	8 yrs
Probate Court:	8 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	retention election
Court of Appeals:	retention election
Court of Criminal Appeals:	retention election
Chancery Court:	reelection
Criminal Court:	reelection
Circuit Court:	reelection
Probate Court:	reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	8 yrs
Court of Appeals:	8 yrs
Court of Criminal Appeals:	8 yrs
Chancery Court:	8 yrs
Criminal Court:	8 yrs
Circuit Court:	8 yrs
Probate Court:	8 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment with joint House/Senate confirmation
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment with joint House/Senate confirmation
Court of Criminal Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment with joint House/Senate confirmation
Chancery Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission
Criminal Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission
Circuit Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission
Probate Court:	gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred; hold office for remainder of unexpired term
Court of Appeals:	next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred; hold office for remainder of unexpired term

*Filed in French v. Jones, No. 15-35990 archived on December 4, 2017*

Court of Criminal Appeals:	next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred; hold office for remainder of unexpired term
Chancery Court:	next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred; hold office for remainder of unexpired term
Criminal Court:	next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred; hold office for remainder of unexpired term
Circuit Court:	next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred; hold office for remainder of unexpired term
Probate Court:	next general election at least 30 days after vacancy occurred; hold office for remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	peer vote
Court of Appeals:	peer vote
Court of Criminal Appeals:	peer vote
Chancery Court:	a presiding judge is selected in each judicial district
Criminal Court:	a presiding judge is selected in each judicial district
Circuit Court:	a presiding judge is selected in each judicial district
Probate Court:	--

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	4 yrs
Court of Appeals:	1 yr
Court of Criminal Appeals:	1 yr
Chancery Court:	1 yr
Criminal Court:	1 yr
Circuit Court:	1 yr
Probate Court:	--

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	authorized to practice law in state; minimum age of 35; state resident 5 yrs
Court of Appeals:	authorized to practice law in state; minimum age of 30; state resident 5 yrs and district resident 1 yr
Court of Criminal Appeals:	authorized to practice law in state; minimum age of 30; state resident 5 yrs and district resident 1 yr
Chancery Court:	authorized to practice law in state; minimum age of 30; state resident 5 yrs and district resident 1 yr
Criminal Court:	authorized to practice law in state; minimum age of 30; state resident 5 yrs and district resident 1 yr
Circuit Court:	authorized to practice law in state; minimum age of 30; state resident 5 yrs and district resident 1 yr
Probate Court:	authorized to practice law in state; minimum age of 30; state resident 5 yrs and district resident 1 yr

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VI](#) of the Tennessee Constitution and Title 17, Chapter 4 of the [Tennessee Code](#).

\*Per statute, each county legislative body has the discretion to require elections to be conducted in a nonpartisan manner.

**Texas**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	9
Court of Criminal Appeals:	9
Court of Appeals:	80
District Court:	433

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court:	--
Court of Criminal Appeals:	--
Court of Appeals:	14
District Court:	432

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court:	statewide
Court of Criminal Appeals:	statewide
Court of Appeals:	district
District Court:	district

Supreme Court:	partisan election
Court of Criminal Appeals:	partisan election
Court of Appeals:	partisan election
District Court:	partisan election

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Criminal Appeals:	6 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
District Court:	4 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	reelection
Court of Criminal Appeals:	reelection
Court of Appeals:	reelection
District Court:	reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Criminal Appeals:	6 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
District Court:	4 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment with senate approval
Court of Criminal Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment with senate approval
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment with senate approval
District Court:	gubernatorial appointment with senate approval

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term
Court of Criminal Appeals:	next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term
Court of Appeals:	next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term
District Court:	next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	popular election
Court of Criminal Appeals:	popular election
Court of Appeals:	popular election
District Court:	--

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	6 yrs
Court of Criminal Appeals:	6 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
District Court:	--

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	U.S. citizen; state resident; licensed in state; between 35 yrs and 74 yrs of age; 10 yrs practicing lawyer and/or judge*
Court of Criminal Appeals:	U.S. citizen; state resident; licensed in state; between 35 yrs and 74 yrs of age; 10 yrs practicing lawyer and/or judge*
Court of Appeals:	U.S. citizen; state resident; licensed in state; between 35 yrs and 74 yrs of age; 10 yrs practicing lawyer and/or judge*
District Court:	U.S. citizen; state resident; licensed in state; between 25 yrs and 74 yrs of age; 4 yrs practicing lawyer and/or state judge; resident of judicial district 2 yrs*

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article 5](#) of the Texas Constitution.

\*In 2007, Texas voters approved a constitutional amendment allowing judges who reached mandatory retirement age to finish their term of office.

**Utah**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	5
Court of Appeals:	7
District Court:	70

Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: --  
 District Court: 8

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: statewide  
 District Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: at least 3 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: at least 3 yrs  
 District Court: at least 3 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
 Court of Appeals: retention election  
 District Court: retention election

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 10 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
 District Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: first general election more than 3 yrs after appointment  
 Court of Appeals: first general election more than 3 yrs after appointment  
 District Court: first general election more than 3 yrs after appointment

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 Court of Appeals: peer vote  
 District Court: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 4 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 2 yrs  
 District Court: 2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: U.S. citizen; state resident 5 yrs; 30 yrs of age; admitted to practice law in state; mandatory retirement at 75  
 Court of Appeals: U.S. citizen; state resident 3 yrs; 25 yrs of age; admitted to practice law in state; mandatory retirement at 75  
 District Court: U.S. citizen; state resident 3 yrs; 25 yrs of age; admitted to practice law in state; mandatory retirement at 75

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VIII](#) of the Utah Constiution.

Vermont

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 5  
 Superior Court: 12\*  
 District Court: 17\*

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --

Superior Court: 14  
 District Court: 14

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Superior Court: statewide  
 District Court: statewide

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Superior Court: 6 yrs  
 District Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: vote of general assembly  
 Superior Court: vote of general assembly  
 District Court: vote of general assembly

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Superior Court: 6 yrs  
 District Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: expiration of unexpired term  
 Superior Court: expiration of unexpired term  
 District Court: expiration of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission with senate confirmation  
 Superior Court: administrative judge for trial courts appointed by supreme court  
 District Court: administrative judge for trial courts appointed by supreme court

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
 Superior Court: appointed to 4 yr term but may be removed by supreme court  
 District Court: appointed to 4 yr term but may be removed by supreme court

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: attorney who has practiced law or served as judge in state for more than 5 of the last 10 yrs; mandatory retirement at 70  
 Superior Court: attorney who has practiced law or served as judge in state for more than 5 of the last 10 yrs; mandatory retirement at 70  
 District Court: attorney who has practiced law or served as judge in state for more than 5 of last 10 yrs; mandatory retirement at 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Chapter 2, [Sections 32, 33, and 34](#) of the Vermont Constitution.

Each county is also served by two assistant judges, who are chosen in partisan elections and serve four- year terms. Assistant judges have limited power and are not required to be attorneys.

\*Superior Court and District Court judges also serve as Family Court judges.

**Virginia**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 11  
 Circuit Court: 157



Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: --  
 Circuit Court: 31

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: statewide  
 Circuit Court: circuit

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: legislative election  
 Court of Appeals: legislative election  
 Circuit Court: legislative election

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 12 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection by legislature\*  
 Court of Appeals: reelection by legislature\*  
 Circuit Court: reelection by legislature\*

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 12 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 8 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: legislative election\*\*  
 Court of Appeals: legislative election\*\*  
 Circuit Court: legislative election\*\*

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: \*\*  
 Court of Appeals: \*\*  
 Circuit Court: \*\*

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
 Court of Appeals: peer vote  
 Circuit Court: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 4 yrs  
 Court of Appeals: 4 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: state resident; state bar member 5 yrs; maximum age of 70  
 Court of Appeals: state resident; state bar member 5 yrs; maximum age of 70  
 Circuit Court: state and circuit resident; state bar member 5 yrs; maximum age of 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VI, Section 7](#) of the Virginia Constitution.

\*The courts of justice committees of the house of delegates and the senate interview candidates who seek reelection. Then the full house and senate vote.

\*\*When the general assembly is in session, vacancies are filled through legislative election. When the legislature is not in session, the governor fills vacancies through appointment. Appointees must then be elected at the next legislative session.

Washington

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 9

Court of Appeals: 27  
Superior Court: 186

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: -  
Court of Appeals: 9  
Superior Court: 30

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide\*  
Court of Appeals: district  
Superior Court: county

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: nonpartisan election\*\*  
Court of Appeals: nonpartisan election\*\*  
Superior Court: nonpartisan election\*\*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
Superior Court: 4 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: reelection  
Court of Appeals: reelection  
Superior Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 6 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 6 yrs  
Superior Court: 4 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment  
Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment  
Superior Court: gubernatorial appointment

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election; successor holds office for remainder of unexpired term  
Court of Appeals: next general election; successor holds office for remainder of unexpired term  
Superior Court: next general election; successor holds office for remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
Court of Appeals: peer vote  
Superior Court: peer vote\*\*\*

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 4 yrs  
Court of Appeals: 1 yr  
Superior Court: at least 1 yr\*\*\*

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: licensed to practice in state; retirement age is 75  
Court of Appeals: 5 yrs practice in state; resident of district at least 1 yr  
Superior Court: licensed to practice in state; retirement age is 75

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Article IV of the [Washington Constitution](#) and [Chapter 2.06](#) of the Revised Code of Washington.

\*Currently, the supreme court has one justice from eastern Washington (Debra Stephens), while six of the justices are from the Seattle-Tacoma area. Various proposals have been made in the legislature for geographically based election schemes.

\*\*Judicial candidates run in a primary election. If no candidate receives a majority of the vote, the names of the top two vote getters are placed on the general election ballot.

\*\*\*Each superior court district may establish local rules for the appointment and term of the chief judge. However, the chief judge must be selected by a vote of his/her peers and the term must be at least one year.

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West Virginia

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court of Appeals: 5  
 Circuit Court: 66

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court of Appeals: --  
 Circuit Court: 31

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court of Appeals: statewide  
 Circuit Court: circuit

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court of Appeals: nonpartisan election  
 Circuit Court: nonpartisan election

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court of Appeals: 12 yrs  
 Circuit Court: 8 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court of Appeals: reelection  
 Circuit Court: reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court of Appeals: nonpartisan election  
 Circuit Court: nonpartisan election

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court of Appeals: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
 Circuit Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court of Appeals: next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term  
 Circuit Court: next general election; hold office for remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court of Appeals: peer vote  
 Circuit Court: peer vote

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court of Appeals: 1 yr  
 Circuit Court: varies by circuit

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court of Appeals: state citizen 5 yrs; minimum age of 30; 10 yrs practice of law  
 Circuit Court: state citizen 5 yrs; circuit resident; minimum age of 30; 5 yrs practice of law

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by [Article VIII](#) of the West Virginia Constitution.

## Wisconsin

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court: 7  
 Court of Appeals: 16  
 Circuit Court: 241

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: --  
 Court of Appeals: 4  
 Circuit Court: 69

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
 Court of Appeals: district  
 Circuit Court: circuit

Supreme Court:	nonpartisan election*
Court of Appeals:	nonpartisan election*
Circuit Court:	nonpartisan election*

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court:	reelection
Court of Appeals:	reelection
Circuit Court:	reelection

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court:	10 yrs
Court of Appeals:	6 yrs
Circuit Court:	6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court:	gubernatorial appointment**
Court of Appeals:	gubernatorial appointment**
Circuit Court:	gubernatorial appointment**

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court:	next spring in which no other justice is to be elected (if the vacancy occurs between Dec. 1 and the spring election, appointees stand for election in the next spring election)***
Court of Appeals:	next spring election in which no other judge from that district is to be elected (if the vacancy occurs between Dec. 1 and the spring election, appointees stand for election in the next spring)***
Circuit Court:	next spring election (if the vacancy occurs between Dec. 1 and the spring election, appointees stand for election in the next spring election)***

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	Court selection
Court of Appeals:	Supreme court appoints
Circuit Court:	supreme court appoints

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court:	2 years
Court of Appeals:	3 yrs
Circuit Court:	2 yrs

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court:	qualified elector of the state; licensed to practice law in state 5 yrs****
Court of Appeals:	qualified elector of the state; licensed to practice law in state 5 yrs****
Circuit Court:	qualified elector of circuit; licensed to practice law in state 5 yrs****

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Article VII of the Wisconsin Constitution.

\*If there are more than two candidates for a judicial position, a nonpartisan primary election is held. The top two vote getters in the primary compete in the general election.

\*\*Governor Walker uses an advisory council on judicial selection to screen applicants for interim judicial vacancies and recommend three to five qualified candidates. The governor is not bound by the council's recommendations.

\*\*\*If the vacancy occurs between December 1 and the spring election, appointees stand for election in the next spring election.

\*\*\*\*The Wisconsin Constitution authorizes the legislature to impose a mandatory retirement age of no less than 70. To date it has not been enacted by statute.

**Wyoming**

**Number of Judgeships**

Supreme Court:	5
District Court:	22

**Number of Districts/Circuits**

Supreme Court: 9  
District Court:

**Geographic Basis for Selection**

Supreme Court: statewide  
District Court: district

**Method of Selection (full term)**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**Length of Term**

Supreme Court: at least one year  
District Court: at least 1 yr

**Method of Retention**

Supreme Court: retention election  
District Court: retention election

**Length of Subsequent Terms**

Supreme Court: 8 yrs  
District Court: 6 yrs

**Method of Filling Interim Vacancies**

Supreme Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission  
District Court: gubernatorial appointment from nominating commission

**When Interim Judges Stand for Election/Appointment**

Supreme Court: next general election 1 yr after appointment; if retained, serve remainder of unexpired term  
District Court: next general election 1 yr after appointment; if retained, serve remainder of unexpired term

**Selection of Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: peer vote  
District Court: --

**Term of Office for Chief Judge/Justice**

Supreme Court: 4 yrs  
District Court: --

**Qualifications**

Supreme Court: U.S. citizen; state resident 3 yrs; 9 yrs legal experience; minimum age of 30; mandatory retirement at 70  
District Court: U.S. citizen; state resident 2 yrs; minimum age of 28; mandatory retirement at 70

Selection and retention methods and term lengths are prescribed by Article 5 of the [Wyoming Constitution](#).

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