

**Table 4.1  
STATE COURTS OF LAST RESORT**

State or other jurisdiction	Justices chosen (a)		No. of judges (b)	Term (in years) (c)	Chief justice	
	Name of court	At large			By district	Method of selection
Alabama	S.C.	★	9 (d)	6	Popular election	6 years
Alaska	S.C.	★	5	10	By court	3 years (e)
Arizona	S.C.	★	5	6	By court	5 years
Arkansas	S.C.	★	7	8	Popular election	8 years
California	S.C.	★	7	12	Appointed by governor	12 years
Colorado	S.C.	★	7	10	By court	Indefinite
Connecticut	S.C.	★	7 (f)	8	Legislative appointment (g)	8 years
Delaware	S.C.	★	5	12	Appointed by governor	12 years
Florida	S.C.	(h)	7	6	By court	2 years
Georgia	S.C.	★	7	6	By court	4 years
Hawaii	S.C.	★	5	10	Appointed by governor, with consent of Senate (i)	10 years
Idaho	S.C.	★	5	6	By court	4 years
Illinois	S.C.	★	7	10	By court	3 years
Indiana	S.C.	★	5	10 (i)	Judicial nominating commission appointment	5 years
Iowa	S.C.	★	9	8	By court	8 years or duration of term
Kansas	S.C.	★	7	6	Rotation by seniority	Indefinite
Kentucky	S.C.	★	7	8	By court	4 years
Louisiana	S.C.	★	8 (k)	10	By seniority of service	Duration of service
Maine	S.J.C.	★	7	7	Appointed by governor	7 years
Maryland	C.A.	★	7	10	Appointed by governor	Indefinite
Massachusetts	S.J.C.	★	7(l)	To age 70	Appointed by governor (m)	To age 70
Michigan	S.C.	★	7	8	By court	2 years
Minnesota	S.C.	★	7	6	Popular election	6 years
Mississippi	S.C.	★	9 (n)	8	By seniority of service	Duration of service
Missouri	S.C.	★	7	12	By court (o)	2 years
Montana	S.C.	★	7	8	Popular election	8 years
Nebraska	S.C.	★	7	6 (q)	Appointed by governor from Judicial Nominating Commission	Duration of service
Nevada	S.C.	★	5	6	Rotation	2 years
New Hampshire	S.C.	★	5	To age 70	Appointed by governor with approval of elected executive council	To age 70
New Jersey	S.C.	★	7	7 (t)	Appointed by governor, with consent of Senate	Duration of service
New Mexico	S.C.	★	5 (s)	8	By court	2 years
New York	C.A.	★	7	14	Appointed by governor from Judicial Nominating Commission	14 years
North Carolina	S.C.	★	7	8	Popular election	8 years
North Dakota	S.C.	★	5	10	By Supreme and district court judges	5 years (l)
Ohio	S.C.	★	7	6	Popular election	6 years
Oklahoma	S.C.	★	9	6	By court	2 years
Oregon	C.C.A.	★	5	6	By court	2 years
Pennsylvania	S.C.	★	7	6	By court	6 years
Rhode Island	S.C.	★	7	10	Rotation by seniority	Duration of term
South Carolina	S.C.	★	5	Life	Appointed by governor from Judicial Nominating Commission	Life
				10	Legislative election	10 years

See footnotes at end of table.

JUDICIARY

STATE COURTS OF LAST RESORT — Continued

State or other jurisdiction	Justices chosen (a)		No. of judges (b)	Term (in years) (c)	Chief justice	
	Name of court	At large			By district	Method of selection
South Dakota .....	S.C.	★	5	8	By court	4 years
Tennessee .....	S.C.	★	5	8	By court	4 years
Texas .....	S.C.	★	9	6	Partisan election	6 years
Utah .....	C.C.A.	★	9	6	Partisan election	6 years (v)
Vermont .....	S.C.	★	5	10 (w)	By court	4 years
Virginia .....	S.C.	★	5	6	Appointed by governor from Judicial Nomination Commission, with consent of Senate	6 years
Washington .....	S.C.	★	7	12	Seniority	Indefinite
West Virginia .....	S.C.	★	9	6	By court	4 years
Wisconsin .....	S.C.A.	★	5	12	Rotation by seniority	1 year
Wyoming .....	S.C.	★	7	10	Seniority	Until declined
Dist. of Columbia .....	S.C.	★	5	8	By court	At the pleasure of the court
American Samoa .....	C.A.	★	9	15	Judicial Nominating Commission appointment	4 years
Puerto Rico .....	H.C.	★	8 (x)	(y)	Appointed by Secretary of the Interior	(w)
	S.C.	★	7	To age 70	Appointed by Governor, with consent of Senate	To age 70

Sources: Court Statistics Project, *State Court Caseload Statistics, 1998* (National Center for State Courts 1999) and State Court Organization 1998; state constitutions, statutes and court administration offices.

Key:

S.C. — Supreme Court

S.C.A. — Supreme Court of Appeals

S.J.C. — Supreme Judicial Court

C.A. — Court of Appeals

C.C.A. — Court of Criminal Appeals

H.C. — High Court.

(a) See Table 4.4, "Selection and Retention of Judges," for details.

(b) Number includes chief justice.

(c) The initial term may be shorter. See Table 4.4, "Selection and Retention of Judges," for details.

(d) 9 justices sit in panels of 5 or en banc.

(e) A justice may serve more than one term as chief justice, but may not serve consecutive terms in that position.

(f) 7 justices sit in panels of 5 (membership rotates daily); upon order of chief justice, 6 or 7 may sit on panel.

(g) Governor nominates from candidates submitted by Judicial Selection Commission.

(h) Regional (5), Statewide(2), Regional based on District of Appeal.

(i) Judicial Selection Commission nominates.

(k) Initial two years; retention 10 years.

(l) Includes one assigned from courts of appeal.

(m) Chief Justices are appointed, until age 70, by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Executive (Governor's) Council.

(n) 9 justices sit in panels of 3 and en banc.

(o) Selection is typically rotated among the judges.

(p) Chief justice chosen statewide; associate judges chosen by district.

(q) More than three years for first election and every six years thereafter.

(r) Followed by tenure.

(s) 5 justices sit in panels of 3.

(t) Or expiration of term, whichever is first.

(u) Initially chosen by district; retention determined statewide.

(v) Presiding judge of Court of Criminal Appeals.

(w) Initial three years; retention 10 years.

(x) Chief judges and associate judges sit on appellate and trial divisions.

(y) For good behavior.