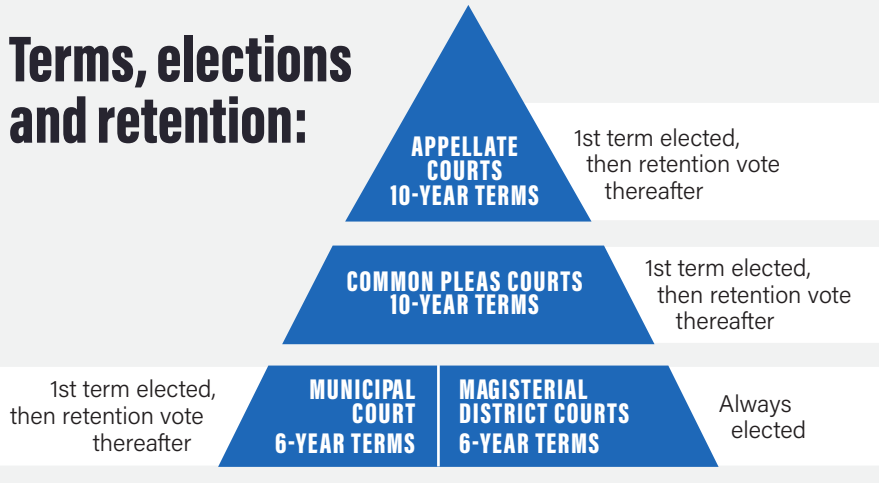


# How are judges elected in Pennsylvania?

Pa. judges are chosen in elections that occur in odd-numbered years.

## Terms, elections and retention:



## Qualifications:

- Pa. resident and U.S. citizen
- Ages 21 - 75
- State bar member (except MDJs who must be members of the bar or pass a qualifying exam)



## SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court, Superior Court and Commonwealth Court are appellate courts with statewide authority.

## SUPERIOR COURT

## COMMONWEALTH COURT

## COURTS OF COMMON PLEAS

Courts of Common Pleas are trial courts that preside over cases at the county level.

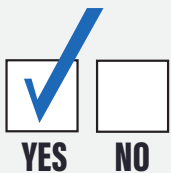
## MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT COURTS AND PHILADELPHIA MUNICIPAL COURT

Magisterial District and Municipal Courts preside over cases at the local level.

Pennsylvania has **60** judicial districts (seven include two counties), that have between **one** and **93** judges.



## What is a retention vote?



Judges run for retention unopposed. Their names appear on the ballot in the fall election and they are not affiliated with any political party. Voters vote "yes" to retain the judge or "no" to remove the judge.

If a jurist is not retained, the governor has the authority to appoint an interim judge with two-thirds Senate approval. The position is filled permanently in the next judicial election.

Retention votes only occur in the appellate, Courts of Common Pleas and Philadelphia Municipal Court. They do not occur in Magisterial District Courts.

