

Infographic for Immediate Release

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Highlighting Pennsylvania’s Intermediate Appellate Courts

HARRISBURG – Pennsylvania’s Superior and Commonwealth Courts both play a unique role in the state court system. Both Courts work to determine if errors were made at the trial court level, but handle different types of cases. Their judges both serve a 10-year term, up to age 75.

The infographic below provides a high-level overview of both Courts and can be used as a resource to help educate both students and the public about the work and role of Pennsylvania’s intermediate appellate courts. A high-resolution file of the graphic is available for download at www.pacourts.us under [Media Resources](#).

Pennsylvania's Intermediate Appellate Courts

What are intermediate appellate courts?
These courts serve as an intermediate step between the trial courts and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Both courts work to determine if errors were made at the trial court level, but have different jurisdictions. Their judges serve a 10-year term, up to age 75.

Superior Court
The appeals court for most PA citizens and businesses and one of the busiest intermediate appellate courts in the nation.
15 judges including a president judge.
Issues decisions that have a significant impact on Pennsylvania's economy and the quality of life for residents.
Hears appeals in criminal and most civil cases from the trial courts and on matters involving children and families.
Established in **1895**
Cases are usually heard by groups or panels of three judges but may also be heard en banc by nine judges.

Commonwealth Court
Only court like it in the country – specializing in issues of state and local government and regulatory agencies.
9 judges including a president judge.
Issues decisions that affect the relationship between state and local government and PA citizens.
Not only hears appeals, but sometimes sits like a trial court in certain cases – such as a constitutional challenge to a state law, a tax dispute, or an election matter.
Established in **1968**
Cases are generally heard by panels of three judges but can be heard by a single judge or by en banc panels of seven judges.

Diagram of the court system: MINOR COURTS, COURTS OF COMMON PLEAS (TRIAL COURTS), SUPERIOR COURT, COMMONWEALTH COURT, SUPREME COURT.

AOPC

PA Courts InfoShare is a monthly product of the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) that visually highlights the work of the courts with interesting data and statistics obtained through the judiciary’s case management systems, interactive dashboards and other research. Reproduction is permissible with source cited.

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