

## Wisconsin Circuit Court Fact Sheet

### What is the Wisconsin Circuit Court?

- The Wisconsin Circuit Courts are the main trial courts for civil and criminal cases in the Wisconsin
- The circuit courts hear cases first in almost all civil and criminal matters in the state
- They also hear cases appealed from Municipal Courts and from administrative hearings
- Both state and county governments fund circuit courts

### What do I need to know about circuit court judges?

- There are 257 circuit court judges in Wisconsin
- At least one circuit court judge serves in each of the state's 72 counties
- Voters elect judges in nonpartisan elections to serve six-year terms

### Circuit court rulings impact many people in Wisconsin, and the court's rulings decide:

Family law disputes

Voting rights

Labor rights

Civil rights

Disability rights, including guardianship and civil commitments

Public safety

Further reading: <https://www.wicourts.gov/courts/circuit/index.htm>

### How do you decide who to vote for?

#### 1. Decide what you are looking for in a candidate.

- *What issues are important to you?*
- *What qualities do you want in a leader?*
- *Which candidate's judicial philosophies align with your values?*

#### 2. Learn about the candidates.

- Visit their websites, watch candidate forums and interviews, go to [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org), seek other nonpartisan sources for information.
- *What are their qualifications?*
- *What are their judicial philosophies?*
- *What are their judicial records?*

#### 3. Sort it out.

- *Which candidate's judicial philosophies and views on the role of a Circuit Court Judge best match your own views?*
- *Who seems most prepared for the job?*
- *Who has the leadership qualities you are looking for?*