



# Oregon's State Courts Overview

Updated: November 2023

- ▶ A strong, fair, impartial court system **protects our rights** and our democracy.
- ▶ Oregon's courts are dedicated to **access, fairness, respect, and justice for all.**
- ▶ The courts listed below are all part of **Oregon's judicial branch.**
- ▶ **Learn more:** [courts.oregon.gov](https://courts.oregon.gov)



## Supreme Court

7 justices

This is Oregon's highest court. If someone believes the Court of Appeals or Tax Court made a mistake, they may seek review here. The Supreme Court selects which of these cases to review and decide. This court also hears direct appeals in death penalty cases, and cases about ballot measure titles and attorney discipline. The only court that may reverse or modify a decision of this court is the U.S. Supreme Court.

## Court of Appeals

13 judges

This is Oregon's intermediate appellate court. If someone appeals their case because they believe the circuit court made a mistake, the case goes here. This court also hears appeals from administrative agencies. It ranks as one of the busiest appellate courts in the nation.

## Tax Court

1 judge, 3 magistrates

All cases related to state tax laws go here.

## Circuit Courts

179 judges in 27 judicial districts

These are trial courts that handle all types of criminal and civil cases (except for tax cases). Most cases are addressed here — about 500,000 each year.

# Circuit Courts

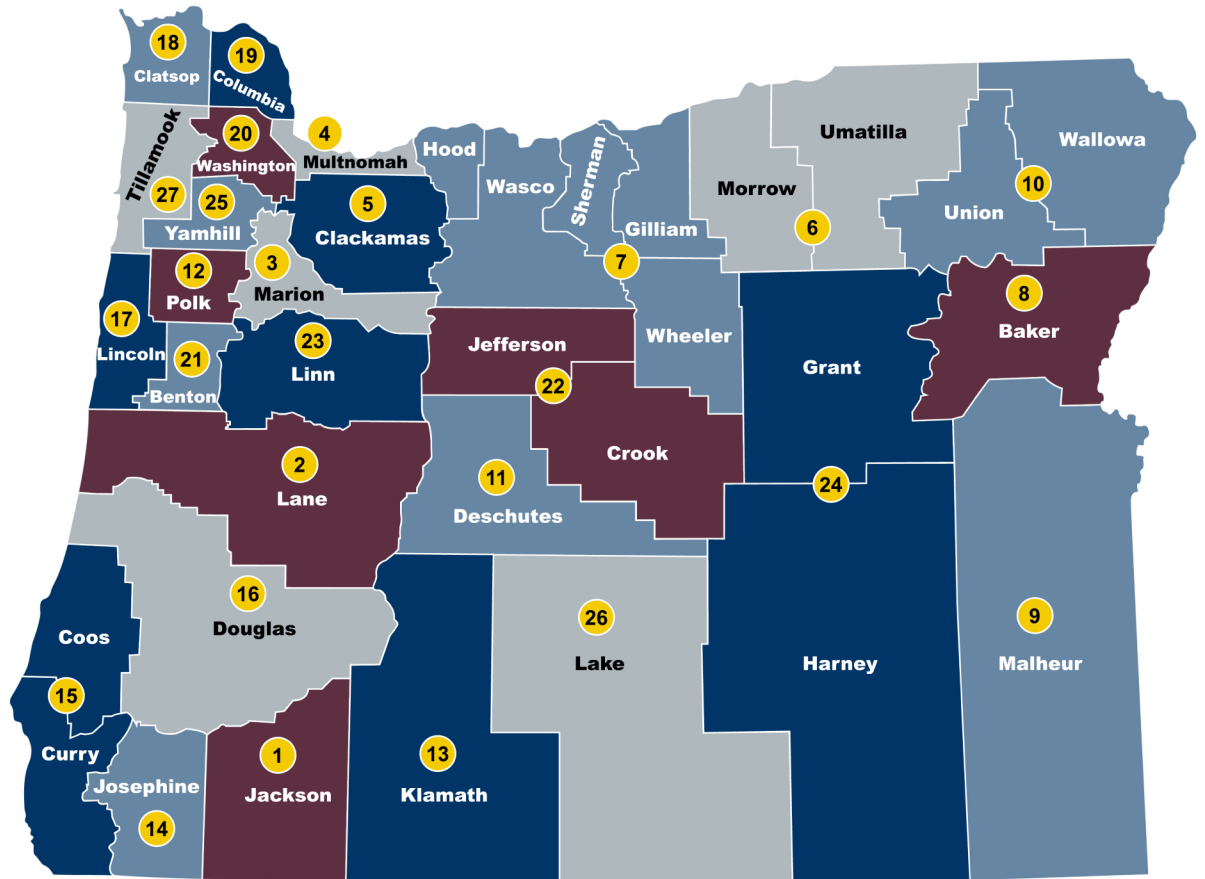
- ▶ A circuit court exists in every county. They're often located in the county courthouse, although they are not county courts — they are **state courts**.
- ▶ Circuit courts are trial courts, where cases are decided by a **judge or jury**.



## Oregon's 27 Judicial Districts

Some districts contain just one county, and some have more than one.

# Judicial district numbers



## Circuit courts handle a wide variety of cases, including:

- Felonies, misdemeanors
- Protective (restraining) orders
- Debt collection
- Home foreclosures
- Contract enforcement
- Personal injury
- Landlord-tenant issues
- Juvenile dependency (child neglect), termination of parental rights, juvenile delinquency matters



- Employment disputes
- Child support
- Divorce, child custody, adoption
- Civil commitment
- Probate
- Guardianship, conservatorship
- Appeals from some municipal court cases