



**Judicial independence** is a central theme of the United States Constitution, because one goal of the founding fathers was to improve upon the flawed court system imposed by the British. Judicial independence means that judges are free to decide cases fairly and impartially, relying only on the facts of the case and the law. It means judges are protected from political pressure from the legislature, special interest groups and the media.

Judicial independence ensures that cases are decided on their merits and what is just under the law, not on the prevailing political atmosphere at the time, thus protecting our constitutional rights.

Learn more!  
Contact the **Judicial  
Branch of Georgia** at  
[www.georgiacourts.org](http://www.georgiacourts.org)

**Here is how Georgia's Judicial Branch is Organized:**

<b>Court</b>	<b>Number of Judges</b>	<b>Length of Term</b>	<b>Elected by Whom?</b>
<b>State Supreme Court</b>	7	Six year, staggered term	Popular vote, statewide nonpartisan election
<b>Court of Appeals</b>	12	Six year, staggered term	Popular vote, statewide nonpartisan election
<b>Superior Court</b>	197 in 49 judicial circuits	Four years	Popular vote, district-wide nonpartisan election
<b>State Court</b>	116 in 72 circuits	Four years	Popular vote, county-wide nonpartisan election
<b>Juvenile Court</b>	120 covering 159 districts	Four years	Not elected, appointed by the Superior Court
<b>Probate Court</b>	159	Four years	Popular vote, county-wide election
<b>Magistrate Court</b>	159	Four years	Popular vote, county-wide election

Georgians will come in contact with a court for many reasons such as serving on a jury, settling a traffic ticket or lawsuit, to probate a family member's will, to adopt a child, negotiate child support or child custody, or as a result of being charged with a crime. As citizens of the state of Georgia and the United States, we are guaranteed the right to a fair and speedy trial and understanding the role of the courts is critical to protecting their impartiality.

