

## Agency Purpose

**M**innesota's Court of Appeals is the state's intermediate appellate court, providing citizens with prompt and deliberate review of final decisions of the trial courts, state agencies, and local governments.

This error-correcting court hears and decides cases in three-judge panels.

- ⇒ **Mission:** To provide the people with impartial, clear, and timely appellate decisions made according to law.
- ⇒ **Vision:** To be an accessible intermediate appellate court that renders justice under the law fairly and expeditiously through clear, well-reasoned decisions and promotes cooperative effort, innovation, diversity, and the professional and personal growth of all personnel.

## Core Functions

The Court of Appeals has jurisdiction over all final decisions of the district court, except first-degree murder convictions, which are appealed directly to the Supreme Court. The Court of Appeals has jurisdiction to review interlocutory decisions, administrative agency decisions, and rules and decisions of the commissioner of Employment and Economic Development.

In support of these core functions, the Court of Appeals:

- ⇒ Manages its cases to ensure prompt resolution within the statutory 90-day time limitation from oral argument to decision.
- ⇒ Enhances the knowledge and skills of its staff by regular training.
- ⇒ Explores the use of technology to improve its ability to provide timely and effective access to the court.

## Operations

Through its decisions and administration, the Court of Appeals has an impact on all Minnesotans.

In their adjudicative roles, the judges of the Court of Appeals are assisted by law clerks. Administratively, they are assisted by the Chief Attorney's Office and the State Court Administrator's Office.

The Court of Appeals hears cases throughout the state as well as in St. Paul. The court has installed interactive video as an additional measure to provide timely access.

The Court of Appeals issues a published opinion, unpublished opinion, or order opinion on each case it considers. The judges also share responsibility for hundreds of special term opinions, orders on motions, and petitions filed with the court.

With the assistance of a computerized case management system, the court monitors the progress of every appeal to ensure that there are no unnecessary delays in processing. The court demonstrates the value of aggressive, hands-on management of its cases.

## Budget

The Court of Appeals is funded 100% from General Fund direct appropriations.

## At A Glance

- ◆ The Court of Appeals has 16 judges and considers more than 2,000 appeals each year.
- ◆ By law, the court must issue a decision within 90 days after oral arguments – the shortest deadline imposed on any appellate court in the nation.
- ◆ The court expedites decisions on child protection cases, child custody cases, mental health commitments, and other requested matters.
- ◆ Court of Appeals' decisions are the final ruling in about 95% of the appeals filed each year.
- ◆ The Court of Appeals operates in a constantly changing environment.
- ◆ Laws, case types, and legal sanctions change annually.
- ◆ Caseload volume is determined by the trial courts and by other branches of government.
- ◆ The Minnesota Courts regularly review their effectiveness by monitoring:
  - ⇒ case filing trends;
  - ⇒ case clearance rates; and
  - ⇒ elapsed case time from filing to disposition.

Costs of non-judicial personnel use 51% of the resources of the Court of Appeals. Another 36% goes to the personnel costs of the judicial personnel. The remaining 13% is for operations (including items such as legal research materials and supplies.)

The Court of Appeals has 80.75 full-time equivalent employees.

**Contact**

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Dollars in Thousands

	Current		Forecast Base		Biennium 2006-07
	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	
<b><u>Direct Appropriations by Fund</u></b>					
<b>General</b>					
Current Appropriation	7,898	7,939	7,939	7,939	15,878
<b>Forecast Base</b>	<b>7,898</b>	<b>7,939</b>	<b>7,939</b>	<b>7,939</b>	<b>15,878</b>
Change		0	0	0	0
% Biennial Change from 2004-05					0.3%
<b><u>Expenditures by Fund</u></b>					
<b>Direct Appropriations</b>					
General	7,897	7,940	7,939	7,939	15,878
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,897</b>	<b>7,940</b>	<b>7,939</b>	<b>7,939</b>	<b>15,878</b>
<b><u>Expenditures by Category</u></b>					
Total Compensation	6,802	6,903	6,903	6,903	13,806
Other Operating Expenses	1,095	1,037	1,036	1,036	2,072
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,897</b>	<b>7,940</b>	<b>7,939</b>	<b>7,939</b>	<b>15,878</b>
<b><u>Expenditures by Program</u></b>					
Court Of Appeals	7,897	7,940	7,939	7,939	15,878
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,897</b>	<b>7,940</b>	<b>7,939</b>	<b>7,939</b>	<b>15,878</b>
<b>Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)</b>	<b>80.8</b>	<b>80.8</b>	<b>80.8</b>	<b>80.8</b>	