

James S. Sfekas 1987  
 Fred E. Waldrop 1981  
 Gerard W. Wittstadt 1986  
 Joseph T. O'Melia, *Administrative Clerk*

District 9

Harford County — 3 Judges

Charles J. Kelly, *Administrative Judge* 1981  
 Harry St. A. O'Neill 1981  
 Edwin H. W. Harlan, Jr. 1988  
 Edward Utz, *Administrative Clerk*

District 10

Carroll and Howard counties — 4 Judges

J. Thomas Nissel, *Administrative Judge* Howard, 1981  
 Luke K. Burns, Jr. Carroll, 1988  
 Raymond J. Kane, Jr. Howard, 1988  
 Donald M. Smith Carroll, 1981  
 Martha Bush, *Administrative Clerk*

District 11

Frederick and Washington counties — 4 Judges

J. Louis Boublitz, *Administrative Judge* Washington, 1981  
 Stanley Y. Bennett Frederick, 1981  
 William W. Wenner Frederick, 1988  
 Daniel W. Moylan Hagerstown, 1989  
 Dixie L. Lecates, *Administrative Clerk*

District 12

Allegheny and Garrett counties — 3 Judges

Lewis R. Jones, *Administrative Judge* Garrett, 1981  
 Miller Bowen Allegheny, 1981  
 Milton Gerson Allegheny, 1981  
 James S. Stafford, *Administrative Clerk*

A proposed constitutional amendment in 1969, which was ratified by the voters in the State at the November 1970 general election, brought into existence the Maryland District Court, a statewide court of limited jurisdiction. The initial implementing legislation for the court was contained in Chapter 528 of the Acts of 1970 and was further supplemented by Chapter 423, Acts of 1971, and by other 1971 legislation.

The court commenced operation on July 5, 1971, and functions on a statewide basis in every county in the State and Baltimore City. The District Court

is part of the State's judicial system, is a court of record, and replaces entirely the theretofore existing justices of the peace, the county trial magistrates, the People's Courts in certain counties, the People's Court of Baltimore City, and the Municipal Court of Baltimore City. It has uniform jurisdiction throughout the State and, in Montgomery County only, it has also been given juvenile court jurisdiction as existed prior thereto in the People's Court for that county. Although the District Court is a court of limited jurisdiction it has been given expanded jurisdiction over the prior existing lower court systems.

In accordance with constitutional provisions, the first Chief Judge of the District Court was appointed by the Governor. Subsequent chief judges will be appointed by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals from among the judges of the court. By statute the State is divided into twelve judicial districts. In addition to the Chief Judge, eighty-five associate judges are authorized by law. District Court judges are appointed by the Governor for ten-year terms, subject to confirmation by the Senate. At the expiration of a ten-year term, the name of the judge is automatically presented to the Senate for confirmation for an additional term. Judges must meet the same qualifications set out in the Constitution for judges of the appellate courts and courts of general jurisdiction. They must devote their full time to their judicial duties, and they are prohibited from engaging in any way in the practice of law.

Within the District Court system there is a Chief Clerk appointed by the Chief Judge. The Chief Judge also designates from among the judges an Administrative Judge for each district. Each district also has an administrative clerk. In addition, a District Court Clerk for each county within a district and all other necessary court employees are chosen. Further commissioners are appointed by the administrative judge of the district with the approval of the Chief Judge to function in each county and in Baltimore City as may be needed. The commissioners perform functions similar to the old Committing Magistrates with respect to issuance of arrest warrants, setting bail or collateral, or other terms of pre-trial release pending a hearing or incarceration prior to hearing.

The District Court has jurisdiction in criminal, traffic, and civil matters. It has virtually no equity jurisdiction and has juvenile jurisdiction in Montgomery County only. In criminal cases the court may conduct preliminary hearings in felony cases; it has general jurisdiction over misdemeanors, whether common law, statutory, or established by ordinance, and over criminal