

apply to trials of Appeals from judgments of the District Court, nor to criminal cases below the grade of felony, except when the punishment is confinement in the Penitentiary; and this Section shall be subject to such provisions as may hereafter be made by Law.

**SEC. 23.** The Judges of the respective Circuit Courts of this State, and of the Courts of Baltimore City, shall render their decisions, in all cases argued before them, or submitted for their judgment, within two months after the same shall have been so argued or submitted.

**SEC. 24.**<sup>117</sup> The salary of each Chief Judge and of each Associate Judge of the Circuit Court shall not be diminished during his continuance in office.

**SEC. 25.**<sup>118</sup> There shall be a Clerk of the Circuit Court for each County, who shall be elected by a plurality of the qualified voters of said County, and shall hold his office for four years from the time of his election, and until his successor is elected and qualified, and be re-eligible, subject to be removed for wilful neglect of duty or other misdemeanor in office, on conviction in a Court of Law. In case of a vacancy in the office of Clerk of a Circuit Court, the Judges of said Court shall have power to fill such vacancy until the general election for Delegates to the General Assembly, to be held next thereafter, when a successor shall be elected for the term of four years.

**SEC. 26.**<sup>119</sup> The Clerks shall appoint, subject to the confirmation of the Judges of their respective Courts, as many deputies under them, as the Judges shall deem necessary, to perform, together with themselves, the duties of the office, who shall be removable by the Judges for incompetency, or neglect of duty, and whose compensation shall be according to existing, or future provisions of the General Assembly. In Washington County, all deputy clerks and other clerks shall be appointed pursuant to and be removable according to the merit system procedure established by law for these deputies and clerks. All deputy clerks and other employees of the office of the Clerk of the Criminal Court of Baltimore City, excepting the Clerk, shall be selected pursuant to and be removable according to

the merit system procedure established by law for these deputies and clerks. Any employee of the office of the Clerk of the Criminal Court of Baltimore who has been employed for at least six months on July 1, 1974 shall be a member of the classified service of the State.

#### *Part IV— Courts of Baltimore City.*

**SEC. 27.** There shall be in the Eighth Judicial Circuit, six Courts, to be styled the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City, the Superior Court of Baltimore City, the Court of Common Pleas, the Baltimore City Court, the Circuit Court of Baltimore City<sup>120</sup> and the Criminal Court.<sup>121</sup>

**SEC. 28.**<sup>122</sup> The Superior Court of Baltimore City, the Court of Common Pleas, and the Baltimore City Court shall each have concurrent jurisdiction in all civil common Law cases, and concurrently, all the jurisdiction which the Superior Court of Baltimore City and the Court of Common Pleas now have, except jurisdiction in Equity, and except in applications for the benefit of the Insolvent Laws of Maryland, and in cases of Appeal from judgments of the District Court in said City, whether civil or criminal, or arising under the ordinances of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, of all of which appeal cases the Baltimore City Court shall have exclusive jurisdiction; and the said Court of Common Pleas shall have exclusive jurisdiction in all applications for the benefit of the Insolvent Laws of Maryland, and the supervision and control of the Trustees thereof.

**SEC. 29.** The Circuit Court of Baltimore City shall have exclusive jurisdiction in Equity within the limits of said city, and all such jurisdiction as the present Circuit Court of Baltimore City has; provided, the said Court shall not have jurisdiction in applications for the writ of *habeas corpus* in cases of persons charged with criminal offenses.

**SEC. 30.** The Criminal Court of Baltimore shall have and exercise all the jurisdiction, now held and exercised by the Criminal Court of Baltimore, except in such appeal cases as are herein assigned to the Baltimore City Court.

<sup>117</sup> Thus amended by Chapter 99, Acts of 1956, ratified November 6, 1956.

<sup>118</sup> Thus amended by Chapter 99, Acts of 1956, ratified November 6, 1956.

<sup>119</sup> Thus amended by Chapter 889, Acts of 1974, ratified November 5, 1974.

<sup>120</sup> Circuit Court No. 2 established by Chapter 194, Acts of 1888.

<sup>121</sup> Criminal Court No. 2 established by rule of the Supreme Bench, December 21, 1897. See *Jackson v. State*, 87 Md. 191. of Baltimore.

<sup>122</sup> Thus amended by Chapter 681, Acts of 1977, ratified November 7, 1978.