

COURT OF APPEALS

Chief Judge:

Robert C. Murphy, Second Appellate Circuit Towson, 1989

Associate Judges:

Marvin H. Smith, First Appellate Circuit Federalsburg, 1985

Rita C. Davidson, Third Appellate Circuit Chevy Chase, 1990

James F. Couch, Jr., Fourth Appellate Circuit Adelphi, 1988

John C. Eldridge, Fifth Appellate Circuit Annapolis, 1991

Lawrence F. Rodowsky, Sixth Appellate Circuit Baltimore, 1992

Harry A. Cole, Sixth Appellate Circuit Baltimore, 1988

James H. Norris, Jr., *Acting Clerk of the Court*

Robert C. Franke, *Chief Deputy Clerk*

Virginia S. Hubbard, *Deputy Clerk IV*

Mary J. Morris, *Deputy Clerk III*

Jane A. Faudree, *Deputy Clerk II*

Courts of Appeal Building Telephone: 269-3341
Annapolis 21401

The Court of Appeals of Maryland, the highest tribunal in the State of Maryland, was created by the Constitution of 1776. In the early years of its existence, the Court met at various locations within the State, but since 1851 has sat only in Annapolis. The term of the Court begins the second Monday of September in each year.

The Court is presently composed of seven members, one from each of the first five Appellate Judicial Circuits and two from the Sixth Appellate Judicial Circuit (Baltimore City). Members of the Court, after initial appointment by the Governor and confirmation by the Senate, run for office on their records without opposition. If the voters reject the retention in office of a judge, or if the vote is tied, that office becomes vacant and must be filled by a new appointment. Otherwise, the incumbent judge is retained in office for a ten-year term. The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals is designated by the Governor and is the constitutional administrative head of the Maryland judicial system.

By legislation effective January 1, 1975, the Court of Appeals hears cases almost exclusively by way of certiorari (i.e., on review). As a result,

its formerly excessive caseload has been reduced to a manageable level so as to allow it to devote its efforts to the most important and far-reaching decisions. At present the Court may review a case decided by the Court of Special Appeals or may bring up for review cases filed in that court before they are decided there. The Court of Appeals may also review certain decisions rendered at the circuit court level if those courts have acted in an appellate capacity with respect to an appeal from the District Court. The Court is empowered to adopt rules of judicial administration, practice, and procedure, which have the force of law. It also reviews recommendations of the State Board of Law Examiners, and conducts disciplinary proceedings involving members of the bench and bar.

During the conduct of its business, the Court of Appeals must devote considerable time and effort to the exercise of its rule-making functions, and it holds a number of hearings throughout the year in regard to the adoption or amendment of rules of practice and procedure. It also must apportion some of its time to the supervision of the activities of the Attorney Grievance Commission. The ever-increasing number of petitions for certiorari also consume more of the Court's time with each passing year. Other regular duties, such as the admission of persons to the practice of law, also claim a portion of the Court's time (Code Courts Article, secs. 12-301 through 12-307).

The clerk of the Court of Appeals is appointed by the Court. The clerk maintains the docket, receives the briefs and transcripts of all cases filed with the Court, and maintains official custody of the decisions of the Court, the Acts of the General Assembly, and of all other records that the law may require to be filed with the Court (Const. 1867, Art. IV, sec. 17).

COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS

Chief Judge:

Richard P. Gilbert, Sixth Appellate Circuit Baltimore, 1987

Associate Judges:

William H. Adkins II, First Appellate Circuit Easton, 1984

Paul E. Alpert, Second Appellate Circuit Towson, 1984

Vacancy, Third Appellate Circuit

John J. Garrity, Fourth Appellate Circuit University Park, 1984