What is the Wisconsin Court of Appeals?

- Intermediate appellate court: hears all cases appealed from the circuit courts (local courts in each county) and rules in favor of one party. Will only overrule circuit court decisions if an important legal error was made.
- Does not decide facts of a case, but rather makes decisions on whether the law was appropriately applied to the facts. Facts are determined by the circuit court. The Court of Appeals corrects legal errors in rulings from circuit courts.
- Consists of 16 judges serving in four districts.
- 3-judge panels hear nearly all cases, but appeals from mental health commitments and protective placements are almost always decided by a single judge. Other cases heard by a single judge include small claims actions, municipal ordinance violations, traffic violations, juvenile, and misdemeanor cases, unless a panel is requested.
- Decisions made by the Court of Appeals may be appealed to the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

What do I need to know about the Judges on the Court of Appeals?

- Judges are chosen in nonpartisan elections from their respective districts to serve for six-year terms. There are no term limits for judges.
- Judges are elected in April.
- There is no jury and the court does not hear testimony. Judges make decisions based on the evidence presented at the circuit court and written briefs of the case. The Court of Appeals rarely hears oral arguments.

Why does the Court of Appeals matter to voters with disabilities?

- The Court of Appeals hears cases about issues important to people with disabilities such as voting rights, mental health commitments, employee rights, and more.
- You choose these judges in nonpartisan elections. Make sure your voice is heard in choosing qualified and fair judges.
- If your case was decided unfairly, this is the court that provides important oversight to ensure laws were appropriately followed.
- Your rights are at stake. The Court of Appeals determines binding legal precedent for interpretation of laws unless overruled by the Wisconsin Supreme Court.
### HOW DO YOU EVALUATE JUDICIAL CANDIDATES?

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<tr>
<th>1. Decide what you are looking for.</th>
<th>2. Learn about the candidates.</th>
<th>3. Sort it out.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What issues are important to you?</td>
<td>Visit their websites, watch candidate forums and interviews, go to VOTE411.org, seek other nonpartisan sources for information.</td>
<td>Which candidate’s judicial philosophies and views on the role of an Appeals Court Judge best match your own views?</td>
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<td>What qualities do you want in a leader?</td>
<td>Review candidate websites, campaign materials, or contact the campaign to ask questions.</td>
<td>Who seems most prepared for the job?</td>
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<td>Which candidate’s judicial philosophies align with your values?</td>
<td>What are their qualifications?</td>
<td>Who has the leadership qualities you are looking for?</td>
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