

## WHAT IS THE N.C. SUPREME COURT & WHAT DOES IT DO?

The state Supreme Court is North Carolina's highest court. It only hears appeals\*, so it holds no trials and has no jury. Its primary purpose is to consider whether errors occurred in lower courts or in how judges interpreted our laws.

*\*Appeal: A challenge to a previous legal decision*

**The N.C. Supreme Court can determine rights for things such as abortion, state maps, gun control, and other issues that affect us.**

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

### HOW DO JUSTICES GET THE JOB?

Justices are elected to 8-year terms by voters like you.

### Voting Rights

In May 2022, the N.C. Supreme Court protected voting rights for people with previous felony charges — expanding voting rights to tens of thousands of voters.

### Immigration

The N.C. Supreme Court determines how federal immigration law and legislation should be applied within state. For example, a 2016 case led to a requirement that defendants in state court must be informed of the immigration consequences of taking a plea deal (*State v. Nkiam*, SC declined action after hearing oral arguments, which upheld appeals court decision).

**Cases involving state laws are tried in State Trial Courts**

Defendant loses and appeals

**Intermediate Appellate Courts**

Further appeal

**N.C. Supreme Court**

Decisions can be appealed if they raise a constitutional question

**U.S. Supreme Court**

### WHO IS ON THE N.C. SUPREME COURT?

1 chief justice  
6 associate justices

### Ethnic studies in schools

N.C. Supreme court decisions can affect funding for N.C. public schools, which can determine access to adequate resources and teachers for students.

### Redistricting

In February 2022, the State Supreme Court struck down unfair district maps and ordered them to be redrawn by the state legislature.

**VOTE** for your Supreme Court Justices!

The N.C. Supreme Court is an important part of checks and balances in our judicial system, and **voters have the power to choose who's in it.**