

INTRODUCTION

This report, The Arizona Courts: Data Report for FY 2003, Volume I, presents caseload, revenue, expenditures, and personnel statewide summaries, and detailed information on individual general jurisdiction and Appellate Courts. It is intended to supplement the Report of the Arizona Judicial Department 2003 for persons and agencies who are interested in or involved with budgeting, planning, and administration of Arizona courts. The term "FY 2003" in this report refers to the period beginning July 1, 2002 and ending June 30, 2003. All tables reflect this fiscal year period.

The sections in this volume include **Appellate Courts, Tax Court, Superior Court, Adult Probation, and Juvenile Court/Probation**. If you are interested in obtaining The Arizona Courts: Data Report for FY 2003, Volume II, which covers **Limited Jurisdiction Courts**, please contact the Court Programs Unit or visit www.supreme.state.az.us/stats. For easy reference, each section is identified by the appropriate heading located near the bottom of each divider page.

Caseload statistics are compiled from monthly statistical reports submitted to the Supreme Court by the individual Appellate, Tax, and Superior Courts and each probation department. Incomplete or inconsistent information, where detected, is footnoted. **While the statistics are checked for mathematical accuracy, they are not audited by the Supreme Court.**

Arizona has two appellate courts: the Court of Appeals (two divisions) is the intermediate appellate court, and the Supreme Court is the court of last resort. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the state and has administrative supervision over all the courts in the state. Its primary duties are to review appeals and to provide rules of procedure for all the courts in Arizona. Five justices serve on the Supreme Court for a regular term of six years. One justice is selected by fellow justices to serve as Chief Justice for a five year term. In addition to case work, the Chief Justice supervises the administrative work of the court.

The Court of Appeals was established in 1965 as an intermediate appellate court and consists of two divisions: Division One in Phoenix with sixteen judges, and Division Two in Tucson with six judges. The Court of Appeals has jurisdiction in all matters and reviews all decisions properly appealed from Superior Court.

The Superior Court, which has a division in all 15 counties in Arizona, is the state's only general jurisdiction court. Superior Court judges hear all types of cases except small claims, minor offenses, or violations of city codes and ordinances. In addition, the Superior Court acts as an appellate court to hear appeals from decisions made in the Justice of the Peace and Municipal Courts. In counties with more than one Superior Court judge, a specialized juvenile court is established. One or more Superior Court judges are assigned to hear juvenile cases regarding delinquency, incorrigibility and dependency.

The Arizona Tax Court, established in 1988 to decide tax appeals statewide, is a department of the Superior Court in Maricopa County. The tax court has jurisdiction over all cases in the state involving imposing, assessing or collecting a tax, and all questions of law and fact relating to tax disputes.

Another division of each Superior Court is the probation department. Each Superior Court has either a separate or combined adult and juvenile probation department, and each probation officer is considered an employee of the court.