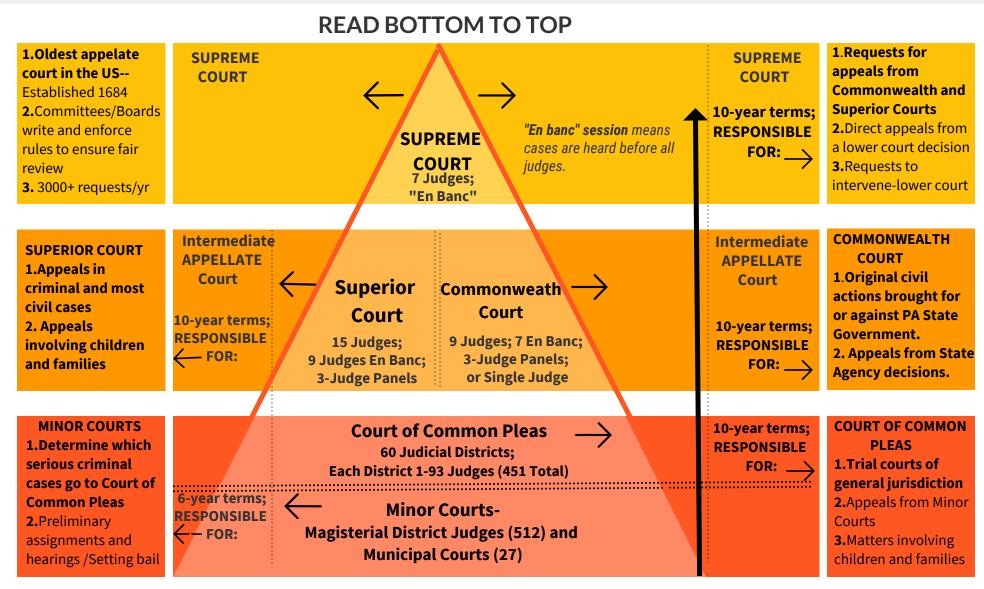
Pennsylvania's Unified Judicial System

Article V of the PA State Constitution established a pyramid-like structure for courts, closely resembling the federal system: all courts are to be "united" for the common good. Three "Appellate" Courts receive applications for the reversal of decisions (appeals) from the lower courts. The Supreme Court reviews appeals from the Superior and Commonwealth Courts. Superior Court handles appeals in criminal and civil cases from the Court of Common Pleas. Commonwealth Court handles original civil actions brought for or against the Commonwealth (PA State Government), and appeals from PA State agency decisions. Assigned by district, Court of Common Pleas are the most numerous courts and are trial courts of general jurisdiction. Magisterial District Courts help decide which serious criminal cases go to the Court of Common Pleas.



Source: pacourts.us/learn