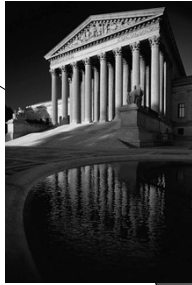


## Introduction to the Court Systems of the US



### Functions and Organization

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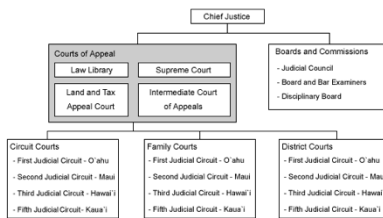
## State Courts

- Historical Development
- Generic organization: trial, appeals, and “supreme”
- Some states have “extra courts”
  - Lower Courts
  - Higher Courts (i.e. “Superior” “Circuit” Court)
  - Appellate Courts
  - Supreme Court of some kind
  - Dispute or Alternative Resolution

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## Picture of Court Organization in Hawai’i



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## Overview of Hawai’i State Court System

- Trial Courts
  - Circuit Court (4 geographical districts)
  - Family Court
  - District Court (“lower court”)
- Intermediate Court of Appeals
- Supreme Court

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## Four “Circuits” in HI

- First Judicial Circuit - Consists of the island of O’ahu and other islands of the State not in any other circuit.
- Second Judicial Circuit - Consists of the islands of Maui, Moloka’i, Lana’i, Kaho’olawe and Molokini.
- Third Judicial Circuit - Consists of the island of Hawai’i.
- Fifth Judicial Circuit - Consists of the islands of Kaua’i and Ni’ihau.
- The Fourth Judicial Circuit, which represented a portion of the island of Hawai’i, was eliminated in 1943 when it merged into the Third Circuit.

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## Trial Courts in Hawai’i

- Circuit Court (4 geographical districts)
  - General Jurisdiction for civil and criminal cases
  - Exclusive jurisdiction for probate, guardianship, criminal felonies, and civil cases worth more than \$20,000
- Family Court
  - Hears matters involving children, domestic relations, domestic violence, and others
- District Court (“lower court”)
  - Hears minor crimes including non felony criminal cases, traffic, small claims, and civil cases worth less than \$10,000
  - [http://www.courts.state.hi.us/page\\_server/Courts/District/3E74279C1AFABC4DEBD911104B.html](http://www.courts.state.hi.us/page_server/Courts/District/3E74279C1AFABC4DEBD911104B.html)

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## Appellate Courts in HI

- Intermediate Court of Appeals
  - “ ” HI  
Supreme Court over all trial courts
- Hawai’i Supreme Court
  - Highest court in the state
  - 1 Chief Justice and 4 Associate Justices

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## Federal Courts

- Federal District Court
  - 94 separate districts
- Federal Appeals Court (“US Court of Appeals”)
  - 12 Circuits and HI in 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit
- US Supreme Court

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