

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The forerunner of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia was the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, which Congress created in 1863.¹ In addition to adjudicating local issues, the Court was vested with the same powers and jurisdiction enjoyed by other district courts.²

Congress initially authorized four judgeships for the Court, with the president nominating one as the Chief Justice. In a manner similar to the Supreme Court of the United States, when a vacancy occurred in the Chief Justiceship, it was the president's option either to nominate someone from outside the Court or to elevate a sitting member (who would then have to be confirmed again by the Senate). This practice was displaced by the norm of seniority common to the other district courts in 1948.³

This court is the only judicial district in the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia; it has fifteen judgeships.

Statutory History		
<i>Seat</i>	<i>Legislation</i>	<i>Authority</i>
DC.ST.01 (Chief Justice)	Act of March 3, 1863	12 STAT. 762
DC.ST.02	Act of March 3, 1863	12 STAT. 762
DC.ST.03	Act of March 3, 1863	12 STAT. 762
DC.ST.04	Act of March 3, 1863	12 STAT. 762
DC.ST.05	Act of June 21, 1870	16 STAT. 161
DC.ST.06	Act of February 25, 1879	20 STAT. 320
DC.ST.07	Act of December 20, 1928	45 STAT. 1056

¹Act of March 3, 1863, 12 STAT. 762. In fact the original name of the court when the District was founded in 1800 was the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia. A separate Criminal Court was created in 1838. The reason for creating the new court in 1863 was to abolish the Supreme Court, which was alleged to have at least one member with secessionist tendencies. See the Honorable Matthew F. McGuire, *An Anecdotal History of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia 1801-1976* (Washington: United States District Court for the District of Columbia, 1976).

²Nonetheless, the Court was not awarded the status of a judicial district until the Act of June 25, 1936, 49 STAT. 1921.

³Act of June 25, 1948, 62 STAT. 869, 875.

DC.ST.08	Act of June 19, 1930	46 STAT. 785
DC.ST.09	Act of June 19, 1930	46 STAT. 785
DC.ST.10	Act of May 31, 1938	32 STAT. 584
DC.ST.11	Act of May 31, 1938	32 STAT. 584
DC.ST.12	Act of May 31, 1938	32 STAT. 584
DC.ST.13	Act of August 3, 1949	63 STAT. 493
DC.ST.14	Act of August 3, 1949	63 STAT. 493
DC.ST.15	Act of August 3, 1949	63 STAT. 493

Seat Histories					
<i>Position #</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of Confirmation</i>	<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Party</i>
DC.ST.01.01 (Chief Justice)	Cartter, David Kellogg	March 11, 1863	April 16, 1887	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.01.02	Bingham, Edward Franklin	January 23, 1888 ⁴	April 30, 1903	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.01.03	Clabaugh, Harry M.	November 16, 1903 ⁵	March 6, 1914	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.01.04	Covington, James Harry	June 15, 1914	January 1, 1918	Resigned	Democrat
DC.ST.01.05	McCoy, Walter Irving	May 22, 1918	December 8, 1929	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.01.06	Wheat, Alfred A.	June 4, 1930	December 31, 1941	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.01.07	Eicher, Edward Clayton	January 20, 1942	November 29, 1941	Deceased	Democrat

⁴Recess appointment, April 22, 1887.

⁵Recess appointment, April 1, 1903.

DC.ST.01.08	Laws, Bolitha	February 22, 1945	November 14, 1958	Deceased	Democrat
DC.ST.01.09	Walsh, Leonard P.	September 9, 1959	October 5, 1971	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.01.10	Flannery, Thomas A.	December 1, 1971	May 10, 1985	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.01.11	Revercomb, George Hughes	December 16, 1985	August 1, 1993	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.01.12	Robertson, James	October 7, 1994	Active	Active	Democrat
DC.ST.02.01	Fisher, George Purnell	March 11, 1863	May 18, 1870	Resigned	Republican
DC.ST.02.02	Humphreys, David Campbell	May 10, 1870	July 12, 1879	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.02.03	James, Charles Pinckney	December 10, 1879	December 1, 1892	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.02.04	Cole, Charles Cleaves	January 28, 1893	April 22, 1901	Resigned	Republican
DC.ST.02.05	Anderson, Thomas H.	February 4, 1902 ⁶	October 1, 1916	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.02.06	Hitz, William	January 2, 1917 ⁷	February 6, 1931	Elevated to D.C. Circuit	Democrat
DC.ST.02.07	Proctor, James McPherson	February 25, 1931	March 5, 1948	Elevated to D.C. Circuit	Republican
DC.ST.02.08	Tamm, Edward Allen	March 29, 1949 ⁸	March 11, 1965	Elevated to D.C. Circuit	Democrat
DC.ST.02.09	Gasch, Oliver	August 11, 1965	November 30, 1981	Retired	Republican

⁶Recess appointment, April 20, 1901.

⁷Recess appointment, November 15, 1916.

⁸Recess appointment, June 22, 1948.

DC.ST.02.10	Jackson, Thomas Penfield	June 24, 1982	January 31, 2002	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.02.11	Collyer, Rosemary M.	November 14, 2002	Active	Active	Republican
DC.ST.03.01	Olin, Abram Baldwin	March 11, 1863	January 13, 1879	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.03.02	Hagner, Alexander Burton	January 21, 1879	June 1, 1903	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.03.03	Wright, Daniel Thew	November 17, 1903	November 15, 1914	Resigned	Republican
DC.ST.03.04	Siddons, Frederick Lincoln	January 15, 1915	June 19, 1931	Deceased	Democrat
DC.ST.03.05	O'Donoghue, Daniel William	January 26, 1932 ⁹	October 31, 1946	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.03.06	Curran, Edward M.	February 3, 1947 ¹⁰	April 2, 1971	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.03.07	Richey, Charles R.	April 29, 1971	March 19, 1997	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.03.08	Roberts, Richard W.	June 5, 1998	Active	Active	Democrat
DC.ST.04.01	Wylie, Andrew	January 20, 1864 ¹¹	May 1, 1885	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.04.02	Merrick, William Matthew	March 30, 1886 ¹²	February 4, 1889	Deceased	Democrat

⁹Recess appointment, October 28, 1931.

¹⁰Recess appointment, October 16, 1946.

¹¹Recess appointment, March 18, 1863.

¹²Recess appointment, May 1, 1885.

DC.ST.04.03	Bradley, Andrew Coyle	March 23, 1889	May 5, 1902	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.04.04	Gould, Ashley Mulgrave	December 8, 1902	May 20, 1921	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.04.05	Hoehling, Adolph A., Jr.	June 13, 1921	January 1, 1927	Resigned	Republican
DC.ST.04.06	Gordon, Peyton	March 29, 1928	February 4, 1941	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.04.07	McGuire, Matthew Francis	July 29, 1941	October 7, 1966	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.04.08	Robinson, Aubrey E., Jr.	October 20, 1966	March 1, 1992	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.04.09	Urbina, Ricardo M. ¹³	June 15, 1994	Active	Active	Democrat
DC.ST.05.01	MacArthur, Arthur	July 15, 1870	April 1, 1887	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.05.02	Montgomery, Martin V.	January 26, 1888 ¹⁴	April 1, 1887	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.05.03	McComas, Louis Emory	January 25, 1893 ¹⁵	March 3, 1899	Resigned	Republican
DC.ST.05.04	Clabaugh, Harry M.	March 2, 1899	April 1, 1903	Elevated to Chief Justice	Republican
DC.ST.05.05	Pritchard, Jeter Connelly	November 16, 1903 ¹⁶	April 27, 1904	Elevated to Fourth Circuit	Republican
DC.ST.05.06	Stafford, Wendell Phillips	December 13, 1904 ¹⁷	May 4, 1931	Retired	Republican

¹³First Hispanic district judge appointed from the District of Columbia.

¹⁴Recess appointment, April 1, 1887.

¹⁵Recess appointment, November 17, 1892.

¹⁶Recess appointment, April 1, 1903.

¹⁷Recess appointment, June 1, 1904.

DC.ST.05.07	Letts, F. Dickinson	February 17, 1932 ¹⁸	May 31, 1961	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.05.08	Jones, William Blakely	April 11, 1962	March 20, 1977	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.05.09	Oberdorfer, Louis F.	October 7, 1977	July 31, 1992	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.05.10	Sullivan, Emmet Gael	June 15, 1994	Active	Active	Democrat
DC.ST.06.01	Cox, Walter Smith	March 1, 1879	July 1, 1899	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.06.02	Barnard, Job	December 19, 1899 ¹⁹	June 8, 1914	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.06.03	McCoy, Walter Irving	October 2, 1914	May 22, 1918	Elevated to Chief Justice	Democrat
DC.ST.06.04	Bailey, Thomas Jennings	May 22, 1918	November 1, 1950	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.06.05	Bastian, Walter Maximillian	December 14, 1950 ²⁰	December 3, 1954	Elevated to D.C. Circuit	Republican
DC.ST.06.06	McGarraghy, Joseph C.	December 2, 1954	December 17, 1967	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.06.07	Parker, Barrington D.	December 18, 1969	December 18, 1985	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.06.08	Lamberth, Royce C.	November 13, 1987	Active	Active	Republican
DC.ST.07.01	Wheat, Alfred A.	May 3, 1929	June 4, 1930	Elevated to Chief Justice	Republican
DC.ST.07.02	Adkins, Jesse Corcoran	June 17, 1930	October 15, 1946	Retired	Republican

¹⁸Recess appointment, May 5, 1931.

¹⁹Recess appointment, October 1, 1899.

²⁰Recess appointment, October 23, 1954.

DC.ST.07.03	Keech, Richmond Bowling	January 22, 1947 ²¹	November 1, 1966	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.07.04	Waddy, Joseph C.	March 2, 1967	August 1, 1978	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.07.05	Penn, John Garrett	March 21, 1979	March 31, 1998	Retired	Independent
DC.ST.07.06	Huvelle, Ellen Segal	October 15, 1999	Active	Active	Democrat
DC.ST.08.01	Cox, Joseph Winston	July 1, 1930	September 9, 1939	Deceased	Democrat
DC.ST.08.02	Pine, David Andrew	March 20, 1940	April 2, 1965	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.08.03	Bryant, William B.	August 11, 1965	January 31, 1982	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.08.04	Hogan, Thomas F.	August 20, 1982	Active	Active	Republican
DC.ST.09.01	Luhring, Oscar Raymond	July 3, 1930	August 18, 1944	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.09.02	Schweinhaut, Henry Albert	December 13, 1944	November 16, 1956	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.09.03	Sirica, John J.	March 26, 1957	October 31, 1977	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.09.04	Greene, Harold H.	May 17, 1978	August 6, 1995	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.09.05	Kollar- Ketelly, Colleen	March 20, 1997	Active	Active	Democrat
DC.ST.10.01	Laws, Bolitha James	June 16, 1938	February 22, 1945	Elevated to Chief Justice	Democrat

²¹Recess appointment, October 14, 1946.

DC.ST.10.02	Holtzoff, Alexander	September 24, 1945	December 31, 1967	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.10.03	Pratt, John H.	June 6, 1968	December 1, 1989	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.10.04	Boudin, Michael	August 3, 1990	June 6, 1992	Resigned	Independent
DC.ST.10.05	Kessler, Gladys	June 15, 1994	Active	Active	Democrat
DC.ST.11.01	Goldsborough, Thomas Alan	February 16, 1939	June 16, 1951	Deceased	Democrat
DC.ST.11.02	Youngdahl, Luther Wallace	August 28, 1951	May 29, 1966	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.11.03	Smith, John Lewis, Jr.	October 20, 1966	January 31, 1983	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.11.04	Harris, Stanley S.	November 11, 1983	February 1, 1996	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.11.05	Bates, John D.	December 11, 2001	Active	Active	Independent
DC.ST.12.01	Morris, James Ward	June 15, 1939	November 15, 1960	Deceased	Democrat
DC.ST.12.02	Robinson, Spottswood W., III ²²	July 1, 1964	November 9, 1966	Elevated to D.C. Circuit	Democrat
DC.ST.12.03	Gesell, Gerhard A.	December 7, 1967	January 22, 1993	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.12.04	Friedman, Paul Lawrence	June 15, 1994	Active	Active	Democrat
DC.ST.13.01	Matthews, Burnita Shelton ²³	April 4, 1950 ²⁴	March 1, 1968	Retired	Democrat

²²First African American district judge appointed from the District of Columbia.

²³First female district judge appointed from the District of Columbia.

²⁴Recess appointment, October 21, 1949.

DC.ST.13.02	Green, June L.	June 6, 1968	January 15, 1984	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.13.03	Sporkin, Stanley	December 16, 1985	February 12, 1999	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.13.04	Walton, Reggie B.	September 21, 2001	Active	Active	Republican
DC.ST.14.01	McLaughlin, Charles F.	February 27, 1950 ²⁵	December 31, 1964	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.14.02	Corcoran, Howard F.	March 11, 1965	November 30, 1977	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.14.03	Green, Joyce Hens	May 10, 1979	July 1, 1995	Retired	Democrat
DC.ST.14.04	Kennedy, Henry Harold, Jr.	September 4, 1997	Active	Active	Democrat
DC.ST.15.01	Kirkland, James Robert	March 8, 1950 ²⁶	February 25, 1958	Deceased	Republican
DC.ST.15.02	Hart, George Luzerne, Jr.	September 9, 1959	May 16, 1979	Retired	Republican
DC.ST.15.03	Johnson, Norma Holloway	May 9, 1980	June 18, 2001	Retired	Independent
DC.ST.15.04	Leon, Richard J.	February 14, 2002	Active	Active	Republican

²⁵Recess appointment, October 21, 1949.

²⁶Recess appointment, October 21, 1949.

