

# California's Judicial Branch

## Overview

- Largest in the US
- About 1600 judges and 400 commissioners and referees hearing over 8,000,000 cases per year
- Only about 840 in the federal system, by comparison
- Three Levels
  - Supreme Court
  - Appellate Courts
  - Superior Courts

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## Supreme Court

- Chief Justice
- Six associate justices
- Appointed by the governor and confirmed by the CA Commission on Judicial Appointments
- Ratified by the electorate at the next general election following their appointment and at the end of each 12-year term
- Decisions are binding on all lower courts

# California's Judicial Branch

## Courts of Appeal

- Also known as Appellate Courts
- Six districts:
  - San Francisco
  - Los Angeles
  - Sacramento
  - San Diego
  - Fresno
  - San Jose
- Further divided into 19 divisions
- 105 justices total

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## Superior Courts

- One in each of the 58 counties of California
- Civil and criminal matters start here
- Elected by county residents for six-year terms
- Non-partisan
- Filled by appointment of the Governor
- Must be a member of the State Bar or a judge in CA for 10 years prior to taking office