



Court of Appeals

Minnesota Judicial Branch

Vision

The general public and those who use the court system will refer to it as accessible, fair, consistent, responsive, free of discrimination, independent, and well managed.

Mission

To provide justice through a system that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.

The Minnesota Court of Appeals began on November 1, 1983. Since then, it has provided the citizens of Minnesota with prompt and deliberate review of final decisions of the trial courts, state agencies, and local governments. As the error-correcting court, the Court of Appeals handles most of the appeals, which allows the Minnesota Supreme Court to spend time resolving difficult constitutional and public policy cases.

Court of Appeals decisions are the final ruling in about 95 percent of the 2,000 to 2,400 appeals every year. Typically, about 5 percent of the court's decisions are accepted by the Minnesota Supreme Court for further review.

The court reviews appeals in a timely manner. By law, the court must issue a decision within 90 days after oral arguments. If no oral argument is held, a decision is due within 90 days of the case's scheduled conference date. This deadline is the shortest imposed on any appellate court in the nation.

As part of the court's effort to expedite justice and to make access to the appellate system less burdensome and expensive, the court's 19 judges sit in three-judge panels and hear oral arguments at the Minnesota Judicial Center and at locations throughout Minnesota.

With the assistance of a computerized case management system, the court monitors the progress of every appeal to ensure that there are no unnecessary delays in processing cases or releasing decisions. The court demonstrates the value of aggressive, hands-on management of its cases. Other states frequently look to Minnesota as a model for case processing and delay reduction.