

Court of Criminal Appeals



Court of Criminal Appeals judges are (seated from left) Thomas T. Woodall, David H. Welles, Joseph M. Tipton, Jerry L. Smith, and James Curwood Witt, Jr. (standing from left) D. Kelly Thomas, Jr., Robert W. Wedemeyer, Norma McGee Ogle, John Everett Williams, Alan E. Glenn, J.C. McLin, and Camille R. McMullen.

The **COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS**, created by the legislature in 1967, hears trial court appeals in felony and misdemeanor cases, as well as post-conviction petitions.

The Tennessee General Assembly increased the membership of the court from nine to 12 on September 1, 1996. The members sit monthly in panels of three in Jackson, Knoxville and Nashville. They may also meet in other places as necessary.

All Court of Criminal Appeals decisions may be appealed to the state Supreme Court by permission, except in capital cases, which are appealed automatically.

No witnesses, juries or testimony are presented in the Court of Criminal Appeals. Instead, attorneys present oral and written arguments.

Court of Criminal Appeals judges serve eight-year terms. If a vacancy occurs on the court, the Judicial Nominating Commission recommends three candidates to the governor, who then appoints a new judge to serve until the next August general election.

Judges on the Court of Criminal Appeals may run for re-election without opposition. Incumbent judges are retained or rejected on a “yes-no” vote.

The word democracy comes from the Greek *demos*, meaning “the people,” and *kratia*, meaning “rule.”