

Rhode Island Judiciary

Rhode Island has a unified court system. State courts hear civil and criminal cases for state-level violations, family law disputes, and appeals from municipal courts. This infographic illustrates the court structure.

GLOSSARY

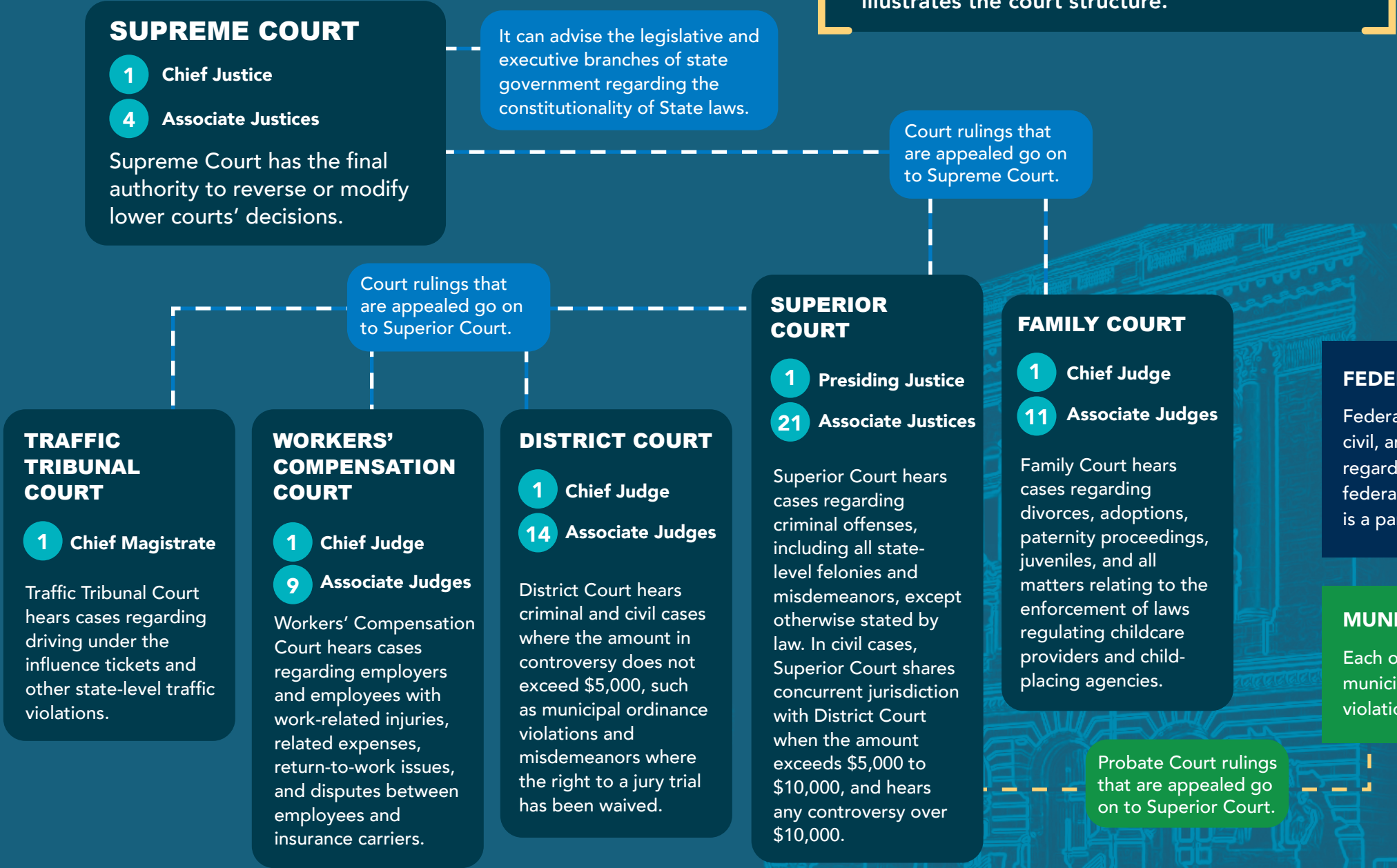
APPEAL: apply to have a decision from a lower court reversed by a higher-level court.

JUDGE: public official who is appointed or elected to preside over cases in a court of law.

JUSTICE: judge of an appellate court or court of last resort (like the Supreme Court).

MAGISTRATE: similar to a judge, but can only hear and rule on cases within a very limited scope.

PROBATE COURT: hears cases involving the execution of wills, estates, conservatorships, and guardianships.



FEDERAL COURTS

Federal courts located in Rhode Island hear criminal, civil, and bankruptcy cases. These include issues regarding residents who live in different states, federal questions, cases where the US Government is a party, and other topics.

MUNICIPAL COURTS

Each of Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns has a municipal court that handles probate, local traffic violations, and municipal issues.



Gregg M. Amore
Secretary of State