

Courts of Indiana (Check your own County website for descriptions of courts in your county. For example, there are 7 Superior Courts in Tippecanoe County that handle different kinds of cases. Knowing what these judges will handle may assist in writing questions.)

General:

There are two primary levels of Indiana state courts: trial courts and appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Indiana, the Court of Appeals of Indiana, and the Indiana Tax Court are appellate-level courts.

The Circuit Courts are trial courts with general jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases. The Superior Courts also are trial courts with general jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases, and they sometimes include divisions for small claims and minor criminal offenses.

Judge of the Superior Court

Sample #1

Most Indiana trial courts are superior courts and almost all Indiana counties have superior courts in addition to their circuit court.

For the most part, superior courts have general jurisdiction, so they can hear all civil and criminal cases. Superior courts are also charged with establishing small claims and minor offense divisions. Judges of the Superior Court issue decisions in these types of cases impartially and according to the law and legal precedent.

Judges are required to have law degrees and usually serve terms of 6 years after general election. However, this is not always the case. Exceptions to this form of election include Lake, St. Joseph, Vanderburgh, and Allen Counties. Candidates for judge of any court do not necessarily have to be practicing attorneys, depending on their county.

Sample #2

The Indiana superior courts are general jurisdiction trial courts within the state that handle all trial cases and can establish small claims cases and minor offense divisions. Nearly all counties in Indiana have a superior court in addition to their circuit courts.

Judge of the Circuit Court

Sample #1

A Judge of the Circuit Court is responsible for issuing decisions in all types of cases impartially and according to the law and legal precedent of the circuit in which they serve. Circuit courts are vested with unlimited trial jurisdiction in all cases, except where exclusive or concurrent jurisdiction is conferred upon other courts. Circuit courts also have appellate jurisdiction over appeals from city and town courts.

Judges are required to have law degrees and usually serve terms of 6 years after general election.

Sample #2

The Indiana circuit courts are trial courts located in every county in Indiana. They have unlimited jurisdiction over trial cases except when exclusive or concurrent jurisdiction is given to other courts. They also handle small claims cases and minor offenses in counties where a superior court is absent.

Sample #3

Tippecanoe County Circuit Court is the Court established by Indiana's Constitution. Since 1826 the Circuit Court has been our only Court of general jurisdiction.

Circuit Court, along with Superior Court and Superior Court 2, handles major criminal cases, domestic relations cases, and major civil cases.

Circuit Court has exclusive jurisdiction in all probate matters, including estates, guardianships, adoptions, and trusts. Circuit Court shares jurisdiction over juvenile matters with Superior Court 3, but Superior Court 3 handles nearly all those cases.