

# **Judicial Selection in the States**

## ***Appellate and General Jurisdiction Courts***



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Updated 2007

ISBN 1-928919-07-3

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Founded in 1913, the American Judicature Society is an independent, nonprofit organization supported by a national membership of judges, lawyers, and other members of the public. Through research, educational programs, and publications, AJS addresses concerns related to ethics in the courts, judicial selection, the jury, court administration, judicial independence, and public understanding of the justice system.



# Judicial Selection in the States

## *Appellate and General Jurisdiction Courts*

### “Summary of Initial Selection Methods”

<b>Merit Selection<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Gubernatorial (G) or Legislative (L) Appointment</b>	<b>Partisan Election</b>	<b>Non-Partisan Election</b>	<b>Combined Merit Selection and Other Methods<sup>2</sup></b>
Alaska	California (G)	Alabama	Arkansas	Arizona
Colorado	Maine (G)	Illinois	Georgia	Florida
Connecticut	New Jersey (G)	Louisiana	Idaho	Indiana
Delaware	Virginia (L)	Ohio <sup>2</sup>	Kentucky	Kansas
District of Columbia	South Carolina (L) <sup>2</sup>	Pennsylvania	Michigan <sup>2</sup>	Missouri
Hawaii		Texas	Minnesota	New York
Iowa		West Virginia	Mississippi	Oklahoma
Maryland			Montana	South Dakota
Massachusetts			Nevada	Tennessee
Nebraska			North Carolina	
New Hampshire			North Dakota	
New Mexico			Oregon	
Rhode Island			Washington	
Utah			Wisconsin	
Vermont				
Wyoming				

1. The following nine states use merit plans only to fill midterm vacancies on some or all levels of court: Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, and Wisconsin.

2. See attached chart for details.



# Judicial Selection in the States

## *Appellate and General Jurisdiction Courts*

### “Initial Selection: Trial Courts of General Jurisdiction”

<b>Merit Selection (17)</b>	<b>Partisan Election (9)</b>	<b>Non-Partisan Election (17)</b>	<b>Gubernatorial (2) or Legislative (2) Appointment</b>	<b>Combined Methods (4)<sup>1</sup></b>
Alaska	Alabama	Arkansas	Maine (G)	Arizona
Colorado	Illinois	California	New Jersey (G)	Indiana
Connecticut	Louisiana	Florida	South Carolina (L)	Kansas
Delaware <sup>2</sup>	New York	Georgia	Virginia (L)	Missouri
District of Columbia	Ohio <sup>3</sup>	Idaho		
Hawaii <sup>4</sup>	Pennsylvania	Kentucky		
Iowa	Tennessee	Michigan		
Maryland <sup>2</sup>	Texas	Minnesota		
Massachusetts <sup>2</sup>	West Virginia	Mississippi		
Nebraska		Montana		
Nevada		North Carolina		
New Hampshire <sup>2</sup>		North Dakota		
New Mexico		Oklahoma		
Rhode Island		Oregon		
Utah		South Dakota		
Vermont		Washington		
Wyoming		Wisconsin		

1. In these states, some judges are chosen through merit selection and some are chosen in competitive elections. See attached chart for details.

2. Merit selection is established by executive order.

3. Candidates appear on the general election ballot without party affiliation but are nominated in partisan primaries.

4. The chief justice makes appointments to the district court and family court.



# Judicial Selection in the States

## *Appellate and General Jurisdiction Courts*

### “Initial Selection: Intermediate Appellate Courts”

<b>Merit Selection (18)</b>	<b>Partisan Election (6)</b>	<b>Non-Partisan Election (11)</b>	<b>Gubernatorial Appointment (2)</b>	<b>Legislative Appointment (2)</b>
Alaska	Alabama	Arkansas	California	South Carolina
Arizona	Illinois	Georgia	New Jersey	Virginia
Colorado	Louisiana	Idaho		
Connecticut	Ohio <sup>1</sup>	Kentucky		
Florida	Pennsylvania	Michigan		
Hawaii	Texas	Minnesota		
Indiana		Mississippi		
Iowa		North Carolina		
Kansas		Oregon		
Maryland <sup>2</sup>		Washington		
Massachusetts <sup>2</sup>		Wisconsin		
Missouri				
Nebraska				
New Mexico				
New York <sup>2</sup>				
Oklahoma				
Tennessee				
Utah				

1. Candidates appear on the general election ballot without party affiliation but are nominated in partisan primary elections.  
 2. Merit selection is established by executive order.



# Judicial Selection in the States

## *Appellate and General Jurisdiction Courts*

### “Initial Selection: Courts of Last Resort”

<b>Merit Selection (25)</b>	<b>Partisan Election (8)</b>	<b>Non-Partisan Election (13)</b>	<b>Gubernatorial Appointment (3)</b>	<b>Legislative Appointment (2)</b>
Alaska	Alabama	Arkansas	California	South Carolina
Arizona	Illinois	Georgia	Maine	Virginia
Colorado	Louisiana	Idaho	New Jersey	
Connecticut	Michigan <sup>1</sup>	Kentucky		
Delaware <sup>2</sup>	Ohio <sup>3</sup>	Minnesota		
District of Columbia	Pennsylvania	Mississippi		
Florida	Texas	Montana		
Hawaii	West Virginia	Nevada		
Indiana		North Carolina		
Iowa		North Dakota		
Kansas		Oregon		
Maryland <sup>2</sup>		Washington		
Massachusetts <sup>2</sup>		Wisconsin		
Missouri				
Nebraska				
New Hampshire <sup>2</sup>				
New Mexico				
New York				
Oklahoma				
Rhode Island				
South Dakota				
Tennessee				
Utah				
Vermont				
Wyoming				

1. Candidates appear on the general election ballot without party affiliation but may be nominated at political party conventions.

2. Merit selection is established by executive order.

3. Candidates appear on the general election ballot without party affiliation but are nominated in partisan primary elections.



# Judicial Selection in the States

## *Appellate and General Jurisdiction Courts*

### “Initial Selection, Retention, and Term Length”

State and Court	APPOINTIVE SYSTEMS		ELECTIVE SYSTEMS		INITIAL TERM OF OFFICE (YEARS)	METHOD OF RETENTION
	Merit Selection	Gubernatorial (G) or Legislative (L) Appointment	Non-Partisan Election	Partisan Election		
<b>ALABAMA</b>						
Supreme Court				X	6	Re-election (6 year term)
Court of Civil App.				X	6	Re-election (6 year term)
Court of Criminal App.				X	6	Re-election (6 year term)
Circuit Court				X	6	Re-election (6 year term)
<b>ALASKA</b>						
Supreme Court	X				3	Retention election (10 year term) <sup>1</sup>
Court of Appeals	X				3	Retention election (8 year term)
Superior Court	X				3	Retention election (6 year term)
<b>ARIZONA</b>						
Supreme Court	X				2	Retention election (6 year term)
Court of Appeals	X				2	Retention election (6 year term)
Superior Court (county pop. greater than 250,000)	X				2	Retention election (4 year term)
Superior Court (county pop. less than 250,000)			X		4	Re-election (4 year term)
<b>ARKANSAS<sup>2</sup></b>						
Supreme Court			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
<b>CALIFORNIA</b>						
Supreme Court		X(G)			12	Retention election (12 year term)
Courts of Appeal		X(G)			12	Retention election (12 year term)
Superior Court <sup>3</sup>			X		6	Nonpartisan election (6 year term) <sup>4</sup>

1. In a retention election judges run unopposed on the basis of their record.

2. In November 2000, Arkansas voters passed an amendment to the Arkansas constitution shifting judicial elections to a nonpartisan system.

3. The California constitution provides that local electors may choose gubernatorial appointments instead of nonpartisan election to select superior court judges. To date, no counties have chosen gubernatorial appointments.

4. If the election is uncontested, the incumbent's name does not appear on the ballot.

State and Court	APPOINTIVE SYSTEMS		ELECTIVE SYSTEMS		INITIAL TERM OF OFFICE (YEARS)	METHOD OF RETENTION
	Merit Selection	Gubernatorial (G) or Legislative (L) Appointment	Non-Partisan Election	Partisan Election		
<b>COLORADO</b>						
Supreme Court	X				2	Retention election (10 year term)
Court of Appeals	X				2	Retention election (8 year term)
District Court	X				2	Retention election (6 year term)
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>						
Supreme Court	X				8	Commission reviews incumbent's performance on noncompetitive basis; governor renominates and legislature confirms
Appellate Court	X				8	Same
Superior Court	X				8	Same
<b>DELAWARE<sup>5</sup></b>						
Supreme Court	X				12	See Footnote 6
Court of Chancery	X				12	See Footnote 6
Superior Court	X				12	See Footnote 6
<b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b>						
Court of Appeals	X				15	Reappointment by judicial tenure commission <sup>7</sup>
Superior Court	X				15	Reappointment by judicial tenure commission <sup>7</sup>
<b>FLORIDA</b>						
Supreme Court	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)
District Court of Appeal	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)
Circuit Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
<b>GEORGIA</b>						
Supreme Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Superior Court			X		4	Re-election for additional terms
<b>HAWAII</b>						
Supreme Court	X				10	Reappointed to subsequent term by the Judicial Selection Commission (10 year term)
Intermediate Court of Appeals	X				10	Reappointed to subsequent term by the Judicial Selection Commission (10 year term)
Circuit Court and Family Court	X				10	Reappointed to subsequent term by the Judicial Selection Commission (10 year term)

5. Merit selection established by executive order in Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. In all other jurisdictions merit selection established by constitutional or statutory provision.

6. Incumbent reapplies to nominating commission and competes with other applicants for nomination by the governor. The governor may reappoint the incumbent or another nominee. The senate confirms the appointment.

7. Initial appointment is made by the President of the United States and confirmed by the Senate. Six months prior to the expiration of the term of office, the judge's performance is reviewed by the tenure commission. Those found "Well Qualified" are automatically reappointed. If a judge is found to be "Qualified" the President may nominate the judge for an additional term (subject to Senate confirmation). If the President does not wish to reappoint the judge, the District of Columbia Nomination Commission compiles a new list of candidates.

State and Court	APPOINTIVE SYSTEMS		ELECTIVE SYSTEMS		INITIAL TERM OF OFFICE (YEARS)	METHOD OF RETENTION
	Merit Selection	Gubernatorial (G) or Legislative (L) Appointment	Non-Partisan Election	Partisan Election		
<b>IDAHO</b>						
Supreme Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
District Court			X		4	Re-election for additional terms
<b>ILLINOIS</b>						
Supreme Court				X	10	Retention election (10 year term)
Appellate Court				X	10	Retention election (10 year term)
Circuit Court				X	6	Retention election (6 year term)
<b>INDIANA</b>						
Supreme Court	X				2	Retention election (10 year term)
Court of Appeals	X				2	Retention election (10 year term)
Circuit Court				X	6	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court (Vanderburgh County)			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Superior Court				X	6	Re-election for additional terms
Superior Court (Allen County)			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Superior Court (Lake County)	X <sup>8</sup>				2	Retention election (6 year term)
Superior Court (St. Joseph County)	X				2	Retention election (6 year term)
Superior Court (Vanderburgh County)			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
<b>IOWA</b>						
Supreme Court	X				1	Retention election (8 year term)
Court of Appeals	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)
District Court	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)
<b>KANSAS</b>						
Supreme Court	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)
Court of Appeals	X				1	Retention election (4 year term)
District Court (seventeen districts)	X				1	Retention election (4 year term)
District Court (fourteen districts)				X	4	Re-election for additional terms
<b>KENTUCKY</b>						
Supreme Court			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
<b>LOUISIANA</b>						
Supreme Court				X <sup>9</sup>	10	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals				X <sup>9</sup>	10	Re-election for additional terms
District Court				X <sup>9</sup>	6	Re-election for additional terms

8. Three of the judges run in partisan elections for 6 year terms then have to be re-elected for additional terms.

9. Louisiana judicial elections are partisan inasmuch as the candidates' party affiliations appear on the ballot. However, two factors lead a somewhat nonpartisan character to these elections: (1) primaries are open to all candidates; and (2) judicial candidates generally do not solicit party support for their campaigns.

State and Court	APPOINTIVE SYSTEMS		ELECTIVE SYSTEMS		INITIAL TERM OF OFFICE (YEARS)	METHOD OF RETENTION
	Merit Selection	Gubernatorial (G) or Legislative (L) Appointment	Non-Partisan Election	Partisan Election		
<b>MAINE</b>						
Supreme Judicial Court		X(G)			7	Reappointment by governor, subject to legislative confirmation
Superior Court		X(G)			7	Reappointment by governor, subject to legislative confirmation
<b>MARYLAND<sup>10</sup></b>						
Court of Appeals	X				See fn 11	Retention election (10 year term)
Court of Special Appeals	X				See fn 11	Retention election (10 year term)
Circuit Court	X				See fn 11	Nonpartisan election (15 year term) <sup>12</sup>
<b>MASSACHUSETTS<sup>13</sup></b>						
Supreme Judicial Court	X				to age 70	
Appeals Court	X				to age 70	
Trial Court of Mass.	X				to age 70	
<b>MICHIGAN</b>						
Supreme Court					X <sup>14</sup> 8	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
<b>MINNESOTA</b>						
Supreme Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
District Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
<b>MISSISSIPPI</b>						
Supreme Court			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
Chancery Court			X		4	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court			X		4	Re-election for additional terms
<b>MISSOURI</b>						
Supreme Court	X				1	Retention election (12 year term)
Court of Appeals	X				1	Retention election (12 year term)
Circuit Court					X 6	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court (Jackson, Clay, Platte, Saint Louis Counties)	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)
<b>MONTANA</b>						
Supreme Court			X		8	Re-election; unopposed judges run for retention
District Court			X		6	Re-election; unopposed judges run for retention
<b>NEBRASKA</b>						
Supreme Court	X				3	Retention election (6 year term)
Court of Appeals	X				3	Retention election (6 year term)
District Court	X				3	Retention election (6 year term)

10. Merit selection established by executive order in Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. In all other jurisdictions merit selection established by constitutional or statutory provision.

11. Until the first general election following the expiration of one year from the date of the occurrence of the vacancy.

12. May be challenged by other candidates.

13. Merit selection established by executive order in Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. In all other jurisdictions merit selection established by constitutional or statutory provision.

14. Although party affiliations for Supreme Court candidates are not listed on the general election ballot, candidates are nominated at party conventions.

State and Court	APPOINTIVE SYSTEMS		ELECTIVE SYSTEMS		INITIAL TERM OF OFFICE (YEARS)	METHOD OF RETENTION
	Merit Selection	Gubernatorial (G) or Legislative (L) Appointment	Non-Partisan Election	Partisan Election		
<b>NEVADA</b>						
Supreme Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
District Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE<sup>15</sup></b>						
Supreme Court	X <sup>16</sup>				to age 70	
Superior Court	X <sup>16</sup>				to age 70	
<b>NEW JERSEY</b>						
Supreme Court		X(G)			7	Reappointment by governor (to age 70) with advice and consent of the Senate
Appellate Division of Superior Court		X(G)			7	Reappointment by governor (to age 70) with advice and consent of the Senate
Superior Court		X(G)			7	Reappointment by governor (to age 70) with advice and consent of the Senate
<b>NEW MEXICO</b>						
Supreme Court	X				until next general election	See Footnote 17
Court of Appeals	X				until next general election	See Footnote 17
District Court	X				until next general election	See Footnote 17
<b>NEW YORK</b>						
Court of Appeals	X				14	See Footnote 18
Appellate Division of the Supreme Court	X				5	Commission reviews and recommends for or against reappointment by governor
Supreme Court				X	14	Re-election for additional terms
County Court				X	10	Re-election for additional terms
<b>NORTH CAROLINA</b>						
Supreme Court			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
Superior Court			X		8	Re-election for additional terms
<b>NORTH DAKOTA</b>						
Supreme Court			X		10	Re-election for additional terms
District Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms

15. Merit selection established by executive order in Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. In all other jurisdictions merit selection established by constitutional or statutory provision.

16. The governor's nomination is subject to the approval of a five-member executive council.

17. Partisan election at next general election after appointment for eight-year term for appellate judges, six-year term for district. The winner thereafter runs in a retention election for subsequent terms.

18. Incumbent reapplies to nominating commission and competes with other applicants for nomination to the governor. The governor may reappoint the incumbent or another nominee. The senate confirms the appointment.

State and Court	APPOINTIVE SYSTEMS		ELECTIVE SYSTEMS		INITIAL TERM OF OFFICE (YEARS)	METHOD OF RETENTION
	Merit Selection	Gubernatorial (G) or Legislative (L) Appointment	Non-Partisan Election	Partisan Election		
<b>OHIO</b>						
Supreme Court				X <sup>19</sup>	6	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals				X <sup>19</sup>	6	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Common Pleas				X <sup>19</sup>	6	Re-election for additional terms
<b>OKLAHOMA</b>						
Supreme Court	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)
Court of Criminal Appeals	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)
Court of Appeals	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)
District Court			X		4	Re-election for additional terms
<b>OREGON</b>						
Supreme Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Tax Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
<b>PENNSYLVANIA</b>						
Supreme Court				X	10	Retention election (10 year term)
Superior Court				X	10	Retention election (10 year term)
Commonwealth Court				X	10	Retention election (10 year term)
Court of Common Pleas				X	10	Retention election (10 year term)
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>						
Supreme Court	X				Life	
Superior Court	X				Life	
Worker's Compensation Court	X				Life	
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b>						
Supreme Court		X (L) <sup>20</sup>			10	Reappointment by legislature
Court of Appeals		X (L) <sup>20</sup>			6	Reappointment by legislature
Circuit Court		X (L) <sup>20</sup>			6	Reappointment by legislature
<b>SOUTH DAKOTA</b>						
Supreme Court	X				3	Retention election (8 year term)
Circuit Court			X		8	Re-election for additional terms

19. Although party affiliations for judicial candidates are not listed on the general election ballot, candidates are nominated in partisan primary elections..

20. South Carolina has a 10 member Judicial Merit Selection Commission that screens judicial candidates and reports the findings to the state's General Assembly. Since 1997, the Assembly is restricted to voting only on those candidates found qualified by the Judicial Merit Selection Commission. However, the nominating commission itself is not far removed from the ultimate appointing body, and cannot be considered to be nonpartisan as control over member nominations is vested in majority party leadership. Although most nominating commissions contain members appointed by the governor or legislature, no other commissions actually contain the governor or current legislators who have final approval over the candidate as voting members of the commission. In contrast, the Judicial Merit Selection Commission in South Carolina contains 6 current members of the General Assembly appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. State legislators also choose the remaining 4 members of the Commission who are selected from the general public.

State and Court	APPOINTIVE SYSTEMS		ELECTIVE SYSTEMS		INITIAL TERM OF OFFICE (YEARS)	METHOD OF RETENTION
	Merit Selection	Gubernatorial (G) or Legislative (L) Appointment	Non-Partisan Election	Partisan Election		
<b>TENNESSEE</b>						
Supreme Court	X				until next biennial general election	Retention election (8 year term)
Court of Appeals	X				until next biennial general election	Retention election (8 year term)
Court of Criminal Appeals	X				until next biennial general election	Retention election (8 year term)
Chancery Court				X	8	Re-election for additional terms
Criminal Court				X	8	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court				X	8	Re-election for additional terms
<b>TEXAS</b>						
Supreme Court				X	6	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Criminal Appeals				X	6	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals				X	6	Re-election for additional terms
District Court				X	4	Re-election for additional terms
<b>UTAH</b>						
Supreme Court	X				First general election	Retention election (10 year term)
Court of Appeals	X					Retention election (6 year term)
District Court	X					Retention election (6 year term)
Juvenile Court	X				3 years after appointment	Retention election (6 year term)
<b>VERMONT</b>						
Supreme Court	X				6	Retained by vote of General Assembly (6 year term)
Superior Court	X				6	Retained by vote of General Assembly (6 year term)
District Court	X				6	Retained by vote of General Assembly (6 year term)
<b>VIRGINIA</b>						
Supreme Court		X(L)			12	Reappointment by legislature
Court of Appeals		X(L)			8	Reappointment by legislature
Circuit Court		X(L)			8	Reappointment by legislature
<b>WASHINGTON</b>						
Supreme Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Superior Court			X		4	Re-election for additional terms
<b>WEST VIRGINIA</b>						
Supreme Court				X	12	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court				X	8	Re-election for additional terms

State and Court	APPOINTIVE SYSTEMS		ELECTIVE SYSTEMS		INITIAL TERM OF OFFICE (YEARS)	METHOD OF RETENTION
	Merit Selection	Gubernatorial (G) or Legislative (L) Appointment	Non-Partisan Election	Partisan Election		
WISCONSIN						
Supreme Court			X		10	Re-election for additional terms
Court of Appeals			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
Circuit Court			X		6	Re-election for additional terms
WYOMING						
Supreme Court	X				1	Retention election (8 year term)
District Court	X				1	Retention election (6 year term)

# THE AMERICAN JUDICATURE SOCIETY'S ELMO B. HUNTER CITIZENS CENTER FOR JUDICIAL SELECTION

The American Judicature Society (AJS) works to maintain the independence and integrity of the courts and increase public understanding of the justice system. AJS is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with a national membership of judges, lawyers, and other citizens interested in the administration of justice.

AJS' Elmo B. Hunter Citizens Center for Judicial Selection was founded in 1991 to further the American Judicature Society's historic interest in judicial selection issues. The Hunter Center provides nonpartisan public education and outreach, conducts applied research, and offers expertise and assistance in support of judicial selection reform. The Center serves its core audiences—state court administrators, lawmakers, the media, the legal and academic communities, and court reform organizations—in a number of ways:

- Maintaining the Judicial Selection in the States website ([www.judicialselection.us](http://www.judicialselection.us)), the leading resource for information about the selection and retention of judges nationwide.
- Conducting groundbreaking research on such topics as demographic diversity in the merit selection process, the prevalence of midterm appointments in states that utilize contestable elections for judicial office, and the use of nominating commissions by U.S. senators to identify potential nominees for federal judgeships.
- Working with other court-related organizations to increase public awareness of, and involvement with, state justice issues through forums and public discussions. The Center convened the first national forum on judicial selection in Washington, D.C. in 2000. A follow-up program was held in Birmingham, Alabama in 2006. A symposium on federal judicial selection was held in Washington, D.C. in 2002.
- Monitoring and providing assistance to grassroots judicial reform efforts in the states. Center staff works closely with state-based reform groups to promote the adoption of judicial merit selection.
- Educating international visitors on methods of judicial selection in the United States and their respective implications for judicial independence and accountability.
- Organizing meetings and conferences for AJS members and others on judicial selection topics of current interest. In 2006, AJS presented a program on rethinking strategies for judicial selection reform.

## **Publications and resources offered by the Hunter Center include the following:**

- ***Model Judicial Selection Provisions***, revised in 2008, offer exemplary language for establishing judicial nomination and evaluation processes of the highest quality and represent AJS policy as to the “best practices” in selecting, retaining, and evaluating judges.
- ***Judicial Selection in the States: How It Works, Why It Matters*** is a guide prepared for state legislators to promote greater understanding of the complex and critical issue of selecting state court judges.
- ***Judicial Merit Selection: Current Status*** is a detailed description of selection provisions in states with “merit selection,” or commission-based appointment, of judges at some level of court.
- ***Judicial Selection in the States: Appellate and General Jurisdiction Courts*** is a set of tables that provide basic information about the initial selection and subsequent retention of state judges.
- ***Judicial Selection Reform: Examples from Six States*** examines successful judicial selection reform efforts in six states, discussing the nature of each reform and its implementation in other states, the events that provided the impetus for reform, and the actors who were instrumental in bringing about the reform.
- ***Judicial Selection in the United States: A Special Report*** describes the historical evolution of judicial selection in the U.S.
- ***Handbook for Judicial Nominating Commissioners, 2nd Edition*** leads commissioners through each step of the nominating process—getting organized, establishing evaluative criteria, publicizing the judicial vacancy, investigating and screening applicants, interviewing, voting, and submitting names to the appointing authority. The revised and updated 2nd edition offers two expanded chapters that address specific ethics considerations and privacy and confidentiality concerns.
- ***Merit Selection: A Review of the Social Scientific Literature*** synthesizes existing social science research on “merit selection” of judges.
- ***Research on Judicial Selection*** is a two-volume, peer-reviewed series featuring studies of unexplored and under-explored aspects of judicial selection.
- ***Ensuring Judicial Excellence*** is a video that describes the benefits of judicial merit selection through interviews with voters, judges, attorneys, and judicial nominating commissioners.
- ***Judicial Selection in the United States: A Compendium of Provisions*** is a compilation of state statutory and constitutional provisions relating to judicial selection.