

# STRUCTURE OF THE FEDERAL COURTS

★ *What is a District Court? What is a Circuit Court?* ★

★ It is a trial court where cases start. Facts are established and law is applied.

★ It is an appellate court where decisions of trial courts are reviewed.

## DISTRICT COURTS

*What You'll See in the Courtroom*

1 judge on the bench.  
A witness stand. A jury box.

**1  
JUDGE**

**YES  
WITNESSES**

**6-12  
JURORS**

## CIRCUIT COURTS OF APPEALS

*What You'll See in the Courtroom*

3 or more judges on the bench.  
No witness stand. No jury box.

**3  
OR MORE  
JUDGES**

**NO  
WITNESSES**

**NO  
JURORS**

### TRIAL COURTS ★ 94 DISTRICTS

1-4 DISTRICTS PER STATE

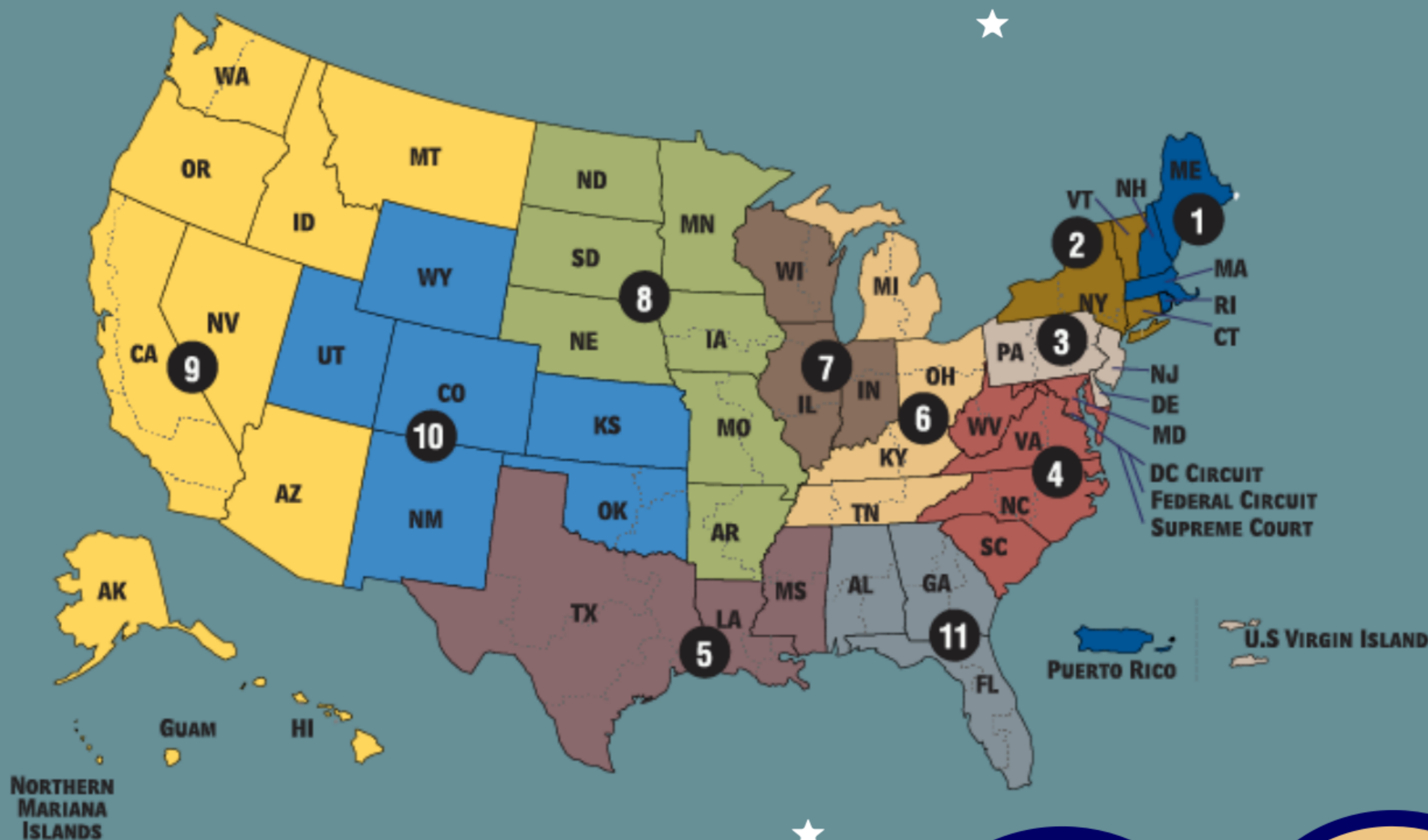


DISTRICT  
JUDGES

BANKRUPTCY  
JUDGES

MAGISTRATE  
JUDGES

### APPELLATE COURTS ★ 13 CIRCUITS



TYPICALLY,  
THREE-JUDGE  
PANELS

SOMETIMES,  
EN BANC:  
ALL JUDGES

This is a teaching tool that simplifies key points for students. Find detailed information at [uscourts.gov](http://uscourts.gov) Educational Resources.