

# Court Statistics Project Trial Court Aggregation

## Types of State Trial Courts

For the purposes of national caseload reporting, the Court Statistics Project (CSP) aggregated the caseloads of the three basic types of state trial courts—single-tiered, general jurisdiction, and limited jurisdiction—to make the caseloads as comparable as possible at the national level. Single-tiered state courts (sometimes referred to as unified courts) process all case types in a single trial court. Fitting naturally into this category are nine states<sup>1</sup>: California, the District of Columbia, Guam, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Vermont. Three other states, Idaho, Maine, and Missouri, were added to this group as a result of the caseload aggregation process used by the CSP for data collection.

The remaining 42 states divide their court systems into a two-tiered structure with at least one type of general jurisdiction court and one type of limited jurisdiction court. States with two-tiered court systems aggregated their limited jurisdiction courts into one limited tier caseload. States with more than one general jurisdiction court aggregated these caseloads into one general tier caseload.

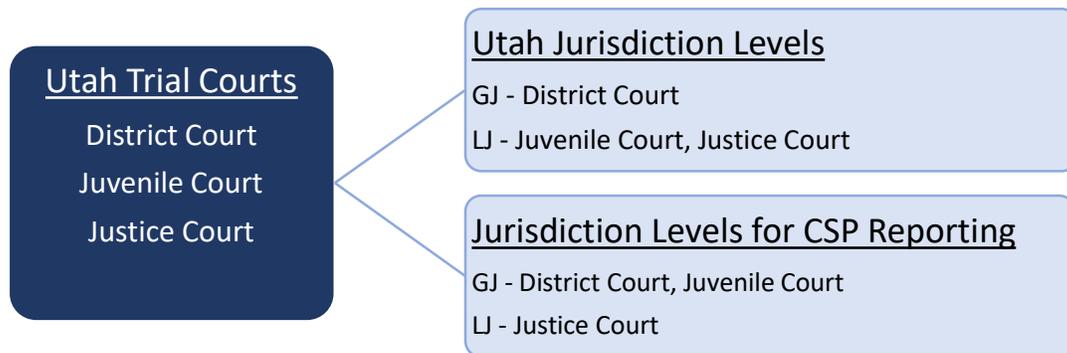
Eighteen of the 42 states have limited jurisdiction courts with exclusive jurisdiction over case type(s) typically heard in general jurisdiction courts. The 18 states aggregated these specific limited jurisdiction court caseloads into the general tier caseload (see the below example, Utah). The aggregated tiers allow for improved comparisons as the three types of caseloads, single, general, and limited, have more similar jurisdiction across states. **Please remember that the CSP is not the authoritative source of data for each state, only the state can provide these official records.**

<u>Single-Tiered Structure</u> (12 states)	<u>Two-Tiered Structure</u> (42 states)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All trial court cases processed in a single trial court</li><li>All trial court cases for the state are aggregated into one trial court caseload</li></ul>	<u>General Jurisdiction (GJ) Courts</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Highest court in the state for matters they hear (appeals go directly to the appellate court level)</li><li>If a state has multiple General Jurisdiction courts, the caseloads are aggregated into one general tier caseload</li></ul>	<u>Limited Jurisdiction (LJ) Courts</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lower level trial court where appeals go to a general jurisdiction court instead of the appellate court level</li><li>If a state has multiple Limited Jurisdiction courts, the caseloads are aggregated into one limited tier caseload</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> CSP refers to the District of Columbia, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico as states

### Example: Aggregation of Utah Trial Courts

Utah provides an example of a two-tiered trial court structure that was aggregated to make caseloads more comparable for CSP. In Utah there are three court types: a general jurisdiction court (the District Court) and two limited jurisdiction courts (the Juvenile Court and the Justice Court). The Juvenile Court is limited only in the scope of its jurisdiction, in that the court has original, exclusive jurisdiction over juvenile cases and appeals proceed directly to the intermediate appellate court. When considering the CSP national reporting framework, this juvenile caseload is more typical of a juvenile caseload from a general jurisdiction court. For reporting CSP data, Utah’s Juvenile caseload is reported as part of its general tier.



### Detailed CSP Trial Court Aggregation by State

The following table outlines how courts were aggregated in each state for CSP reporting tiers. Although all courts in the state are listed in the tables, some of the courts are locally funded and governed, and the state administrative office has no authority over the data. Therefore, all courts may not be able to report data to the CSP.

### Court Statistics Project Trial Court Aggregation

State	CSP Tier	Structure Chart Courts
AL	G	Circuit Ct, <b>Probate Ct*</b>
	L	District Ct, Municipal Ct
AK	G	Superior Ct
	L	District Ct
AZ	G	Superior Ct, Tax Ct
	L	Justice of the Peace Ct, Municipal Ct
AR	G	Circuit Ct
	L	District Ct
CA	S	Superior Ct
CO	G	District Ct, Denver Juvenile Ct, Denver Probate Ct, Water Ct
	L	County Ct, Municipal Ct
CT	G	Superior Ct
	L	Probate Ct

State	CSP Tier	Structure Chart Courts
DE	G	Ct of Chancery, Superior Ct, <b>Family Ct*</b>
	L	Ct of Common Pleas, Justice of the Peace Ct, Alderman's Ct
DC	S	Superior Ct
FL	G	Circuit Ct
	L	County Ct
GA	G	Superior Ct, <b>Juvenile Ct*</b>
	L	Civil Ct, County Recorder's Ct, State Ct, Magistrate Ct, Municipal Ct, Probate Ct
GU	S	Superior Ct
HI	G	Circuit Ct, Family Ct
	L	District Ct
ID	S	District Ct, <b>Magistrates Division**</b>
IL	S	Circuit Ct
IN	G	Superior Ct, Circuit Ct, Probate Ct, <b>Small Claims of Marion County*</b>
	L	City Ct, Town Ct
IA	S	District Ct
KS	G	District Ct
	L	Municipal Ct
KY	G	Circuit Ct, Family Ct
	L	District Ct
LA	G	District Ct, Juvenile Ct, Family Ct
	L	Justice of the Peace Ct, Mayor's Ct, City and Parish Ct
ME	S	District Ct, Superior Ct, <b>Probate Ct**</b>
MD	G	Circuit Ct
	L	District Ct, Orphan's Ct
MA	G	Superior Ct Dept., <b>Juvenile Ct Dept.*</b> , <b>Probate and Family Ct Dept.*</b>
	L	District Ct Dept., Boston Mun. Ct Dept., Housing Ct Dept., Land Ct Dept.
MI	G	Circuit Ct, Court of Claims
	L	District Ct, Probate Ct, Municipal Ct
MN	S	District Ct
MS	G	Circuit Ct
	L	Justice Ct, Chancery Ct, County Ct, Municipal Ct
MO	S	Circuit Ct, <b>Municipal Ct**</b>
MP	S	Superior Ct
MT	G	Water Ct, District Ct, Workers' Compensation Ct
	L	Justice's Ct, City Ct, Municipal Ct
NE	G	District Ct, <b>Juvenile Ct*</b> , <b>Workers' Compensation Ct*</b>
	L	County Ct
NV	G	District Ct
	L	Justice Ct, Municipal Ct
NH	G	Superior Ct
	L	Circuit Ct
NJ	G	Superior Ct, <b>Tax Ct*</b>
	L	Municipal Ct

State	CSP Tier	Structure Chart Courts
NM	G	District Ct, <b>Probate Ct*</b>
	L	Magistrate Ct, Bernalillo Co. Metro Ct, Municipal Ct
NY	G	Supreme Ct, County Ct, <b>Ct of Claims*</b> , <b>Family Ct*</b> , <b>Surrogates' Ct*</b>
	L	District Ct, City Ct, Civil Ct of the City of NY, Criminal Ct of the City of NY, Town & Village Justice Ct
NC	G	Superior Ct
	L	District Ct
ND	G	District Ct
	L	Municipal Ct
OH	G	Ct of Common Pleas, <b>Ct of Claims*</b>
	L	Municipal Ct, County Ct, Mayors Ct
OK	G	District Ct, <b>Ct of Tax Review*</b>
	L	Municipal Ct Not of Record, Municipal Criminal Ct of Record
OR	G	Circuit Ct, Tax Ct
	L	County Ct, Justice Ct, Municipal Ct
PA	G	Ct of Common Pleas
	L	Philadelphia Municipal Ct, Magisterial District Judge Ct
PR	S	Ct of First Instance
RI	G	Superior Ct, <b>Family Ct*</b> , <b>Probate Ct*</b> , <b>Workers' Compensation Ct*</b>
	L	District Ct, Municipal Ct, Traffic Tribunal
SC	G	Circuit Ct, <b>Family Ct*</b> , <b>Probate Ct*</b>
	L	Magistrate Ct, Municipal Ct
SD	G	Circuit Ct
	L	Magistrate Ct
TN	G	Circuit Ct, Chancery Ct, Probate Ct, Criminal Ct, <b>Juvenile Ct*</b>
	L	General Session Ct, Municipal Ct
TX	G	District Ct
	L	Constitutional County Ct, Probate Ct, County Ct at Law, Municipal Ct, Justice Ct
UT	G	District Ct, <b>Juvenile Ct*</b>
	L	Justice Ct
VT	S	Superior Ct
VA	G	Circuit Ct
	L	District Ct
WA	G	Superior Ct
	L	Municipal Ct, District Ct
WV	G	Circuit Ct
	L	Magistrate Ct, Family Ct, Municipal Ct
WI	G	Circuit Ct
	L	Municipal Ct
WY	G	District Ct
	L	Circuit Ct, Municipal Ct

**Courts identified as General Jurisdiction for CSP but Limited Jurisdiction in the state shown in blue**

\* Court is identified as a Limited Jurisdiction Court in the state but included in the General Jurisdiction level for CSP reporting

\*\*Court is identified as a Limited Jurisdiction Court in the state but is included in the General Jurisdiction level for CSP reporting. This results in the state being identified as having a single tiered structure for CSP purposes