

## State Appropriations for the Judicial Branch: Fiscal Years 1994, 1995 and 1996

Budget Unit/Agency	FY 1994 Amended Appropriation	FY 1995 Amended Appropriation	Percent Change FY 94-95	1996 General Appropriation	Percent Change FY 95-96
Supreme Court	\$5,201,909	\$5,433,395	4.5%	\$5,515,675	1.5%
Court of Appeals	5,819,886	6,269,416	7.7%	7,142,296	13.9%
<b>Superior Courts (Total)</b>	<b>47,558,332</b>	<b>51,050,860</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>53,297,032</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
Operations	44,268,810	47,535,338	7.4%	49,643,861	4.4%
Council of Superior Court Judges	126,609	135,417	7.0%	346,841	156.1%
Judicial Administrative Districts	1,164,572	1,242,858	6.7%	1,290,967	3.9%
Prosecuting Attorneys' Council	1,840,926	1,969,089	7.0%	2,015,363	2.4%
Sentence Review Panel	157,415	168,158	6.8%	-	-100.0%
Council of Juvenile Court Judges	911,803	1,023,530	12.3%	1,077,570	5.3%
<b>Institute of Continuing Judicial Education (Total)</b>	<b>647,450</b>	<b>652,490</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>711,007</b>	<b>9.0%</b>
Operations	509,750	513,260	0.7%	548,459	6.9%
Magistrate Courts Training Council	137,700	139,230	1.1%	148,098	6.4%
Municipal Courts Training Council	-	-	-	14,450	100.0%
<b>Judicial Council</b>	<b>2,389,352</b>	<b>1,802,442</b>	<b>-24.6%</b>	<b>1,693,214</b>	<b>-6.1%</b>
Operations	1,269,363	1,262,686	-0.5%	1,152,470	-8.7%
Board of Court Reporting	41,689	70,756	69.7%	74,869	5.8%
Case Counting	76,500	76,500	0.0%	76,500	0.0%
Council of Magistrate Court Judges	26,000	26,700	2.7%	25,835	-3.2%
Council of Probate Court Judges	20,000	20,000	0.0%	20,450	2.3%
Council of State Court Judges	12,000	12,000	0.0%	12,050	0.4%
Council of Superior Court Clerks	33,800	33,800	0.0%	31,040	-8.2%
Appellate Resource Center	250,000	300,000	20.0%	300,000	0.0%
Computerized Information Network	660,000	0	-100.0%	-	-
Judicial Qualifications Commission	146,228	148,808	1.8%	157,718	6.0%
Indigent Defense Council	1,000,000	2,000,000	50.0%	3,000,000	200.0%
<b>Georgia Courts Automation Commission</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,244,331</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>1,363,811</b>	<b>0</b>
Operations	0	561,763	0	680,011	21.0%
Statewide County Computerized Information Network	0	682,568	0	683,800	0.2%
Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution	-	-	-	229,149	100.0%
<b>Judicial Branch Totals</b>	<b>\$63,674,960</b>	<b>\$69,625,272</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>\$74,187,472</b>	<b>6.6%</b>

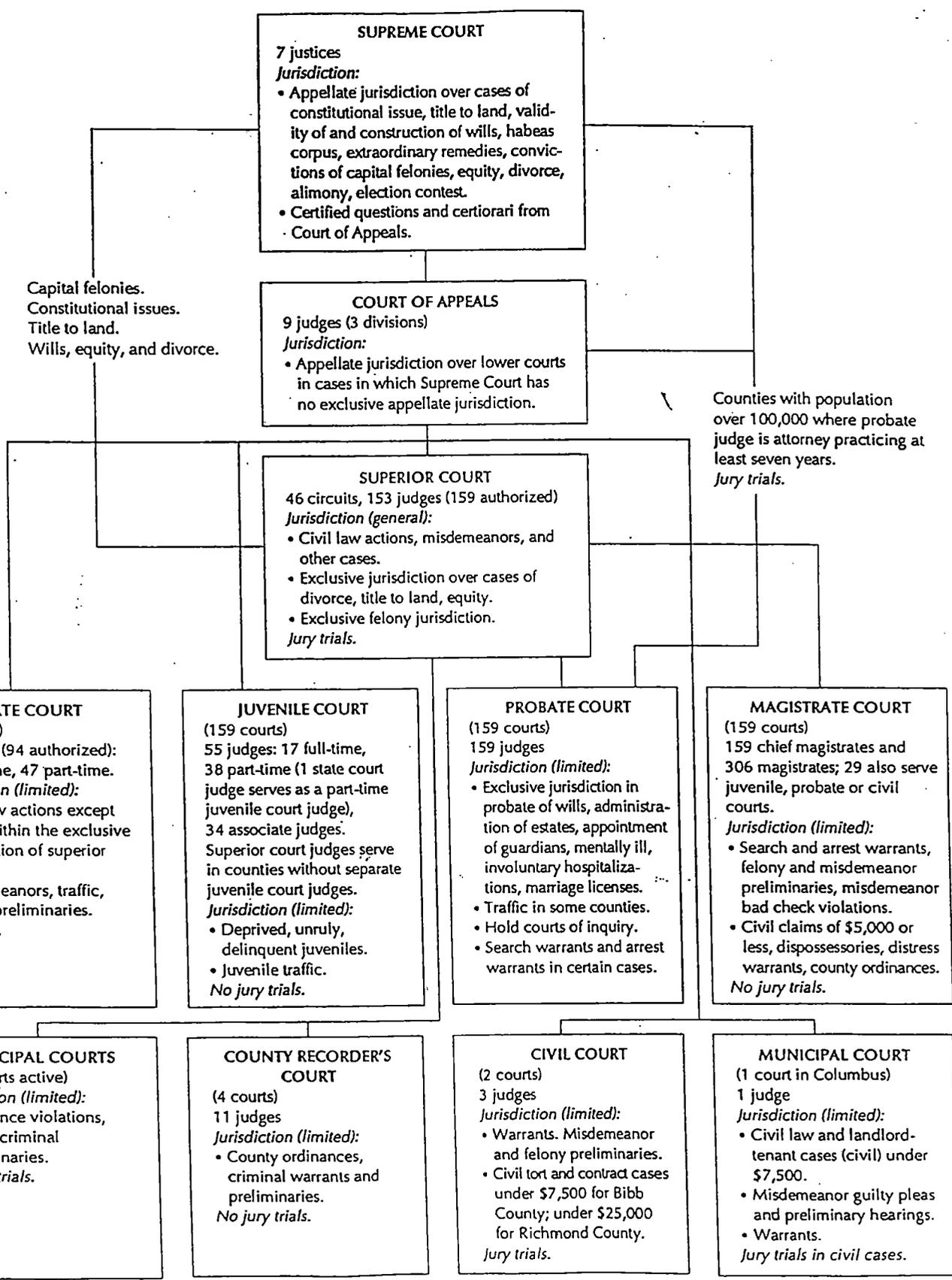
FY 97  
Seeking

7,999,637

### Appropriations

The total state budget rose by 10.9 percent for fiscal year 1995; appropriations to the judicial branch increased by 6.6 percent. The judicial branch budget includes funds for 14 superior court judgeships and related positions that are now being filled following a favorable ruling in the federal voting-rights litigation. Ten new judgeships were approved by the General Assembly in 1995.

# Georgia Court System: June 30, 1995



Capital felonies.  
Constitutional issues.  
Title to land.  
Wills, equity, and divorce.

Counties with population over 100,000 where probate judge is attorney practicing at least seven years.  
Jury trials.

## Court of Appeals

The Georgia Court of Appeals was created in 1907 to alleviate the caseload burden of the Georgia Supreme Court. Today the Court of Appeals has become the appellate court in the country with the most signed opinions per judge and one of the appellate courts with the highest number of appellate cases filed per year, per judge.

The Court of Appeals has constitutional jurisdiction over appeals from superior, state and juvenile courts in all cases where exclusive or general jurisdiction is not reserved to the Supreme Court. These cases include civil claims for damages, child custody cases, workers' compensation and other administrative cases and all criminal cases other than capital felonies. The court may also certify legal questions to the Supreme Court.

Nine judges serve on panels of three judges each. The chief judge of the court, usually the most senior judge who has not served as chief judge, is elected by the court to a two-year term and is responsible for the administration of the court. On January 5, 1995, Judge Dorothy T. Beasley was elected to this position, the first woman to serve as chief judge. The chief judge appoints three presiding judges, usually the most senior, to head each panel and assigns judges to the panels each year. The chief judge and the presiding judges form the executive council.

Panel decisions are final unless a judge dissents. If, after a hearing by the full court the judges are equally divided, the case is transferred for decision to the Supreme Court.

Court of Appeals judges are elected to staggered, six-year terms in statewide, nonpartisan elections. A candidate for judgeship must have been admitted to practice law for at least seven years prior to assuming office. In the event of vacancies, the governor appoints successors to complete unexpired terms.

The court has terms beginning in September, January and April. The Georgia Constitution provides that all cases shall be decided no later than the term following the

term to which a case is docketed (the "two term" rule) or the case shall be affirmed by operation of law. It is believed that no case has ever been so affirmed.

The Court of Appeals provides for a voluntary settlement conference procedure in civil cases after a notice of appeal is filed in the trial court. The procedure affords the possibility of settlement or clarification of the issues of a case prior to docketing with the Court of Appeals. The settlement conference chief judge and other settlement conference judges located throughout the state consider cases as assigned. Beginning July 1, 1995, the appellate settlement conference, which has operated since October 1, 1989, will be suspended. The court plans to use the senior appellate court judges and senior superior court judges to assist, as permitted by OCGA §15-1-9.2 and §15-3-1.

The Court of Appeals has a clerk/court administrator to handle the increasing administrative requirements of the court as well as the increasing caseload. During fiscal year 1995, the court hired additional floating and central staff attorneys in an effort to keep pace with the expanding caseload.

*Court of Appeals filings and dispositions for calendar years 1993 and 1994 are compared in the table on the next page.*

## Court of Appeals Caseload: 1993 and 1994

Filed	1993	1994	Disposed	1993	1994
Appeals	2,601	2,842	Appeals		
Discretionary applications	479	611	By opinion	2,183	2,315
Interlocutory applications	450	458	By order	512	580
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,412</b>	<b>3,530</b>	Discretionary applications		
			Granted	127	132
			Denied	296	340
			Dismissed	51	64
			Transferred to Supreme Court	0	15
			Withdrawn	1	4
			Changed to Interlocutory	4	0
			Total	479	555
			Interlocutory applications		
			Granted	142	139
			Denied	247	244
			Dismissed	49	37
			Transferred to Supreme Court	1	2
			Withdrawn	0	1
			Total	440	423
			<b>Total</b>	<b>3,614</b>	<b>3,873</b>

2,315 @ 257 each