

GOVERNMENT 101 for CITIZENS OF MICHIGAN

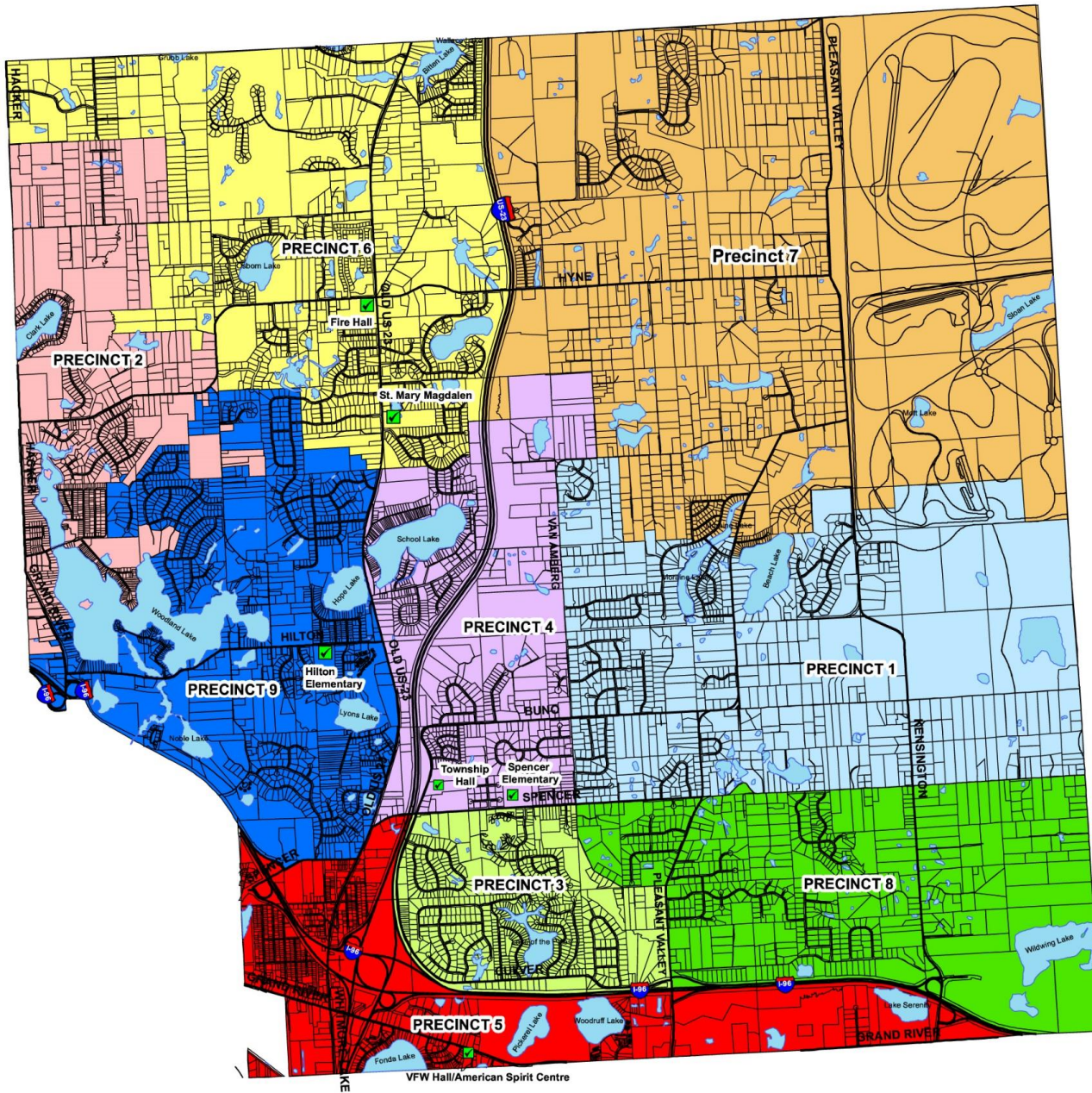
Geopolitical Units: Precinct, Municipality, County, Legislature, Judiciary

Elected Officials: Municipal, County, State, Federal

Elections: Primary, General & Special

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF BRIGHTON

Voting Precinct Map



MUNICIPALITY

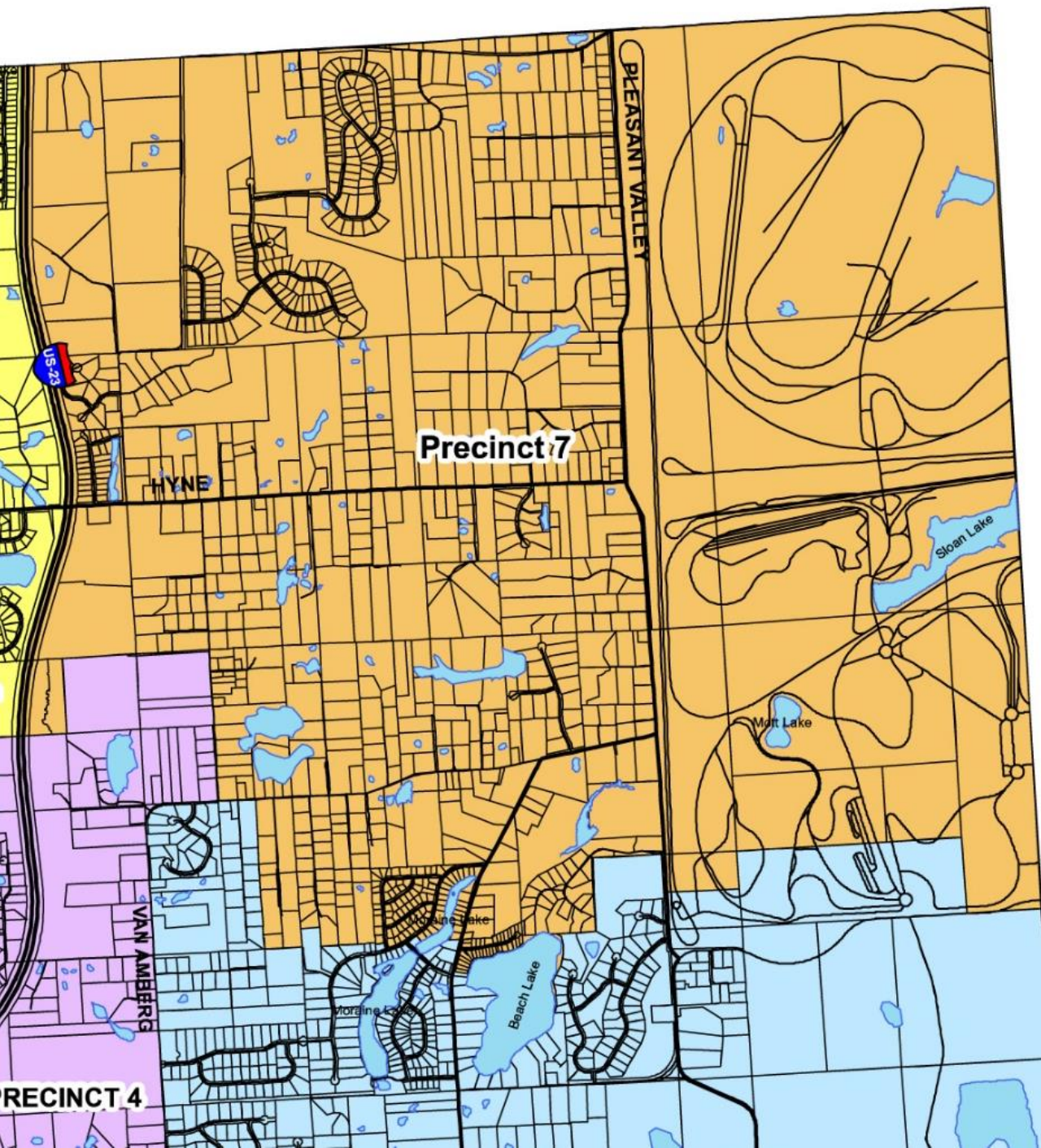
CITY or TOWNSHIP

- each has a governing body
- most have a government building
- most have a website
- all have codes or ordinances (municipal laws)
- municipalities consist of one or more precincts – those with multiple precincts have a precinct map to show precinct boundaries

PRECINCT

- per Michigan law, a precinct contains no more than 5,000 active registered voters (MCL 168.658 amended in 2023 from 2,999 registered voters to 5,000)
- all voters in a precinct vote at the same polling location

Get to know your precinct! Browse the precinct map, take note of precinct boundaries and drive the streets. Identify the businesses, churches and schools and locate contact information





What municipality do you live in?

What is the address of your municipal government building?

What is the website for your municipality and what content is available there?

Obtain a copy of your municipality codes or ordinances - find on the website or ask your municipal clerk. Read through the codes or ordinances and identify any of interest or concern.



Obtain a precinct map - find on the website or ask your municipal clerk. What precinct do you live in?

Study your precinct map. What businesses, churches, schools and other entities are located in your precinct? How can you contact them?

ELECTED OFFICIALS

ALL INFLUENCE YOUR LIFE – FOR GOOD OR EVIL

- Municipal & School Board
- County
- State
- Federal
- Judicial

MUNICIPAL CITY or TOWNSHIP

SCHOOL BOARD

Municipal Board Members

Township Supervisor or City Mayor
Clerk, Treasurer & Other Members

School Board Members

HOW CAN YOU REACH THEM?

WHEN AND WHERE DO THEY MEET?



Where and when does your municipal government have their public meetings?

Who are the members of your municipal government? How can you reach them?

Township Supervisor or City Mayor:

Clerk:

Treasurer:

Other Members:



What public school district do you live in?

Where and when does your school board have their public meetings?

Who are the members of your school board? How can you reach them?

COUNTY

83 counties in Michigan: 15 in the Upper Peninsula, 68 in the Lower Peninsula

- each has its own governing body, government building and official website
- all have codes or ordinances (county laws)
- all have municipality maps and county commissioner district maps
- county clerk has record of all precinct delegates for both major parties elected in most recent August primary election



COUNTY

Executive (4-yr terms): Clerk, Treasurer, Sheriff, Prosecutor, Water (or Drain) Commissioner, Road Commissioners

Legislative (4-yr terms): County Commissioners

HOW CAN YOU REACH THEM?

WHEN AND WHERE DO THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEET?





What county do you live in?

What is the address of your county government building?

What is the website for your county and what content is available there?

Obtain a copy of your county codes or ordinances - find on the website or ask your county clerk. Read through the codes or ordinances and identify any of interest or concern.



Who are the executives in your county government? How can you reach them?

Clerk:

Treasurer:

Sheriff:

Prosecutor:

Water or Drain Commissioner:

Road Commissioner(s):



Obtain a county commissioner district map - find on the website or ask your county clerk. What commissioner district do you live in?

Who is your county commissioner? How can you reach them?

Where and when do your county commissioners have their public meetings?

Obtain the precinct delegate list(s) from your county clerk. Who are the delegates in your precinct, municipality and beyond? How can you reach them?

STATE

MICHIGAN CONSTITUTION MICHIGAN COMPILED LAWS (MCL)

Lansing, MI
Michigan.gov

Executive: Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
Secretary of State, Attorney General, Board
of Education, University Boards

Legislative: State Senators, State
Representatives
legislature.mi.gov



MICHIGAN CONSTITUTION

[legislature.mi.gov/Publications/
MIConstitution.pdf](http://legislature.mi.gov/Publications/MIConstitution.pdf)

- supersedes all other state laws
- can be amended through the ballot initiative (proposal) process



Michigan Compiled Laws: Basic Search

Multiple Search Options for the Michigan Compiled Laws

MCL Section Number(s) 

Statute Number(s) 

Popular Name 

Chapter Number(s) 

Session Regular  

Key Words 

☐ **Exclude Constitution From Full Text Search**

MICHIGAN
COMPILED LAWS
legislature.mi.gov

- The set of laws developed by the Michigan Legislature
- Subject to the Constitution

Bill Search

Legislative Session

Bill Number

Key Words

You can use a wild card, e.g., "limit*".

Browse Bills By Session

House

Senate

Bill Searches

by Category
by Detailed Category
by Sponsor
by PA Affected
by Committee
by Bill History
Appropriations Bills

BILLS

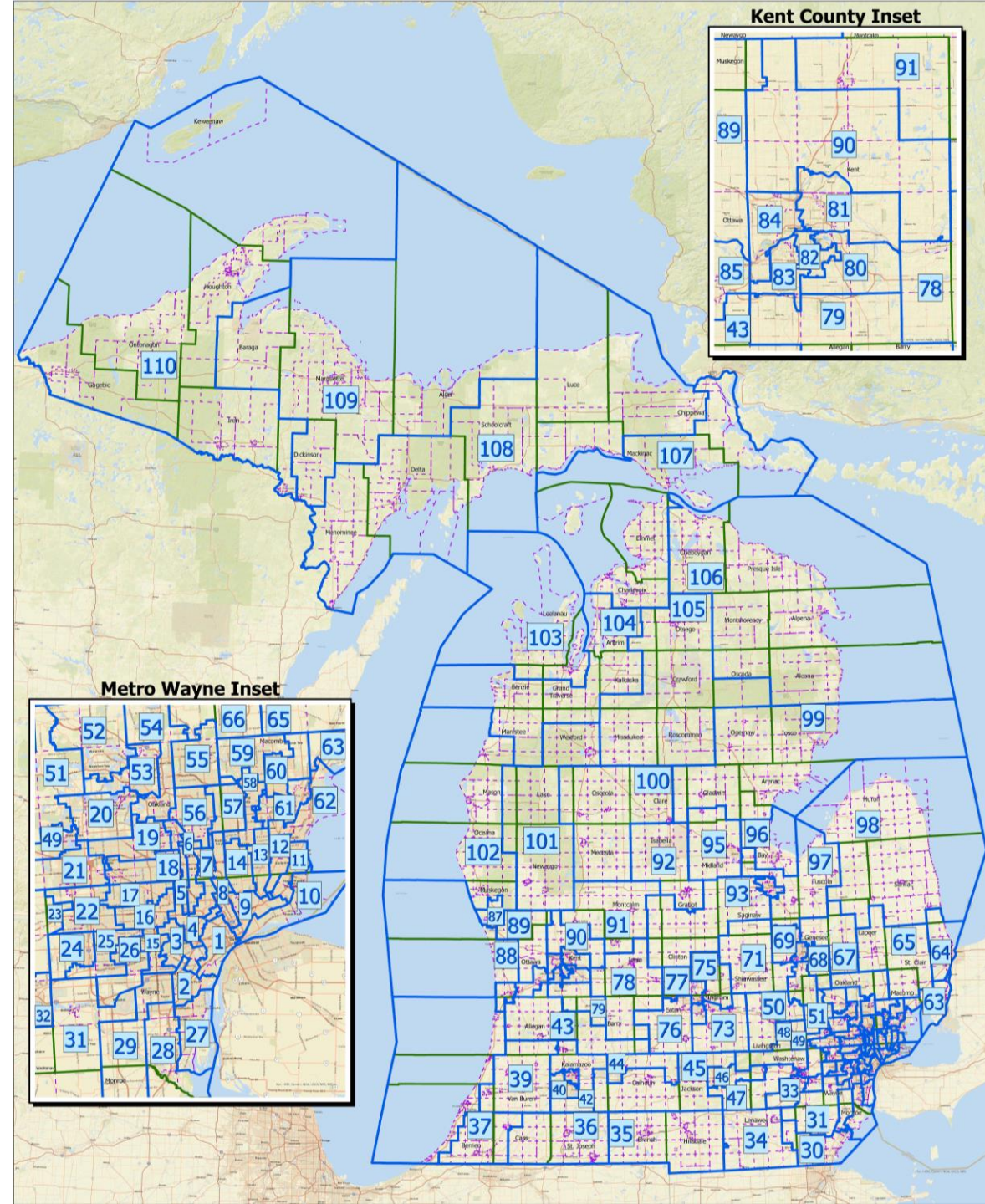
legislature.mi.gov

- All laws are first introduced as bills in a committee of one of the legislative chambers (house of representatives or senate) and must first be approved in committee
- Bills approved in committee must then be approved by members of the chamber it originated in, before also being approved by members of the other legislative chamber
- Bills approved by both chambers must be approved by the Michigan Governor before becoming law

STATE HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

house.mi.gov

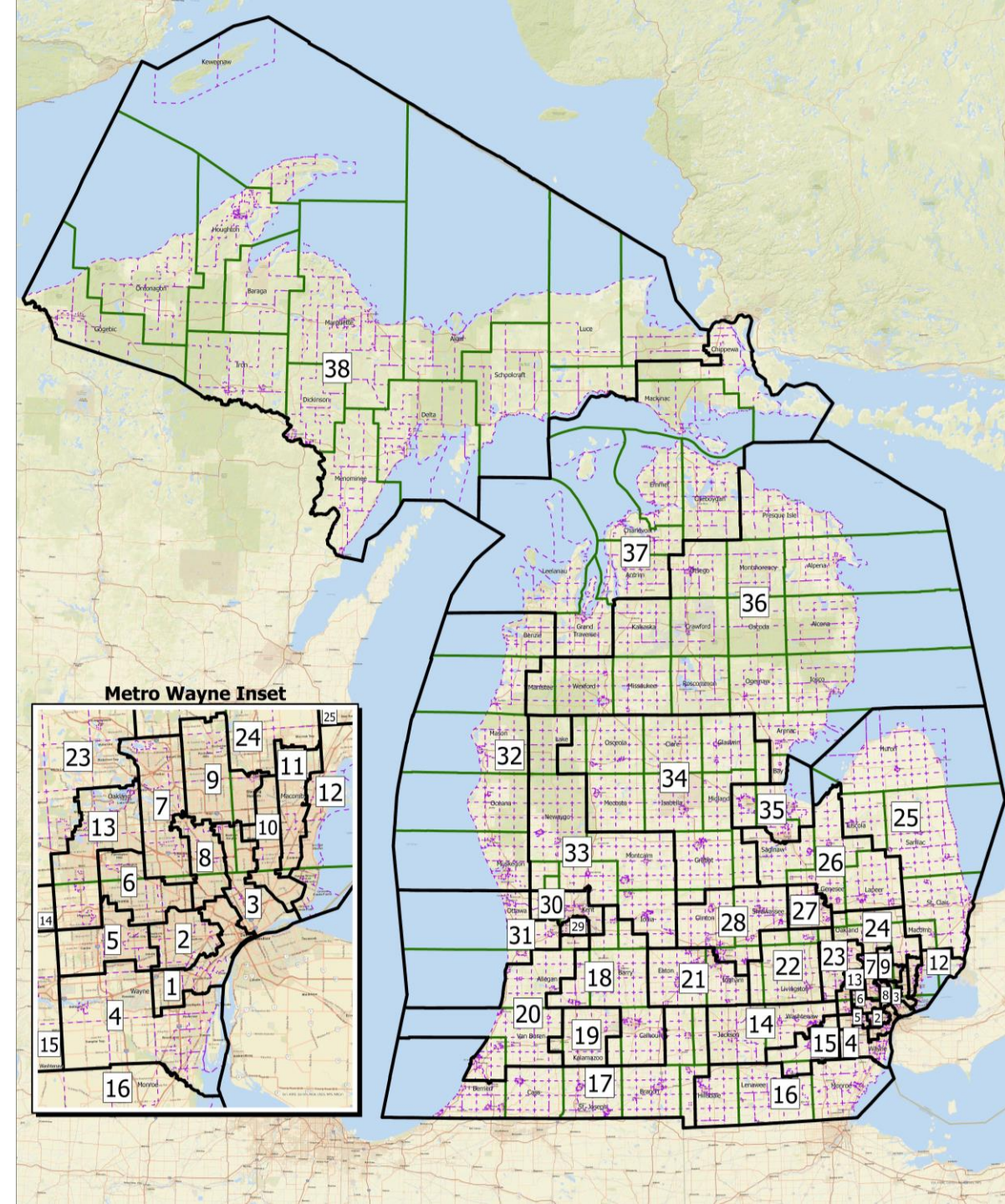
110 legislative districts



STATE SENATE

senate.michigan.gov

38 legislative districts





Read and familiarize yourself with the Michigan Constitution.

Familiarize yourself with doing a basic MCL search to locate laws specific to the topics that interest you.

Familiarize yourself with searching for bills specific to the topics that interest you and determining which body is considering these bills.



What state rep district do you live in?

Who is your state representative? How can you reach them?

What state senate district do you live in?

Who is your state senator? How can you reach them?

FEDERAL

U.S. CONSTITUTION
FEDERAL LAWS

Washington, D.C.
[Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov)

Executive: President, Vice President

Legislative: U.S. Senators (100),
U.S. Representatives (435)



UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

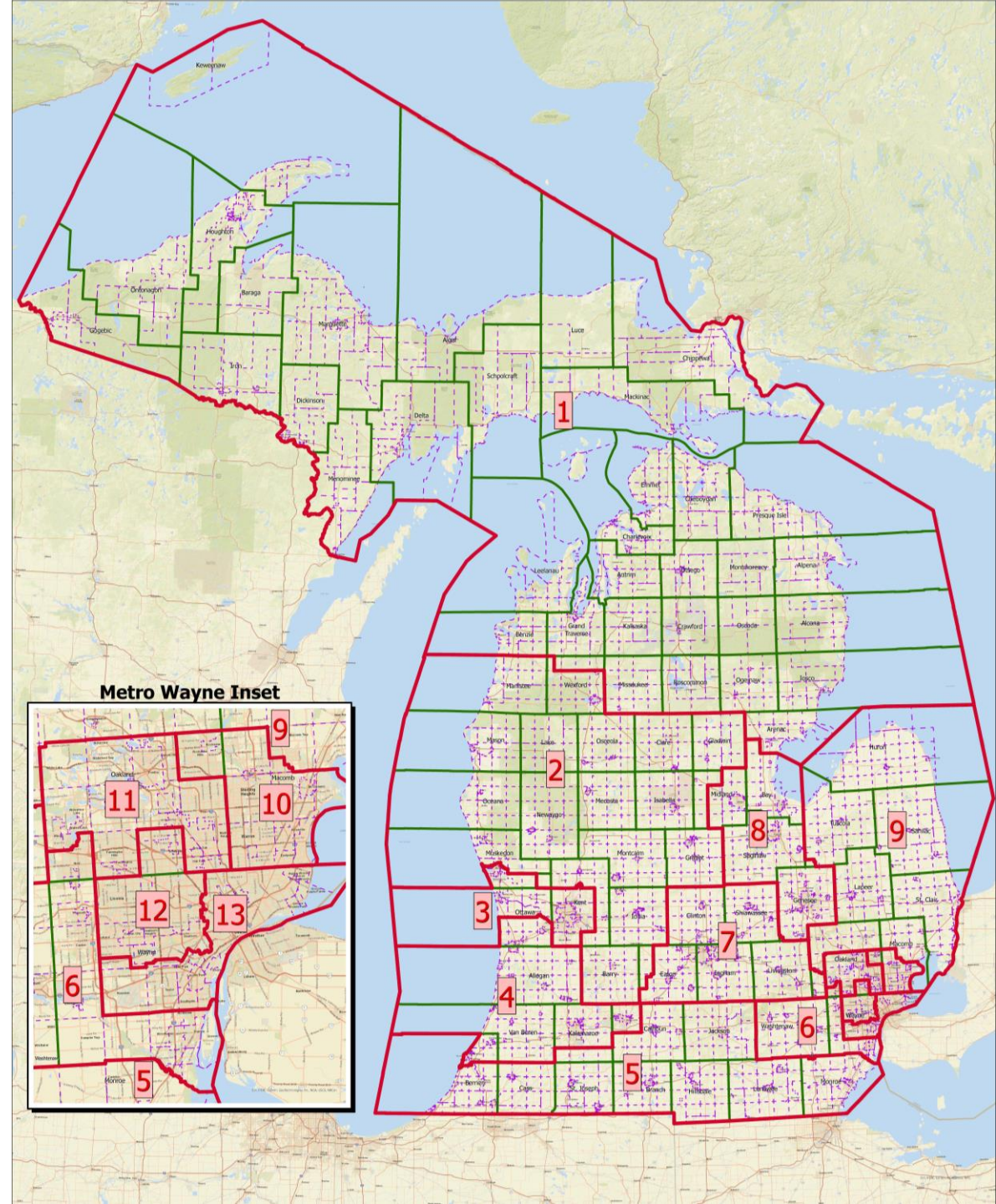
constitutioncenter.org

- supersedes all other laws in the United States of America



U.S. HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

13 legislative districts





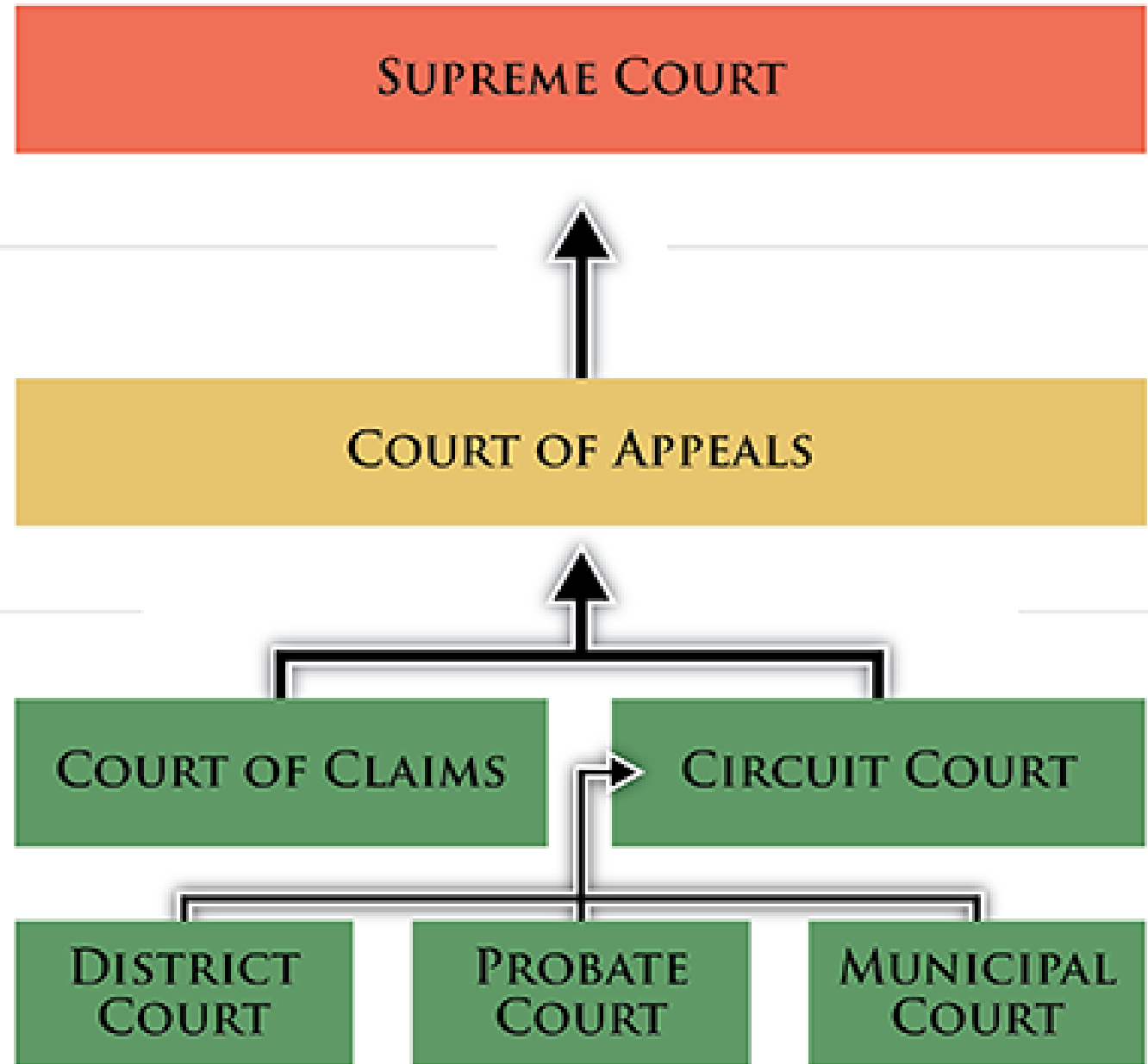
Read and familiarize yourself with the U.S. Constitution.

What U.S. rep district do you live in?

Who is your U.S. representative? How can you reach them?

Who are your U.S. senators? How can you reach them?

JUDICIAL SYSTEM



PROBATE COURT

Low Level Trial Court

78 Districts

100+ Judges (6-yr term)

One district per county, with exception of ten counties which have consolidated to form five probate districts

LIMITED JURISDICTION

- Wills & Estates: proper transfer of assets after death
- Guardianships
- Protection of incapacitated or mentally ill individuals and their assets

DISTRICT COURT

Low Level Trial Court

105 Districts

250+ Judges (6-yr term)

or MUNICIPAL
COURT

4 Districts

LIMITED JURISDICTION

- Civil litigation under \$25,000, excluding equity and small claims under \$3,000
- Misdemeanors, ordinance violations with sentences less than one year
- Preliminary trials on felony charges
- Landlord/tenant or summary proceedings

CIRCUIT COURT

High Level Trial Court

57 Districts

230+ Judges (6-yr term)

JURISDICTION

- Cases appealed from lower trial courts
- Civil litigation over \$25,000
- Felony criminal cases
- Family division



COURT OF CLAIMS

High Level Trial Court

4 Judges from the Court of Appeals,
appointed by the Michigan Supreme Court

LIMITED JURISDICTION

- Litigation against the State of Michigan
- Examples: highway defect, medical malpractice, contracts, constitutional claims, prisoner litigation, tax-related suits, and other claims for money damages

COURT OF APPEALS

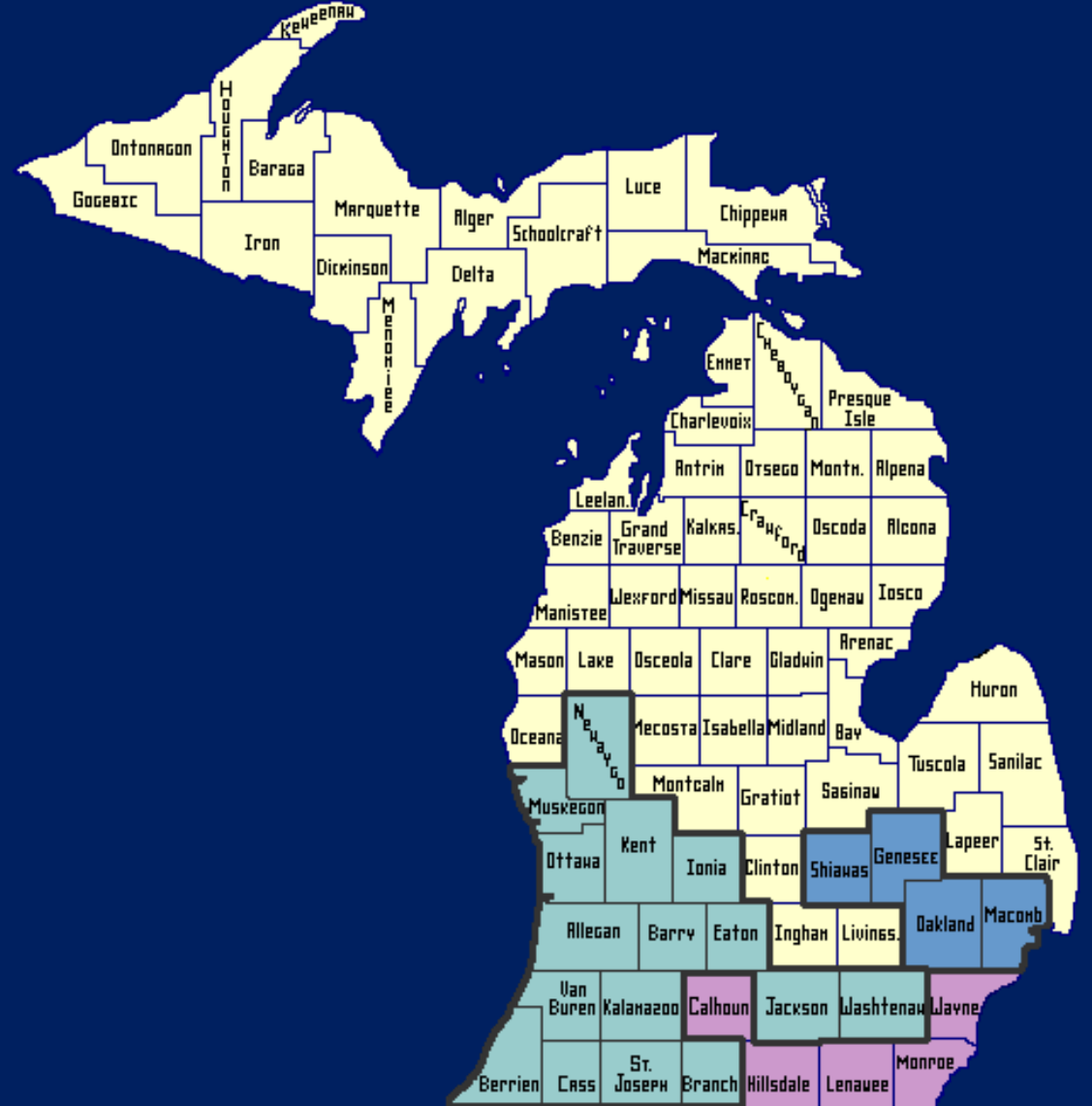
Intermediate Appellate Court

4 Districts

24 Judges (6-yr term)

JURISDICTION

- Cases appealed from trial courts
- Essentially serves to reduce the workload for the Michigan Supreme Court



MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT

State Court of Last Resort
7 Justices (8-yr term)

JURISDICTION

- Review Court of Appeals decisions
- Judicial misconduct cases
- Superintending control over all state courts in Michigan



U.S. DISTRICT COURT

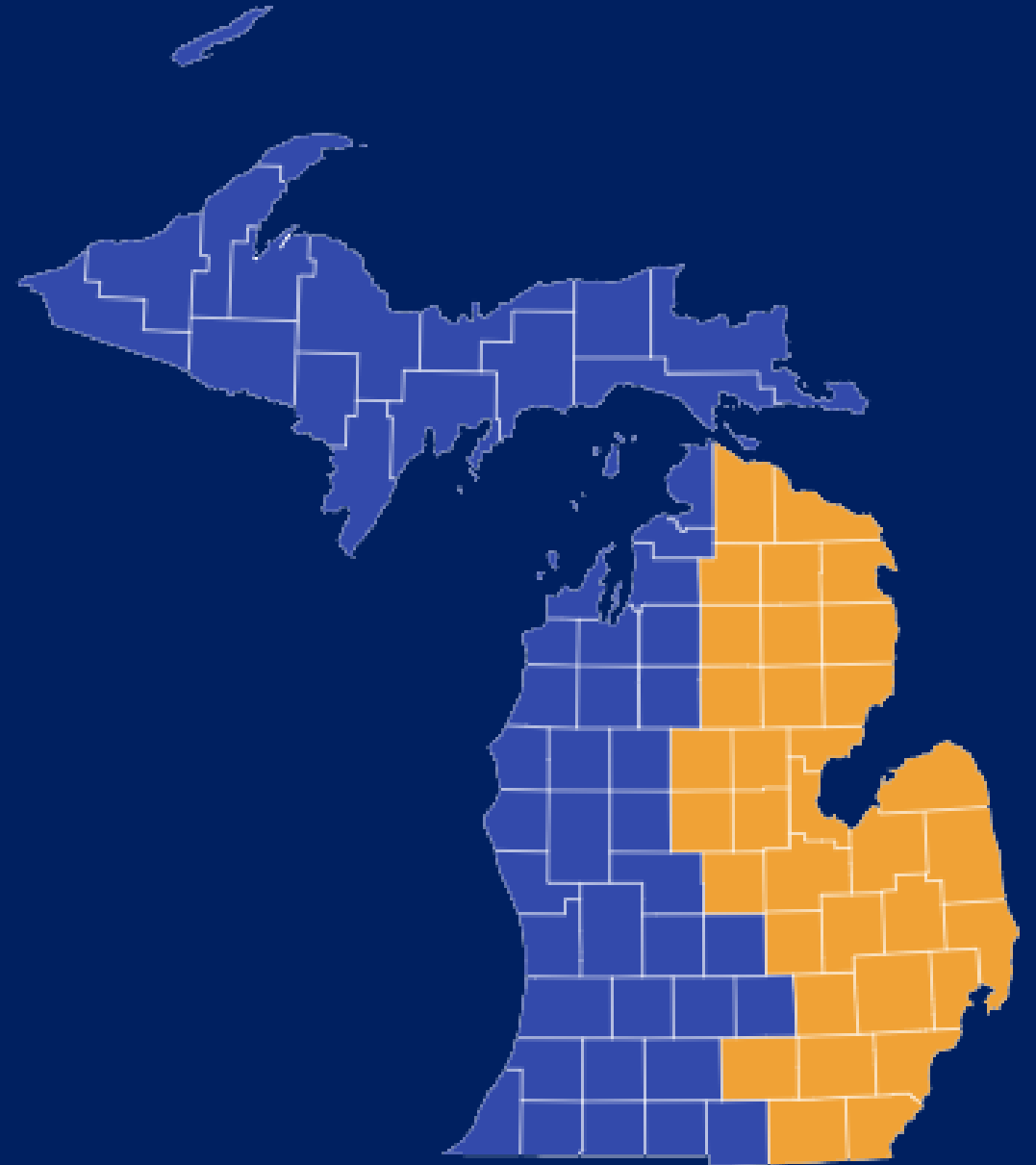
Federal Trial Court

East District: 12 Judges

West District: 4 Judges

JURISDICTION

- Civil and criminal federal cases
- Bankruptcy courts associated with each federal district court
- Judges nominated by U.S. President and confirmed by U.S. Senate for life terms

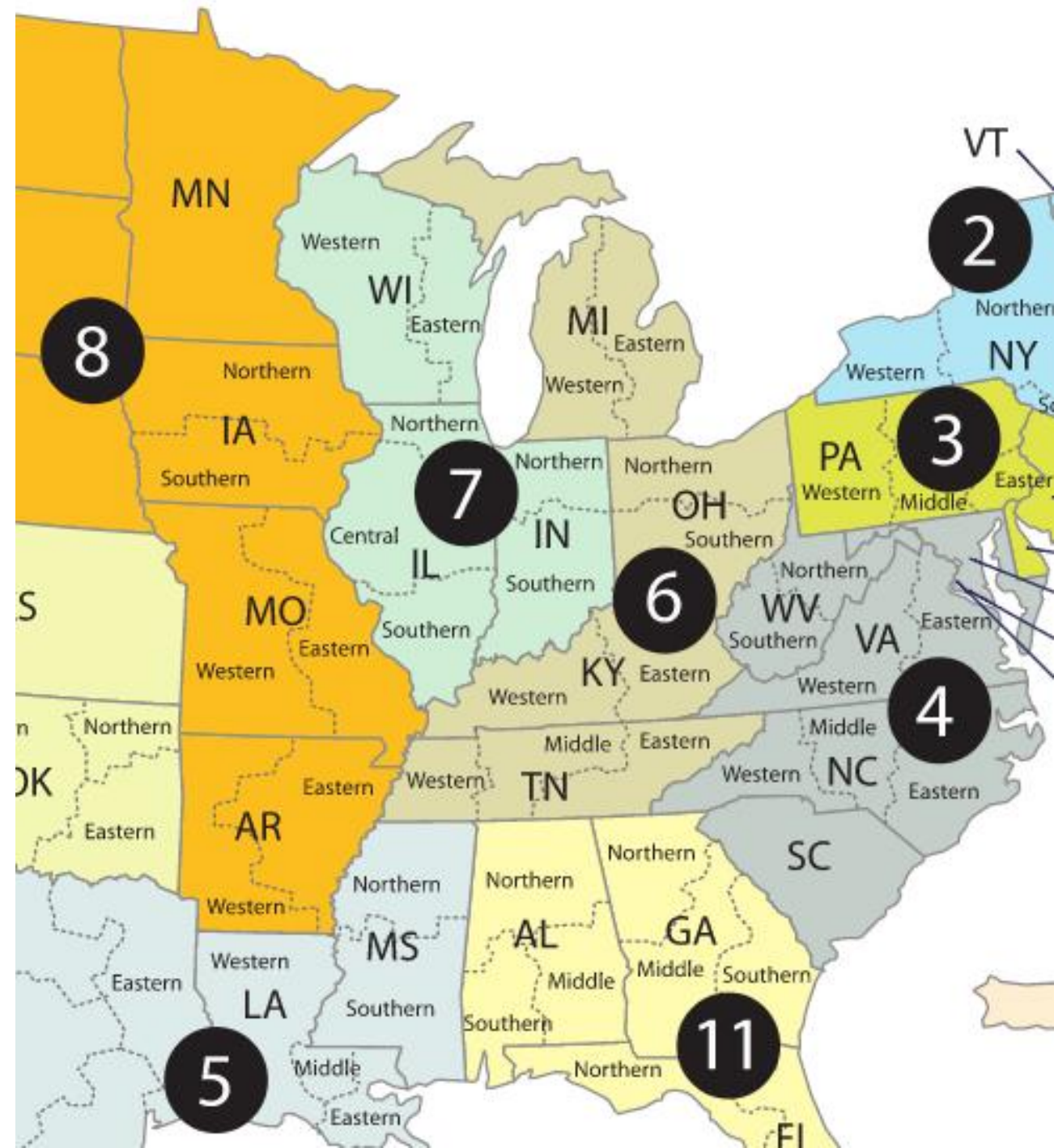


U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR SIXTH CIRCUIT

Federal Appellate Court
29 Judges

JURISDICTION

- Cases appealed from federal trial courts
- Judges nominated by U.S. President and confirmed by U.S. Senate for life terms



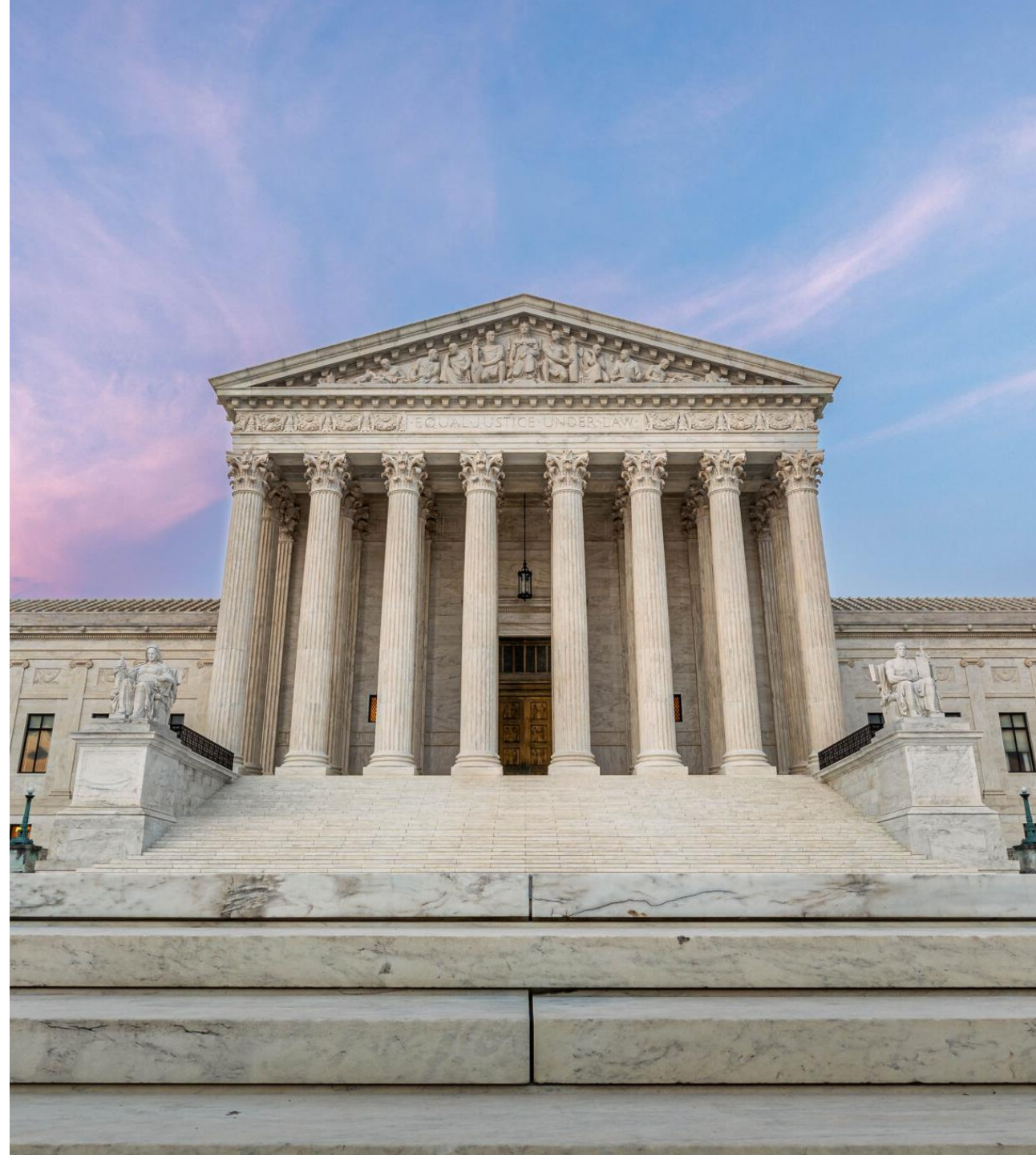
U.S. SUPREME COURT

Federal Court of Last Resort

9 Justices

JURISDICTION

- Review Court of Appeals decisions
- 1 Chief Justice, 8 Associate Justices
- Judges nominated by U.S. President and confirmed by U.S. Senate for life terms





What is the address for the probate court in your county?

Who are the judges in your probate court?

What is the district # and address for your district or municipal court?

Who are the judges in your district or municipal court?



What is the district # and address for your circuit court?

Who are the judges in your circuit court?

What court of appeals district are you in?

Who are the judges in your appellate district?



Who are the Michigan Supreme Court Justices? What party nominated them?

ELECTIONS

Standard Primary Elections:

- August of even years, alternating between Statewide and Presidential

Standard General Elections:

- November of even years, alternating between Statewide and Presidential

Special Elections:

- May of even years
- May, August or November of odd years

ELECTION DATES

RESTRICTED TO:

TUESDAY AFTER FIRST MONDAY IN MAY, AUGUST & NOVEMBER

Exceptions:

- Presidential Primary in Presidential Years on the second Tuesday in March
- School board elections held in November of even years
- Special elections called under the Michigan Legislature
- School districts, intermediate school districts and community college districts that wish to present a millage proposal, bond proposal or proposal to borrow funds on a separate date (with limitations)