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# When do oral arguments occur?

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Arguments are heard year-round at the Minnesota Judicial Center in St. Paul. They are open to the public.

Arguments are also held at different locations in Greater Minnesota and via Zoom.

Watch arguments live online or listen to archived audio recordings at [mncourts.gov/courtofappeals.aspx](http://mncourts.gov/courtofappeals.aspx).

## Minnesota Court of Appeals

Minnesota Judicial Center  
25 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-297-1000  
Hours 8 a.m.—5 p.m.  
Monday—Friday  
[www.mncourts.gov](http://www.mncourts.gov)

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# Visitor’s Guide to Oral Arguments

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## MINNESOTA COURT OF APPEALS



Welcome to the Minnesota Court of Appeals. You are about to hear oral arguments in an appeal.

The Court of Appeals does not consider any new evidence or testimony. Instead, the court reviews the decisions and procedures of a district court or agency and decides whether an error occurred.

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## MINNESOTA COURT OF APPEALS



**Chief Judge  
Jennifer Frisch**



**Judge  
Renee Worke**



**Judge  
Kevin Ross**



**Judge Francis  
Connolly**



**Judge  
Matthew  
Johnson**



**Judge Michelle  
Larkin**



**Judge Louise  
Dovre  
Bjorkman**



**Judge Peter  
Reyes, Jr.**



**Judge  
Tracy Smith**



**Judge Diane  
Bratvold**



**Judge Jeanne  
Cochran**



**Judge Randall  
Slieter**



**Judge Sarah  
Wheelock**



**Judge  
Elise Larson**



**Judge  
Jon Schmidt**



**Judge  
Keala Ede**



**Judge  
JaPaul Harris**



**Judge  
Elizabeth  
Bentley**



**Judge  
Rachel Bond**

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## Where do most appeals come from?

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Each year, the Minnesota Court of Appeals handles approximately 2,000 appeals of decisions from:

- District courts (except first-degree murder appeals, which go directly to the Minnesota Supreme Court).
- Administrative agencies (except Tax and Workers’ Compensation courts).

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## The appeals process

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Appellant files an appeal after a decision by a Minnesota district court or agency.



District court or agency forwards files to Minnesota Court of Appeals.



Appellant and respondent file briefs.



Three-judge panel hears oral arguments.



Minnesota Court of Appeals issues a written opinion.

Parties may petition the Minnesota Supreme Court for further review.

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## What happens during oral arguments?

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**The marshal calls the court to order and the audience stands.**

During oral arguments, the marshal helps maintain decorum in the courtroom and time limits for arguments.

**Three judges enter the courtroom.**

Court of Appeals cases are heard by a panel of three judges. Judges prepare by reading written arguments, called briefs, submitted in advance by the parties involved.

**Appellant’s attorney argues the case.**

The attorney representing the appealing party has 15 minutes to highlight their best arguments and answer questions from the judges.

**Respondent’s attorney argues the case.**

The respondent’s attorney also has 15 minutes to present their arguments.

**Appellant’s attorney has five minutes for a rebuttal.**

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## Courtroom decorum

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**Please help maintain decorum in the courtroom.**

Important issues are decided based on oral arguments, so it is critical that the judges and attorneys work without distraction.

Please do the following while in court:

- Turn off cell phones before entering the courtroom.
- Remove hats before entering the courtroom.
- Sit in the audience area of the courtroom. Standing is prohibited during oral arguments.
- Remain silent.
- Do not eat, drink, chew gum, or use tobacco.
- Do not use electronic recording devices. They are prohibited, except as permitted for the media.

No demonstrations are allowed. That includes no signs, banners or symbols.

Any distracting activity will be grounds for removal from the courtroom.

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## What happens after oral arguments?

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**Judges conference the case.**

The three judges meet privately to decide the outcome of the appeal. One judge is assigned to write the court’s decision, called an opinion.

**Judges review the draft opinion.**

The draft opinion is reviewed by the three-judge panel. A judge on the panel may also write a concurring opinion—agreeing with the decision, but for different reasons—or a “dissenting opinion”—disagreeing with the majority opinion. Once the panel judges agree on a final draft, the opinion is circulated to other Court of Appeals judges for comments.

**The final opinion is filed with the Clerk of Appellate Courts.**

The Minnesota Court of Appeals releases its opinion within 90 days or sooner for certain case types.

**Opinions are released weekly, typically on Mondays at 10 a.m. They are available to the public at [mncourts.gov](http://mncourts.gov).**