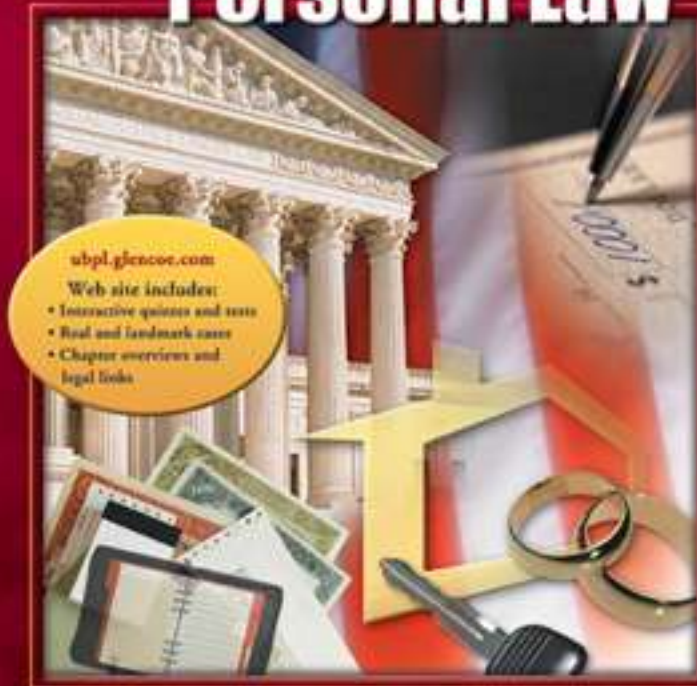


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## Section 2.1

# A Dual Court System

## The Federal Court System

Federal courts hear cases involving

- federal matters
- matters involving diversity of citizenship

## The Federal Court System

**Jurisdiction** is the power and authority given to a court to hear a case and to make a judgment.

## The Federal Court System

Federal courts have jurisdiction over:

- actions in which the United States or one state is a party, except those actions between a state and its citizens
- cases that raise a federal question, such as interpreting the Constitution

## The Federal Court System

Federal courts have jurisdiction over:

- **diversity of citizenship** cases, which involve citizens of different states and in which the amount of money in dispute exceeds \$75,000
- admiralty cases, or those pertaining to the sea

## The Federal Court System

Federal courts have jurisdiction over:

- patent and copyright cases
- bankruptcy cases

## The Federal Court System

Federal courts are arranged in three steps, or tiers:

- U.S district courts
- U.S. courts of appeals
- the Supreme Court

## District Courts

- District courts have original jurisdiction over most federal court cases.
- **Original jurisdiction** means trying a case the first time it is heard.



## Courts of Appeals

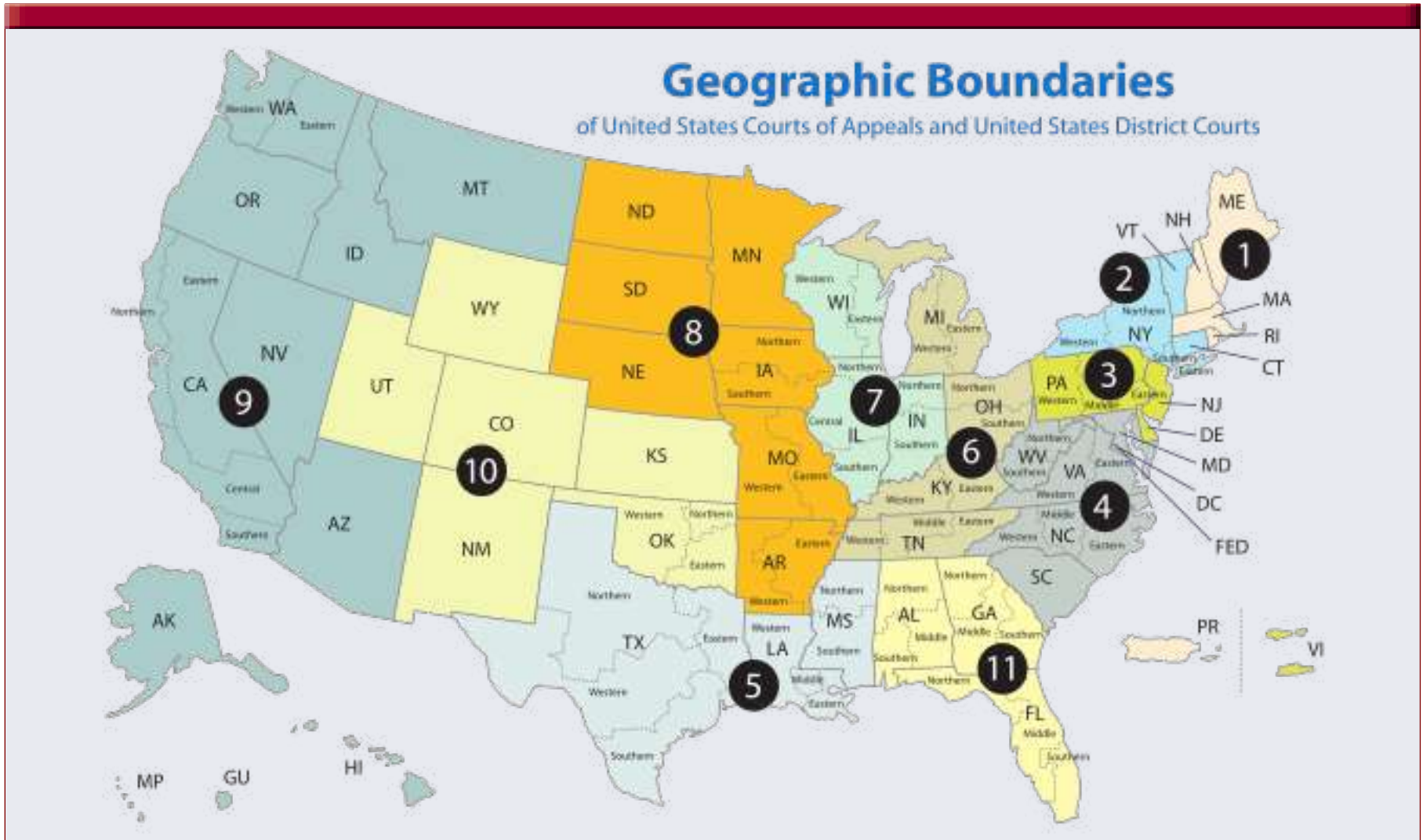
- The U.S. courts of appeals are also called **appellate courts**.
- They are **intermediate courts**, courts between lower courts and the highest court.
- They hear appeals and review cases from lower courts.

## Courts of Appeals

They have **appellate jurisdiction**, meaning that any party to a suit decided in a federal district court may appeal to the federal court of appeals in the circuit where the case was tried.

# Section 2.1

# A Dual Court System



## Special U.S. Courts

Congress has established several special federal courts that have jurisdiction in cases, including:

- suits brought by citizens against the federal government

## Special U.S. Courts

- disagreements over taxes on imported goods
- disputes between taxpayers and the Internal Revenue Service

## Supreme Court

- is the highest court in the land
- has original jurisdiction in all cases involving ambassadors, consuls, other public ministers, and cases in which a state is a party

## Supreme Court

- must hear all cases that involve the constitutionality of the federal law
- also decides which additional cases it will hear from the U.S. courts of appeals or the state supreme courts



What does *jurisdiction* mean?



**POP QUIZ!**

*ANSWER*

The power and authority given to a court to hear a case and to make a judgment.

## State Court Systems

Each state has its own court system. However, the general pattern is the same in all states.

- local trial courts
- general trial courts

## State Court Systems

- special courts
- intermediate appellate courts
- supreme courts

## Local Trial Courts

- Local courts are courts of limited jurisdiction.
- **Limited jurisdiction** means they handle minor matters, such as misdemeanors and civil actions involving small amounts of money.

## General Trial Courts

- Each county in most states has at least one general trial court.
- It has **general jurisdiction.**
- All cases involving major crimes and large amounts of money must begin in one of these courts.

## Special Courts

Courts have been established in many states to handle specialized cases.

- Domestic relations courts handle divorce, annulment, and dissolution proceedings.
- Juvenile courts have jurisdiction over delinquent, unruly, abused, or neglected children.

## Juvenile Courts

- A **delinquent child** is a minor who has committed an adult crime.
- An **unruly child** is generally a minor who has done something inappropriate that is not considered an adult crime.

## Juvenile Courts

- A **neglected or abused child** is one who is homeless, destitute, or without adequate parental care.
- He or she may become a ward of the state.



## Intermediate Appellate Courts

- Hear appeals from courts of general jurisdiction
- Appeals may be made to a state intermediate court if:

## Intermediate Appellate Courts

- The parties believe they did not have a fair trial in the lower court
- That the judge did not properly interpret the law.

## State Appellate Courts

State appellate courts hear appeals only on questions of law, not on questions of fact.

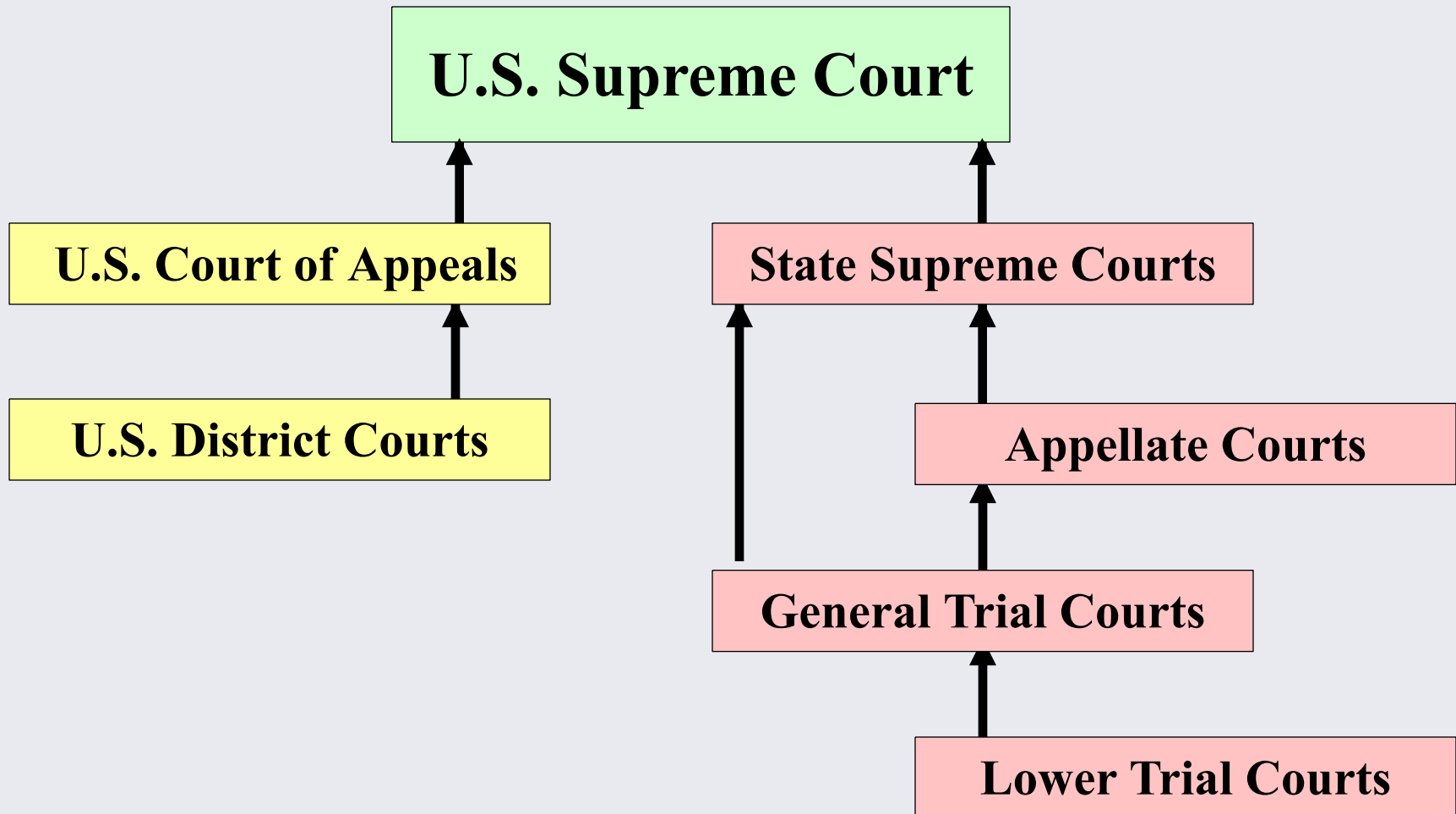
## State Appellate Courts

Instead of hearing witnesses, appeals judges hear oral arguments from attorneys and study the documents and records in the case.

## Supreme Courts

- The highest court in most states is known as the supreme court.
- Typically these courts decide matters of law appealed from lower courts.

## Court Systems in the United States



# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

1. What are the differences among original, appellate, limited and general jurisdiction?

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

Original: district courts have authority to try a case the first time it is heard.



## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

Appellate: any party to a suit decided in a federal district court may appeal the decision to the federal court of appeals in the circuit where the case was tried.

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

Limited: local courts have jurisdiction only in minor matters such as misdemeanors and civil actions involving small amounts of money.

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

General: general trial courts handle the major civil and criminal cases in each state.

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

2. How are the federal courts structured?

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

Three tiers:

- Lowest—U.S. district courts located throughout U.S.
- Middle—U.S. courts of appeals
- Highest—Supreme Court

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

3. What is the role of the United States Supreme Court?

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

The Supreme Court is the highest court with both original and appellate jurisdiction.

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

4. How are most state courts structured?



# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

Tiers of local trial courts, general trial courts, intermediate appellate courts, and supreme courts.

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

5. Explain the differences among unruly, delinquent, and abused or neglected juveniles.

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

Unruly: minor who has committed an act that would not be a crime if an adult did it.

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

Delinquent: minor who has committed an act that would be a crime if an adult did it.

# Section 2.1 A Dual Court System

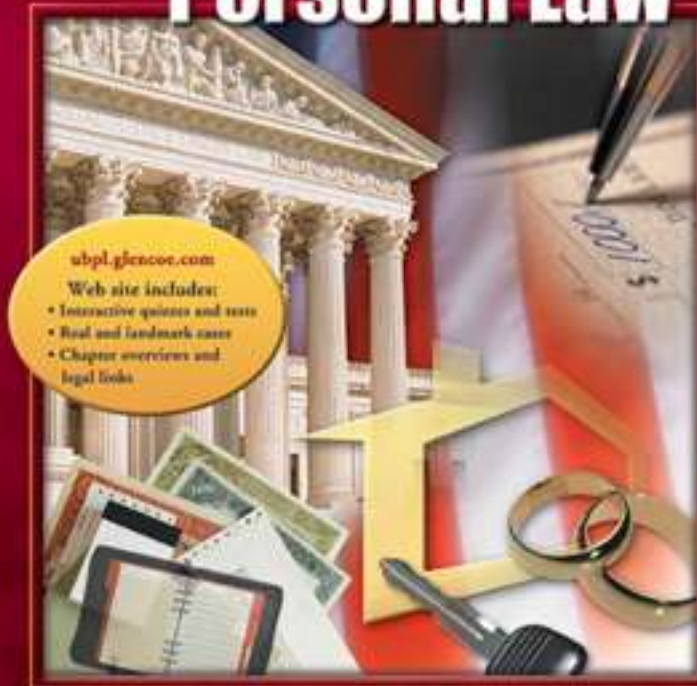
## Section 2.1 Assessment

### Reviewing What You Learned

#### Answer

Neglected/abused: homeless, destitute, or without adequate parental care

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**End of Section 2.1**  
**A Dual Court System**