STATE OF NEW YORK

8418

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

June 9, 2025

Introduced by Sen. GIANARIS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT to amend the judiciary law, in relation to judicial departments

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Section 70 of the judiciary law, as amended by chapter 690 of the laws of 2007, is amended to read as follows:

§ 70. Judicial departments. The state is hereby divided into four judicial departments. The first department shall consist of the counties embraced within the first and twelfth judicial districts; the second department shall consist of the counties embraced within the second, ninth, tenth, eleventh and thirteenth judicial districts; the third department shall consist of the counties embraced within the third, fourth and sixth judicial districts; the fourth department shall consist of the counties embraced within the fifth, seventh [~~and~~], eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth judicial districts.

§ 2. Section 140 of the judiciary law, as amended by chapter 10 of the laws of 1948, the opening paragraph and the second undesignated paragraph as amended and the thirteenth undesignated paragraph as added by chapter 690 of the laws of 2007, the first undesignated paragraph as amended by chapter 1006 of the laws of 1981, the tenth undesignated paragraph as amended and the eleventh undesignated paragraph as added by chapter 692 of the laws of 1962, and the twelfth undesignated paragraph as amended by chapter 38 of the laws of 1982, is amended and two new undesignated paragraphs fourteen and fifteen are added to read as follows:

§ 140. Division of state into judicial districts. The state is hereby divided into [~~thirteen~~] fifteen judicial districts, pursuant to the provisions of the first section of the sixth article of the constitution, which districts shall be arranged as follows:

The first judicial district shall consist of the county of New York;

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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The second judicial district shall consist of the county of Kings;

The third judicial district shall consist of the counties of Columbia, Sullivan, Ulster, Greene, Albany, Schoharie and Rensselaer;

The fourth judicial district shall consist of the counties of Warren, Saratoga, Washington, Essex, Franklin, Saint Lawrence, Clinton, Montgomery, Hamilton, Fulton and Schenectady;

The fifth judicial district shall consist of the counties of [~~Onondaga,~~] Oneida, Oswego, Herkimer, Jefferson [~~and~~], Lewis**, Cayuga, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne and Yates**;

The sixth judicial district shall consist of the counties of Otsego, Delaware, Madison, Chenango, Broome, Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins, Cortland and Schuyler;

The seventh judicial district shall consist of the [~~counties~~] **county** of [~~Livingston, Wayne, Seneca, Yates, Ontario, Steuben,~~] Monroe [~~and Cayuga~~];

The eighth judicial district shall consist of the [~~counties~~] **county** of Erie[~~, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Orleans, Niagara, Genesee, Allegany and Wyoming~~];

The ninth judicial district shall consist of the counties of Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Orange and Rockland;

The tenth judicial district shall consist of the counties of Nassau and Suffolk.

The eleventh judicial district shall consist of the county of Queens. The creation of such eleventh district shall not affect or impair the rights, privileges or compensation of any officer or employee of the supreme court in office on the first day of September, nineteen hundred and sixty-two in the tenth judicial district as theretofore constituted; each such officer or employee employed in the county of Queens on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the eleventh judicial district and each such officer or employee employed in the counties of Nassau and Suffolk on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the tenth judicial district.

The twelfth judicial district shall consist of the county of Bronx. The creation of such twelfth district shall not affect or impair the rights, privileges or compensation of any officer or employee of the supreme court in office on the first day of January, nineteen hundred eighty-three in the first judicial district as theretofore constituted; each such officer or employee employed in the county of Bronx on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the twelfth judicial district and each such officer or employee employed in the county of New York on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the first judicial district.

The thirteenth judicial district shall consist of the county of Richmond. The creation of such thirteenth district shall not affect or impair the rights, privileges or compensation of any officer or employee of the supreme court in office on the first day of January, two thousand eight in the second judicial district as theretofore constituted; each such officer or employee employed in the county of Richmond on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the thirteenth judicial district and each such officer or employee employed in the county of Kings on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the second judicial district.

The fourteenth judicial district shall consist of the county of Onondaga. The creation of such fourteenth district shall not affect or impair the rights, privileges or compensation of any officer or employee of the supreme court in office on the first day of January, two thousand

twenty-six in the fifth judicial district as theretofore constituted; each such officer or employee employed in the county of Onondaga on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the fourteenth judicial district and each such officer or employee employed in the counties of Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, and Oswego on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the fifth judicial district.

The fifteenth judicial district shall consist of the counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Genesee, Livingston, Niagara, Orleans, Steuben, and Wyoming. The creation of such fifteenth judicial district shall not affect or impair the rights, privileges, or compensation of any officer or employee of the supreme court in office on the first day of January, two thousand twenty-six in the seventh and eighth judicial districts as theretofore constituted; each such officer or employee employed in the counties of Cayuga, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the fifth judicial district; each such officer or employee employed in the county of Monroe on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the seventh judicial district; each such officer or employee employed in the county of Erie on such date shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the eighth judicial district; each such officer or employee employed in the counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Genesee, Livingston, Niagara, Orleans, Steuben, and Wyoming shall thereafter be an officer or employee for the fifteenth judicial district.

§ 3. Section 140-a of the judiciary law, as amended by chapter 749 of the laws of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

§ 140-a. Number of supreme court justices in each judicial district. The number of justices of the supreme court in each judicial district shall be as follows:

1. First district, thirty-eight;
2. Second district, fifty-three;
3. Third district, seventeen;
4. Fourth district, fourteen;
5. Fifth district, [~~nineteen~~] fourteen;
6. Sixth district, eleven;
7. Seventh district, [~~twenty~~] thirteen;
8. Eighth district, [~~twenty-eight~~] eighteen;
9. Ninth district, thirty-four;
10. Tenth district, fifty-one;
11. Eleventh district, forty-four;
12. Twelfth district, twenty-nine;
13. Thirteenth district, nine.
14. Fourteenth district, nine.
15. Fifteenth district, thirteen.

No person may serve in the office of justice of the supreme court unless [~~he or she~~] such person has been admitted to practice law in the state of New York for at least ten years as of the date [~~he or she commences~~] they commence the duties of office.

§ 4. The following named justices or their successors in office on the effective date of this act shall for the remainder of the terms for which they were elected or appointed be justices of the supreme court in and for the fifth judicial district as reconstituted and continued by this act.

Elena Cariola
Jason Cook
Scott DelConte

Julie Denton
Danielle Fogel
Gregory Gilbert
James McClusky
Charles Merrell
William Ramseier
Peter Rayhill
Mark Rose
James Vazzana
Jean Marie Westlake

The following named justices or their successors in office on the effective date of this act shall for the remainder of the terms for which they were elected or appointed be justices of the supreme court in and for the seventh judicial district as reconstituted and continued by this act.

Victoria Argento
Vincent Dinolfo
Gail Donofrio
Daniel Doyle
John Gallagher
Stephen Lindley
Kevin Nasca
Alexander Renzi
Stacey Romeo
Charles Schiano
Judith Sinclair
Erin Skinner
William Taylor

The following named justices or their successors in office on the effective date of this act shall for the remainder of the terms for which they were elected or appointed be justices of the supreme court in and for the eighth judicial district as reconstituted and continued by this act.

Tracey Bannister
John Curran
Diane Devlin
Paula Feroleto
Daniel Furlong
Deborah Haendiges
Craig Hannah
Lynn Keane
John Licata
Amy Martoche
Mark Montour
Henry Nowak
Catherine Nugent
E. Jeanette Ogden
Frank Sedita
Donna Siwek
Mary Slisz
Gerald Whalen

The following named justices or their successors in office on the effective date of this act shall for the remainder of the terms for which they were elected or appointed be justices of the supreme court in and for the fourteenth judicial district as created and constituted by this act.

Robert Antonacci
Donald Greenwood
Deborah Karalunas
Kevin Kuehner
Joseph Lamendola
Rory McMahon
James Murphy
Gerard Neri

The following named justices or their successors in office on the effective date of this act shall for the remainder of the terms for which they were elected or appointed be justices of the supreme court in and for the fifteenth judicial district as created and constituted by this act.

Frank Caruso
Deborah Chimes
Emilio Colaiacovo
Gerald Greenan III
Grace Hanlon
Joseph Lorigo
Michael Norris
Kelly Vacco
Sam Valleriani
Joseph Waldorf
James Walsh
Raymond Walter
Paul Wojtaszek

§ 5. It is the intended object of this act to erect, in the fourth judicial department, the fourteenth judicial district, comprising the county of Onondaga, and the fifteenth judicial district, comprising the counties of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Genesee, Livingston, Niagara, Orleans, Steuben, and Wyoming, and to provide for the employees thereof selection, designation, nomination and election in the general election to be held in November 2026 of justices of the fifth, seventh, eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth judicial districts consistent with the foregoing provisions of this act. Any other consistent provision of law, rule or regulation which by its terms or in its application aids in the accomplishment of such object shall be given full force and effect. Any provision which is inconsistent with the accomplishment of such object shall be denied force and effect to the extent that it may be applicable thereto.

§ 6. If any provision of any section of this act is held void or unconstitutional, all other provisions and all other sections of this act which are not expressly held to be void or unconstitutional shall continue in full force and effect.

§ 7. This act shall take effect immediately except that the provisions of sections one, two, three, and four of this act shall take effect January 1, 2027.