

Jobs at the Judiciary



What is the Rhode Island Judiciary?

There are three (3) branches of government on the federal and state levels: legislative; executive; and judicial. The Rhode Island Judiciary is a unified judicial system that includes the Supreme Court, the Superior Court, the Family Court, the District Court, the Workers' Compensation Court, and the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal.

Who works at the Rhode Island Judiciary?

The Judiciary employs more than 700 people. There are 91 judicial officers (justices, judges, and magistrates). That means that there are more than 600 people in a variety of jobs that help the judicial branch run smoothly. Jobs include attorneys or lawyers, administrators, courtroom staff, facilities and operations professionals, law enforcement officials, interpreters, social workers, and technologists.

Judicial Officers: Judges preside over the courts of the Judiciary. In all of the courts, except Supreme Court, judges hear arraignments, motions, trial appeals, and other issues involving criminal, civil, and mediated disputes between parties.

Judges are appointed for life by the state's Judicial Nominating Commission.

Educational requirements: Juris Doctor (JD) (law degree).

Magistrates are also judicial officers and are the authority in the courtroom. Magistrates are appointed to ten-year terms. However, magistrates have limited powers in some areas. For example, a magistrate cannot sign court orders.



Attorneys: A person appointed to act for another person in court or business. There are both attorneys that work for the courts in general counsel or as law clerks. Attorneys frequently appear in court or work with the courts as public defenders, prosecutors, or representing clients in private practice.

Educational requirements: Juris Doctor (JD), which is a law degree.

Courtroom and General Support Staff: Courtroom positions include court reporters, clerks, electronic recorders, and investigators. General support staff positions include fiscal clerks, record clerks, and supervisory clerks.

Educational requirements: Depending on the position, a high school diploma, associate's degree, or a bachelor's degree may be required.

Interpreters: Interpretation services are provided free of charge to court users who request one. The most commonly requested languages are Spanish and Portuguese. Interpreters play a vital role in courtrooms and beyond.

Educational requirements: Bachelor's degree preferred. Must pass a written and oral standardized certification exam.

Facilities and Operations, and Security Staff: The facilities, operations, and security staff maintain the Judiciary's six (6) courthouses and also play an integral role in court security.

Educational requirements: Depending on position, no degree to at least a bachelor's degree.



Technology: The Judicial Technology Center manages, develops, and secures the programs from email to case management systems that enable the courts to run on digital platforms. The office employs program managers, coders, network specialists, and technical support technicians.

Educational requirements: A bachelor's degree or above in a related field.

Law Enforcement: The Judiciary works closely with the Capitol Police and the Division of Sheriffs. Both of these law enforcement agencies are under the direction of the executive branch (the governor). The Sheriffs are responsible for prisoner transportation, courtroom security, and serving certain court documents. The Capitol Police are responsible for securing the perimeter and the entrances and exits of the courthouses in addition to providing other security provisions.

Educational requirements: A high school diploma or Tests of General Education Development (GED). Must be eighteen (18) years or older. Depending on division, training academy completion. Must pass division's physical, written, and mental evaluations.



How do I figure out if I want to work at the Judiciary?

The Judiciary offers several opportunities to experience what it is like to work at the Judiciary. Tours are available to visitors of all ages.

- Middle school students: Court tours and classroom visits
- High school students: Court tours, Judiciary Employment Education Programs (JEEP), and internships
- Law school students and College students: Internships and shadowing opportunities
- Law school graduates: Clerkships
- Young professionals: Informational interviews and shadowing opportunities

What should I think about when considering a job in public service?

- Level of education required
- Experience needed
- The salary range
- What type of environment you want to work in: one with a lot of independent work versus team-oriented work
- Do you want a public-facing position where you interface with members of the public often or a more internal position

What materials or resources will I need to apply for jobs at the Judiciary?

- Resume
- Cover letter
- References
- “Thank you” note emails to staff that interview you

Where do I apply for jobs at the Judiciary?

All State of Rhode Island government jobs can be found on applyri.gov. The Judiciary also posts many positions on the X (Formerly Twitter) page [@RIJudiciary](https://twitter.com/RIJudiciary) and LinkedIn [@RhodeIslandJudiciary](https://www.linkedin.com/company/RhodeIslandJudiciary).

A Few Definitions

Plaintiff: A person or party who brings a case against another person or party in court.

Defendant: A person or party that is sued or accused of something in court.

Criminal case: When the government files a case in court to punish someone (the defendant) for committing a crime or violating a law.

Civil case: A non-criminal lawsuit where an individual, business, or government entity sues another to protect, enforce, or to be compensated for a violation of private rights.

Arraignment: The first step in the criminal court process where the person accused of a crime is brought in front of a judicial officer for a formal reading of the charges against the person and to record a plea to the charges.

Plea: A formal entry to a judicial officer by a person being accused of a crime where the person can either admit to the charges by pleading guilty or deny the charges by pleading not guilty.

Contact the Rhode Island Judiciary

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