

Election 2024: Who is running for Ohio Supreme Court?

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Ohio Democrats will try to take majority control of the state Supreme Court next year in what will likely be a contentious, expensive campaign.

Ohio Republicans have controlled a majority of seats on the seven-member high court since 1986. The GOP currently hold four of the seven seats on the court.

The Ohio Democratic Party announced Monday that 8th District Court of Appeals Judge Lisa Forbes is running and Justices Michael Donnelly and Melody Stewart are running for reelection.

On the Republican side, the candidates are: Justice Joe Deters, who was appointed by Gov. Mike DeWine to fill a court vacancy, Hamilton County Common Pleas Court Judge Megan Shanahan and Franklin County Common Pleas Court Judge Dan Hawkins.

The exact matchups are to be determined. Deters has yet to decide if he'll run for the remainder of the term he was appointed to serve or if he'll take on either Donnelly or Stewart for a six-year term.

If Deters runs for retention, he'll face Forbes in 2024. The winner of that matchup would then be positioned to run again in two years for a full term.

Supreme Court decisions impact how much Ohioans pay in taxes, whether utility companies can add fees to ratepayers' bills, how insurance and business laws are interpreted, what government records will be available to the public and more.

With the passage of Issue 1 in November, the Ohio Supreme Court next year is expected to rule on lawsuits that challenge existing laws that restrict abortion.

Are judicial races nonpartisan?

Sort of. Trial and municipal court races in Ohio are nonpartisan but a new state law requires partisan labels in general elections for appellate and supreme court candidates.

Justice Jennifer Brunner, a Democrat, is suing to overturn the label law. Brunner lost her bid for chief justice in 2022 against Republican Sharon Kennedy. That was the first election cycle in which the partisan label law was in force.

Absent a victory in federal court for Brunner, the six candidates running for Ohio Supreme Court in 2024 will have their party affiliation listed with their names.