

ENROLLED

**Senate Bill No. 479**

(By Senators Trump, Carmichael, Maynard,  
Miller, Woelfel, Snyder, Ferns, Palumbo, Nohe,  
Beach, Gaunch, Karnes, D. Hall, Kirkendoll,  
Romano, Williams and Leonhardt)

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[Passed March 13, 2015; in effect ninety days from passage.]

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AN ACT to amend and reenact §51-2A-3 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to adding family court judges to certain family court circuits of the state; providing for terms of office; and providing for election of new family court judges at the regular elections held in the year 2016.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

That §51-2A-3 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted to read as follows:

**ARTICLE 2A. FAMILY COURTS.**

**§51-2A-3. Number of family court judges; assignment of family court judges by family court circuits.**

1 (a) Beginning on January 1, 2009, forty-five family court judges shall serve throughout the  
2 state, allocated among a total of twenty-seven family court circuits as follows:

3 (1) The counties of Brooke, Hancock and Ohio shall constitute the first family court circuit

1 and have two family court judges;

2 (2) The counties of Marshall, Wetzel and Tyler shall constitute the second family court  
3 circuit and have one family court judge;

4 (3) The counties of Pleasants and Wood shall constitute the third family court circuit and  
5 have two family court judges;

6 (4) The counties of Roane, Calhoun, Gilmer and Ritchie shall constitute the fourth family  
7 court circuit and have one family court judge;

8 (5) The counties of Mason, Jackson and Wirt shall constitute the fifth family court circuit and  
9 have two family court judges;

10 (6) The county of Cabell shall constitute the sixth family court circuit and have two family  
11 court judges;

12 (7) The county of Wayne shall constitute the seventh family court circuit and have one family  
13 court judge;

14 (8) The county of Mingo shall constitute the eighth family court circuit and have one family  
15 court judge;

16 (9) The county of Logan shall constitute the ninth family court circuit and have two family  
17 court judges;

18 (10) The counties of Lincoln and Boone shall constitute the tenth family court circuit and  
19 have two family court judges;

20 (11) The county of Kanawha shall constitute the eleventh family court circuit and have five  
21 family court judges;

22 (12) The counties of McDowell and Mercer shall constitute the twelfth family court circuit

1 and have three family court judges;

2 (13) The counties of Raleigh, Summers and Wyoming shall constitute the thirteenth family  
3 court circuit and have three family court judges;

4 (14) The county of Fayette shall constitute the fourteenth family court circuit and have one  
5 family court judge;

6 (15) The counties of Greenbrier and Monroe shall constitute the fifteenth family court circuit  
7 and have one family court judge;

8 (16) The counties of Clay and Nicholas shall constitute the sixteenth family court circuit and  
9 have one family court judge;

10 (17) The counties of Braxton, Lewis and Upshur shall constitute the seventeenth family court  
11 circuit and have one family court judge;

12 (18) The counties of Harrison and Doddridge shall constitute the eighteenth family court  
13 circuit and have two family court judges;

14 (19) The county of Marion shall constitute the nineteenth family court circuit and have one  
15 family court judge;

16 (20) The counties of Monongalia and Preston shall constitute the twentieth family court  
17 circuit and have two family court judges;

18 (21) The counties of Barbour and Taylor shall constitute the twenty-first family court circuit  
19 and have one family court judge;

20 (22) The counties of Tucker and Randolph shall constitute the twenty-second family court  
21 circuit and have one family court judge;

22 (23) The counties of Mineral, Hampshire and Morgan shall constitute the twenty-third family

1 court circuit and have one family court judge;

2 (24) The counties of Berkeley and Jefferson shall constitute the twenty-fourth family court  
3 circuit and have three family court judges;

4 (25) The counties of Hardy, Pendleton and Grant shall constitute the twenty-fifth family court  
5 circuit and have one family court judge;

6 (26) The county of Putnam shall constitute the twenty-sixth family court circuit and have one  
7 family court judge; and

8 (27) The counties of Webster and Pocahontas shall constitute the twenty-seventh family court  
9 circuit and have one family court judge.

10 (b) Beginning on January 1, 2017, forty-seven family court judges shall serve throughout the  
11 state, allocated among a total of twenty-seven family court circuits as follows:

12 (1) The counties of Brooke, Hancock and Ohio shall constitute the first family court circuit  
13 and have two family court judges;

14 (2) The counties of Marshall, Wetzel and Tyler shall constitute the second family court  
15 circuit and have one family court judge;

16 (3) The counties of Pleasants and Wood shall constitute the third family court circuit and  
17 have two family court judges;

18 (4) The counties of Roane, Calhoun, Gilmer and Ritchie shall constitute the fourth family  
19 court circuit and have one family court judge;

20 (5) The counties of Mason, Jackson and Wirt shall constitute the fifth family court circuit and  
21 have two family court judges;

22 (6) The county of Cabell shall constitute the sixth family court circuit and have three family

1 court judges;

2 (7) The county of Wayne shall constitute the seventh family court circuit and have one family  
3 court judge;

4 (8) The county of Mingo shall constitute the eighth family court circuit and have one family  
5 court judge;

6 (9) The county of Logan shall constitute the ninth family court circuit and have two family  
7 court judges;

8 (10) The counties of Lincoln and Boone shall constitute the tenth family court circuit and  
9 have two family court judges;

10 (11) The county of Kanawha shall constitute the eleventh family court circuit and have five  
11 family court judges;

12 (12) The counties of McDowell and Mercer shall constitute the twelfth family court circuit  
13 and have three family court judges;

14 (13) The counties of Raleigh, Summers and Wyoming shall constitute the thirteenth family  
15 court circuit and have three family court judges;

16 (14) The county of Fayette shall constitute the fourteenth family court circuit and have one  
17 family court judge;

18 (15) The counties of Greenbrier and Monroe shall constitute the fifteenth family court circuit  
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20 (16) The counties of Clay and Nicholas shall constitute the sixteenth family court circuit and  
21 have one family court judge;

22 (17) The counties of Braxton, Lewis and Upshur shall constitute the seventeenth family court

1 circuit and have one family court judge;

2 (18) The counties of Harrison and Doddridge shall constitute the eighteenth family court  
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4 (19) The county of Marion shall constitute the nineteenth family court circuit and have one  
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6 (20) The counties of Monongalia and Preston shall constitute the twentieth family court  
7 circuit and have two family court judges;

8 (21) The counties of Barbour and Taylor shall constitute the twenty-first family court circuit  
9 and have one family court judge;

10 (22) The counties of Tucker and Randolph shall constitute the twenty-second family court  
11 circuit and have one family court judge;

12 (23) The counties of Mineral, Hampshire and Morgan shall constitute the twenty-third family  
13 court circuit and have two family court judges;

14 (24) The counties of Berkeley and Jefferson shall constitute the twenty-fourth family court  
15 circuit and have three family court judges;

16 (25) The counties of Hardy, Pendleton and Grant shall constitute the twenty-fifth family court  
17 circuit and have one family court judge;

18 (26) The county of Putnam shall constitute the twenty-sixth family court circuit and have one  
19 family court judge; and

20 (27) The counties of Webster and Pocahontas shall constitute the twenty-seventh family court  
21 circuit and have one family court judge.

22 (c) Family court judges taking office January 1, 2017, shall be elected at the regularly

1 scheduled election(s) occurring in the year 2016 and shall serve for a term of eight years.

2 (d) The Legislature has the authority and may determine to realign the family court circuits  
3 and has the authority and may determine to increase or decrease the number of family court judges  
4 within a family court circuit, from time to time. Any person appointed or elected to the office of  
5 family court judge acknowledges the authority of the Legislature to realign family court circuits and  
6 the authority of the Legislature to increase or decrease the number of family court judges within a  
7 family court circuit.