



THE SUPREME COURT OF THE PHILIPPINES
Padre Faura, 1000 Manila, Republic of the Philippines

The Supreme Court shall be composed of a Chief Justice and fourteen Associate Justices. It may sit *en banc* or, in its discretion, in divisions of three, five, or seven members. (Art. VIII, §4) Its members shall be appointed by the President from a list of at least three nominees prepared by the Judicial and Bar Council for every vacancy, without need of confirmation by the Commission on Appointments. (Art. VIII, §9) Members of the Supreme Court are required to have proven competence, integrity, probity and independence; they must be natural-born citizens of the Philippines, at least forty years old, with at least fifteen years of experience as a judge of a lower court or law practice in the country. (Art. VIII, §7) Justices shall hold office during good behavior until they reach the age of seventy years, or become incapacitated to discharge the duties of office. (Art. VIII, §11)

THE MEMBERS OF THE COURT

The Chief Justice	Hon. MARIA LOURDES P. A. SERENO
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The Senior Associate Justice	Hon. ANTONIO T. CARPIO
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The Associate Justices	Hon. PRESBITERO J. VELASCO, JR. Hon. TERESITA J. LEONARDO-DE CASTRO Hon. ARTURO D. BRION Hon. DIOSDADO M. PERALTA Hon. LUCAS P. BERSAMIN Hon. MARIANO C. DEL CASTILLO Hon. JOSE PORTUGAL PEREZ Hon. JOSE CATRAL MENDOZA Hon. BIENVENIDO L. REYES Hon. ESTELA M. PERLAS-BERNABE Hon. MARVIC M. V. F. LEONEN Hon. FRANCIS H. JARDELEZA Hon. ALFREDO BENJAMIN S. CAGUIOA
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Administrative Officers

Clerk of Court <i>En Banc</i>	Atty. Felipa B. Anama
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Deputy Clerk of Court <i>En Banc</i>	Atty. Anna-Li R. Papa-Gombio
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First Division Clerk of Court	Atty. Edgar O. Aricheta
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Second Division Clerk of Court	Atty. Ma. Lourdes C. Perfecto
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Third Division Clerk of Court	Atty. Wilfredo V. Lapitan
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Office of Administrative Services	Atty. Eden T. Candelaria, <i>Chief</i>
Fiscal Management and Budget Office	Atty. Corazon G. Ferrer-Flores, <i>Chief</i>
Chief Attorney	Atty. Maria Regina A. F. M. Ignacio, <i>Acting Chief</i>
Office of the Reporter	Atty. Edna B. Camba, <i>Chief</i>
Management Information Systems Office	Atty. Carlos N. Garay, <i>Acting Chief</i>
Bar Confidant	Atty. Ma. Cristina B. Layusa, <i>Chief</i>
Judicial Records Office	Atty. Basilia T. Ringol, <i>Chief</i>
Library Services	Mrs. Milagros S. Ong, <i>Chief</i>
Public Information Office	Atty. Theodore O. Te, <i>Chief</i>

Judicial Power and Jurisdiction

Under Article VIII, §1, the judicial power shall be vested in one Supreme Court and in such lower courts as may be provided by law. This power includes the duty to settle actual controversies involving rights that are legally demandable and enforceable and to determine if any branch or instrumentality of government has acted with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack of excess of jurisdiction.

The Supreme Court has both original and appellate jurisdiction. It exercises original jurisdiction (cases are directly filed with the SC in the first instance without passing through any of the lower courts) over cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and over petitions for *certiorari*, prohibition, *mandamus*, *quo warranto*, and *habeas corpus*. (Art. VIII, §5(1)). It also has original jurisdiction over writs of *amparo*, *habeas data* and the environmental writ of *kalikasan*. It exercises appellate jurisdiction to review, revise, reverse, modify, or affirm final judgments, and orders of the lower courts in:

- (a) All cases in which the constitutionality or validity of any treaty, international or executive agreement, law, presidential decree, proclamation, order, instruction, ordinance, or regulation is in question.
- (b) All cases involving the legality of any tax, impost, assessment, or toll, or any penalty imposed in relation thereto.
- (c) All cases in which the jurisdiction of any lower court is in issue.
- (d) All criminal cases in which the penalty imposed is *reclusion perpetua* or higher.
- (e) All cases in which only an error or question of law is involved. (Art. VIII, §5(1), (2))

The Supreme Court has administrative supervision over all courts and court personnel. (Article VIII, §6) It exercises this power through the Office of the Court Administrator.

Rule-making Powers

The Supreme Court has the exclusive power to promulgate rules concerning the protection and enforcement of constitutional rights, pleading, practice, and procedure in all courts, the admission to the practice of law, the integrated bar, and legal assistance to the underprivileged. Any such rules shall provide a simplified and inexpensive procedure for the speedy disposition of cases, shall be uniform for all courts of the same grade, and shall not diminish, increase, or modify substantive rights. Rules of procedure of special courts and quasi-judicial bodies shall remain effective unless disapproved by the Supreme Court. (Art. VIII, §54(5))