

The legal system is made up of civil courts, criminal courts and specialty courts such as family law courts and bankruptcy court. Each court has its own jurisdiction, which refers to the cases that the court is allowed to hear. In some instances, a case can only be heard in one type of court. For example, a bankruptcy case must be heard in a bankruptcy court. In other instances, there may be several potential courts with jurisdiction. For example, a federal criminal court and a state criminal court would each have jurisdiction over a crime that is a federal drug offense but that is also an offense on the state level.