

The [Connecticut Appellate Court](#) will hear arguments in two cases on Thursday, Oct. 22, on the grounds of the [Tapping Reeve House and Litchfield Law School](#), the nation's first formal school of law.



The visit to Litchfield is part of the Appellate Court's ["On Circuit" program](#), which provides students, educators and the public with a greater understanding of appellate courts. Since the program began in 1996, the court has heard arguments at [several high school and higher education locations](#).

- **Date, time, place:** Thursday, Oct. 22 at 82 South St., Litchfield. The first argument will start at 10 a.m., the second at 11 a.m. Arguments for each case will last approximately 40 minutes. A question-and-answer period with counsel from the case and students from Northwestern Regional School District No. 7 will follow each argument.

- **Cases to be heard:** The first case is [State of Connecticut v. John Panek](#); the second case is [Maria Diaz v. Manchester Memorial Hospital](#). Briefs and

case details for both cases are available through the [Supreme and Appellate Court Case Lookup webpage](#). Three judges will hear the cases: the [Hon. Alexandra D. DiPentima, chief judge of the Appellate Court](#); the [Hon. Michael R. Sheldon](#); and the [Hon. Eliot D. Prescott](#).

- **Access/cameras in court:** The arguments are open to the public, although space is *extremely* limited in the building where the arguments will be heard. A spillover room will be available in a nearby building. CT-N will serve as the video pool, please contact Joe Patriss at 860-240-0367 regarding pooling arrangements. One still camera is allowed; any request should be made to Rhonda.Hebert@jud.ct.gov **before the day of the event**.
- **Quotes regarding the visit:**
 - *Chief Judge Alexandra D. DiPentima:* "Judges Sheldon, Prescott and I are very much looking forward to holding an Appellate Court 'on circuit' session in the Litchfield Law School. The 'on circuit' sessions provide an opportunity for students and others to learn about the appellate process and our system of justice. We are grateful for the invitation from the Litchfield Historical Society, and we are excited to hear arguments in this historic location. We appreciate the efforts of Catherine Keene Fields, director of the Litchfield Historical Society, in making this logistically challenging session possible, and we also appreciate the

efforts of those volunteer attorneys from the Litchfield County Bar Association who are preparing students for this experience.”

- *Litchfield Historical Society Director Catherine Keene Fields*: “The Litchfield Historical Society is thrilled to have the Connecticut Appellate Court hear arguments in the Litchfield Law School. The law school, founded by Judge Tapping Reeve in 1774, is the first law school in America and educated the first generation attorneys, jurists and legislators – the men who helped form the American legal system we know today. The court will sit in a room where three Supreme Court justices were educated, where South Carolina firebrand John C. Calhoun learned the law and where over 100 members of the U.S. Congress studied. This is the first time that the building has been used for legal arguments since Reeve and his students held moot court in the first half of the 19th century. We hope this is only the first of many opportunities to collaborate with the Connecticut legal community.”
- **Contact information:** External Affairs, Connecticut Judicial Branch, 860-757-2270.