

# Wisconsin Supreme Court

VOTE APRIL 1 FOR WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT

## CANDIDATES

SUSAN  
CRAWFORD



BRAD  
SCHIMEL



### Why your April 1 vote matters

The [election](#) on Tuesday, April 1 will decide control of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Susan Crawford and Brad Schimel are running for a 10-year term. While this is a nonpartisan election, Crawford is generally [seen as a liberal](#) supported by Democrats, and Schimel is considered to [be a conservative](#) supported by Republicans. Liberal justices now [have](#) a 4-3 majority. This election will either keep that majority or switch it to the conservatives. In 2019, 6,000 votes decided a Wisconsin Supreme Court seat, while three in four eligible voters stayed home. This election could be just as close.

### The Wisconsin Supreme Court decides important questions of state law

This year, the Court will rule on an [attempt to reactivate](#) the state's 175-year-old [abortion ban](#) and on whether [Republicans in the state Senate](#) have the authority to fire Wisconsin Elections Commission's nonpartisan administrator Meagan Wolfe. The Court is also [expected](#) to hear an appeal of a Dane County [judge's decision](#) that overturned Act 10, restoring collective bargaining rights to unions representing [200,000](#) teachers and other public employees. The winner will rule on any potential redistricting and voting rules cases, such as a 2022 case where a conservative-dominated Court [banned ballot drop boxes](#).

In recent years, the Court [struck down](#) Republican-drawn [legislative](#) maps and in a meat packing case, ruled that workers [should be paid](#) for time spent putting on or removing protective gear. The Court declined to hear a Democratic-backed lawsuit that sought to [redraw](#) the state's congressional map. It also declined to hear a lawsuit brought by Democrats [seeking to end](#) the state's taxpayer-funded private school voucher program.

### To help you decide

Here's background on the candidates' positions, relevant rulings, experience, and publicized endorsements. Follow our links to get further information on the candidates' positions and actions.

#### SUSAN CRAWFORD [crawfordforwi.com](http://crawfordforwi.com)

- **On abortion**, Crawford supports [women's "access](#) to reproductive health care." As a private attorney she [represented](#) Planned Parenthood in blocking a 2011 Wisconsin law that made physicians who provide abortion services get admitting privileges at a nearby hospital.
- **On campaign finance**, in private practice she [helped](#) file a brief that opposed the practice of candidates coordinating their expenditures with outside groups.
- **On criminal justice**, she [supports](#) "restorative justice," transparency in sentencing data, and "diversion programs (like Drug Court) that hold people accountable while giving them a chance to avoid a conviction." Her campaign said Trump pardoning 1,500 people convicted for Jan. 6 [undermined](#) "public trust in our justice system," as did Biden's family pardons.

#### BRAD SCHIMEL [schimelforjustice.com](http://schimelforjustice.com)

- **On abortion**, Schimel [says](#) he's pro-life and that Wisconsin's 1849 abortion ban is valid. In 2012 he [signed](#) a legal white paper that endorsed making "it a crime to intentionally destroy the life of an unborn child unless it is necessary to save the life of the mother."
- **On criminal justice**, as attorney general he [supported](#) a WI constitutional amendment letting crime victims participate more in court proceedings and have personal information sealed. He [said](#) he didn't object to Trump pardoning 1,500 people convicted for Jan. 6. "Presidents have the power to pardon." Later said anyone convicted of attacking police should "serve their full sentence."
- **On environment**, as attorney general Schimel moved to [limit](#) EPA authority—and [then limit](#) Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources authority—to [regulate](#) drinking water. He [opposed](#) federal restrictions on coal plants.

## SUSAN CRAWFORD

- **On executive power**, as Dane County Circuit Court Judge Crawford [declared unconstitutional](#) a law passed by a Republican legislative majority that limited the power of the Democratic Wisconsin attorney general.
- **On labor**, as an attorney Crawford [represented](#) Madison Teachers, Inc. in a 2011 lawsuit to overturn Wisconsin's Act 10, which outlawed collective bargaining for public employee unions. She [supports](#) protecting "workers' rights."
- **On her priorities**, she [believes](#) "in protecting the basic rights and freedoms of Wisconsinites." She has said she is "[committed](#) as a judge to ensuring that the courtroom presents a level playing field.... and that the court is in a position to... act as a check and balance on the other branches of government."
- **On redistricting**, as a private attorney Crawford [co-authored](#) a friend of the court brief for Wisconsin League of Women Voters that outlined options for a nonpartisan redistricting plan.
- **On voting rules**, she has [opposed voter ID laws](#). She [has supported](#) giving a voter the option of swearing under penalty of perjury "that you are who you say you are and you're an eligible voter."

Susan Crawford is [currently](#) a judge for the Dane County Circuit Court. She earned a bachelor's degree in English literature from Lawrence University and her J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law. She worked as assistant attorney general for the Wisconsin Department of Justice, becoming Director of Criminal Appeals in 2000. She also worked in the Wisconsin departments of Natural Resources, Corrections, and Employment Relations. She was chief legal counsel for the Wisconsin Office of the Governor, and then a [partner](#) at the Pines Bach law firm from 2011 to 2018. She was elected to the Dane County Circuit Court in 2018.

**Crawford's endorsements include:** Justices Ann Walsh Bradley, Rebecca Dallet, Jill Karofsky, and Janet Protasiewicz, and former Justice Lewis Butler, the Wisconsin Education Association Council, the Wisconsin Laborers District Council, [Senator Tammy Baldwin](#), and the [Democratic Party of Wisconsin](#), [along with 150 judges](#), former judges, and court commissioners.

## BRAD SCHIMEL

- **On gun rules**, he [called](#) bans on posting blueprints online for untraceable 3-D printed guns a "First Amendment rights" issue. As attorney general he [supported](#) a federal lawsuit seeking to overturn San Francisco's requirement that firearms stored in private homes be locked.
- **On healthcare**, as attorney general Schimel co-led a [20-state legal effort](#) to strike down the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare).
- **On labor**, he [supports](#) protecting Act 10, which outlawed collective bargaining for public employees unions.
- **On his priorities**, he "will [take back](#) the Wisconsin Supreme Court and end the [madness](#)" of "rogue judges... putting their radical agenda above the law."
- **On redistricting**, as attorney general, Schimel [defended](#) before the U.S. Supreme Court Republican-drawn redistricting maps that a lower federal court had [rejected](#) as a partisan gerrymander.
- **On voting rules**, Schimel [supported](#) Wisconsin's 2011 voter ID law. As attorney general he also [attempted](#) to limit early voting in Milwaukee and Madison.

Brad Schimel is [currently](#) a judge for the Waukesha County Circuit Court. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and his J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School. After six months in private practice, he [was](#) hired as Waukesha County Assistant District Attorney from 1990 to 2006 and then was Waukesha District Attorney from 2006 to 2014. He was elected Wisconsin Attorney General from 2015 to 2019. In 2019 he was appointed to the Waukesha County Circuit Court by then-Governor Scott Walker.

**Schimel's endorsements include:** the Waukesha County Police Chiefs Association, the Milwaukee Police Association, the Milwaukee Professional Firefighters Association, and more than 70 Wisconsin county sheriffs, along with Judge [Maria S. Lazar](#), [Americans for Prosperity-Wisconsin](#), [Senator Ron Johnson](#), [Wisconsin Young Republicans](#), and Wisconsin's [five Republican](#) U.S. House representatives.

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