

Executive Summary

The **2023-2024 Judicial Hellholes®** report shines its brightest spotlight on nine jurisdictions that have earned reputations as Judicial Hellholes®. Some are known for allowing innovative lawsuits to proceed or for welcoming litigation tourism, and in all of them state leadership seems eager to expand civil liability at every given opportunity.

JUDICIAL HELLHOLES®

#1 GEORGIA The “Peach State” maintained its position atop the list thanks to another year of high nuclear verdicts and liability-expanding decisions by the Georgia Supreme Court. Neither the judiciary nor the legislative branches are willing to take responsibility for the state’s poor civil justice system.

#1 THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA & THE PHILADELPHIA COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

A late-breaking venue decision by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court that will increase litigation tourism and an almost \$1 billion verdict out of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas propelled these courts to the top of this year’s list. Additionally, there is a flood of medical liability litigation in Philadelphia courts thanks to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court’s decision to eliminate an important rule governing where lawyers may file these cases. The Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas continues to be a prolific producer of nuclear verdicts and liability-expanding decisions by the high court will only worsen the situation. Plaintiffs from across the country flock to the Court of Common Pleas because of its reputation for excessive verdicts and its “open door” policy to out-of-state plaintiffs.

#2 COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS Lawsuits brought under the state’s Biometric Information Privacy Act bog down Illinois businesses and a new wave of no injury lawsuits is on the horizon. Food and beverage litigation floods the county’s dockets and liability-expanding legislation only worsens the problem. Additionally, an overwhelming percent of the state’s nuclear verdicts come out of the Cook County trial court.

#3 CALIFORNIA Endless Prop-65 litigation targets a variety of industries and no-injury Private Attorney General Act (PAGA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility lawsuits bog down business. The state’s unique Lemon Law is a gold mine for plaintiffs’ lawyers and arbitration is under attack in both the courts and the legislature. California also is at the forefront of the environmental litigation battle.

#4 NEW YORK CITY Expansive liability laws have led to lawsuit abuse in the Big Apple. No-injury consumer class action lawsuits and lawsuits brought under the ADA bog down businesses and third-party



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- 2 COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS**
- 3 CALIFORNIA**
- 4 NEW YORK CITY**
- 5 SOUTH CAROLINA ASBESTOS LITIGATION**
- 6 LANSING, MICHIGAN**
- 7 LOUISIANA**
- 8 ST. LOUIS**