Fact Sheet – 2025-2026 Edition

What is a Judicial Hellhole®? How does one end up on the list?
Judicial Hellholes® have civil justice climates that allow abuse and starkly contrast the rest of the nation. The Judicial Hellholes® report shines a light on the year's abuses in the civil justice system and in state legislative bodies. Judicial Hellholes® are infamous among trial lawyers who flock to these jurisdictions to sue for more money and create new avenues to pursue litigation.

How many years has the Judicial Hellholes® report been published?
The first Judicial Hellholes® report was published in 2002. The 2025-2026 edition is the 24th edition of the Judicial Hellholes® report.

Who produces the Judicial Hellholes® report?
The Judicial Hellholes® report is written and produced by staff of the American Tort Reform Foundation (ATRF), the educational arm of the American Tort Reform Association (ATRA).

How are Judicial Hellholes® chosen? Who decides the rankings?
ATRF annually surveys ATRA members, the legal community on the frontlines of litigation, and others with firsthand experience in Judicial Hellholes® jurisdictions as part of its research process. Because the program has become widely known, ATRF also continually receives and gathers information provided by a variety of sources.

What are the American Tort Reform Association and the American Tort Reform Foundation?
The American Tort Reform Association (ATRA) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, national organization exclusively dedicated to reforming the civil justice system with a nationwide network of more than 40 state-based liability reform coalitions backed by 142,000 grassroots supporters. ATRA was founded in 1986 by the American Council of Engineering Companies and was joined shortly thereafter by the American Medical Association. ATRA is a District of Columbia corporation designated by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(6). ATRA has a full-time staff and a 26-member Board of Directors.

The American Tort Reform Foundation (ATRF) is a District of Columbia nonprofit corporation, founded in 1997. The primary purpose of the Foundation is to educate the general public about how the American civil justice system operates, the role of tort law in the civil justice system, and the impact of tort law on the private, public and business sectors of society.

Who are ATRA's members?
ATRA's membership is diverse and includes nonprofits, small and large companies, as well as state and national trade, business and professional associations across a broad spectrum of industries and sectors.

Does any one member pay for the Judicial Hellholes® report?
ATRF is funded by a broad coalition base which contributes to various programs, including Judicial Hellholes®.

Why does it matter if there are Judicial Hellholes® in some places?
Lawsuit abuse harms average, hardworking Americans by clogging our court system with meritless and frivolous cases, taking dollars away from researching and developing life-saving drugs, driving up insurance costs, and driving away jobs. Excessive tort costs to the U.S. economy result in a $1.097 trillion expenditure loss and $367.8 billion in annual direct costs each year, meaning every American pays approximately $1,666 each year in a "tort tax." The impact of excessive tort costs includes a loss of more than 4.8 million jobs across the country each year when dynamic effects are considered. That amounts to a loss of more than $354 billion in wages. The economic costs and impacts of the excesses in the civil justice system are why we should preserve balanced, cost-effective alternatives to litigation.