

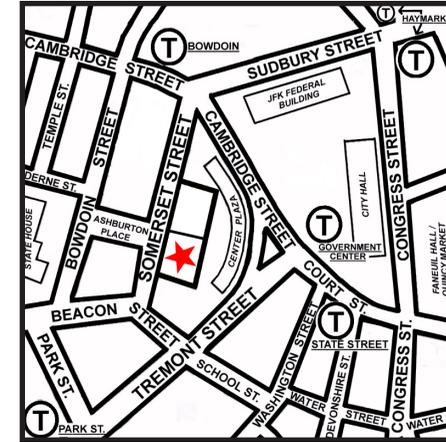
The John Adams Courthouse is the home of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, the Massachusetts Appeals Court, and the Social Law Library. Opened in 1894, this beautifully-renovated courthouse is named in honor of John Adams. Adams was a leading patriot, author of the influential Massachusetts Constitution, first Vice President and second President of the United States.



## Location and Directions

The John Adams Courthouse, One Pemberton Square, is located near the Government Center and Park Street MBTA stations, and steps from many Freedom Trail sites, including the Massachusetts State House. The front entrance is accessed from the plaza located through the archway at Three Center Plaza. The rear entrance, on Somerset Street, is one block from the east entrance to the Massachusetts State House.

For detailed directions, please visit:  
<http://www.mass.gov/courts/sjc/directions.html>



### Hours and Schedule:

The courthouse is open to the public Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., excluding federal and state holidays.

### Scheduling Group Tours:

To schedule a free, group tour on Mondays and Thursdays, please contact Discovering Justice. To schedule a tour on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, please contact the Court's Public Information Office.

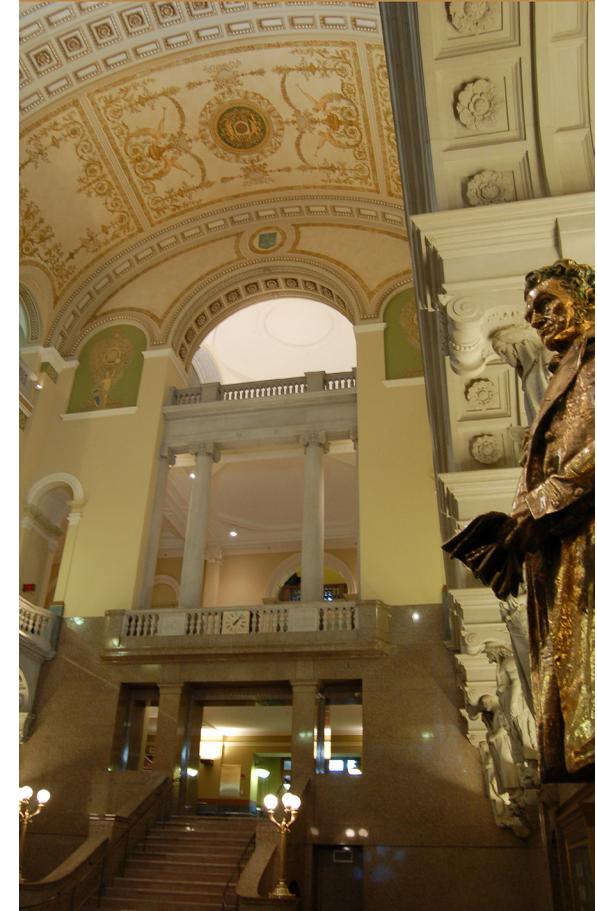
### John Adams Courthouse, Public Information Office:

Phone: 617-557-1114; [publicinfo@sjc.state.ma.us](mailto:publicinfo@sjc.state.ma.us)  
[www.mass.gov/sjc](http://www.mass.gov/sjc)

**Discovering Justice:** [www.discoveringjustice.org](http://www.discoveringjustice.org)  
Phone: 617-748-4188; [info@discoveringjustice.org](mailto:info@discoveringjustice.org)  
John Joseph Moakley Federal Courthouse,  
One Courthouse Way, Boston MA 02210

The mission of Discovering Justice, a non-profit leader in civic education, is to prepare young people to value the justice system, realize the power of their own voices, and embrace civic responsibility by connecting classrooms and courtrooms.

## The John Adams Courthouse



One Pemberton Square  
Boston, Massachusetts



## Supreme Judicial Court

Established in 1692 to bring an end to the Salem witch trials, the Supreme Judicial Court is the nation's oldest continuously sitting appellate court. The seven justices of the Supreme Judicial Court enforce the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, drafted by John Adams in 1779 and ratified by the citizens of Massachusetts in 1780. This Constitution, the oldest written constitution in the world still being enforced, was a critical model for the United States Constitution, other state constitutions, and democratic constitutions world-wide.

## Appeals Court

Created in 1972, the 25 justices of the Appeals Court constitute the Commonwealth's intermediate appellate court. The Appeals Court justices hear cases in panels of three.

## Social Law Library

Established in 1804, the Social Law Library is the oldest law library in the nation. The library's first president, Theophilus Parsons, later served as Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court from 1806 - 1813. Throughout its history, the Social Law Library has resided in the courthouse of the Supreme Judicial Court.

## Great Hall

The Great Hall's barrel-vaulted ceiling is decorated with a mural featuring the seal of the Commonwealth. Surrounding the Great Hall are sixteen life-size allegorical figures created by sculptor Domingo Mora. The Hall contains a statue of 19<sup>th</sup> century attorney and statesman Rufus Choate sculpted by Daniel Chester French.

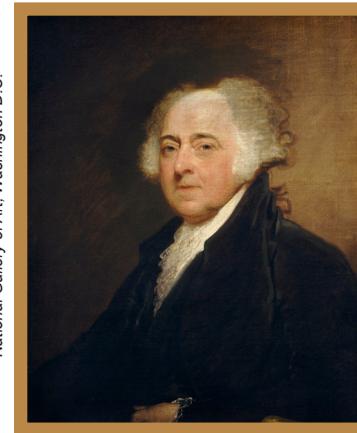
## Attending Court Sessions

Groups and the general public are welcome to attend court sessions. Court schedules may be found at [www.mass.gov/sjc](http://www.mass.gov/sjc). If possible, groups of ten or more wishing to attend court sessions should make advance arrangements with the court's Public Information Office.

## Tour Options

Visitors are welcome to take a self-guided tour of the courthouse. Explanatory panels describe many of the building's features, and the exhibit rooms are designed for self-guided tours. Schools and other groups are encouraged to schedule free, docent-led group tours. When scheduling your tour, you may request that a judge meet with your group.

## John Adams



Courtesy of the Board of Trustees,  
National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

Gilbert Stuart (oil on canvas 1800/1815)

## Exhibit Rooms

The courthouse contains two exhibit rooms. **John Adams: Architect of American Government** explores the central roles played by John Adams and the people of Massachusetts in creating a new system of government for a young nation. **Sacco and Vanzetti: Justice on Trial** examines the notorious trial and executions of Italian anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti during the 1920s.



Entrance to the Appeals Court is located on the third floor of the courthouse.



The Social Law Library is located on the fourth and fifth floors of the courthouse.



Students and teachers are encouraged to visit [www.iCivics.org](http://www.iCivics.org) for a wide selection of free, interactive games and other resources about American government. The mission of iCivics, founded by retired United States Supreme Court Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, is to make civic education fun, exciting, and relevant.