



A CIVICS IN REAL LIFE SERIES **THE DOCKET**

Civics is all around us. The United States Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. Through its power of judicial review, its decisions have a lasting impact on "We the People". So what is the Court hearing this session and how might the justices rule? Let's help each other expand our civic literacy.

2025-2026 DOCKET PREVIEW

The first Monday in October marks the beginning of the annual term of the United States Supreme Court. During the 2025-2026 term, the Court will preside over approximately 80 cases. In recent years, 5,000-7,000 cases are filed per term, with the Court under no obligation to hear any set number. To date, the Court has already agreed to hear more than 40 cases this term. In addition, the Court stayed busy in between terms with [shadow docket](#) rulings. Let's examine some of the cases we'll hear this term.

CASE	THE ISSUES	THE QUESTIONS
Case v. Montana	In September 2021, Montana police entered Trevor Case's home during a wellness check, after he made suicidal threats to his ex-girlfriend. Inside, they found him hiding in a closet with an object they believed was a gun. Case was shot by officers and later charged with assaulting an officer. Case's lawyers sought to exclude all evidence obtained in the case as the police officers entered his home without a warrant.	May law enforcement enter a home without a search warrant based on less than probable cause that an emergency is occurring?
Trump v. Slaughter; Trump v. Cook & Learning Resources v. Trump	Several cases this term will examine the constitutional limits of the executive branch. The Court will hear legal arguments on topics such as tariffs, executive position employment, and determine presidential power within the context of these cases.	(1) Whether the statutory removal protections for members of the Federal Trade Commission violate the separation of powers and, if so, whether <i>Humphrey's Executor v. United States</i> , 295 U. S. 602 (1935), should be overruled. (2) Whether a federal court may prevent a person's removal from public office, either through relief at equity or at law. Can the president fire a member of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors? Does the International Emergency Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. § 1701 ("IEEPA"), authorize the president to impose tariffs?
Louisiana v. Callais	A legal challenge to Louisiana's congressional map—specifically District 6—alleges that the district was drawn using unconstitutional racial gerrymandering.	Does Louisiana's creation of a second majority-Black congressional district constitute unconstitutional racial gerrymandering, even when drawn in response to a federal court finding that the state's prior single majority-Black district likely violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act?
Villarreal v. Texas	David Asa Villarreal was on trial for murder in Texas. While he was testifying, the judge paused the trial overnight and told his lawyers not to discuss his ongoing testimony with him, but they could talk about other trial matters. At the trial's conclusion, Mr. Villarreal was found guilty and sentenced to 60 years in prison	Does a trial court violate a defendant's Sixth Amendment right to counsel by preventing the defendant and his lawyer from discussing the defendant's testimony during an overnight break in the trial?
Cox Communications, Inc. v. Sony Music Entertainment	Cox Communications is a major U.S. internet provider. Between 2013 and 2014, some of its users illegally downloaded and shared copyrighted music from several companies like Sony Music. A watchdog group sent Cox over 163,000 warnings about infringement notices. Although Cox had a "13-strike policy" to address repeat offenders, they rarely terminated service for copyright violations. The record companies sued Cox, claiming it contributed to or benefited from the illegal activity.	Can an internet provider be held legally responsible just for <i>knowing</i> about illegal downloads and not cutting off users? Is that enough to count as "willful" infringement under copyright law?

To Think and To Do: Examine the listed cases presented for the 2025-2026 Supreme Court term. Which one(s) are of most interest to you? Why?



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