

INDIGENT COUNSEL IN THE HARRIS COUNTY DISTRICT COURTS


A REPORT BROUGHT TO YOU BY RESTORING JUSTICE AND THE TEXAS CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND EQUITY

THIS REPORT USES DATA FROM HARRIS COUNTY'S NEW INDIGENT DEFENSE DASHBOARD TO SHOW HOW FREQUENTLY EACH OF THE DISTRICT COURT JUDGES UTILIZES THE HARRIS COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE, WHICH IS CAPABLE OF RECEIVING UP TO 20% OF ALL DISTRICT COURT INDIGENT APPOINTMENTS.

DISTRICT COURTS BY LOWEST PUBLIC DEFENDER APPOINTMENT RATE

AUGUST 2021

#1 JUDGE HAZEL B. JONES




0%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

174TH DISTRICT COURT

#1 JUDGE CHRIS MORTON




0%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

230TH DISTRICT COURT

#1 JUDGE LORI CHAMBERS GRAY



0%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

262ND DISTRICT COURT

<u>RANK</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE</u>	<u>% OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO</u>
2.	338TH	RAMONA FRANKLIN	1.04%
3.	209TH	BRIAN E WARREN	1.32%
4.	185TH	JASON LUONG	1.54%
5.	176TH	NIKITA V. HARMON	2.61%
6.	RIC	BROCK THOMAS	6.43%
7.	180TH	DASEAN JONES	7.66%
8.	351ST	NATALIA "NATA" CORNELIO	14.62%
9.	179TH	ANA MARTINEZ	14.76%
10.	263RD	AMY MARTIN	15.29%
11.	184TH	ABIGAIL ANASTASIO	15.91%
12.	339TH	TE'IVA J. BELL	17.20%
13.	182ND	DANILO LACAYO	17.32%
14.	228TH	FRANK AGUILAR	17.78%
15.	177TH	ROBERT JOHNSON	18.13%
16.	337TH	COLLEEN GAIDO	19.69%
17.	183RD	CHUCK SILVERMAN	20.22%
18.	232ND	JOSH HILL	21.15%
19.	248TH	HILARY UNGER	22.40%
20.	208TH	GREG GLASS	23.08%
21.	178TH	KELLI JOHNSON	23.61%

TOTAL PDO APPOINTMENT RATE

11.92%

The 6th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution requires the appointment of an attorney for anyone facing criminal charges that is unable to afford their own. In Harris County, the judges of the district courts select attorneys for any indigent defendant facing charges in their court.

Despite the establishment of the Harris County Public Defender's Office in 2011, many of Harris County's elected district court judges fail to appoint the Public Defender's Office to capacity, opting to appoint private attorneys to represent indigent defendants instead.

Recent research conducted in Harris County shows that private attorneys receiving appointments are less effective than the Harris County Public Defender's Office in addition to frequently donating to judicial re-election campaigns and exceeding the Texas Indigent Defense Commission's maximum recommended caseload limits.