

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 2022

#1 JUDGE BROCK THOMAS




2.56%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

RIC

#2 JUDGE HAZEL B. JONES




8.86%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

174TH DISTRICT COURT

#3 JUDGE NATALIA CORNELIO



10.47%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

351ST DISTRICT COURT

<u>RANK</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE</u>	<u>% OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO</u>
4.	176TH	NIKITA V. HARMON	10.75%
5.	262ND	LORI CHAMBERS GRAY	11.17%
6.	182ND	DANILO LACAYO	12.50%
7.	339TH	TE'IVA J. BELL	13.27%
8.	228TH	FRANK AGUILAR	13.89%
9.	178TH	KELLI JOHNSON	13.93%
10.	338TH	RAMONA FRANKLIN	14.29%
11.	248TH	HILARY UNGER	14.36%
12.	232ND	JOSH HILL	14.86%
13.	208TH	GREG GLASS	15.18%
14.	177TH	ROBERT JOHNSON	16.37%
15.	179TH	ANA MARTINEZ	17.02%
16.	482ND	MARITZA ANTU	17.82%
17.	209TH	BRIAN E. WARREN	18.71%
18.	183RD	CHUCK SILVERMAN	18.97%
19.	180TH	DASEAN JONES	19.30%
20.	337TH	COLLEEN GAIDO	19.30%
21.	185TH	JASON LUONG	19.75%
22.	263RD	AMY MARTIN	21.79%
23.	230TH	CHRIS MORTON	22.06%
24.	184TH	ABIGAIL ANASTASIO	25.48%

TOTAL PDO APPOINTMENT RATE

15.04%

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.