

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

MARCH 2022

#1 JUDGE BROCK THOMAS




7.38%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

RIC

#2 JUDGE ABIGAIL ANASTASIO




8.92%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

184TH DISTRICT COURT

#3 JUDGE ROBERT JOHNSON



11.54%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

177TH DISTRICT COURT

<u>RANK</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE</u>	<u>% OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO</u>
4.	232RD	JOSH HILL	12.04%
5.	178TH	KELLI JOHNSON	12.28%
6.	338TH	RAMONA FRANKLIN	12.50%
7.	351ST	NATALIA "NATA" CORNELIO	13.17%
8.	176TH	NIKITA V. HARMON	13.91%
9.	262ND	LORI CHAMBERS GRAY	15.85%
10.	248TH	HILARY UNGER	16.67%
11.	482ND	MARITZA ANTU	17.09%
12.	228TH	FRANK AGUILAR	17.97%
13.	174TH	HAZEL B. JONES	18.09%
14.	339TH	TE'IVA J. BELL	18.29%
15.	337TH	COLLEEN GAIDO	18.47%
16.	179TH	ANA MARTINEZ	18.56%
17.	180TH	DASEAN JONES	19.19%
18.	182ND	DANILO LACAYO	19.35%
19.	208TH	GREG GLASS	19.50%
20.	185TH	JASON LUONG	20.38%
21.	209TH	BRIAN E WARREN	21.34%
22.	230TH	CHRIS MORTON	23.20%
23.	183RD	CHUCK SILVERMAN	23.90%
24.	263RD	AMY MARTIN	25.44%

TOTAL PDO APPOINTMENT RATE

16.67%

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.