

# INDIGENT COUNSEL IN THE HARRIS COUNTY DISTRICT COURTS


A REPORT BROUGHT TO YOU BY RESTORING JUSTICE AND THE TEXAS CRIMINAL JUSTICE COALITION

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

JANUARY 2021

**#1 JUDGE CHRIS MORTON**




**0.63%**

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

230TH DISTRICT COURT

**#1 JUDGE LORI CHAMBERS GRAY**




**0.63%**

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

262ND DISTRICT COURT

**#2 JUDGE DASEAN JONES**



**3.35%**

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

180TH DISTRICT COURT

<u>RANK</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE</u>	<u>% OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO</u>
3.	177TH	ROBERT JOHNSON	3.55%
4.	176TH	NIKITA V. HARMON	3.88%
5.	185TH	JASON LUONG	3.91%
6.	RIC	BROCK THOMAS	4.61%
7.	337TH	COLLEEN GAIDO	4.73%
8.	174TH	HAZEL B. JONES	4.76%
9.	338TH	RAMONA FRANKLIN	6.16%
10.	183RD	CHUCK SILVERMAN	6.64%
11.	179TH	ANA MARTINEZ	6.64%
12.	208TH	GREG GLASS	7.76%
13.	232ND	JOSH HILL	7.93%
14.	184TH	ABIGAIL ANASTASIO	8.64%
15.	351ST	NATA CORNELIO	10.64%
16.	178TH	KELLI JOHNSON	11.11%
17.	263RD	AMY MARTIN	11.41%
18.	339TH	TE'IVA J. BELL	14.55%
19.	209TH	BRIAN WARREN	18.84%
20.	228TH	FRANK AGUILAR	19.21%
21.	248TH	HILARY UNGER	20.50%
22.	182ND	DANILO LACAYO	24.87%

**TOTAL PDO APPOINTMENT RATE**

**9.00%**

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.