

MUNICIPAL COURTS OF TEXAS

About Us

- ⇒ 926 courts
- ⇒ 99% judges are appointed by city councils
- ⇒ 1% elected
- ⇒ 1,265 judges
- ⇒ 5,270 court support personnel

How We Differ

- ⇒ Smallest Court: Cuney pop. 140
- ⇒ Largest Court: Houston pop. 2,195,914
- ⇒ Over 160 courts of record
- ⇒ Qualifications: 61% of judges are lawyers
- ⇒ Degree of formality and use of technology

How We are the Same

- ⇒ 99% judges are appointed by city councils
- ⇒ 1% elected
- ⇒ Many pro se defendants
- ⇒ All have prosecutors
- ⇒ All are governed by federal, state, and local laws



Most Important Laws Governing Our Procedures and Decisions

- ⇒ U.S. Constitution
- ⇒ Texas Constitution
- ⇒ Transportation Code
- ⇒ Penal Code
- ⇒ Alcoholic Beverage Code
- ⇒ Education Code
- ⇒ Health and Safety Code
- ⇒ Parks and Wildlife Code
- ⇒ Judicial Code of Conduct
- ⇒ City Ordinances

Statistical data from OCA website:
www.txcourts.gov



From Our Perspective

More people come in contact with municipal courts than all other Texas courts combined - we play a key role in determining public perception of the judiciary and city government.

Municipal courts play a critical role in public safety, protecting the quality of life in Texas communities, and deterring criminal behavior.

Municipal court process is complicated due to so many applicable laws, resulting in a need for professional management by highly trained court administrators and competent judges. Average length of judicial service is 9 years, 10 months.

Case law, legislative changes, and mandatory reporting create a demanding need for constant change and continuing education.

Remember

- ⇒ Recognize the court as an independent, 3rd branch of government.
- ⇒ Respect the court as an institution of fairness - not a revenue center.
- ⇒ Visit your court.
- ⇒ Meet regularly with the presiding judge and court personnel.

About Our Work

As Magistrates

- ⇒ Statutory Warnings & Admonishments
- ⇒ Examining Trials
- ⇒ Mental Health Assessments
- ⇒ Emergency Protection Orders
- ⇒ Ignition Interlock Orders
- ⇒ Arrest & Search Warrants

As Trial Judges

- ⇒ Pre-Trial Hearings
- ⇒ Bench & Jury Trials
- ⇒ Indigence Hearings
- ⇒ Show Cause Hearings
- ⇒ Commitment Hearings
- ⇒ Animal Hearings
- ⇒ Mental Health Hearings
- ⇒ Code Enforcement Hearings
- ⇒ Driver's License Suspension Hearings
- ⇒ Bond Forfeiture Hearings
- ⇒ Truancy Hearings
- ⇒ Expunction Orders
- ⇒ Records Retention & Destruction Orders

For More Information

Texas Municipal Courts Education Center (TMCEC)
www.tmcec.com/800.252.3718

Texas Municipal Courts Association (TMCA) www.txmca.com

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