

**How Municipal Courts Can Make a Difference**

12-hour Clerks Seminar

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**Interactive Notes:**

**1. "Preventing the greater Harm"**

What does that mean?

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**2. Power in Numbers**

Municipal courts constitute 34 percent of the Texas Judicial System.

Municipal judges constitute 38 percent of the Texas Judiciary.

Municipal Judges constitute 44 percent of judges in Texas who are attorneys.

Municipal judges who are non-attorneys constitute 41 percent of all non attorney judges in the state.

In FY 2007, Texas municipal courts adjudicated 6,743,230 cases.

In FY 2007, Texas municipal courts conducted 1,225,561 trials.

**3. Gate Keeping Functions**

**a. Magistrate Duties**

In FY 2007:

Number of Search Warrants issued = 5,368

Number of Arrest Warrants issued = 2,454,665

Magistrate Warnings Given = 274,567

Emergency Medical Commitments = 2,078

Orders of Emergency Protection = 8,847

**b. Children in the Classroom**

True or False: For the last decade, juvenile courts have adjudicated the vast majority of children accused of criminal conduct. **FALSE**

Class C Misdemeanors      Delinquent Conduct      CNIS      Certified felonies

What does "training the offender" mean?

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**4. Trial Court Function**

Class C Misdemeanors:

Offence defined in the Penal Code = a fine not exceed \$500.00  
(e.g., public intoxication, disorderly conduct, simple assault, open container)

Offence defined outside the Penal Code = "Fine Only"  
(e.g., Transportation Code offenses, City ordinance violations (f.n.e. \$500))

In FY 2007, judgments in municipal courts totaled \$685,793,685 !

**5. Tools**

"Probation"

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"Deterrence"

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"Remedial Orders"

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**6. Enforcement**

Active Enforcement

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Passive Enforcement

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Private Enforcement

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Civil Enforcement

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**7. How Good Things Go Bad**

Judicial Independence      ≠      \_\_\_\_\_

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The Rule of Law      ≠      \_\_\_\_\_

Public Safety & Quality of Life      ≠      \_\_\_\_\_