

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

JUNE 2022

#1 JUDGE BROCK THOMAS




6.16%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

RIC

#2 JUDGE ABIGAIL ANASTASIO




9.86%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

184TH DISTRICT COURT

#3 JUDGE NIKITA V. HARMON



10.86%

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

176TH DISTRICT COURT

<u>RANK</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE</u>	<u>% OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO</u>
4.	182ND	DANILO LACAYO	11.06%
5.	338TH	RAMONA FRANKLIN	13.27%
6.	248TH	HILARY UNGER	14.37%
7.	180TH	DEASEAN JONES	16.09%
8.	208TH	GREG GLASS	16.15%
9.	177TH	ROBERT JOHNSON	16.45%
10.	174TH	HAZEL B. JONES	16.67%
11.	209TH	BRIAN E WARREN	16.87%
12.	232ND	JOSH HILL	17.22%
13.	337TH	COLLEEN GAIDO	19.05%
14.	178TH	KELLI JOHNSON	19.16%
15.	263RD	AMY MARTIN	19.21%
16.	179TH	ANA MARTINEZ	20.00%
17.	351ST	NATALIA "NATA" CORNELIO	20.00%
18.	228TH	FRANK AGUILAR	20.49%
19.	482ND	MARITZA ANTU	21.28%
20.	185TH	JASON LUONG	22.94%
21.	183RD	CHUCK SILVERMAN	23.23%
22.	339TH	TE'IVA J. BELL	23.33%
23.	230TH	CHRIS MORTON	23.40%
24.	262ND	LORI CHAMBERS GRAY	25.00%

TOTAL PDO APPOINTMENT RATE

17.12%

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.