INDIGENT COUNSEL IN THE HARRIS COUNTY DISTRICT COURTS

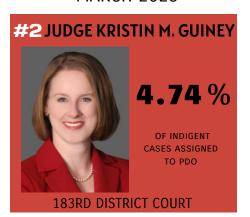
A REPORT BROUGHT TO YOU BY RESTORING JUSTICE AND THE TEXAS CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND EQUITY

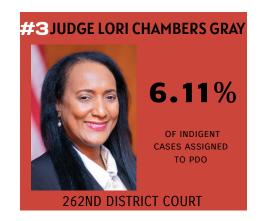
THIS REPORT USES DATA FROM HARRIS COUNTY'S NEW INDIGENT DEFENSE DASHBOARD TO SHOW HOW FREQUENTLY EACH OF THE DISTRICT COURT JUDGES UTILIZES THE HARRIS COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE, WHICH IS CAPABLE OF RECEIVING UP TO 20% OF ALL DISTRICT COURT INDIGENT APPOINTMENTS.

DISTRICT COURTS BY LOWEST PUBLIC DEFENDER APPOINTMENT RATE

MARCH 2023







<u>RANK</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE</u>	% OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO
4.	228тн	FRANK AGUILAR	8.28%
5.	176тн	NIKITA V. HARMON	8.33%
6.	180тн	DASEAN JONES	9.05%
7.	351sт	NATALIA "NATA" CORNELIO	9.27%
8.	338тн	RAMONA FRANKLIN	9.50%
9.	177тн	ROBERT JOHNSON	9.63%
10.	178тн	KELLI JOHNSON	9.84%
11.	208тн	BEVERLY D. ARMSTRONG	11.73%
12.	248тн	HILARY UNGER	11.96%
13.	232ND	JOSH HILL	12.32%
14.	263RD	MELISSA M. MORRIS	13.16%
15.	339тн	TE'IVA J. BELL	13.61%
16.	179тн	ANA MARTINEZ	14.21%
17.	184тн	KATHERINE N. THOMAS	14.29%
18.	185тн	ANDREA BEALL	14.46%
19.	209тн	BRIAN E WARREN	15.38%
20.	182nd	DANILO LACAYO	17.68%
21.	337тн	COLLEEN GAIDO	18.09%
22.	230тн	CHRIS MORTON	18.13%
23.	482ND	VERONICA M. NELSON	19.02%
24.	174тн	HAZEL B. JONES	21.94%

TOTAL PDO APPOINTMENT RATE

11.67%

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.