

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

APRIL 2022

#1 JUDGE RAMONA FRANKLIN



2.98%

OF INDIGENT
CASES ASSIGNED
TO PDO

338TH DISTRICT COURT

#2 JUDGE ROBERT JOHNSON



3.05%

OF INDIGENT
CASES ASSIGNED
TO PDO

177TH DISTRICT COURT

#3 JUDGE BROCK THOMAS



4.23%

OF INDIGENT
CASES ASSIGNED
TO PDO

RIC

| <u>RANK</u> | <u>COURT</u> | <u>JUDGE</u> | <u>% OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO</u> |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|--|
| 4. | 178TH | KELLI JOHNSON | 7.07% |
| 5. | 248TH | HILARY UNGER | 7.51% |
| 6. | 184TH | ABIGAIL ANASTASIO | 7.76% |
| 7. | 228TH | FRANK AGUILAR | 8.16% |
| 8. | 174TH | HAZEL B. JONES | 8.38% |
| 9. | 263RD | AMY MARTIN | 9.30% |
| 10. | 339TH | TE'IVA J. BELL | 9.34% |
| 11. | 337TH | COLLEEN GAIDO | 10.00% |
| 12. | 176TH | NIKITA V. HARMON | 10.27% |
| 13. | 185TH | JASON LUONG | 10.29% |
| 14. | 482ND | MARITZA ANTU | 10.32% |
| 15. | 351ST | NATALIA "NATA" CORNELIO | 10.40% |
| 16. | 183RD | CHUCK SILVERMAN | 11.69% |
| 17. | 232ND | JOSH HILL | 12.83% |
| 18. | 182ND | DANILO LACAYO | 13.38% |
| 19. | 209TH | BRIAN E WARREN | 14.19% |
| 20. | 262ND | LORI CHAMBERS GRAY | 15.24% |
| 21. | 179TH | ANA MARTINEZ | 17.09% |
| 22. | 208TH | GREG GLASS | 17.68% |
| 23. | 180TH | DASEAN JONES | 19.88% |
| 24. | 230TH | CHRIS MORTON | 23.91% |

TOTAL PDO APPOINTMENT RATE

10.82%

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.