

# 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

NOVEMBER 2022

**#1 JUDGE BROCK THOMAS**




**4.10%**

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

RIC

**#2 JUDGE BRIAN E WARREN**




**8.81%**

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

209TH DISTRICT COURT

**#3 JUDGE JASON LUONG**



**9.35%**

OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO

185TH DISTRICT COURT

<u>RANK</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE</u>	<u>% OF INDIGENT CASES ASSIGNED TO PDO</u>
4.	176TH	NIKITA V. HARMON	9.68%
5.	338TH	RAMONA FRANKLIN	10.39%
6.	337TH	COLLEEN GAIDO	11.11%
7.	182ND	DANILO LACAYO	11.64%
8.	248TH	HILARY UNGER	11.73%
9.	177TH	ROBERT JOHNSON	12.10%
10.	339TH	TE'IVA J. BELL	12.35%
11.	178TH	KELLI JOHNSON	12.50%
12.	351ST	NATALIA "NATA" CORNELIO	13.41%
13.	180TH	DASEAN JONES	13.82%
14.	228TH	FRANK AGUILAR	14.39%
15.	183RD	CHUCK SILVERMAN	15.95%
16.	232ND	JOSH HILL	16.33%
17.	208TH	GREG GLASS	16.44%
18.	262ND	LORI CHAMBERS GRAY	17.26%
19.	184TH	ABIGAIL ANASTASIO	17.36%
20.	174TH	HAZEL B. JONES	17.36%
21.	230TH	CHRIS MORTON	18.95%
22.	482ND	MARITZA ANTU	19.26%
23.	263RD	AMY MARTIN	19.87%
24.	179TH	ANA MARTINEZ	21.58%

**TOTAL PDO APPOINTMENT RATE**

**13.74%**

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.