

GOVERNMENT CODE  
TITLE 2. JUDICIAL BRANCH  
SUBTITLE F. COURT ADMINISTRATION  
CHAPTER 75. OTHER COURT ADMINISTRATION

SUBCHAPTER A. ASSIGNMENT OF FORMER JUDGES AND RETIRED JUDGES WHO  
ELECT TO BE JUDICIAL OFFICERS

Sec. 75.001. JUDICIAL RETIREE ELECTION TO BE JUDICIAL OFFICER. (a) A retiree under Subtitle D or E of Title 8 may elect to be a judicial officer.

(b) An election under this section may be made:

(1) not later than the 90th day after the date of the person's retirement in a document addressed to the chief justice of the supreme court; or

(2) after the 90th day after the date of the person's retirement in a petition addressed to the supreme court.

(c) An election under Subsection (b)(2) takes effect only on approval of the petition by the supreme court.

(d) A retiree who makes an election under this section shall be designated a senior judge.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 2, Sec. 8.41(a), eff. Aug. 28, 1989; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 179, Sec. 2(e), eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 646, Sec. 18, eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 75.002. ASSIGNMENT OF RETIREE AS JUDICIAL OFFICER.

(a) A retiree who makes an election under Section 75.001 is, with the retiree's consent to each assignment, subject to assignment:

(1) by the chief justice of the supreme court to sit on any court of the state of the same or lesser dignity as that on which the person sat before retirement;

(2) by the presiding judge of the court of criminal appeals to sit as a commissioner of that court; and

(3) if the retiree's last judicial office before retirement was judge of a district or statutory county court, by the presiding judge of an administrative judicial region to sit on a

district or statutory county court in that administrative region or, on request of the presiding judge of another administrative judicial region, to that administrative region.

(b) In addition to an assignment under Section 74.003 and Subsection (a)(1), the chief justice of the supreme court may assign a retiree whose last judicial office before retirement was justice or judge of the supreme court, the court of criminal appeals, or a court of appeals to the administrative judicial region in which the retiree resides for reassignment by the presiding judge of that region to a district or statutory county court in the region. The reassignment by a presiding judge is subject to the requirements of Section 74.055. The assignment by the chief justice of a retiree to the administrative region of the retiree's residence continues only during the period for which the retiree has certified a willingness to serve under Section 74.0551.

(c) A retiree assigned under this subchapter has all the powers of a judge of the court to which the retiree has been assigned.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985. Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 2, Sec. 8.44(15), eff. Aug. 28, 1989; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 646, Sec. 18, eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 75.003. ASSIGNMENT OF FORMER APPELLATE JUDGE. (a) A former judge whose last judicial office before leaving active service was justice or judge of the supreme court, the court of criminal appeals, or a court of appeals is, with the former judge's consent to each assignment, subject to assignment by the chief justice of the supreme court:

(1) to sit on an appellate, district, or statutory county court; and

(2) to the administrative judicial region in which the former judge resides for reassignment by the presiding judge of that region to a district or statutory county court within the region.

(b) A reassignment by a presiding judge under Subsection (a)(2) is subject to the requirements of Section 74.055. The assignment of a former judge by the chief justice to the

administrative region of the former judge's residence continues only during the period for which the former judge has certified a willingness to serve under Section 74.0551.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 646, Sec. 19, eff. Aug. 28, 1989.

Sec. 75.004. EMPLOYEE STATUS. A former or retired judge or justice who is assigned under this subchapter is not an employee of the county in which the assigned court is located.

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 606 (S.B. 891), Sec. 14.03, eff. September 1, 2019.

#### SUBCHAPTER B. ADMINISTRATION BY JUDGES IN COUNTY

Sec. 75.012. PRESIDING CIVIL JUDGE OF BEXAR COUNTY. (a) The district judges of Bexar County, not later than January 1 and July 1 of each year, or at any other time as determined by a majority of the district judges, shall elect one of the district judges as the presiding civil judge to serve at the will of the judges.

(b) The presiding civil judge, as necessary, shall adjust the business and dockets of the courts and transfer or cause to be transferred causes from any of the courts to any other of the courts to equalize the business of the courts so that each judge has cases or proceedings to try or consider.

(c) The presiding civil judge shall ensure that the trial of a case will not be delayed because of the disqualification of the judge in whose court it is pending.

(d) When a case is transferred, proper orders shall be entered on the minutes of the court as evidence of the transfer.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 75.013. PRESIDING CRIMINAL JUDGE OF BEXAR COUNTY. (a) A majority of the judges of the district courts giving preference to criminal cases in Bexar County shall select a presiding criminal judge to serve at the will of the judges.

(b) The presiding criminal judge shall be the judge receiving bills of indictment for that term. All indictments shall be returned to a district court in Bexar County giving preference to

criminal cases. The presiding criminal judge, in rotation in the order in which indictments are returned or as agreed to by a majority of judges trying criminal cases, shall assign indictments to the judicial districts for trial. The presiding criminal judge shall adjust the case flow so that each of those courts receives approximately an equal share of the indictments for trial.

(c) The presiding criminal judge shall handle all preindictment bond problems and preindictment appointment of counsel.

(d) Any other judge may preside in the absence of the presiding criminal judge or at his request.

(e) The presiding criminal judge, as necessary, shall adjust the business and dockets of the criminal courts and transfer or cause to be transferred causes from any of the courts to any other of the courts to equalize the business of the courts so that each judge has cases or proceedings to try or consider.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 75.014. EL PASO COUNCIL OF JUDGES. (a) The El Paso Council of Judges is composed of the judges of the district courts of El Paso County, the judges of the county courts at law of El Paso County, and the judge of the probate court of El Paso County.

(b) The council of judges may require the district clerk to maintain, arrange, and preserve copies of or record all or any part of the acts, proceedings, and minutes of the council of judges. The district clerk shall maintain, arrange, and preserve those acts, proceedings, and minutes in the same manner that acts, proceedings, and minutes of the district court are maintained, arranged, and preserved.

(c) Unless the council of judges by majority vote provides otherwise, the judges on the council of judges may sit and act for any magistrate in the county on any unindicted felony case or on any misdemeanor case for which an indictment has not been issued or an information has not been filed.

(d) The offices, courtrooms, physical facilities, equipment, furniture, and books provided by the El Paso Commissioners Court for the court system and its auxiliary

services, judges, and court personnel, except for the Court of Appeals for the Eighth Court of Appeals District, shall be allocated and utilized as provided by a majority vote of the council of judges.

(e) The County Courts at Law No. 6 and No. 7 of El Paso County, Texas, are designated as criminal misdemeanor courts. Courts designated as criminal misdemeanor courts shall give preference to and have primary responsibility for:

- (1) criminal misdemeanor cases;
- (2) appeals or petitions under Section [501.052](#), [521.242](#), [521.302](#), or [524.041](#), Transportation Code;
- (3) misdemeanor bail bond and personal bond forfeiture cases; and
- (4) appeals de novo from the municipal and justice courts.

(f) The council of judges may by majority vote periodically change the criminal misdemeanor designations provided by Subsection (e) so that different county courts at law are designated as criminal misdemeanor courts. At least four county courts at law must be designated as criminal misdemeanor courts, except that, for any period for which the commissioners court has provided funding for more than one criminal law magistrate judge:

- (1) the council of judges may by majority vote designate a county court at law as a family court; and
- (2) there may be fewer than four designated criminal misdemeanor courts, if the criminal misdemeanor docket permits, as determined by a majority vote of the council of judges.

(g) For the effective operation of the El Paso County court system and the effective administration of justice, the council of judges shall order the assignment, docketing, and transfer of a specified number or percentage and type of family law cases and proceedings, as defined by Section [25.0002](#), to the county court at law designated as a family court under Subsection (f). If, after a county court at law is designated a family court, funding for more than one criminal law magistrate judge is not continued, the council of judges may order that:

- (1) the designation of the county court at law as a

family law court be retracted; and

(2) a specified number or percentage and type of family law cases and proceedings in that court be transferred to other courts for the effective operation of the court system and the effective administration of justice.

(h) A district judge in El Paso County or a judge of a statutory county court in El Paso County may serve as the local administrative judge for the council of judges. The council of judges shall elect a judge as local administrative judge for a term of not more than two years. The local administrative judge may not be elected on the basis of rotation or seniority.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1074, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1352 (S.B. [1189](#)), Sec. 17, eff. September 1, 2005.

Sec. 75.015. EL PASO COUNTY JUDGE ASSIGNMENTS. (a) Judges may be assigned in the manner provided by this section to hold district court, county court at law, or statutory probate court in El Paso County when necessary to dispose of accumulated business in the county.

(b) The following judges may be assigned as provided by this section by any judge of a district court, county court at law, or statutory probate court in El Paso County or by the El Paso Council of Judges:

(1) a regular judge of a district court, county court at law, or statutory probate court of El Paso County, who has consented to be subject to assignment under this section and who has filed the judge's written consent to assignment with the local administrative judge under this section; and

(2) any judge on the criminal law magistrate court of El Paso County, who has consented to be subject to assignment under this section and who has filed the judge's written consent to assignment with the local administrative judge under this section.

(c) The local administrative judge shall establish and maintain a list of judges who have filed a written consent to be

subject to assignment under this section.

(d) The written consent of a judge to be subject to assignment under this section by a district, county court at law, or statutory probate judge in El Paso County or by the El Paso Council of Judges may be limited to one or more district courts, county courts at law, or statutory probate courts.

(e) An El Paso County district, county court at law, or statutory probate judge may only assign a judge under this section to hold court for that judge.

(f) A judge may revoke or amend the judge's written consent to assignment under this section by filing a revocation or amendment to the consent with the local administrative judge not later than the 10th day before the effective date of the revocation or amendment.

(g) A judge on the criminal law magistrate court of El Paso County may be assigned to hold district court under this section without the judge's consent by a two-thirds vote of all the district court and county court at law judges of El Paso County.

(h) A judge assigned under this section has all the powers, emoluments of office, and jurisdiction of the judge of the court to which the assignment is made.

(i) If any court holds any part of this section, Section [25.0732](#), or Subchapter J, Chapter [54](#), as added by Senate Bill No. 221, Acts of the 71st Legislature, Regular Session, 1989, unconstitutional, all acts performed by any judge under the authority of any of these laws before and on the date that the court's judgment becomes final are valid and binding.

(j) A retired or former judge of a county court at law or statutory probate court of El Paso County who is assigned to a district court in El Paso County under Subchapter A, under Chapter [74](#), or by other law of this state has the jurisdiction conferred by Subsection (h) of this section. A retired or former judge of a county court at law or statutory probate court of El Paso County who has served 12 years as a county court at law judge is a senior judge. The district courts, county courts at law, and statutory probate courts of El Paso County are of the same dignity.

(k) Except as provided by this subsection or by the council

of judges, the local administrative judge may assign a judge on the council of judges or any other magistrate in the county to hold court for any magistrate in the county in any unindicted felony case or any Class A misdemeanor case, or Class B misdemeanor case for which an indictment has not been issued or an information has not been filed. A judge on the council of judges, other than the magistrate judge, may not be assigned under this subsection without the judge's consent. The local administrative judge may delegate or the council of judges may provide for delegation of the power to assign under this subsection to any other judge on the council of judges. A judge assigned under this subsection has all the powers and jurisdiction of the judge of the court to which assigned.

Added by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 1074, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.  
Amended by Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 512, Sec. 3, eff. June 13, 1991.

Sec. 75.016. PRESIDING CRIMINAL JUDGE OF TRAVIS COUNTY. (a) The judges of the Travis County district courts that give preference to criminal cases shall elect from among those judges a presiding criminal judge for the county for a two-year term expiring September 30 of each odd-numbered year.

(b) The presiding criminal judge, with respect to the Travis County district courts that give preference to criminal cases, shall:

(1) preside at all meetings of the criminal judges, except when absent, in which case any other of those judges may preside;

(2) implement and execute the local district court rules of administration for those courts, including assigning all capital murder cases to the proper court on a rotating basis;

(3) appoint any special or standing committees necessary or desirable for the administration of those courts;

(4) address administrative issues on an emergency basis for the criminal courts, provided that the presiding criminal judge's decisions regarding those issues may be reviewed at the next meeting of the judges of those courts;

(5) supervise the budget and fiscal matters of the



criminal courts;

(6) monitor and serve as liaison regarding any legislation amending the Penal Code or Code of Criminal Procedure and any other legislation affecting the business of those courts; and

(7) serve as a liaison to the commissioners court of the county and appear before the commissioners court as necessary.

(c) The Commissioners Court of Travis County may set additional compensation to be paid to the presiding criminal judge by the county in any amount that does not exceed the amount the local administrative district judge of Travis County receives from this state. Notwithstanding any other law, compensation paid the presiding criminal judge under this subsection is not included as part of the judge's combined base salary from all state and county sources for purposes of the salary limitations provided by Section [659.012](#).

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 959 (H.B. [3468](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1121 (H.B. [2384](#)), Sec. 16, eff. September 1, 2019.

#### SUBCHAPTER D. ASSIGNMENT CLERKS

Sec. 75.201. ASSIGNMENT CLERKS IN DALLAS AND TARRANT COUNTIES. (a) In Dallas County and Tarrant County, a majority of the district judges with civil jurisdiction may appoint an assignment clerk to serve under the judges of the district courts of each county in the setting and disposing of cases on the general jury docket.

(b) The commissioners court of each county shall set the salary of the assignment clerk on recommendation of the district judges. The salary shall be paid in monthly installments on vouchers approved by the presiding judge of the district courts.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 75.202. ASSIGNMENT CLERKS IN NUECES COUNTY. (a) A

majority of the district judges in Nueces County may appoint an assignment clerk to serve under the presiding judge of the district courts in the setting and disposing of cases on the general docket. The assignment clerk shall perform the duties that are assigned to him by the district judges in connection with the setting and disposing of cases.

(b) The commissioners court shall set the salary of the assignment clerk and provide for the payment of the salary out of the general fund or the jury fund of the county. The salary shall be paid in monthly installments on vouchers approved by the presiding judge of the district courts.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 75.203. ASSIGNMENT CLERKS IN BEXAR COUNTY. (a) A majority of the judges of district courts having jurisdiction in Bexar County may appoint an assignment clerk to serve under the presiding judge of the district courts in the coordination, setting, and disposing of cases on the general docket. The assignment clerk shall perform the duties that are assigned to him by the district judges in connection with the coordination, setting, and disposing of cases.

(b) The district judges shall determine reasonable compensation for the assignment clerk, which may not exceed an amount equal to 70 percent of the salary paid by the state to each district judge. The commissioners court shall provide for the payment of the salary of the assignment clerk out of the general fund or the jury fund of the county.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 75.204. TERM. An assignment clerk authorized by this subchapter is appointed for a term of two years but is subject to dismissal by a majority of the district judges for inefficiency or misconduct.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

#### SUBCHAPTER F. ADMINISTRATION OF CERTAIN COURTS

Sec. 75.401. COURT ADMINISTRATOR SYSTEM FOR DISTRICT AND STATUTORY COUNTY COURTS IN CERTAIN COUNTIES. (a) In a county that has more than one district court or statutory county court, those courts may establish and maintain, if approved by the commissioners court, a court administrator system.

(b) The judges of the district courts or the statutory county courts may by local rule designate local court divisions and the duties of the court administrator for each division, if applicable. The court administrator shall cooperate with regional, presiding, and local administrative judges and state agencies having duties relating to the operation of the courts to promote uniform and efficient administration of justice.

(c) If the commissioners court includes in the county budget money for the position of court administrator, the court administrator is appointed by the judges of the district courts or the statutory county courts served by the court administrator. The court administrator serves at the pleasure of those judges.

(d) A court administrator is entitled to reasonable compensation, as determined by the judges served and in the salary range for the position, as set by the commissioners court in the annual budget.

(e) The judges of the courts served by the court administrator, if the positions are included in the county budget adopted by the commissioners court, shall appoint appropriate staff and support personnel according to the needs of the local jurisdiction.

(f) If money to fund the court administrator system is included in the county budget, the commissioners court shall fund the court administrator system from fines collected by the courts served by the court administrator. If the fines collected are insufficient to provide the total funding for the program, the county shall provide the additional funds needed.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 653 (H.B. [1925](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 966 (S.B. [1913](#)), Sec. 1, eff.

September 1, 2015.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 966 (S.B. 1913), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2015.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1110 (H.B. 4104), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 75.402. COURT MANAGER AND COORDINATOR SYSTEM FOR CERTAIN HARRIS COUNTY COURTS. (a) The courts in Harris County that have the same criminal jurisdiction as county courts with criminal jurisdiction may establish and maintain a court manager and coordinator system.

(b) The judges of the courts to which this section applies may appoint a court manager, one or more court coordinators, and other staff as appropriate to the needs of the local jurisdiction. The judges shall by rule designate the qualifications and duties of the court manager and the coordinators to improve criminal justice and expedite the processing of criminal cases through the county courts. The court manager and the coordinators shall cooperate with state agencies having duties relating to the operation of the courts to promote uniform and efficient justice.

(c) The court manager and the coordinators serve at the pleasure of the judges.

(d) A court manager and coordinators are entitled to reasonable compensation as set by the judges of the courts served. The amount paid the court manager may not exceed 60 percent of the salary paid the judges unless the commissioners court by order sets the court manager's compensation at a greater amount. The amount paid the coordinators may not exceed 50 percent of the salary paid the judges.

(e) On the judges' orders, the commissioners court shall fund the court manager and coordinator system from fines collected by the courts served by the court manager and coordinators. If the fines collected are insufficient to provide the total funding for the program, the county shall provide the additional funds needed.

(f) This section does not diminish the statutory duties and powers of the sheriff, district attorney, clerk of the court, or any court officer.

Sec. 75.403. PRESIDING JUDGE FOR CERTAIN HARRIS COUNTY COURTS. (a) The judges of the courts in Harris County that have the same criminal jurisdiction as county courts with criminal jurisdiction may select from among themselves a presiding judge.

(b) The presiding judge shall be selected during the month preceding the term the judge is to serve by a vote of two-thirds of the judges. The presiding judge serves a term of six months unless by a vote of two-thirds of the judges the selection is canceled and another judge is selected to serve the unexpired term. Each judge shall enter on the minutes of the court an order reciting the selection of the presiding judge.

(c) A co-presiding judge may be selected in the same manner as the presiding judge. The co-presiding judge serves when the presiding judge is absent or disabled for any reason and has the same duties as the presiding judge.

(d) The presiding judge shall:

(1) preside at any session of the judges;

(2) hold ex officio membership on all committees created by the judges in session that pertain to the goal of achieving more equal and efficient justice and the orderly dispatch of business; and

(3) serve as chief administrator of the offices of county court manager and county court coordinators, and of pretrial release services and all other court-related ministerial services in misdemeanor cases as required by the judges having jurisdiction over those cases.

(e) If a judge is absent or for any reason unable to preside, the presiding judge may appoint a special judge to serve as presiding judge. The qualifications, duties, and powers of a special judge are the same as for the regular judge. The provisions of Articles 30.04, 30.05, and 30.06, Code of Criminal Procedure, 1965, relating to the oath, compensation, and record of appointment of certain special judges apply to the appointment of a special judge under this subsection.

(f) The judges may adopt rules consistent with the Code of

Criminal Procedure, 1965, and the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure for practice and procedure in the courts. A rule may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the judges, and on adoption shall be entered verbatim in the minutes of each court. The clerk of the court shall supply copies of the rules to any interested person.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985. Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 163, Sec. 2, eff. Aug. 31, 1987.

Sec. 75.404. PRESIDING JUDGE FOR HARRIS COUNTY JUSTICE COURTS. (a) The justices of the peace in Harris County may select from among themselves a presiding judge.

(b) The presiding judge shall be selected during the month preceding the term the judge is to serve by a two-thirds vote of the judges. The presiding judge serves a term of one year unless by a vote of two-thirds of the judges the selection is canceled and another judge is selected to serve the unexpired term. Each judge shall enter on the minutes of the court an order reciting the selection of the presiding judge.

(c) A copresiding judge may be selected in the same manner as the presiding judge. The copresiding judge serves when the presiding judge is absent or disabled for any reason and has the same duties as the presiding judge.

(d) The presiding judge shall:

- (1) preside at any session of the judges;
- (2) keep a record of the decisions of the judges;
- (3) appoint special or standing committees necessary for court management and administration;
- (4) implement local rules, including assignment, docketing, transfer, and hearings of cases; and
- (5) provide statistical and management information requested by the supreme court or the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System.

(e) If a justice of the peace in Harris County is absent or for any reason unable to preside, the presiding judge may appoint, in addition to a qualified person authorized by law, a former justice of the peace or a former county court, statutory county court, or district court judge who served as a judge in this state

and who consents to the appointment as a special judge to preside for the justice of the peace. The presiding judge may designate the duration of the appointment, not to exceed 60 days, and may revoke an appointment at any time. The duties and powers of a special judge are the same as for the regular justice of the peace.

(f) The commissioners court may compensate the special judge.

(g) The justices of the peace in Harris County may adopt local rules:

(1) that are consistent with Chapter 45, Code of Criminal Procedure, and Part V, Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, for practice and procedure in the justice courts of Harris County; and

(2) for practice and procedure in the small claims courts of Harris County.

(h) A local rule may be adopted by two-thirds vote of the justices of the peace.

(i) A local rule may provide for assigning, docketing, transferring, or hearing of a case.

(j) Notwithstanding other provisions of law regarding venue:

(1) a misdemeanor case to be tried in a justice court of Harris County may be prosecuted, according to a local rule, in any precinct in the county designated by the local rule; and

(2) a civil case, except a suit for forcible entry and detainer or involving real property, may be brought, according to local rule, in any precinct in the county designated by the local rule.

(k) Each justice of the peace shall enter the local rules on the minutes of the court. On request, a justice of the peace shall provide a copy of the local rules to any interested person.

Added by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 163, Sec. 3, eff. Aug. 31, 1987.

Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 216, Sec. 1, eff. May 23, 1995;

Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 661, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts

2001, 77th Leg., ch. 583, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

#### SUBCHAPTER G. COURT ADMINISTRATOR IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

Sec. 75.501. APPLICATION. This Act applies to the district courts and to the county courts at law that give preference to criminal cases in Jefferson County.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 75.502. ESTABLISHMENT OF SYSTEM. The courts may establish a court administrator system to improve criminal justice and to expedite the processing of criminal cases.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 75.503. APPOINTMENT AND DUTIES OF COURT ADMINISTRATOR.

(a) The court administrator is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the judges of the courts subject to this subchapter.

(b) The courts shall designate by rule the duties of the court administrator.

(c) To promote uniform and efficient administration of justice, the court administrator shall cooperate with administrative judges and state agencies with duties relating to the operation of the courts.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 75.504. STAFF. (a) The courts may appoint the necessary staff and support personnel for the administrator.

(b) As part of the staff, the courts may appoint witness coordinators who, in addition to other duties designated by the court administrator, shall execute criminal process.

(c) On appointment, the courts shall commission each witness coordinator as a peace officer.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

Sec. 75.505. COMPENSATION AND FACILITIES. The court administrator and the staff are entitled to reasonable compensation, facilities, and equipment as determined by the commissioners court.

Acts 1985, 69th Leg., ch. 480, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1985.

#### SUBCHAPTER H. COURT ADMINISTRATOR IN FORT BEND COUNTY



Sec. 75.521. APPLICATION. This subchapter applies to the district courts and county courts at law in Fort Bend County.  
Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 654, Sec. 1, eff. June 12, 1993.

Sec. 75.522. ESTABLISHMENT OF SYSTEM. The courts may establish a court administrator system to improve the administration of justice and to expedite the processing of civil and criminal cases.  
Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 654, Sec. 1, eff. June 12, 1993.

Sec. 75.523. APPOINTMENT AND DUTIES OF COURT ADMINISTRATOR.  
(a) The court administrator is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the judges of the courts subject to this subchapter.

(b) The courts shall designate by rule the duties of the court administrator.

(c) To promote uniform and efficient administration of justice, the court administrator shall cooperate with administrative judges and state agencies with duties relating to the operation of the courts.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 654, Sec. 1, eff. June 12, 1993.

Sec. 75.524. COMPENSATION AND FACILITIES. A court administrator is entitled to reasonable compensation, facilities, and equipment as determined by the judges of the courts served, with the approval of the commissioners court. The commissioners court shall fund the court administrator system from general funds of the county.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 654, Sec. 1, eff. June 12, 1993.

Sec. 75.525. STAFF. The judges of the courts served by the court administrator may appoint the necessary staff and support personnel for the court administrator.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 654, Sec. 1, eff. June 12, 1993.

#### SUBCHAPTER I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 75.551. OBJECTION TO JUDGE OR JUSTICE ASSIGNED TO AN APPELLATE COURT. (a) When a judge or justice is assigned to an appellate court under this chapter or Chapter 74:

(1) the order of assignment must state whether the judge or justice is an active, former, retired, or senior judge or justice; and

(2) the person who assigns the judge or justice shall, if it is reasonable and practicable and if time permits, give notice of the assignment to each attorney representing a party to the case that is to be heard in whole or part by the assigned judge or justice.

(b) A judge or justice assigned to an appellate court may not hear a civil case if a party to the case files a timely objection to the assignment of the judge or justice. Except as provided by Subsection (d), each party to the case is entitled to only one objection under this section for that case in the appellate court.

(c) An objection under this section must be filed not later than the seventh day after the date the party receives actual notice of the assignment or before the date the case is submitted to the court, whichever date occurs earlier. The court may extend the time to file an objection under this section on a showing of good cause.

(d) A judge or justice who was defeated in the last primary or general election for which the judge or justice was a candidate for the judicial office held by the judge or justice may not sit in an appellate case if either party objects to the judge or justice.

(e) An active judge or justice assigned under this chapter is not subject to an objection.

(f) For purposes of this section, notice of an assignment may be given and an objection to an assignment may be filed by electronic mail.

(g) In this section, "party" includes multiple parties aligned in a case as determined by the appellate court.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1064, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.  
Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 315, Sec. 14, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 75.601. ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE PROGRAM FOR PARTICIPATING COUNTIES. (a) The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System shall develop and make available to each county a court reminder program that allows the county to send a text message to notify criminal defendants of scheduled court appearances. The purposes of the program must include:

(1) reducing costs associated with defendants who fail to appear for a scheduled court appearance;

(2) improving the efficiency of courts in this state;

(3) reminding criminal defendants to appear at each scheduled court appearance; and

(4) reducing the number of criminal defendants who are confined in a county jail due solely to the defendant's failure to appear for a scheduled court appearance.

(b) The program must:

(1) be available to each county at no cost;

(2) comply with applicable state and federal laws requiring the consent of an individual before sending a reminder by text message;

(3) provide text message reminders for each court appearance of a defendant who has access to a device with the technological capability of receiving text messages and provides the court administrator with an operational phone number for the device;

(4) document each occurrence of a criminal defendant receiving a text message reminder;

(5) identify criminal defendants with scheduled court appearances who lack access to devices with the technological capability of receiving text messages;

(6) document the number of criminal defendants who fail to appear at scheduled court appearances after being sent one or more text message reminders;

(7) include the technological capability, at the discretion of the local administrative judge, to provide additional information to criminal defendants concerning scheduled court appearances, such as the location of the court appearance,

available transportation options, and procedures for defendants who are unable to attend court appearances;

(8) support partnerships with local law enforcement agencies, local governments, and local public defenders in accordance with the purposes described by Subsection (a); and

(9) provide one or more publicly available Internet websites through which criminal defendants may request text reminders.

Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 736 (H.B. 4293), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 75.602. ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNTY PROGRAMS. (a) The justices of the justice courts and judges of the county courts, statutory county courts, and district courts with jurisdiction over criminal cases in each county may establish a court reminder program that allows the county to send a text message to notify criminal defendants of scheduled court appearances.

(b) In developing the court reminder program, the justices and judges may join the state program developed under Section 75.601 or develop a county program that allows the county to send text message notifications to criminal defendants and that complies with the requirements of Section 75.601(b).

Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 736 (H.B. 4293), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2021.

Sec. 75.603. MUNICIPAL PROGRAM. (a) The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System, or the justices of the justice courts and judges of the county courts, statutory county courts, and district courts with jurisdiction over criminal cases in each county, may partner with municipalities and local law enforcement agencies to allow:

(1) individuals to whom a peace officer issues a citation and releases to receive text message reminders of scheduled court appearances; and

(2) criminal defendants in municipal court to receive text message reminders of scheduled court appearances.

(b) Any municipality that partners with the Office of Court

Administration of the Texas Judicial System shall pay all costs of sending reminders to municipal criminal defendants, including the costs of linking the municipal court database with the state court administrator database.

Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 736 (H.B. [4293](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2021.