

# MUNICIPAL COURTS OF TEXAS

## About Us

- ⇒ 926 courts
- ⇒ 99% judges are appointed by city councils
- ⇒ 1% elected
- ⇒ 1,265 judges
- ⇒ 5,270 court support personnel

## How We Differ

- ⇒ Smallest Court: Cuney pop. 140
- ⇒ Largest Court: Houston pop. 2,195,914
- ⇒ Over 160 courts of record
- ⇒ Qualifications: 61% of judges are lawyers
- ⇒ Degree of formality and use of technology

## How We are the Same

- ⇒ 99% judges are appointed by city councils
- ⇒ 1% elected
- ⇒ Many pro se defendants
- ⇒ All have prosecutors
- ⇒ All are governed by federal, state, and local laws



## Most Important Laws Governing Our Procedures and Decisions

- ⇒ U.S. Constitution
- ⇒ Texas Constitution
- ⇒ Transportation Code
- ⇒ Penal Code
- ⇒ Alcoholic Beverage Code
- ⇒ Education Code
- ⇒ Health and Safety Code
- ⇒ Parks and Wildlife Code
- ⇒ Judicial Code of Conduct
- ⇒ City Ordinances

Statistical data from OCA website:  
[www.txcourts.gov](http://www.txcourts.gov)



## From Our Perspective

More people come in contact with municipal courts than all other Texas courts combined – we play a key role in determining public perception of the judiciary and city government.

Municipal courts play a critical role in public safety, protecting the quality of life in Texas communities, and deterring criminal behavior.

Municipal court process is complicated due to so many applicable laws, resulting in a need for professional management by highly trained court administrators and competent judges. Average length of judicial service is 9 years, 10 months.

Case law, legislative changes, and mandatory reporting create a demanding need for constant change and continuing education.

### Remember

- ⇒ Recognize the court as an independent, 3rd branch of government.
- ⇒ Respect the court as an institution of fairness – not a revenue center.
- ⇒ Visit your court.
- ⇒ Meet regularly with the presiding judge and court personnel.

## About Our Work

### As Magistrates

- ⇒ Statutory Warnings & Admonishments
- ⇒ Examining Trials
- ⇒ Mental Health Assessments
- ⇒ Emergency Protection Orders
- ⇒ Ignition Interlock Orders
- ⇒ Arrest & Search Warrants

### As Trial Judges

- ⇒ Pre-Trial Hearings
- ⇒ Bench & Jury Trials
- ⇒ Indigence Hearings
- ⇒ Show Cause Hearings
- ⇒ Commitment Hearings
- ⇒ Animal Hearings
- ⇒ Mental Health Hearings
- ⇒ Code Enforcement Hearings
- ⇒ Driver's License Suspension Hearings
- ⇒ Bond Forfeiture Hearings
- ⇒ Truancy Hearings
- ⇒ Expunction Orders
- ⇒ Records Retention & Destruction Orders

## For More Information

Texas Municipal Courts Education Center (TMCEC)  
[www.tmcec.com/800.252.3718](http://www.tmcec.com/800.252.3718)

Texas Municipal Courts Association (TMCA) [www.txmca.com](http://www.txmca.com)

TMCEC is funded by a grant from the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals

