

Councils, Courts, and Cities: The C3 Initiative



Judge Ryan Kellus Turner
Texas Municipal Courts Education Center
October 10, 2019

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Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1. Explain how the public perception of municipal courts in Texas was the catalyst for the creation of C3;
2. Describe how C3 seeks to fill the "information gap"; and
3. Provide examples of how a better understanding of municipal courts by "city hall" improves the local administration of justice.

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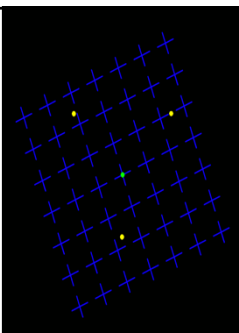
Part I. Perception



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1. Focus on the Green Center Dot.

2. Which One of the Yellow Dots is Blinking?



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Procedural Fairness



Four Key Components

- **Voice** – The Opportunity to be Heard
- **Neutrality** - By Unbiased Decision Makers
- **Respect** – Who Treat People with Dignity and Honor their Rights
- **Understanding** – And who Explain Rights and the Court Process

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Judicial Council Survey

- 60% had overall positive impression vs. 28% negative
- 80% agreed Judges are courteous and respectful
- 33% think average person can afford court costs, fees
- 87% think technology makes interacting with courts easier
- 30% jury; 25% traffic; 12% family law case
- 80% think risk factors should determine bond
- 72% satisfied with Texas Court system and 74% believe citizens' rights are protected

**The TJC Survey Focused on
Public Impression of the Entire Texas Judicial System**

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But Guess What?

**Another Study
Focused Exclusively
on Public Impression of
Municipal Courts in Texas**

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**2017 Texas Municipal Courts Education Center
and the National Center for State Courts Survey**

TMCEC and NCSC Examined Statewide:

- Defendants' and other members of the public's impressions of how they were treated in municipal courts
- Whether municipal courts are perceived by defendants to demonstrate:
 1. Fairness,
 2. Respect,
 3. Equal Treatment
 4. Concern in the Imposition of Fines and Court Costs

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2017 TMCEC and NCSC Survey

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While most of the respondents in the TJCI/OCA study were jurors, 81% of the respondents in the TMCEC/NCSC survey were defendants accused of traffic offenses (Only 2% were jurors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roughly 60% reported that their visit to municipal court was their first visit to a courthouse
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**2017 TMCEC & NCSC Survey:
Areas of High Satisfaction**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way their case was handled (86%) • The level of information provided by the municipal court with regard to next steps in their case (90%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal treatment being provided to those before the municipal court (89%) • Communications with the municipal judge (82%) • Treatment by the municipal judge (81%)
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**2017 TMCEC & NCSC Survey:
Additional Areas of High Public Satisfaction**

- Ability to find the location of the municipal court, courtroom, and necessary information (92%)
- Amount of time court business required (90%)
- Amount of respect shown by municipal court staff (96%)

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**2017 TMCEC & NCSC Survey:
Area for Improvement**


33%

**Surveyed did Not Agree that the Court's
Website was Useful**

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2017 TMCEC & NCSC Survey

What Does This Have to Do With City Hall?



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Part II
The Information Gap



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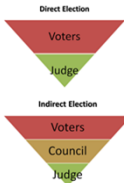
Mind the Gap

According to Research, Which Court Professionals Influence Public Perception of Fairness the Most?

- Judges (In Texas, Most Municipal Judges are Appointed by City Council)
- Court Staff (In Texas Municipal Courts, these are City Employees)
- Prosecutors (In Texas Municipal Courts these are Typically Hired or Employed by the City)

The Rule of Law: It Doesn't Just Bind Defendants, Judges, Court Staff and Prosecutors, it Binds all City Officials

- State Law Governs Municipal Courts – Creation, Jurisdiction, and Procedures
- State Law Imposes Duties on Municipal Judges as Magistrates for the County
- State Law Provides a Term of Office (Section 29.005, Govt. Code)




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Councils, Courts, and Cities: The C3 Initiative

- C3 (Councils, Courts, and Cities) is a public information and education campaign created by the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center in 2018
- C3 aims to help fill the information gap between city halls and municipal courts in Texas.
- C3's purpose is to highlight issues and increase awareness and understanding of municipal courts in Texas for mayors, city council members, city attorneys, and other local officials.

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C3 Official Launch TML Annual Conference 2018



**Between City Hall and Municipal Court:
How City Officials Can Promote Public Safety and Confidence in the Legal System**

Judge Ryan Kellon Turner
General Counsel & Director of Education
Texas Municipal Courts Education Center

Texas Municipal League Annual Conference
Thursday, October 11, 2018
2:00 - 3:15 PM
Ft. Worth Convention Center
Room 284, Level 2

Public safety and quality of life are enhanced through the enforcement of traffic laws and local ordinances. The public increasingly depends on city officials and employees to understand underlying key issues.

Join us for a discussion about how public safety, community policing, and the fair administration of justice can be better promoted, not just on our streets, not just in the courtroom, but by the people who work at city hall. This session will introduce city officials and employees to the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center's new public information and education campaign, C3: Councils, Courts, and Cities. C3's purpose is to highlight issues and increase awareness and understanding of municipal courts in Texas for mayors, city council members, city attorneys, and other local officials.

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C3 Statewide Conference - May 28-30, 2019



**FINES & FEES
EXPOSITION AND SHOWCASE**

TEXAS MUNICIPAL COURTS EDUCATION CENTER
MAY 28-30, 2019 • DOWNTOWN AUSTIN, TEXAS

SOLD OUT!!!

Part retrospective, part preview, an examination of both big ideas and best practices, this conference will feature a unique blend of new presentations and topics with some of TMCEC's highest rated presentations from recent years. Registration is also open to mayors, city council members, and other city officials and employees who attend with a judge, clerk, court administrator, city attorney/prosecutor, or bailiff/warrant officer.

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Part III. Resources

THE BRIEF 

Information for Texas Municipalities about Texas Municipal Courts (May 2019)

On-Line: www.tmccec.com/c3

The Brief is a periodic briefing for Texas mayors, city council members, and other local officials highlighting issues and increasing awareness and understanding of municipal courts in the Lone Star State.

- April 2019 - *Finances, Fees, Exemptions and Discounts*
- March 2019 - *How Things Look from City Hall*
- January 2019 - *The 80th Texas Legislature and Municipal Courts*
- November 2018 - *The Official Launch of C3 (Councils, Courts, and Cities)*
- October 2018 - *Recent Studies Provide Insights into Public Perception of Texas Courts*
- August 2018 - *Offense Levels, Laws, City Hall and Municipal Courts*
- June 2018 - *Discharging the Judiciary's Power and Goals*
- April 2018 - *What Does City Hall Have to Do with Court Security?*
- January 2018 - *Judgment and Sentencing, Fines and Goals*
- November 2017 - *The Annual Conference Recap: The Effects of Frequency and the Future of Fines and Court Goals in Texas*
- September 2017 - *Legislative Recap: Three Big Issues and the Road Ahead for Municipal Courts*

Join Our Mailing List
Want to know about C3 related happenings and receive the most recent issue of The Brief in your inbox? Just send an email to info@tmccec.com in the subject line type "Add me to C3."

On Twitter @C3ofTexas



Councils, Courts, Cities (TX)

@C3ofTexas


Increasing awareness & understanding of municipal courts & related issues for mayors, council members, local officials, & city attorneys in the Lone Star State

Texas, USA

[tmccec.com/c3](https://www.tmccec.com/c3)

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Role of Municipal Court in City Government (Revised 2019)



NEW VIDEO

Ideal for City Officials and Employees (16 minutes)

Visit Online: tmccec.com/c3

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@C3forTexas: Texas and Beyond!
From Sea to Shining Sea




Interactive Tour and Resource Guide
Visit
<https://www.ncsc.org/limitedjurisdiction>

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And With Your Help, There is More to Come!



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