

## JURY TRIALS AND TRAFFIC SAFETY

### Learning Objectives: Students will:

1. Meet a municipal judge and learn what types of cases municipal judges hear;
2. Recognize why it is important to enforce traffic laws and the role of citizens to serve on juries;
3. Identify the role of the judge and the jury in the trial process.

**TEKS:** Social Studies: Govt. 8C, 14C, 22B ELAR: Eng. I-IV. 9A-D

**Materials Needed:** PowerPoint presentation (with notes), jury packets.

### Teaching Strategy:

1. The teacher will introduce the judge and have the judge tell the students about him or herself.
2. The judge will discuss the role and duties of the judge, the meaning of the term jurisdiction, and what types of offenses or crimes a municipal court handles. The judge will lead a discussion as to why it is important to enforce traffic laws and his or her job of presiding over trials. See "notes" section of PowerPoint for additional details.
3. The judge will then lead an activity related to the trial process. Students will need to be in groups of 5-6 students and each will receive a jury packet. Before breaking into groups, the judge will explain the following terms: jury charge, citation, and burden of proof. Students will announce their decision and the judge will facilitate discussion as to why there may have been different conclusions.
4. Perhaps leave time for the students to ask questions of the judge.

Prepared by Mark Goodner, TMCEC Program Attorney & Deputy Counsel, 2010 with funds from the Texas Department of Transportation, *Driving on the Right Side of the Road* project.