



Texas Task Force on Indigent Defense

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Special Edition Newsletter

7th Annual Indigent Defense Workshop a Success

The Task Force is extremely appreciative to several organizations and people who have made significant contributions and provided support to the workshop this year. This year's workshop was truly a partnership among federal, state and local agencies. We had a federal educational co-sponsor this year: The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) in conjunction with American University conducted a technical assistance project regarding criminal caseload management over the summer with many of the counties that attended the workshop. Judge John Parnham with BJA presented the fundamental principles of effective management of criminal caseloads thereby reducing the pretrial length of stay of detained defendants. Additionally, the Task Force was grateful for Mr. Richard Goemann, Director, National Legal Aid and Defender Association, who also presented for BJA. Another national presence was Ms. Kathi Grasso from the U.S. Department of Justice who was the keynote speaker. The Task Force thanks Texas Association of Counties (TAC). TAC has sponsored this event by allowing the workshop to take place in the Events Center for the last three years. Last, but not least, the Task Force is appreciative to the Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Division for a grant to help offset travel expense for the counties to attend this workshop. Video downloads of workshop presentations are now available [here](#). The following counties attended the workshop: Anderson, Bell, Bexar, Brazoria, Burnet, Collin, Dallas, Denton, Fort Bend, Grayson, Lubbock, Lynn, Medina, Montgomery, Tarrant, Taylor, Travis, Val Verde, Webb, Wheeler, Williamson. Some of the ideas that were generated in workgroups by counties included the following: earlier identification of mentally ill offenders; encourage collaboration between court and jail, law enforcement, DA; monthly meeting; expedite filings; consider a mental health court.

New Online Plan Submission Underway

The Task Force wants to thank county court personnel for their patience and spirit of public service as we undergo this process to increase accessibility, accountability and transparency. An instructional slideshow for counties demonstrating the online submission process is available here ([link](#)). Task Force staff are available to assist counties with this process. The Task Force can be called toll-free in Texas at (866)499-0656. Also, the email for assistance is: terri.tuttle@courts.state.tx.us.