

TASK FORCE ON INDIGENT DEFENSE

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STATE TASK FORCE ON INDIGENT DEFENSE AWARDS \$13 MILLION TO TEXAS COUNTIES

AUSTIN –The Task Force on Indigent Defense has awarded more than \$13 million in grants to improve indigent defense in Texas counties.

The Task Force also this week awarded the Robert O. Dawson Indigent Defense Distinguished Service Award to Tarrant County criminal defense attorney Don Hase for outstanding service to improve the way Texas provides counsel for its poorest citizens.

Formula grants were awarded to 223 counties totaling \$11 million. These grants, ranging from \$5,030 to Loving County to \$1.7 million for Harris County, provide state money to counties for increased indigent defense costs using a standard allocation formula.

“These grants provide much needed relief for local jurisdictions dealing with increased indigent defense costs and paves the way for improved indigent defense in Texas,” said Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley, a Task Force member.

The Task Force also awarded \$2 million in equalization disbursement money to 88 counties. These funds are awarded to counties receiving less than 23 percent reimbursement from the state for increased indigent defense costs.

“These grants would not be possible without the support of the Texas Legislature,” said Sharon Keller, the presiding judge of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals and Task Force chair. “These awards will be put to good use at the local level to provide effective indigent defense representation.”

Additional information available at Task Force's web site: <http://www.courts.state.tx.us/tfid/>