



TEXAS TASK FORCE ON INDIGENT DEFENSE

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TASK FORCE ON INDIGENT DEFENSE ANNOUNCES RECEIVING A GRANT OF \$90,000 FROM THE STATE JUSTICE INSTITUTE FOR EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF ELECTRONIC FILING OF CRIMINAL CASES

AUSTIN – The Task Force on Indigent Defense (Task Force) is pleased to announce that working in conjunction with the Office of Court Administration it has received a project grant of \$90,000 from the State Justice Institute. The purpose of the grant is to evaluate the effectiveness of direct filing systems with enhanced electronic document management for expediting pre-disposition processing of misdemeanor defendants. The Task Force will provide a cash match of an additional \$50,000 and will conduct the evaluation in partnership with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University.

The study will compare the implementation, use, and case outcomes associated with direct filing systems in three major urban Texas counties: Bexar, Harris, and El Paso. The counties utilize case management systems ranging from traditional hard copy case processing to an integrated criminal justice system using technology as the enabler. The research team will collect process data documenting the parallel progression of defendants and their paperwork under each of the systems. Then, using records of the defendants in the sample counties, researchers will explore whether justice is administered with greater promptness and efficiency where direct filing systems are in place. Results will be used to determine whether there are practical and/or economic advantages of integrated electronic systems, and to generate research-based recommendations to states or counties considering adopting this approach.

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