



## Recognize local governments' advancements in fulfilling the promise of *Gideon* and the Fair Defense Act

The Texas Indigent Defense Commission is pleased to recognize local governments across Texas that strive to meet a high standard for indigent defense. This recognition program is inspired by the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case *Gideon vs. Wainwright* (March 18, 1963). Counties will be recognized based on how well components of their indigent defense systems meet the principles of the Fair Defense Act and the American Bar Association's Ten Principles of a Public Defense Delivery System.\* Counties may receive recognition for programs or achievements that demonstrate a significant level of innovation, such as a new solution to a problem, significantly streamlining a process, a measurable and significant increase in productivity, or improved service quality to indigent defendants or other stakeholders. Recognition may also be given to counties with exceptionally high performing indigent defense systems. In recognizing a county, the Commission seeks to promote innovative, high performing policies that are replicable in other counties.

Characteristics of high performing programs include those that:

- Provide transparency and allow public review of appointment data, attorney name, fees paid, etc. (i.e., online dashboard for public information)
- Promote independence of defense counsel.
- Screen clients for eligibility in a timely and effective manner in accordance with a financial standard of indigence.
- Assign defense counsel promptly after clients' arrest, detention, or request for counsel.
- Establish processes to monitor attorney workloads to permit the rendering of quality representation.
- Ensure that defense counsel's ability, training, and experience match the complexity of the case.
- Promote parity between defense counsel and the prosecution with respect to resources and include defense counsel as an equal partner in the justice system.
- Provide fair compensation to attorneys for all necessary work on each client's case.
- Provide continuing legal education and require defense counsel to attend.
- Establish mechanisms that allow for review of attorney performance.

\*County must be in compliance and current with Fair Defense Act (FDA) reporting requirements (indigent defense plans and indigent defense expenditure report). County must not have any major unresolved issues with Commission policy or fiscal monitoring reports.

### **Recognition – what the county will receive**

Counties will receive a certificate reflecting its *Texas Gideon Recognition*. The county recognitions will be featured on the Commission website, newsletter (statewide and national distribution) and Commission annual report that is sent to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the Texas Judicial Council. The county will also receive a digital *Texas Gideon Recognition* seal indicating the year it was given which a county may publish on its website.

### **Submission process**

The submission form is on the following page. Suggestions for programs to be recognized may be submitted at any time throughout the year to: [mkubinski@tidc.texas.gov](mailto:mkubinski@tidc.texas.gov)



## Submission Form

Name of County being nominated:

Describe the activity or component of the indigent defense system in the county that is being nominated:

Why do you think this activity or component deserves recognition?:

Brief description of activity or component:

Actions taken by county:

Resources invested in the program:

Results of the program:

Please identify and summarize records kept by the county that demonstrate the result:

Name, title, and contact information of person who is the primary point of contact for this nomination/submission:

Name:

Title:

Phone:

Email:

Mailing address: