



What is TIDC?

Creation

In 2001, Texas recognized serious flaws in its indigent defense system. Many people who could not afford a lawyer faced criminal conviction with ineffective representation or no lawyer at all. Lawyers paid with public funds were subject to little oversight.

In response, the 77th Legislature passed the Fair Defense Act, which provided state funding and set minimum standards for the appointment, performance, and payment of lawyers. The Legislature also created what is now known as the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) and charged it with oversight, funding, and improvement of indigent defense.

Mission

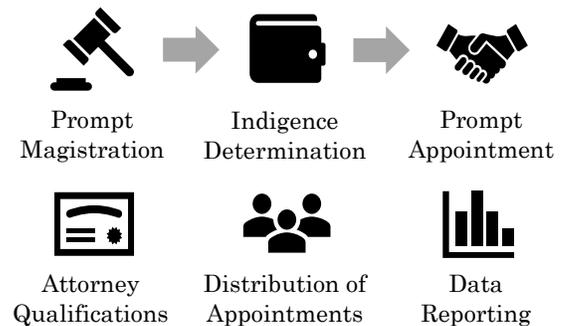
TIDC is led by a 13-member board, including five gubernatorial appointees and eight ex officio members. The Commission is chaired by the Honorable Sharon Keller, Presiding Judge of the Court of Criminal Appeals. A staff of 11 carries out its mission: to develop and maintain quality, cost-effective indigent defense systems that meet the needs of local communities and the requirements of the Constitution and state law.

TIDC oversees, funds, and improves local indigent defense systems. Staff monitor counties' courts and finances to ensure compliance with the Fair Defense Act and that state funds are used appropriately. Where it finds gaps, TIDC works with counties to provide training, technical assistance, and additional resources.

Goals

TIDC is working to improve the quality, transparency, and accountability of indigent defense around the state. TIDC works closely with counties to build systems that deliver on these values.

Oversight: TIDC monitors six core requirements of the Fair Defense Act.



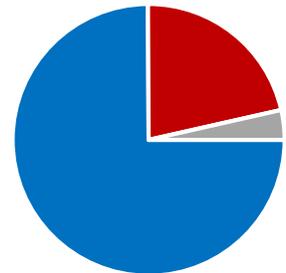
Funding: TIDC awards grants to help counties pay for indigent defense.

In 2018, TIDC spent:

**\$23.3m in
Formula Grants**

**\$6.7m in
Improvement
Grants**

**\$1.1m in
Administration**



Improvement: TIDC provides training and technical assistance.

In 2018, TIDC:



Trained more than 1,000 judges, county officials, and attorneys.



Produced 17 publications, including legal and policy guidance, evaluation reports, and model procedures.



Completed planning studies for several new public defender offices.

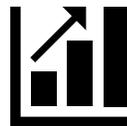
“Texas is a county-based, county-funded public defense system. We are excited to increase our funding so that Texans can have equal access to quality public defense services, no matter where they live.”

*Executive
Director Geoff
Burkhart*

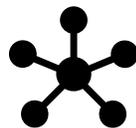
Increased funding for rural counties



Increased sustainability funding to 2/3rd for rural regional public defender offices;



Increased floor for formula grant reimbursements from \$5,000 to \$15,000;



Indigent Defense Coordinator grants now eligible for the standard 4-year improvement grants.



Increased sustainability funding to 2/3rd for the Regional Public Defender Office for Capital Cases (RPDO), which serves 181 Texas counties;

To learn how your county can benefit, please contact:

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