



**CHAIR:**  
The Honorable Sharon Keller  
Presiding Judge, Court of Criminal  
Appeals

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:**  
Honorable Sharon Keller  
Honorable Nathan Hecht  
Honorable John Whitmire  
Honorable Brandon Creighton  
Honorable Joseph "Joe" Moody  
Honorable Reggie Smith  
Honorable Sherry Radack  
Honorable Vivian Torres

**MEMBERS APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR:**  
Mr. Alex Bunin  
Honorable Richard Evans  
Mr. Gonzalo Rios  
Honorable Missy Medary  
Honorable Valerie Covey

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:**  
Geoffrey Burkhart

## Report from the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) for the February 24, 2023 Texas Judicial Council Meeting

Here is a report on TIDC's work from September 1—January 31. If you would like additional information, please contact **Executive Director Geoff Burkhart**: (512) 936-6999 or [gburkhart@tidc.texas.gov](mailto:gburkhart@tidc.texas.gov).

### *TIDC Board and Committee Meetings*

On October 26, the TIDC board met to discuss the Texas Judicial Council's legislative proposal related to family protection legal representation and TIDC. The Policy and Standards (P&S) Committee met on November 9 to finalize recommendations for the upcoming legislative session. The TIDC Full Board met on [December 1](#) for updates from the P&S Committee. The next board meeting is on March 30, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in the 1st floor conference room in the Tom C. Clark building.



### *TIDC at the Texas Legislature*

On September 27, **Geoff** testified on [TIDC's Legislative Appropriations Request \(LAR\)](#) at the Joint Budget hearing for the LBB. On October 3, **Geoff** and **Linda Gonzalez** testified at the [Joint Hearing: Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence and Juvenile Justice & Family Issues](#) on the

interim charge related to the Texas-Mexico border. On November 15, **Geoff** was invited to testify at the [Senate Border Security Committee hearing](#) on the interim charge related to the Texas-Mexico border with **Megan LaVoie**. TIDC submitted its revised [LAR](#) in late January.



## *Staff Update*

In addition to its normal monitoring, grants administration, and data collection, TIDC staff has been involved in the following:

- **Sarah Gammell, PhD.** joined the TIDC staff as our first ever Research Director, **Eric Schneider** joined as our new Grants Specialist, and **Donovan Estrada** joins us as this semester's intern from the Texas Tech University School of Law.
- TIDC staff has traveled to Goliad, Kleberg, Willacy, Galveston, Kaufman, Van Zandt, Franklin, Rains, Wharton, Bee, and Live Oak Counties for fiscal or policy monitoring visits.
- TIDC staff has issued final fiscal monitoring reports for [Kinney](#) and [Karnes](#) Counties.
- TIDC staff presented at several conferences and workshops, including the [National Association for Public Defense \(NAPD\) Women's Virtual Conference](#), the [Texas Association of Court Administration \(TACA\)](#), the Galveston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, Texas Justice Courts Training Center's Magistration Workshop, the Criminal Justice Planners meeting, the [Judicial Summit on Mental Health](#), the UT School of Law Children's Rights Clinic, and the [National Association for Public Defense \(NAPD\) Leadership Institute](#) at the Texas Capitol.



- In the fall, **Geoff** spoke at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law, the South Texas College of Law, University of Houston Law Center, St. Mary's University School of Law, the UNT Dallas College of Law, and the SMU Dedman School of Law about careers in public defense.
- **Debra Stewart** and **Crystal Leff-Piñon** presented the FY22 Child Protective Services Indigent Defense Expenditure Reporting 101 training.
- [The Court-Appointed Legal Representation in Texas Child Protection Cases report](#) is now available online.

## *Indigent Defense in the Media*

[Regional public defenders to get new offices in Burnet County](#) (September)

[Video: The Sixth: A shortage of public defenders is causing a constitutional crisis](#) (December)

[Congress Just Gained A Rare New Member: Someone Who Worked As A Public Defender](#)  
(January)