COURT STRUCTURE OF TEXAS

SEPTEMBER 1, 1994

SUPREME COURT (1 Court -- 9 Justices)

- -- Statewide Jurisdiction --
- · Final appellate jurisdiction in civil cases and juvenile cases.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS (1 Court -- 9 Judges)

- -- Statewide Jurisdiction --
- · Final appellate jurisdiction in criminal cases.

Cases in Which Death Penalty

Has Been Assessed

Criminal Appeals

State Highest Appellate Courts

Civil Appeals

COURTS OF APPEALS

- (14 Courts -- 80 Justices) -- Regional Jurisdiction --
- Intermediate appeals from trial courts in their respective courts of appeals districts.



State Intermediate Appellate Courts



(386 Courts -- 386 Judges) (Established in 386 Districts Containing One or More Counties)

-- Jurisdiction --

- · Original jurisdiction in civil actions over \$200, divorce, title to land, contested elections, and contested probate matters.
- · Original jurisdiction in felony criminal matters.
- 10 District Courts are named Criminal District Courts, some others directed to give preference to certain specialized areas.



State Trial Courts of General and **Special Jurisdiction**

COUNTY-LEVEL COURTS (439 Courts -- 439 Judges)

Constitutional County Courts (254)

(One Court in Each County)

- -- Jurisdiction --
- · Original jurisdiction in civil actions between \$200 and \$5,000.
- · Probate (contested matters transferred to District Court.)
- · Exclusive original jurisdiction over misdemeanors with fines greater the sentense courts
- · or on the record from municipal courts of record.

County Courts at Law (167)

(Established in 72 Counties)

- -- Jurisdiction --
- · Limited jurisdiction over civil matters, most under \$100,000
- · Limited jurisdiction over misdemeanor criminal matters.
- Appeals de novo from lower courts or on the record from municipal courts of record.

Probate Courts (18)

(Established in 8 Counties)

- -- Jurisdiction --
- Limited primarily to probate matters.



County Trial Courts of Limited Jurisdiction

MUNICIPAL COURTS¹ (840 Cities -- 1,206 Judges)

(Established in Approximately 840 Cities)

- -- Jurisdiction --
- · Criminal misdemeanors with fines less than \$500.
- · Exclusive jurisdiction over municipal ordinance violations. (Fines up to \$2,000.)
- · Limited civil penalties in cases involving dangerous dogs.
- Magistrate functions.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURTS² (885 Courts -- 885 Judges)

(Established in Precincts Within Each County)

- -- Jurisdiction --
- Civil actions under \$5,000.
- Small Claims
- Criminal misdemeanors with fines less than \$500.
- Magistrate functions.



Local Trial Courts of **Limited Jurisdiction**

¹ Some Municipal Courts are courts of record -- appeals from those courts are taken on the record to the county-level courts.
2 All Justice of the Peace Courts and most Municipal Courts are not courts of record. Appeals from these courts are by trial de novo in the county-level courts; in some instances to the district courts.