



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 Nicole Collier
Honorable Andrew Murr
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 November 15, 2019 Texas Judicial Council Meeting

Here is a brief report on TIDC's recent work. If you would like additional information, please contact **Executive Director Geoff Burkhart**: (512) 936-6999 or gburkhart@tidc.texas.gov.

TIDC Board and Committee Meetings

The TIDC [Full Board](#) met August 29th to consider

Improvement Grant applications, approve contracts, and discuss the FY20 budget. This meeting marked Williamson County Commissioner **Valerie Covey's** first meeting as a board member.



The June and August Board meetings were historic. TIDC invested in a Travis County Public Defender Office, a Harris County MAC, a 27-county Padilla pilot project, a randomized controlled trial to study counsel at magistrations, rural regional public defender offices, and the Regional Public Defender Office for Capital Cases (RPDO), all while increasing formula grant funding.

The next Policies and Standards Committee meeting is Friday, December 13th at 10:30 a.m. in the TIDC 2nd Floor Conference Room. The next Full Board meeting is Friday, December 13th at 1:30 p.m. in the Tom C. Clark Building, 1st Floor Conference Room.

Staff Activities

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

- In mid-July, **Geoff Burkhart** met with County Judge **Sarah Eckhardt** to discuss the Public Defender Oversight Committee for Travis County.

- **Geoff** traveled to Dallas to meet with Dallas County Chief Public Defender **Lynn Richardson** and former TIDC board member County Judge **Chris Hill** towards the end of July.
- On July 26th, **Geoff** traveled to Harris County to meet with Commissioner **Rodney Ellis**, TIDC Board member **Alex Bunin**, and several judges, lawyers, and court administrators.

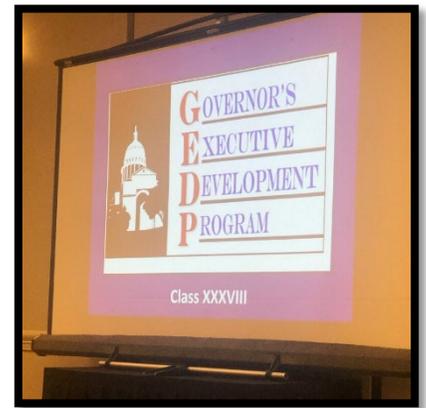


- On July 30th, **Wesley Shackelford** testified at the Hays County Commissioners meeting, while Geoff attended the Travis County Commissioners Court.
- On August 1st, **Scott Ehlers** attended the Texas Health and Human Services Outpatient Competency Restoration External Stakeholder Rules Workgroup meeting.
- TIDC Staff held a staff retreat at Horseshoe Bay on August 12th.
- On August 16th, **Scott** attended the [Judicial Commission on Mental Health's meeting](#) at the Texas Law Center.

- On August 19th, **Claire Buetow** met with Brandon Woods at the Texas Commission on Jail Standards to discuss auditing methods.
- On August 26th, **Geoff** attended the [Governor's Executive Development Program \(GEDP\) XXXVIII](#) orientation meeting.
- **Geoff** and **Scott** presented at the Austin Criminal Defense Lawyers Association CLE on Travis County's grant application to TIDC to establish a public defender office and improve the Capital Area Private Defender Service, and to provide an update on indigent defense-related legislation at the end of August.
- On September 6th, **Wesley** attended the Dual Status Task Force Legal Representation & Advocacy Workgroup meeting for the Children's Commission.
- **Geoff** attended the Investiture of Brett Busby that afternoon.
- On September 10th, TIDC staff held an internal planning session to discuss opportunities to continue to improve Texas public defense.
- **Geoff** and **Kathleen Casey-Gamez** traveled to Houston to meet with the District Court MAC planning group on September 17th.
- On September 19th, **Geoff** attended an NAPD Steering Committee meeting.
- **Wesley** attended the Children's Commission's Legal Representation Committee meeting on September 20th.



- Early last month, **Joel Lieurance**, **Claire Buetow**, and **Edwin Colfax** traveled to Starr County for a grant review of the public defender, Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid.
- **Geoff** attended Week One of the [Governor's Executive Development Program](#) in Arlington.
- While in Arlington, **Geoff** met with House Criminal Jurisprudence Chairwoman and TIDC Board Member, **Nicole Collier**.
- October 7-11th, **Scott**, **Kathleen**, and **Geoff** traveled to Galveston to present at the [97th Annual County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas Conference](#). Afterward, they met with Galveston County judges and court staff.



- **Wesley** and **Kathleen** tabled at [The Texas Law Public Service Expo](#) at the UT School of Law.
- TIDC staff cohosted the National Association for Public Defense's [Executive Leadership Institute](#) at the Texas Capitol, October 14-17th.
- **Debra Stewart** and **Claire** presented at the [74th Annual Texas Association of County Auditors Fall Conference](#) in Horseshoe Bay.
- **Debra** presented an IDER training session on

October 18th in Edinburg.

- On October 28th, **Geoff** presented on "Reducing Incarceration: Pretrial Diversion/ Cash Bail Reform/Wrongful Convictions/drug prosecutions, and Indigent Defense" at [Transforming Texas' Criminal Justice System: A Symposium for Journalists on CJ Reform in Texas](#) at UT with (L-R) **Cary Aspinwall** (Marshall Project), **Lina Hidalgo** (Harris County Judge), and **Amanda Woog** (Texas Fair Defense Project).
- On Wednesday, October 23rd, staff toured [Austin's Sobering Center](#).
- **Geoff** and **Scott** presented to the Harris County Criminal Lawyers Association regarding a managed assigned counsel system on October 24th.
- That afternoon, **Wesley** traveled to San Marcos to discuss a Counsel at Magistration Study with the Hays County Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission.



- **Geoff** attended Week Two of the Governor's Executive Development Program in Galveston late October.
- On October 30th, **Scott** and **Kathleen** presented to the Travis County Public Defender Board.
- **Scott** attended the meeting of Harris County District Judges regarding establishing a managed assigned counsel program (MAC). **Jim Bethke** presented on his experiences running the MAC in Lubbock the following afternoon.
- **Kathleen** met with representatives from Thurgood Marshall School of Law to discuss collaborating with the law school on the Future Indigent Defense Leaders (FIDL) mentorship and training program.
- TIDC staff has conducted policy and/or fiscal monitoring in Rusk, Scurry, Fisher, Somervell, San Augustine, Sabine, Kleberg, Duval, Collin, Childress, Deaf Smith, Briscoe, Hall, Donley,
- Goliad, Fort Bend, Waller, Jefferson, and Jim Wells Counties.
- TIDC staff has issued final fiscal monitoring reports for [Kendall](#), [Duval](#), [Lee](#), [Upton](#), [Cass](#), [Houston](#), and [Freestone](#) Counties.
- TIDC staff have attended several presentations and training sessions, including the [32nd Annual Rusty Duncan Advanced Criminal Law Course](#) in San Antonio, [Texas State Agency Business Administrators' Association's \(TSABAA\) Annual Conference](#) in Sugarland, [Gideon's Promise Leadership Training](#) in Atlanta, the [State Auditor's Office 2019 Audit Conference](#), [TCDLA's Innocence for Lawyers CLE](#), the 46th ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) Conference in Austin, the NCSC State Court Financial Managers Summit in Denver, the [2nd Annual Rural Association for Court Administration](#) education conference in Corpus Christi, WorkQuest's 31st Annual Product and Services Expo in Austin, and the [Texas Tribune Festival](#) in Austin.

Indigent Defense in the Media

[Travis County plans for 'hard decisions' in FY 2020 budget process in light of revenue cap](#) (June)

[Local attorney earns scholarship](#) (June)

[TIDC mentoring program will reap benefits](#) (July)

[After defeats in 2019, a group of Texas lawmakers is teaming up to push criminal justice reform](#) (July)

[The Shocking Lack of Lawyers in Rural America](#) (July)

[The Year of the Public Defender](#) (July)

[Harris County reaches landmark settlement over 'unconstitutional' bail system](#) (July)

[Harris County Hires More Lawyers For Public Defender's Office](#) (July)

[Right oversight needed for Bexar County indigent defense](#) (July)

[A Poor Defense](#) (July)

[Travis County receives state grant funding to create new public defender's office](#) (August)

[Hays County seeks grant for immigrant defense program](#) (August)

[Our justice system no longer thinks you're entitled to a zealous legal defense](#) (August)

[How the Unchecked Power of Judges Is Hurting Poor Texans](#) (September)

[\\$20 Million State Grant Comes Through for Indigent Defense](#) (September)

[A Fair Fight: Achieving Indigent Defense Resource Parity](#) (September)

[Judges Confront Commissioners On Budget, Indigent Defense](#) (September)

[County secures Padilla grant for pilot program](#) (October)

[To reform its bail system, Dallas County set to iron out differences between groups of judges](#) (October)

[County Receives Indigent Defense Coordinator Grant](#) (October)