



**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 February 14, 2020 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](mailto:gburkhart@tidc.texas.gov).

### *TIDC Board and Committee Meetings*

The Policies and Standards (P&S) Committee met Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>

at 10:30 a.m. to review the 2019 Indigent Defense plan submission status, to consider the publication of proposed amendments to policy monitoring rules, and to review the policy monitoring processes. The [TIDC Full Board](#) met that afternoon to discuss the FY19 IDER results, the FY20 Formula and Improvement Grant cycle, and information from that morning's P&S Committee meeting. The next Commission meeting is Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020

at 10:00 a.m. in the Tom C. Clark Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room.

### *Texas Indigent Defense Workshop*

TIDC hosted the [Texas Indigent Defense Workshop](#) on January 16 and 17 in Austin. Every two years, TIDC brings together around one hundred county stakeholders to hear from top minds in Texas indigent defense. This year's workshop addressed:

- What happened last legislative session



- What's happening with bail litigation
- How Texas counties are improving indigent defense
- How counties can apply for TIDC grant funding
- How TIDC can work with counties to improve indigent defense

Workshop attendees got to spend time workshopping ideas for improving indigent defense in their counties in their assigned breakout sessions.

### *Staff Update*

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

- TIDC's newest extern, **Hailey Hanners**, started last month. Hailey is a 3L at Texas Tech Law. She attended UT Austin, where she studied Corporate Communication and German. Hailey previously taught English in Germany and worked for a solo practitioner in Austin.
- TIDC's newest Policy Analyst, **Lindsay Bellinger**, started this month. Prior to joining TIDC, Lindsay was an Assistant Public Defender with the Harris County Public Defender's Office. She served as an Assistant Federal Public Defender in trial practice and as a Research and Writing Specialist with the Federal Public Defender for the Southern District of Texas in McAllen, Texas and Houston, Texas from 2009 to 2017.
- **Geoff Burkhart** spoke with staff at the Office of Capital and Forensic Writs about the Future Indigent Defense Leaders (FIDL) program in November.
- **Geoff** attended the Investiture of Justice **Jane Bland** in the House Chamber in November.
- TIDC staff participated in the first Texas JTIP (Juvenile Training Immersion Program) Advisory Board meeting in November.
- **Scott Ehlers** attended the Texas Forensic Initiative Team (TFIT) meeting and the Travis County Public Defender Oversight Board meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup>.
- **Geoff** completed the [Governor's Executive Development Program \(GEDP\)](#) in early



December. GEDP is a three-week intensive educational program for top executives in Texas state agencies and universities. GEDP is designed for those with executive-level positions and responsibility for charting the strategic direction of their organizations.

- **Scott** and **Kathleen Casey-Gamez** attended a train-the-trainer program regarding mental health and sequential intercepts in December.
- **Scott** met with Blanco County Judge Bray and Burnet County Public Defender Michelle Moore in Johnson City.
- TIDC staff held the [3<sup>rd</sup> Texas Roundtable on Representation of Defendants with Mental](#)



[Illness](#) in San Marcos.

- **Joel Lieurance** and **Scott** held the [Rio Grande City Workshop on Effective Magistration and Indigent Defense Practices](#) in Starr County.

- **Geoff** visited Lubbock County judges, professors, and county officials in January.

- **Edwin Colfax** traveled to Georgetown to meet with TIDC Board Member Commissioner Valerie Covey, attend an IRB Compliance training, and tour the Wilco office. **Geoff**

discussed the great work happening in Texas in a [webinar](#) for the National Association of Public Defense (NAPD).

- TIDC staff has issued final fiscal monitoring reports for [Fort Bend](#) and [Goliad](#) Counties.
- TIDC staff has conducted policy or fiscal monitoring in Tarrant and Lubbock Counties.
- TIDC staff have attended several presentations and training sessions, including the CAPPS Requisition Training, the [2019 Judicial Summit on Mental Health](#) in Austin, the IAAP Austin Area Branch Importance of Leadership for Executive and Administrative Assistants, the [ACS \(American Constitution Society\) Austin: Local Control Battles in Texas](#) at the UT School of Law, [MyPadilla](#) training in San Marcos, the [37<sup>th</sup> Annual Prairie Dog Advanced Criminal Law CLE](#) in Lubbock, the [IAAP Austin Area Branch Information Security](#) session, the [Governor's Commission for Women's State Agency Council](#) orientation meeting in Austin, and the [Texas Public Policy Foundation's 2020 Policy Orientation](#) in Austin.

## ***Indigent Defense in the Media***

[Vicarious Post-Traumatic Stress — Or Why There's Such A High Rate Of Burnout Among Criminal Defense Attorneys](#) (November)

[New Travis County Public Defender's Office aims for better legal outcomes](#) (November)

[Grant money to help indigent defense](#) (November)

[County Submits Support For Counsel At First Appearance Study](#) (November)

[The Right to Counsel in Armstrong County and Potter County, Texas: Evaluation of Adult Trial Level Indigent Defense Representation](#) (November)

[Report cast dismal light on indigent defense in Amarillo](#) (December)

[Padilla Program Launches in 3rd Administrative Judicial Region](#) (December)

[Travis County commissioners interview 2 candidates for chief public defender position](#) (January)