

Annual Reports of the Judicial Support Agencies, Boards, and Commissions

for the Fiscal Year
Ended August 31, 2009



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Anderson County Courthouse - Palestine

Introduction to the Judicial Support Agencies, Boards, and Committees

The **Office of Court Administration** provides information and research, technology services, budgetary and legal support, and other administrative assistance to a variety of judicial branch entities and courts, under the supervision of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas and an Administrative Director reporting to the Chief Justice.

The **Texas Judicial Council** is the primary policy-making body responsible for studying and recommending changes to improve the administration of justice.

The **Task Force on Indigent Defense** is a standing committee of the Texas Judicial Council that oversees the distribution of funds to counties to provide indigent defense services, and promulgates policies and standards for services to indigent defendants.

The **Judicial Committee on Information Technology** establishes standards and guidelines for the systematic implementation and integration of information technology into the state's trial and appellate courts.

The **Court Reporters Certification Board** performs licensing and regulatory functions for the court reporting profession.

The **Process Server Review Board** performs regulatory functions for persons authorized to serve process.

The **Guardianship Certification Board** performs regulatory functions for individuals (other than attorneys and corporate sureties) who act as private professional guardians, individuals (other than volunteers) who provide guardianship services to wards of guardianship programs, and individuals who provide guardianship services to wards of the Department of Aging and Disability Services.

The **Judicial Compensation Commission** is responsible for making a report to the Texas Legislature each even-numbered year recommending the proper salaries to be paid by the state for all justices and judges of the Supreme Court of Texas, the Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas, the courts of appeals and the district courts. The Office of Court Administration provides administrative support for the JCC.



Office of Court Administration

2009 Activities of OCA by Division

Executive Operations - The OCA is led by an Administrative Director, Mr. Carl Reynolds, who is also the Executive Director of the Texas Judicial Council, and is supported by an Executive Assistant. The Director provides leadership and strategic direction, represents the agency to the Legislature, other agencies and interest groups, and is responsible for the agency's performance.

Much of FY 2009 was dominated by activities driven by legislative session and passage of a high percentage of Judicial Council legislation. In addition, the Director continued to lead OCA's involvement in activities designed to improve court outcomes for children who have been abused or neglected, working with the Supreme Court's Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth & Families, the regional presiding judges and their child

protection courts, and the Department of Family and Protective Services. The Texas Data-Enabled Courts for Kids project completed the new Child Protection Case Management System for the child protection courts and other judges to improve case tracking and management, data sharing, and court performance in child abuse and neglect cases. Preparing to host the Third National Judicial Leadership Summit for the Protection of Children, early in FY 2010, has also been a high priority, as has oversight of the Texas Appeals Management and E-filing System project.

The Director's Assistant continued service as clerk to the Process Server Review Board, now assisted by a full-time employee dedicated to this entity.

Research and Court Services Division - During FY 2009, the division's activities included the development or continuation of programs and projects designed to increase the collection of court costs, fees, and fines; to improve the administrative operation of the courts; and to improve reporting accuracy and compliance. Highlights of these programs and projects are noted below.

Collection Improvement Program. OCA's Collection Improvement Program is a set of principles and processes for managing cases when defendants are not prepared to pay all court costs, fees, and fines, at the point of assessment and when time to pay is requested. In 2005, the Texas Legislature enacted S.B. 1863 (Code of Criminal Procedure, article 103.0033), which requires cities with a population of 100,000 or more, and counties with a population of 50,000 or more, to implement collection improvement programs based on OCA's model Court Collection Improvement Program.

In FY 2009, division staff continued to engage in numerous activities to implement the program, or assist in refining the processes of previously implemented programs, including providing technical assistance and training to the affected counties and cities; assisting or offering assistance with local voluntary collection improvement program efforts; obtaining the case populations from which the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA) auditors select their samples to determine the pre-mandatory program collection rate for mandated programs; refining, in cooperation with the CPA, the methodology for conducting compliance audits; developing, in cooperation with the CPA, the sampling methodology that the CPA will use when conducting compliance audits; conducting simulated compliance audits to identify any deficiencies and assisting programs with correcting any deficiencies found before the CPA auditors conduct the official compliance audit; assisting programs with the use of the web-based collection reporting system to track collection activity and results; and conducting regular regional workshops to provide ongoing collections training to mandatory and voluntary programs, as well as cities, counties, or courts interested in improving court collections.

As of August 31, 2009, 76 of the 78 counties and cities required to implement a program had either fully or partially implemented the model. In addition, 9 voluntary programs were at least partially implemented in 7 cities (Allen, Haltom City, Pharr, Texarkana, Van Horn, Uvalde, and Weslaco) and two counties (Bosque and Uvalde) during FY 2009.

Judicial Information Program. Acting on a mandate of the 80th Texas Legislature (under OCA Rider 7, H.B. 1, 2007) and a request of the Texas Judicial Council Committee on Judicial Data Management, division staff continued working on a project, known as the Judicial Data Project, in which OCA created workgroups of judges, clerks and others to review the data elements currently used by trial courts in reporting case activity and to recommend to the Judicial Council changes to the monthly case activity reports so they more accurately reflect the workload of those courts.

The district and county-level court phase of the project was completed in spring 2008, with the Judicial Council approving changes to the district and county-level court monthly case activity reports and instructions, which take effect September 1, 2010. During FY 2009, division staff engaged in numerous activities to facilitate the implementation of the new reports, including creating a team of district and county clerks to assist OCA in developing solutions and answers to issues and problems faced by the clerks in implementing the new reporting changes; making presentations on the upcoming monthly report changes at district and county clerk conferences and regional meetings; hosting a meeting with case management software providers to discuss the monthly report changes; providing periodic updates to district and county clerks on OCA's activities to facilitate the implementation of the new reports; preparing two published articles, one of which was directed to judges and the

other to court coordinators; and providing frequent technical assistance to clerks and case management software providers.

As part of the Judicial Data Project, the OCA data workgroups were asked by the Judicial Council's Committee on Judicial Data Management to develop a civil cover sheet, which would be submitted by an attorney or pro se litigant when filing a civil or family law case in a district or county-level court. A cover sheet is intended to take the burden off clerks in categorizing cases and make the attorney or pro se litigant indicate what type of case is being filed, thereby resulting in increased accuracy of the identification of the type of case being filed. Division staff assisted in the development of three model cover sheets (i.e., two civil cover sheets—one for district courts and one for county-level courts—and one family law cover sheet for both district courts and county-level courts), which were approved by the Judicial Council in fall 2008. In addition, OCA asked the Supreme Court to promulgate a Rule of Civil Procedure that requires parties to submit cover sheets when filing a civil or family law case. The matter was referred to the Supreme Court Advisory Committee (SCAC). Division staff provided much information to SCAC to assist them in their study of this issue.

Also, during FY 2009, division staff continued to provide extensive support for the justice and municipal court phase of the Judicial Data Project, including the drafting of proposed reporting forms and instructions. In fall 2008, the recommended changes to the monthly reports and instructions for the justice and municipal courts developed by the OCA Justice and Municipal Court Data Workgroup were submitted to the Judicial Council's Committee on Judicial Data Management for its consideration. The Committee developed additional recommended changes to the monthly reports and instructions and submitted the proposed monthly reports and instructions, as amended, to the full Judicial Council for its consideration. At its August 28, 2009 meeting, the Judicial Council approved the posting of the proposed monthly reports and instructions on the Judicial Council/OCA website for comments.

In addition to the Judicial Data Project, division staff worked with the Information Services Division to develop a database for and electronic reporting of information required on the District and County Court Appointments and Fees Report. This new reporting system went live in March 2009. Over the year, division staff also conducted a number of surveys concerning topics such as court expenses, emergency disaster relief plans, court information technology resources, and use of civil case cover sheets in other states. The section also continued to support the work of the Judicial Compensation Commission and made regular presentations to municipal court clerks concerning proper reporting of case activity on the Municipal Court Monthly Report.

Court Services Program. The Court Services Program provides assistance to courts in evaluating and implementing case management and other administrative programs to help courts run more efficiently. During FY 2009, division staff provided on-site training on case management, calendar management, and other administrative matters to district judges and court coordinators at their respective offices in Burleson, Freestone, Hidalgo, Liberty, Navarro, and Uvalde counties, as well as to a child protection associate judge and her court coordinator at their office in Bandera County.

Division staff continued working with a committee comprised of court coordinators and court managers on the development of a handbook for court coordinators in district, statutory county, and specialty courts.

Single Point of Contact Position on Domestic Violence Issues. In FY 2009, division staff applied for grant funding to hire a full-time attorney who will serve as a single point of contact to support court efforts to combat domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The single point of contact will provide technical assistance to the courts on how to best handle these cases. One of the primary objectives of this project is for the single point of contact to develop a judges' benchbook on legal and other issues in domestic violence cases. OCA will partner with the Texas Council on Family Violence on this project. Funding for the project was awarded in fall 2009.

Information Services Division - OCA works to improve information technology at all judicial levels in Texas. In addition to providing information technologies (IT) for its agency work and for the various boards it supports, OCA provides IT directly for the Supreme Court of Texas, the Court of Criminal Appeals, the 14 intermediate courts of appeals, the State Law Library, the State Prosecuting Attorney, and the State Commission on Judicial Conduct (SCJC). These bodies use computers, desktop software, line-of-business software applications, Internet access, wide area and local area networks, server databases and resources, and websites provided and maintained by OCA. The line-of-business software applications OCA maintains includes certification management for

OCA's regulatory boards, case management for the child-protection and child-support specialty courts, case management for SCJC, and court case management for appellate courts. Additionally, OCA supports the meetings and activities of the Judicial Committee on Information Technology.

In September 2009, the Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK) project, funded by a Supreme Court of Texas Court Improvement Program grant from the federal Administration for Children and Families, implemented an improved child protection case management system.

The **Indigent Defense Division** supports the Task Force on Indigent Defense by administering the distribution of funds to counties for indigent defense services; developing policies and standards for legal representation and other defense services for indigent defendants; promoting local compliance with the core requirements of the Fair Defense Act through evidence-based practices; providing technical support to counties with respect to indigent defense; and establishing a statewide county reporting plan for indigent defense information. Accomplishments for FY 2009 are discussed in the report for the Task Force.

The **Legal Division** continued to provide legal support for numerous entities within the judiciary and to oversee the administration of the specialty courts programs on behalf of the presiding judges of the nine administrative judicial regions. Legal staff served as liaisons to or provided legal support to the Judicial Compensation Commission; the Texas Judicial Council; the Conference of Regional Presiding Judges; the Council of Chief Justices; the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families; the Task Force to Ensure Judicial Readiness in Times of Emergency; the Judicial Districts Board; the Task Force on Indigent Defense; the Guardianship Certification Board (GCB); and the Court Reporters Certification Board (CRCB). Division attorneys drafted new rules and amendments for the Texas Judicial Council's new judicial data reporting requirements, for the GCB, the CRCB, the Judicial Committee on Information Technology, and the collections improvement program. The division updated the county clerk procedure manual and the model jury summons form. A division attorney worked extensively on the agency's automated registry project, including assisting with inter-agency contracts and user agreements and other implementation issues. A division attorney also made presentations throughout the year to judges and clerks on issues including the Texas court system, charging instruments in municipal court, court costs, and legislative updates.

Specialty Courts Program. The specialty courts program includes the child protection courts and the child support courts programs. Throughout the year division staff supported the efforts of the presiding judges of the administrative judicial regions in administering the specialty courts program. The program director worked with the information services division to revise the case management system for the child support courts and worked with the information services division and the child protection advisory committee to finalize a new case management system for the child protection courts. The program director facilitated the annual Child Protection Court Conference in Austin attended by the associate judges and coordinators.

The **Finance and Operations Division** manages the fiscal and operational support activities of OCA, including purchasing, accounting, payroll, budgeting, financial reporting, human resources, property inventory, and facilities management. Division staff members consult with OCA program managers on a variety of financial and contractual issues, and answer questions from the Legislature, the public, and other interested parties on judicial funding and state appropriations to the courts and judicial agencies. The division coordinates preparation of the agency's strategic plan, legislative appropriations request, and quarterly performance measures. Finance and Operations staff work with the clerks of the appellate courts on issues related to accounting, purchasing, financial reporting, and human resources. In addition, the division provides support to the appellate courts and the Presiding Judges of the administrative judicial regions regarding legislative, budgetary, and human resources issues.

In November 2008, division staff successfully implemented a new Executive Information System, through which OCA employees can view their payroll and leave information, rather than relying on paper copies and manual distribution of this information. Also in FY 2009, division staff reviewed proposed changes to the Classification Plan for the 81st legislative session and submitted a request to the State Auditor's Classification Office to add a new classification title for Specialty Courts personnel previously classified as Administrative Assistants. The new classification title, Court Coordinators, was approved by the 81st Legislature and was effective September 1, 2009. Staff developed fiscal notes and supported OCA and the appellate courts during the legislative session. Division staff also coordinated space renovation to accommodate three additional staff members authorized by the 81st Legislature for the indigent defense program.

Division staff continued to provide training to other OCA employees on human resources policies, as well as purchasing, travel, and property procedures. Staff completed a variety of financial reports, including the Annual Financial Report, quarterly performance measures reports, a biennial revenue report to the Legislative Budget Board, and multiple grant reimbursement requests. Finance staff also continued to oversee the internal audit function to ensure OCA programs are operating in an effective and cost-efficient manner.

The **Court Reporters Certification Division** serves as staff to the Court Reporters Certification Board (CRCB), the governing body that oversees the licensing and regulation of the court reporting profession in Texas. Primary responsibilities include administration of the court reporters exam, certification of court reporters, registration of court reporting firms, and the conduct of disciplinary hearings on complaints filed against court reporters and court reporting firms. Accomplishments for FY 2009 are discussed under the report for the CRCB.

The **Guardianship Certification Program** serves as staff to the Guardianship Certification Board (GCB), the entity that certifies certain individuals who provide guardianship services in Texas. Its primary responsibility is to carry out the daily business of the GCB and perform the necessary administrative functions to implement and enforce statutory requirements. These functions include processing applications for certification, provisional certification and re-certification in accordance with GCB guidelines; developing procedures and forms; maintaining program and GCB records; and disseminating information on the GCB's rules, minimum standards and policies. Accomplishments for FY 2009 are discussed under the report for the GCB.



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Stephens County Courthouse



Texas Judicial Council

Legislation. The Judicial Council developed more than 60 legislative proposals, coming from workgroups on guardianship, indigent defense, court reporting, court administration, disaster readiness, associate judges, re-entry, and justice and municipal courts. OCA staff worked with legislative sponsors to achieve an impressive 46 percent passage rate, compared to a rate of approximately 17 percent for filed legislation overall. The Judicial Council Legislative Report was issued in late June, as soon as the veto period ended, and much more promptly than in prior years.

Committees. Often the Council appoints committees to study issues affecting the administration of justice. The Legislative Committee was re-established to prepare for the 81st Legislative Session and the Committee on Judicial Data Management was also active during the reporting period.

Committee on Judicial Data Management. Section 71.035 of the Texas Government Code provides that “the council shall gather judicial statistics and other pertinent information from the several state judges and other court officials of this state.” In an effort to improve the accuracy and usefulness of the data reported to the Office of Court Administration (OCA) each month for publication in the *Annual Report for the Texas Judiciary*, the Committee on Judicial Data Management asked OCA to:

“...assemble a workgroup of clerks and other interested persons or entities to make recommendations regarding: 1) the elimination of one or more of the current data elements; 2) the addition of one or more data elements; 3) the revision of one or more of the current data elements; 4) the clear and concise definition for each data element; 5) the development of a civil cover sheet; and 6) the improvement of the quality and accuracy of the annual report of the Texas judicial system.”

The review of the trial court data elements, known as the Judicial Data Project, began in 2004. Because the number of data elements reported by the trial courts is extensive, OCA decided to create a workgroup for each level of trial court (i.e., district, county, and justice/municipal) and to further divide the workgroup for the district courts, and the workgroup for the county-level courts, into sub-workgroups. During the past few years, the workgroups and sub-workgroups have met and developed recommendations regarding changes to the monthly case activity reports and instructions. The district and county-level court phase of the project was completed in spring 2008, with the Judicial Council approving changes to the monthly case activity reports and instructions for those courts.

During FY 2008, the OCA Justice and Municipal Court Data Workgroup met and began developing its recommended changes to the monthly reports and instructions for the justice and municipal courts. The OCA workgroup submitted its recommended changes to the Committee on Judicial Data Management in fall 2008. The Committee met on November 19, 2008 and February 4, 2009 to consider those recommended changes, and it developed additional recommended changes to the monthly reports and instructions. The proposed reporting forms and instructions, as amended by the Committee, were forwarded to the full Judicial Council for its consideration at its meeting on August 28, 2009. At that meeting, the Judicial Council approved giving notice of its intention to adopt proposed amendments to its reporting rules to add the reporting requirements for justice and municipal courts, by filing notice with the secretary of state for publication in the Texas Register; to provide a 30-day period for comments regarding the proposed amendments to the rules; and to post the proposed changes to the monthly case activity reports and instructions for the justice and municipal courts on the Judicial Council/OCA website for comment.

As part of the Judicial Data Project, the OCA data workgroups were asked to develop a civil cover sheet. At its meeting on September 19, 2008, the Judicial Council approved three model cover sheets, which are discussed in the report of the Office of Court Administration on page 66, and then approved minor amendments to them at its meeting on November 7, 2008.

Task Force on Indigent Defense

Introduction and Background to Indigent Defense. FY 2009 marks the eighth fiscal year of a statewide indigent defense program in Texas. In January 2002, the Texas Fair Defense Act (FDA) became effective after its passage by the Texas Legislature in 2001. The legislation established the Texas Task Force on Indigent Defense (Task Force) to oversee the provision of indigent defense services in Texas. The Task Force is a permanent standing committee of the Texas Judicial Council, staffed as a component of the Office of Court Administration (OCA). The Task Force has authority to set statewide policies and standards for the provision and improvement of indigent defense, to grant state funds to counties for that purpose, and to monitor counties' compliance with policies and standards. The mission of the Task Force is to improve the delivery of indigent defense services through fiscal assistance, accountability and professional support to State, local judicial, county and municipal officials. That mission supports the ultimate purpose of the Task Force, which is to promote justice and fairness to all indigent persons accused of criminal conduct, while doing so in a cost-effective manner that also meets the needs of the local community. In FY 2009, the Task Force and its committees held seven public meetings. The Task Force and staff converged for a strategic planning session last year to take stock of the progress of indigent defense policies in Texas and to chart a strategic vision to guide further improvements. The Strategic Plan 2008-2012 presents the results of this effort and is available on the Task Force's website.

The challenges ahead involve three distinct but related goals:

- Improve policies by giving clear guidance to staff and develop strategies for policy and standards and legislative initiatives;
- Continue to improve the monitoring of policy outcomes, establish thresholds for outcome indicators and agree on an outcome accountability policy; and
- Determine the best use of new funds to improve indigent defense system, determine the allocation of new funding and resolve issues related to funding formula.

The strategic plan is oriented toward exploring the best way to accomplish these three goals over the next two to three years.

Policies and Standards Development. Strategic goal one is to improve policies by giving clear guidance to staff and develop strategies for policy and standards and legislative initiatives. Initiatives under this goal are developed to provide additional consistency and improvement in the way Texas delivers indigent defense services. While the FDA contains a variety of statutory requirements, the Task Force is given broad authority to develop additional policies covering a wide range of indigent defense issues, which are achieved through development of rules, best practices, and model forms in a process that encourages stakeholder involvement and collaboration. In approaching this process, the Task Force is always mindful of the potential costs associated with implementing additional requirements. The Policies and Standards Committee of the Task Force met twice during the year. In addition, workgroups that were charged with assisting the committee to develop legislative recommendations met several times during the year.

Indigent Defense-Related Legislation. Part of this strategy is to make recommendations to the Legislature based upon information gathered by staff and input from key criminal justice stakeholders. Two bills related to indigent defense were passed by the 81st Legislature and signed into law by the governor in 2009. One of the bills, HB 2058, was a proposal recommended by the Task Force and Texas Judicial Council that creates separate standards for appellate lead counsel in a capital case. It permits highly skilled appellate attorneys to represent defendants on appeal without having to meet the prior requirements, which include extensive trial experience appellate lawyers often do not have. SB 1091 also passed to create the Office of Capital Writs to provide legal representation in a state writ of habeas corpus for indigent capital murder defendants who were sentenced to death and were appointed counsel. For a full update on the 81st Legislature, including indigent defense-related bills that did not pass, visit the Task Force's website.

New Policy Monitoring Rules. The Task Force's second strategy is to continue to improve the monitoring of policy outcomes, establish thresholds for outcome indicators and agree on an outcome accountability policy. The Task Force is charged with promoting local compliance with the legal requirements of state law relating to indigent defense. For example, state law requires that competent qualified counsel be appointed in a timely manner in all criminal cases in which the accused is too poor to hire a lawyer. The Task Force visits counties each year to promote county compliance with the requirements of state law and Task Force policies and standards relating to indigent defense, and this process is guided by a set of policy monitoring rules. New policy monitoring rules have been codified in the Texas Administrative Code (1 TAC §§174.26 - 174.28). They set out the expectations for what areas the monitoring will cover, what documents will be reviewed, and the time frames for reports and county responses. The rules may be accessed at Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, Part 8, Chapter 174 online at: <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/tac>.

New Indigent Defense Plan Submission Process for 2009. In response to an internal audit report on the current process of receiving and displaying indigent defense plans, the Task Force changed the process for the plan submissions due November 1, 2009. The wide latitude local officials have had in the structure of plans and format of submission has resulted in a cumbersome and, at times, confusing set of documents. Updates to plans originally submitted at the end of 2001 have varied dramatically and many counties have multiple plan documents, including supplements and amendments on file, often with conflicting language, making it difficult or impossible to piece together the current plan. Following implementation of the new submission process, counties' indigent defense plans will be able to be displayed by section or in their entirety. Plans will also be searchable by section, rather than the search taking you to a list of plan documents on file for the counties meeting the demographic criteria you set. This will allow state and local officials, staff and researchers to focus on only those parts of the plans they are currently interested in reviewing. As an example, it would allow a judge to find the attorney qualification requirements in the plans of similarly sized counties in the judge's region. Staff from the Task Force and Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) will be available to assist local officials in the submission process.

Funding Strategies. Goal three in the strategic plan is to determine the best use of new funds to improve the indigent defense system, determine the allocation of new funding, and resolve issues related to the funding formula. Distribution of and accounting for state funds to counties are critical responsibilities of the Task Force. The Grants and Reporting Committee met twice over the year and also had a workgroup meeting in November 2008 to discuss the current formula for distributing funds. The Task Force grant program encourages compliance with state and federal requirements by requiring counties to meet provisions of the FDA in their local indigent defense plans to qualify for funding. In FY 2009, the Task Force awarded more than \$28 million to counties through seven funding methods—\$11,728,773 in formula grants; \$3,904,473 in discretionary grants; \$131,523 in direct disbursements to rural counties; \$475,003 in reimbursements for counties with extraordinary expenses; \$105,000 for targeted specific grants; \$5,000 for technical assistance; and \$12 million in an equalization disbursement. The Expenditure Report contained in the FY 2009 Annual Report of the Task Force at www.courts.state.tx.us/tfid provides details of the expenditures for each of the seven funding methods. The Task Force authorized staff to publish the FY 2010 Discretionary Grant Request for Applications (RFA) during FY 2009. This timeline gives counties more time to plan, budget and implement new programs for the upcoming fiscal year. In April, several applications were submitted for consideration. In all, the Task Force awarded \$572,024 in new FY 2010 discretionary grants to Fort Bend, Parker and Wichita counties at its June 10, 2009 meeting.

Clearinghouse of Indigent Defense Information. To further promote best practices and accountability by transparency, the Task Force serves as a clearinghouse of indigent defense information via its website, www.courts.state.tx.us/tfid, with public access to all county plans, expenditures, guides, model forms, rules, publications, e-newsletters and press releases. In addition to its numerous publications on the website, the Task Force also offers professional development educational programs to enhance understanding of the FDA.

In FY 2009, Task Force staff made 14 presentations to more than 1,350 attendees at various professional associations. One of these was the 6th Annual Indigent Defense Workshop sponsored by the Task Force, held during FY 2009 on October 23-24, 2008. Twenty-two counties were represented by court administrators, judges and commissioners. There were approximately 100 in attendance, including presenters and staff. The keynote speaker was Robert Spangenberg, a national indigent defense expert and president of the Spangenberg Group consulting firm. Attendees heard from a vast array of presenters, from defense to prosecution, who shared a wealth of useful information, perspectives and practical advice on how to improve local indigent defense systems. Workshops have resulted in improvements in indigent defense processes each year. Some examples of actions taken: There were several

counties that would consider a public defender office if it was supported and feasible (Fort Bend, Nacogdoches, Nueces, Zapata). In light of the recent *Rothgery* ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in June, counties will come up with a plan of action such as revisiting and revising indigent defense plans, changing magistration procedures and following up with defendants who have bonded out. Counties also indicated interest in mental health diversion, establishing relationships with MHMR and improving communication between law enforcement, county and district attorney, and the court. The presentations were videotaped and video downloads are available on the Task Force website under Resources at www.courts.state.tx.us/tfid.

National Right to Counsel Committee National Report on Indigent Defense. On April 14, 2009 the Constitution Project's National Right to Counsel Committee released its much-anticipated report, *Justice Denied: America's Continuing Neglect of our Constitutional Right to Counsel*. The report details the endemic and systemic challenges of the indigent defense system and recommends 22 specific reforms. The full report and other relevant materials are available online at <http://tcpjusticedenied.org>.

Increasing Quality of Representation through Public Defender Offices. Public defender offices are spreading across the state. In 2001, only seven counties had some form of public defender office in operation. By 2009, there were 16 public defender offices that had either been awarded a grant or were in full operation. In total, these programs serve 91 counties across the state. Eighty percent of the public defender offices have either been established or have had their offices expand through the Task Force's discretionary grant program. In FY 2009, the Task Force awarded Fort Bend County \$517,824 to establish a mental health public defender office to serve indigent defendants with mental illness. The new program will be modeled after the first such program established in the nation in Travis County. Staffed with attorneys, case workers and social workers, the office will represent defendants with mental illness in misdemeanor cases. The program will help connect clients to available services and treatment options. The office also will seek solutions to get and keep defendants with mental illness out of the criminal justice system.

In FY 2009, the Spangenberg Group completed an evaluation of the Bexar and Hidalgo Public Defender Offices. Highlights from the two evaluations show that persons are spending less time in jail, the quality of representation is better and more persons are being served. Also in FY 2009, Harris County announced its intention to form a study group to determine the feasibility of a public defender office and is currently considering how to implement the program. In addition, the West Texas Regional Capital Public Defender Office (funded by a multi-year discretionary grant by the Task Force that began in FY 2008) was recognized nationally when Lubbock County, on behalf of the 75 participating counties in the 7th and 9th Administrative Judicial Regions, submitted an application for a 2009 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties. The program won not only an Achievement Award, but also the Best of Category Award in the Criminal Justice and Public Safety categories. There were only 20 categories and 20 Best of Category Awards given nationwide.

Mental Health Study Underway. In recent years, funds have been appropriated in Texas to enhance mental health services for the criminal justice population. The Task Force has also provided funding to a number of counties to establish mental health public defender offices [Dallas, El Paso, Travis, Lubbock and Fort Bend (FY 2010 Discretionary Grant)]. With access to more resources and in an effort to slow the recidivism of poor persons suffering mental illness facing criminal charges, counties are rapidly adopting new local diversion and treatment alternatives. In this climate of change and innovation, little objective analysis has been conducted to guide counties in their planning. The Task Force received a grant from State Justice Institute for a research project entitled *Representing the Mentally Ill Offender: An Evaluation of Advocacy Alternatives*. This study is currently underway and expected to be completed in FY 2010. This multi-year study is being conducted, in collaboration with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M, to document the effectiveness of emerging pre-trial interventions and compare outcomes for mentally ill misdemeanor defendants represented by the mental health public defenders versus appointed counsel. Exposing individuals to interventions is expected to demonstrate: 1) faster and more accurate identification of mental illness by the criminal justice system; 2) better access to stabilizing pre-trial mental health services; 3) higher rates of non-criminal diversion or treatment-oriented dispositions; 4) higher rates of sustained participation in community mental health treatment after the case is disposed; and 5) lower rates of recidivism.

Innocence Projects. Through the General Appropriations Act, the Texas Legislature in 2005 provided for the allocation of funds to the state's public law schools to support their work investigating claims of innocence by

incarcerated individuals. The Task Force on Indigent Defense is currently responsible for administering the \$800,000 allocation to each of the four public law schools in Texas: University of Houston School of Law, University of Texas Law School, Texas Tech University School of Law, and Texas Southern University's Thurgood Marshall School of Law. Each of these law schools has an operational innocence project. Working with instructors and staff, law students are responsible for screening and investigating claims by Texas inmates that they are actually innocent of the crimes for which they were convicted and are currently serving a sentence. The Task Force partnered with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University to create a centralized, internet-based reporting system to provide easy access and accountability for performance among the projects. The system standardizes performance data by the innocence project sites and then summarizes those results in a form that is easily accessible to project administrators, Task Force staff, legislators, advocates, and the general public. In this way, the online system eliminates confusion regarding which site is accountable for individual cases, and makes better use of resources. The online system is appended to the current Task Force website used to administer indigent defense program funds to Texas counties. The link to the database is: <http://innocence.tamu.edu/Public>.

FY 2009 Annual Report and Expenditure Report for the Task Force. The Task Force is statutorily required to submit an Annual Report and Expenditure Report, and the full report for FY 2009 may be viewed and downloaded at www.courts.state.tx.us/tfid.



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Gonzales County Courthouse

Judicial Committee on Information Technology

Electronic Court Filing. The 75th Texas Legislature created the Judicial Committee on Information Technology (JCIT) and gave it a 12-point mission, including establishing an electronic court filing system (e-Filing) (Government Code §77.031(5)). To fulfill this mandate, JCIT continues to encourage adoption of electronic filing rules for trial courts. As of November 2009, 59 district and county clerks in 44 counties have implemented electronic filing. These cover 236 district courts, 79 county courts at law, nine probate courts, and 18 justice courts using electronic filing. These jurisdictions cover approximately 73.8 percent of the state's population.

E-filing enables filers and courts to connect electronically through the state's e-government portal, TexasOnline (www.texasonline.com). The e-filing architecture is designed to allow parties to file electronically to any participating court from any one of the several certified front-end service providers.

Work continued in FY 2009 on the design and development of an appellate court case management system that will include e-filing into Texas appellate courts. The Legislature funded \$2.3M to the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to begin the Texas Appeals Management and E-filing System (TAMES) project in the FY 2008-2009 biennium. An additional \$1,488,023 was appropriated in FY 2010 for completion of the project. JCIT participates with the TAMES project steering committee and assists with developing rules of appellate procedure required to implement the project.

The 80th Legislature also directed the Supreme Court to create rules to permit e-Filing in the state's 822 justice courts. These rules were approved by the Supreme Court in December 2007, and, as of November 16, 2009, 18 justice courts were using e-filing.

JCIT is working on standards for document filing types so that TexasOnline may efficiently implement e-Filing in courts and provide a familiar set of document types to attorneys, regardless of the court in which they are filing. Soon this work will encompass indigent e-filing and criminal case e-filing.

Judicial Information Technology Standards. OCA devotes part of its information technology appropriation to court technology standards development, and JCIT provides guidance in the selection of efforts supported. In FY 2007 and 2008, OCA, the Department of Public Safety, and the Department of Criminal Justice established the Texas Path to NIEM (National Information Model) project with JCIT's support. This Path to NIEM project provided 28 model data exchanges for use by courts and their business partners throughout Texas.

Support to OCA Projects. The 80th Legislature funded OCA to support two major new judicial information technology projects, the TAMES project and the Automated Registry. The Automated Registry system was implemented in September 2009. The TAMES project continues in development and is scheduled for implementation in late FY 2010. OCA is working with JCIT for broad-based, diverse advice on how to construct and implement these projects in a way that best supports the activities of a variety of trial courts throughout the state.



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TexasCourthouses.com

Llano County Courthouse

Court Reporters Certification Board

The Court Reporters Certification Board (CRCB) was created in 1977 to certify and regulate court reporters. CRCB functions include certification of individual court reporters, registration of court reporting firms, assessment and collection of fees, approval of court reporting program curriculums submitted by public and private institutions, and enforcement of the rules and regulations governing the court reporting profession. The Board operates under the provisions of Chapter 52 of the Texas Government Code, and the Supreme Court of Texas serves as the Board's rulemaking authority. In 2003, the 78th Legislature administratively attached the CRCB to the Office of Court Administration (OCA). The program is funded from certification fees collected by the CRCB and deposited to the General Revenue Fund.

Mission Statement. The mission of the CRCB is to certify, to the Supreme Court of Texas, qualified court reporters to meet the growing needs and expectations of the public through statewide certification and accountability.

Organization. The Board, as the governing body, consists of 13 members appointed by the Supreme Court of Texas: one active district judge who serves as chair, two attorneys, two official court reporters, two freelance court reporters, two representatives from court reporting firms (one court reporter owned and one non-court reporter owned), and four public members. Appointments reflect a diverse geographical representation throughout the state. Board members are reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with state rules and regulations and serve six-year terms.

The Board uses five standing committees appointed by the Chair: 1) Rules, Standards, and Policies Committee; 2) Certification/Uniform Format Manual Committee; 3) Continuing Education Committee; 4) Legislative Committee; and 5) Review Committee. The Review Committee considers applicants who have criminal convictions.

New Legislation Passed. Two legislative bills proposed by the CRCB were passed in the 81st Legislative Session. S.B. 1599 requires applicants to disclose any criminal history, both state and national, via fingerprint submissions. Criminal history is currently reported on a voluntary basis. S.B. 1441, relating to staggered terms of Board members, achieves more of a balance by limiting the number of members who go off the Board at one time. Terms are set to reflect two members expiring every year for five years with three members expiring in the sixth year.

Board and Committee Meetings Held (Austin). A total of 17 meetings were held during FY 2009: 4 Board meetings, 3 Review Committee meetings, 2 Continuing Education Committee meetings, 3 Certification Committee meetings, and 5 Rules Committee meetings.

At the June 12, 2009 Board meeting, the Board voted to continue its efforts to address contracting issues and referred the issues of disclosure requirements and contract provisions to the Rules Committee to address in the future. Previously, a Task Force that was appointed by the CRCB met to consider the issue. The meetings were facilitated by Susan Schultz from the Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution – UT Law School. The Board's decision to terminate the Task Force meetings was based on budget constraints and the vacancies that occurred on the Task Force when two members were appointed to the Board in April 2009.

Complaints. The Board received a total of 49 complaints filed in FY 2009—47 complaints filed against court reporters and 2 complaints filed against court reporting firms. The Board held 2 formal hearings, which resulted in disciplinary actions assessed against 2 court reporters.

Lawsuits. There was one lawsuit pending from FY 2008 that originated from a disciplinary action against a court reporter. The matter was resolved per an Agreed Judgment in October 2008.

Certification of Individuals. Following an internal audit of the CRCB program in 2006, the Board considered an audit recommendation to contract with an outside vendor to administer the exam instead of the CRCB. The Texas Court Reporters Association (TCRA) was selected as the contracted vendor in FY 2008 with an effective date of September 1, 2008. In FY 2009, TCRA administered 4 exams to 301 applicants in Austin, Houston, and Dallas, resulting in 84 new certifications issued — 6 in oral stenography and 78 in machine shorthand. The benefits of

contracting with TCRA were twofold: 1) the number of exams administered per year was increased from 3 to 4, resulting in a 42 percent increase in the number of new certifications issued (from 49 in FY 2008 to 84 in FY 2009) and 2) customer service was improved when the exam was offered in several cities throughout Texas instead of Austin only. The exam consists of an oral skills test and a written test. Applicants must pass both parts of the exam to be eligible for certification.

The Board renewed 1,240 individual certifications out of a licensee base of 2,632 licensees with approximately 75 percent renewing online through the Texas Online portal. Renewals are based on a two-year cycle. In order to renew their certifications, individuals must complete 1.0 continuing education units (10 hours) within the two-year period immediately preceding the certification expiration date of January 1st.

Continuing Education (CE) Course Approvals. The Board processed 79 course approvals during the fiscal year to ensure that CE courses completed as a requirement for renewal are relative to the court reporting profession. The Board approves CE courses submitted by sponsors and individual court reporters.

Registration of Firms. The Board processed 19 new registrations for court reporting firms and renewed 183 firm registrations. Renewals are based on a two-year cycle with a January 1st expiration date.

Curriculum Approval for Court Reporting Firms. The Board approves court reporting curriculums for public community colleges, technical institutes and proprietary schools. There are currently 12 court reporting schools in Texas.

Public Information Requests – Rule 12. Staff processed 50 record requests.

Internal Audit. An internal audit of the Court Reporters Certification Program was conducted in May 2006 with 19 recommendations set out in the audit report published in FY 2007 to increase efficiencies and improve cost effectiveness. The scope of the audit included:

- Certification of court reporters and registration of court reporting firms,
- The court reporter exam,
- Automated information systems,
- Continuing education for court reporters,
- Revenue reconciliation procedures,
- Complaint processing procedures and disciplinary actions, and
- Operating practices and procedures.

In FY 2007, the Board performed an analysis and review of the recommendations and implemented five recommendations administratively. In FY 2008, the Board made major strides on a number of recommendations as follows:

- 1) the Access database, determined to be ineffective and unreliable, was replaced with a new more robust licensing database, VERSA, in March 2008;
- 2) recommendations concerning major changes to the complaint function were incorporated in proposed rule revisions to be submitted to the Supreme Court for adoption in FY 2010; and
- 3) the Texas Court Reporters Association was awarded the bid to prepare and administer the court reporters exam in February 2008, a function previously handled by the Board.

Remaining recommendations concerning policies are to be addressed in the near future.

Customer Service. The Board surveys its external customers, examinees and licensees, to obtain feedback on services that the Board provides. During FY 2009, the CRCB received an overall satisfaction rating of 89.6 percent.

Website. The Board maintains a website at www.crcb.state.tx.us to provide information to the public on CRCB functions, including, but not limited to, certification, complaints, forms, disciplinary actions, lists of licensees, new legislation, and related links.

Process Server Review Board

In June 2005, the Supreme Court of Texas approved amendments to Rules 103 and 536(a) of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure governing statewide certification of process servers. The Court also issued a companion order (Misc. Docket No. 05-9122) to establish the framework for certification of those approved to serve process under the revised rules, to approve of certain existing civil process server courses, and to establish the framework for the Board to approve additional courses. This order also required the Office of Court Administration to provide clerical support to the Process Server Review Board (PSRB). The Supreme Court also approved a companion order (Misc. Docket No. 05-9123) that establishes the membership of the PSRB, and an order (Misc. Docket No. 05-9137) appointing a Chair. In FY 2007, the Supreme Court promulgated Rule 14 of the Rules of Judicial Administration (RJA), which governs Statewide Certification to Serve Civil Process; it may be found on the Court's website at <http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/MiscDocket/07/07903600.pdf>.

Mission Statement. The mission of the PSRB is to improve the standards for persons authorized to serve process and to reduce the disparity among Texas civil courts for approving persons to serve process by making recommendations to the Supreme Court of Texas on the certification of individuals and the approval of courses.

Organization. The Board consists of nine members and is a geographical representation of judges, attorneys, law enforcement, and process servers throughout the State. Board Members are not compensated for their services and do not receive reimbursement for actual travel and other expenses incurred while in the performance of their official duties.

Board Meetings Held. The PRSB held five meetings in Austin during the fiscal year.

Complaints. There were 20 complaints against process servers on the Supreme Court of Texas Statewide List of Certified Process Servers that were reviewed by the Board. Three process servers were placed on probationary status as a result of disciplinary actions taken and one server's authorization to serve process was suspended. None had their certification revoked. As of August 31, 2009, eight complaints were pending investigation.

Approval of Applications. The Board approved 1,433 new applicants and 119 renewal applicants. A total of 667 process servers had their certification expire and, of those, 277 reapplied and were reinstated. Nine applicants were subsequently approved after requesting reconsideration of the Board's decision to deny certification bringing the total certification issued for FY 2009 to 1,838.

When the orders were adopted by the Supreme Court, effective July 1, 2005, 1,275 process servers were "grandfathered" by virtue of meeting pre-existing requirements in Harris, Dallas, and Denton counties. As of August 31, 2009, the total number of certified process servers had reached 3,887.

Curriculum Approval for Process Server Training Schools. No new courses were approved during the fiscal year.

Website. The Board maintains a website at <http://www.courts.state.tx.us/psrb/psrbhome.asp> to provide information such as the Supreme Court orders establishing the membership of the Process Server Review Board and the appointment of its Chair; various forms, processes and procedures; and the Supreme Court Statewide List of Certified Process Servers.



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TexasCourthouses.com

Navarro County Courthouse

Guardianship Certification Board

The Guardianship Certification Board (GCB) was created by the 79th Texas Legislature with the passage of Senate Bill 6, effective September 1, 2005. The bill established a certification requirement for certain individuals who provide guardianship services. The GCB is administratively attached to the Office of Court Administration (OCA). The GCB's primary staff, the guardianship certification program director, is an OCA employee; administrative support is also provided by the OCA.

Mission Statement. The mission of the GCB is to perform regulatory functions for individuals (other than attorneys and corporate sureties) who act as private professional guardians, individuals (other than volunteers) who provide guardianship services to wards of guardianship programs, and individuals who provide guardianship services to wards of the Department of Aging and Disability Services.

Organization. The GCB is comprised of 11 members appointed by the Texas Supreme Court and four public members appointed by the Supreme Court from a list of nominees submitted by the Governor's Office. The GCB members were appointed in early 2006. One public member resigned during the fiscal year, and a replacement has not yet been appointed.

The GCB has two permanent committees, the Rules Committee and the Minimum Standards Committee, each comprised of a committee chair and three other GCB members. The GCB also has three review committees: the Application Review Committee, the Denial of Certification Review Committee, and the Disciplinary Review Committee. The review committees are each composed of a chair and two other GCB members, who serve on the committees for six-month terms.

Certification of Individuals. During fiscal year 2009, 51 guardians were granted certification, 71 were granted provisional certification, and 43 individuals moved from provisional to "full" certification. Five provisionally certified guardians and one certified guardian voluntarily surrendered their respective certifications. A total of 324 guardians were certified and provisionally certified at the close of the fiscal year. (The 43 individuals who went from provisional to "full" certification are included in the total number of guardians.)

Certifications are valid for two years, and are renewable if the requirements for re-certification, including completion of continuing education hours, are met. 107 certified guardians successfully re-certified during the fiscal year. The Rules Governing Guardianship Certification allow certified guardians to apply for re-certification up to 90 days past the expiration date. Therefore, although some certified guardians reached their certification expiration dates, none passed the 90-day mark rendering them ineligible for re-certification during the fiscal year.

Provisional certifications are valid for only one two-year period, unless a waiver is sought from and granted by the GCB. Two requests for waivers were considered by the GCB during fiscal year 2009, and both were denied. One of the individuals who had sought a waiver subsequently completed the requirements, applied for and was granted certification before his provisional certification expired. The other individual's provisional certification expired. A total of seven provisional certifications expired during the fiscal year.

Complaints. Two complaints were filed in fiscal year 2009. On one complaint, the provisionally certified guardian voluntarily surrendered her provisional certification before the GCB took action. The Board suspended provisional certification pending compliance on one complaint. On the complaint pending at the start of the fiscal year, the Board suspended certification pending compliance.

Board and Committee Meetings Held. The full GCB met four times in FY 2009 for its regular quarterly meetings, and one time to discuss the examination requirement, which is discussed in more detail below. The Minimum Standards and the Denial of Certification Review Committees did not meet during fiscal year 2009. The Rules Committee met five times, the Application Review Committee met seven times, and the Disciplinary Review Committee met twice.

Rules Governing Guardianship Certification. Amendments to Rules VI, XI, XII and XIV were posted for public comment, approved by the Board, submitted to and approved by the Supreme Court of Texas. First, a requirement was added for an applicant to disclose whether s/he has been denied certification or had certification revoked or suspended in any jurisdiction requiring licensure or certification to provide guardianship services. The second amendment corrected citations to certain sections of the Texas Penal Code. The next two amendments related to disciplinary procedures. A mechanism for the GCB to grant an extension of time to file an answer or provide additional information requested related to a disciplinary action was put in place, and the GCB's designee is permitted to set the date for a hearing in a disciplinary action. Bi-weekly meetings between provisionally certified guardians and their designated certified guardian supervisors are required; the last amendment provides that one meeting each month must be face-to-face.

Additional proposed amendments to the Rules Governing Guardianship Certification were submitted for public comment and approved by the Board for submission to the Supreme Court of Texas. A second set of proposed amendments to the Rules was pending Board approval at the close of the fiscal year. Both sets of proposed amendments will be submitted to the Supreme Court in the coming fiscal year.

Policies. The statute requires each GCB member to attend at least half of the regularly scheduled meetings in each calendar year, and allows the Board to excuse the absences of members who do not meet this requirement. The GCB adopted the Attendance by Board Members at Regularly Scheduled Meetings this fiscal year. In addition to the statutory requirements, the policy requires members to attend at least two of each calendar year's four regularly scheduled meetings in person; a member's in-person absence may be excused by a majority vote of the Board. The policy is effective January 1, 2010.

Statutory Changes. The 81st Legislature passed four bills affecting guardianship certification. Two of the bills, Senate Bill 1056 and Senate Bill 1057, were effective immediately (June 2009). Senate Bill 1056 authorized the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to disclose to the GCB and county clerks in guardianship proceedings criminal history record information that is the subject of a nondisclosure order. Senate Bill 1057 eliminated the requirement that the county clerk must obtain criminal history record information on persons serving as guardians, proposed guardians, and local guardianship program employees and volunteers who provide guardianship services to the program's wards if the person holds a certificate issued by the GCB, and authorized the GCB to share the criminal history record information it obtained from the DPS and FBI with the court upon request.

The other two bills, Senate Bill 1053 and Senate Bill 1055, are effective September 1, 2009. Senate Bill 1053 provided that a person may not be appointed to serve as guardian if he or she does not have the required certification by the GCB, and authorized a court to remove, on the complaint of the GCB, a person who would be ineligible for appointment as a guardian because of the person's failure to maintain the required certification. Senate Bill 1055 eliminated duplicative reporting requirements and imposed consistent and streamlined requirements for reports by private professional guardians, local guardianship programs and the Department of Aging and Disability Services to county clerks and the GCB.

Exam. The GCB met regarding the examinations required for certification. It voted to no longer require successful completion of the national exam as part of the certification requirements. Applicants for certification must pass a new, comprehensive, Texas-specific exam on guardianship practices and principles as of September 1, 2009. The Center for Guardianship Certification (CGC) developed and will administer the new Texas-specific exam under contract with the OCA. A proposed amendment to the Guardianship Certification Program's fee schedule, incorporating the examination and re-examination fee for the new exam, was submitted to and approved by the Supreme Court of Texas.

Applicants for certification who tested on or before the end of the fiscal year were required to successfully complete both the national and the "old" Texas exams. The CGC, under contract with the OCA, administered the exams on behalf of the Board. The national and Texas exams were administered once as scheduled, in conjunction with the Texas Guardianship Association's spring conference. In addition, several hosted exams were given during calendar year 2009.

The new exam is scheduled to be given twice before the end of calendar year 2009, in conjunction with the National and the Texas Guardianship Associations' respective annual conferences.

Judicial Compensation Commission

The Judicial Compensation Commission (JCC) was created by the 80th Legislature effective September 1, 2007.¹ It is responsible for making a report to the Texas Legislature no later than December 1 of each even-numbered year recommending the proper salaries to be paid by the state for all justices and judges of the Supreme Court of Texas, the Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas, the courts of appeals and the district courts. The Office of Court Administration provides administrative support for the JCC.

Organization. The Commission is composed of nine members who are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate to serve six-year terms. No more than three members serving on the Commission may be licensed to practice law. Board members are reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with state rules and regulations.

Commission and Committee Meetings Held (Austin). Members of the Commission were appointed in May 2008. The Commission held its first meeting on June 30, 2008. The Public Comment Committee, created at the June 30 meeting, met on August 25, 2008 to obtain public comment on issues related to judicial compensation. In the meantime, the Fact Gathering Committee worked with the staff of the Office of Court Administration and State Bar of Texas to collect and analyze data pertinent to the statutorily-required factors that must be considered by the Commission.

The Commission held three additional meetings in fiscal year 2009 to prepare and finalize its report, which was published December 1, 2008. The report is available at <http://www.courts.state.tx.us/oca/jcc/jcc.asp>.

Website. Additional information regarding the Commission and its report to the Legislature is available on the Commission's website at www.courts.state.tx.us/oca/jcc/jcc.asp.



Caldwell County Courthouse