



LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

Financing the Judiciary in Texas

Legislative Primer

PREPARED BY LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD STAFF

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SEPTEMBER 2026

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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF TEXAS COURT SYSTEM STRUCTURE

A constitutional amendment adopted in 1891 established the initial structure of the Texas court system. The current judicial structure consists of appellate courts, district courts, county-level courts, justice of the peace courts, and municipal courts. **Figure 1** shows the court structure of Texas as of January 1, 2026.

APPELLATE COURTS

The state's appellate courts include the Supreme Court of Texas (SCOT), the Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA), and the 15 Courts of Appeals. SCOT consists of nine justices and is the state's highest court in civil and juvenile matters. CCA has nine judges and is the final authority in criminal cases. Each of the first 14 Courts of Appeals has one chief justice and two to 12 additional justices; these courts have intermediate appellate jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases. The 15th Court of Appeals has one chief justice and two additional justices and has statewide jurisdiction over intermediate appeals in civil cases, and exclusive jurisdiction over intermediate appeals in cases against the state, state entities, and state officers and employees. The 15th court also has exclusive jurisdiction over appeals from the business court. As of the 2026–27 biennium, 83 justices serve on the 15 appellate courts.

Figure 2 shows the jurisdictions of the 15 Courts of Appeals. The 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, did not modify appellate court jurisdictions. For more information, see the chapter regarding **State Funding for Appellate Court Operations**.

DISTRICT COURTS

As of January 2026, 510 district courts serve one or more counties under the 15 Courts of Appeals, with one judge at each district court. Of the 510 courts, 413 are dedicated to a single county and the remaining courts serve multiple counties. District courts serve as the primary trial courts in the state, and most handle both criminal and civil cases. Original jurisdiction of district courts includes civil actions of more than \$200, divorce, title to land, contested elections, and juvenile matters. District courts often specialize in civil, criminal, or family law matters. For instance, 13 district courts are designated as criminal district courts.

COUNTY COURTS

The Texas Constitution establishes a county court with a single judge in each of the state's 254 counties. These constitutional county courts have original jurisdiction over certain civil actions; probate, mental health, and guardianship cases; certain misdemeanors; juvenile matters; and appeals from lower courts. Constitutional courts exercise original jurisdiction of civil actions ranging from \$200 to \$20,000 and misdemeanors with jail sentences or fines that exceed \$500. Constitutional courts also may hear appeals de novo from lower courts.

Not all county courts exercise judicial functions. In the more populous counties, the county judge may focus exclusively on the administration of county government. For this reason, the Texas Legislature established statutory county courts, also known as county courts at law, to aid the constitutional county court in its judicial functions. Statutory county courts include 262 county courts at law in 92 counties and two multicounty courts at law serving six counties. In addition to their shared responsibilities, statutory court jurisdiction includes civil matters ranging from \$200 to \$325,000.

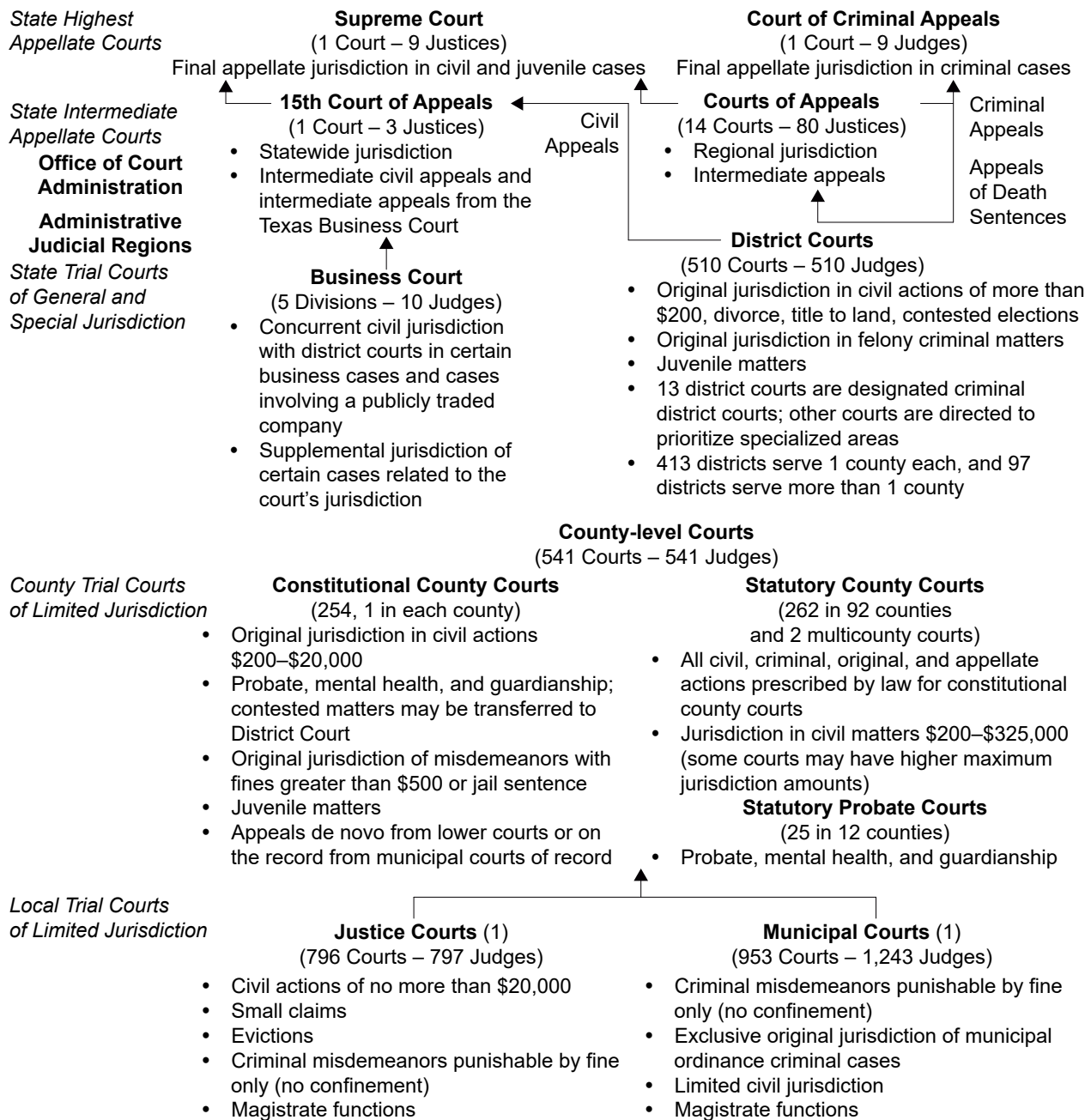
The Texas Legislature also has established 25 statutory probate courts in 12 of the state's largest counties. These courts have exclusive jurisdiction over their counties' probate, mental health, and guardianship cases.

LOCAL TRIAL COURTS

Justice courts, also called justice of the peace courts, have original jurisdiction in misdemeanor criminal cases punishable by fine only and minor civil matters. They also function as small claims courts. A justice of the peace may issue search or arrest warrants and may serve as the coroner in counties where there is no provision for a medical examiner. The Texas Constitution authorizes up to eight justice of the peace precincts per county and either one or two justice of the peace courts. The number of courts authorized is based on the county's or precinct's population. As of January 2026, Texas has 796 justice courts.

Through constitutional authority, the Legislature has established a municipal court in each incorporated municipality statewide. These courts have original jurisdiction over violations of city ordinances and, within city limits,

FIGURE 1
COURT STRUCTURE OF TEXAS, JANUARY 2026

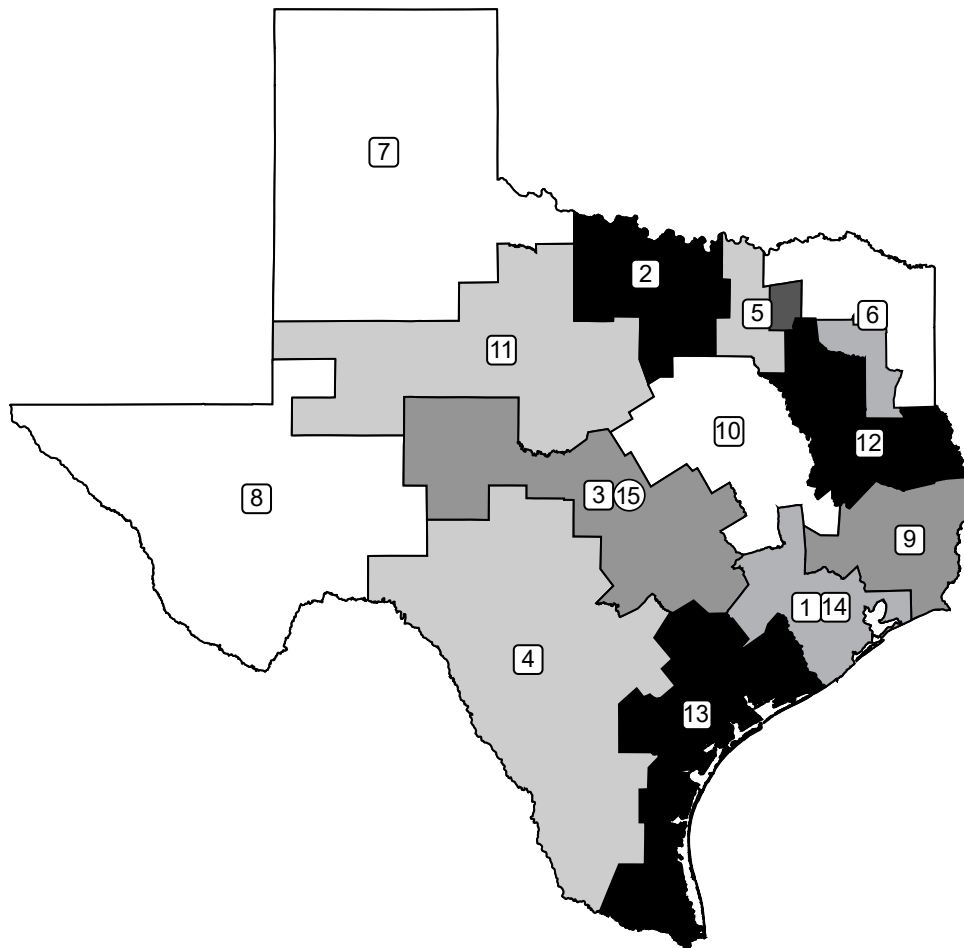


NOTES:

- (1) Justice courts and most municipal courts are not courts of record. Appeals from these courts are by trial de novo in the county-level courts, and in some instances in the district courts.
- (2) Some municipal courts are courts of record; appeals from these courts are taken on the record to the county-level courts. As of July 2025, 215 municipal courts reported that they were courts of record. Municipal courts of record are listed at www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts.aspx.
- (3) An offense against a municipal ordinance is punishable by a maximum fine of \$2,000 for ordinances that govern fire safety, zoning, and public health; \$4,000 for dumping refuse; or \$500 for all other offenses.
- (4) Five business court divisions, each administered by two judges, have concurrent civil jurisdiction with district courts in certain complex business disputes when contended amounts exceed \$5.0 million.

SOURCE: Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council, January 2026.

FIGURE 2
COURTS OF APPEALS DISTRICTS, 2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTES:

- (1) The First and Fourteenth districts share jurisdiction in the following counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Grimes, Harris, Waller, and Washington.
- (2) The Fifth and Sixth districts share jurisdiction in Hunt County.
- (3) The Sixth and Twelfth districts share jurisdiction in Gregg, Rusk, Upshur, and Wood counties.
- (4) The Fifteenth District is located in Austin and has statewide intermediate appellate jurisdiction over specific matters.

SOURCE: Office of Court Administration.

concurrent jurisdiction with justice of the peace courts over misdemeanor criminal cases that may be punishable by small fines. As of January 2026, 1,243 municipal court judges serve 953 municipal courts statewide.

ADMINISTRATIVE JUDICIAL REGIONS

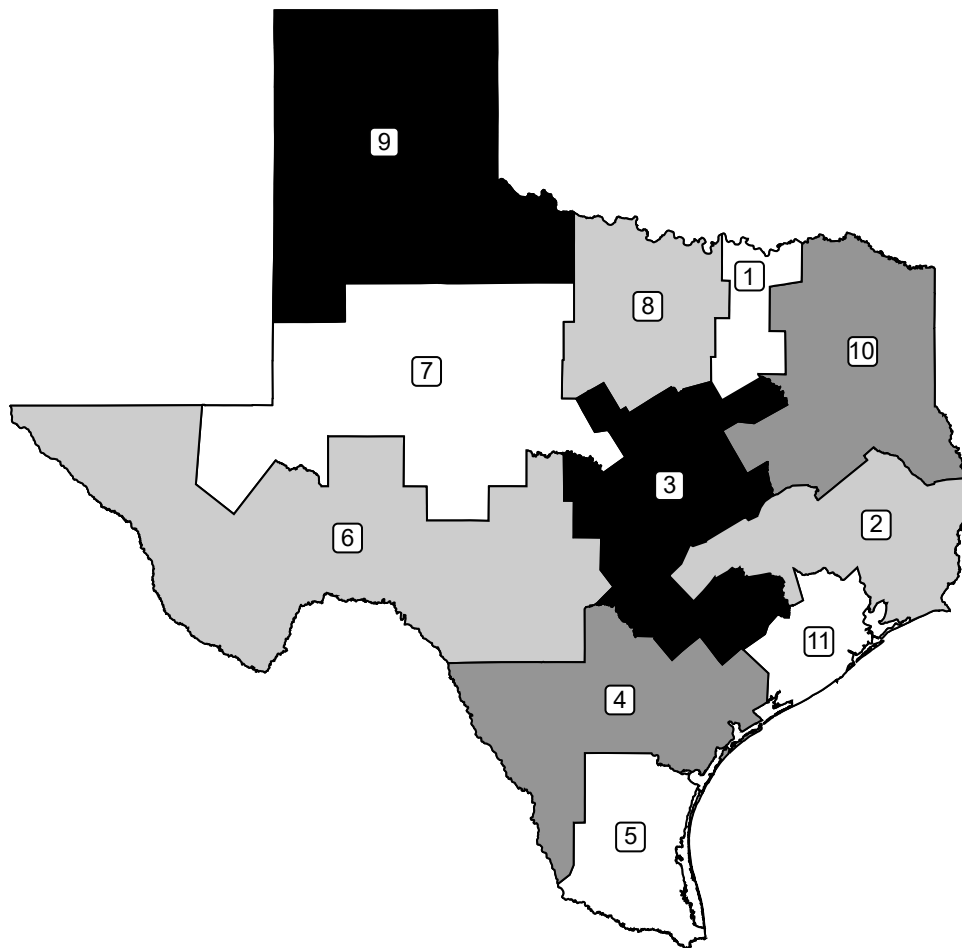
The Texas Government Code, Chapter 74, establishes 11 administrative judicial regions in Texas, each with a single presiding judge designated by the Governor, as shown in **Figure 3**. Presiding judges promulgate and implement regional rules of administration; advise local judges

regarding judicial management; make recommendations to the Chief Justice of SCOT regarding judicial assignments from outside the region; and serve for local administrative judges in their absence.

JUDICIAL SUPPORT AGENCIES

The following agencies provide additional support and information to ensure the efficient administration of courts. For more information, see the chapter regarding **State Funding for Judicial Branch Agency Operations and Programs**.

FIGURE 3
TEXAS' 11 ADMINISTRATIVE JUDICIAL REGIONS, 2026–27 BIENNIUM



SOURCE: Office of Court Administration.

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

The Office of Court Administration (OCA), established by the 65th Legislature, Regular Session, 1977, provides resources and information for the administration of the state's judicial branch. SCOT directs the agency's operation. OCA supports several regulatory and policymaking boards and commissions, including the Texas Judicial Council, the Texas Indigent Defense Commission, and the Judicial Compensation Commission. OCA's support services include compiling judicial statistics, providing research and court services, and supporting the state's Specialty Courts Program. The Texas Judicial Council conducts studies of the judicial system and makes policy recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature, and SCOT for improving the administration of justice in the state.

STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

The State Commission on Judicial Conduct (SCJC) was established by constitutional amendment in 1965 and consists of 13 members appointed by SCOT and the Governor. Members receive no pay and serve six-year terms. The agency's constitutional mandate is to investigate allegations of judicial misconduct or judicial incapacity and to take appropriate action. Actions may include discipline, education, censure, or the filing of formal proceedings that could result in removal from office. SCJC has jurisdiction of approximately 3,900 judges and judicial officers.

OFFICE OF CAPITAL AND FORENSIC WRITS

The 81st Legislature, Regular Session, 2009, established the Office of Capital Writs to represent defendants sentenced to

death in state post-conviction habeas corpus and related proceedings. The 84th Legislature, 2015, renamed the agency the Office of Capital and Forensic Writs and expanded its powers and duties to include representing defendants in cases involving forensic science issues.

STATE LAW LIBRARY

The State Law Library, established in 1971, maintains a legal reference facility for use by SCOT, CCA, the Office of the Attorney General, other state agencies, and the public. The library maintains a collection of more than 100,000 items of primary and secondary source material regarding Texas law, information regarding Texas legal history, federal primary source materials, major law reviews, treatises and monographs on general law, and selected federal publications.

OFFICE OF STATE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

The Office of the State Prosecuting Attorney was established in 1923 to provide representation for the people of Texas before CCA. The office's responsibilities have evolved to include representing the state in all proceedings before CCA, representing the state in any stage of a criminal case before a state appellate court, assisting county or district attorneys before appellate courts, and assisting district or county attorneys in cases before CCA.

JUDICIARY SECTION, COMPTROLLER'S DEPARTMENT

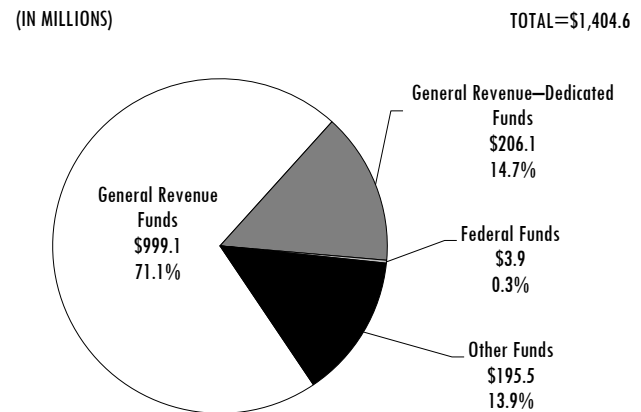
The Comptroller of Public Accounts, Judiciary Section, coordinates the payment of salaries and expenses for all state district judges, district attorneys, and other prosecutors in Texas, including the Special Prosecution Unit headquartered in Walker County.

OVERVIEW OF TEXAS STATE COURT SYSTEM FINANCING

The 89th Legislature, General Appropriations Act (GAA), 2026–27 Biennium, appropriated \$1,404.6 million in All Funds to the Judiciary, which includes the state's court system and judicial branch agencies. This amount represents an increase of 11.0 percent from the 2024–25 biennium. It includes \$264.5 million in All Funds in employee benefits costs and excludes \$26.3 million in Interagency Contracts.

Figure 4 shows appropriations to the Judiciary by method of finance for the 2026–27 biennium. General Revenue Funds total \$999.1 million and represent 71.1 percent of total appropriations. General Revenue–Dedicated Funds total \$206.1 million, 14.7 percent, and include

FIGURE 4
JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS BY METHOD OF FINANCE
2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTE: Totals include benefits.
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

appropriations from five accounts. Other Funds total \$195.5 million, 13.9 percent, and include appropriations from three funds, including the Judicial Fund. Federal Funds contribute \$3.9 million.

GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS

General Revenue Funds are the primary method of finance for the Judiciary courts and agencies. Direct appropriations of General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium total \$999.1 million. Appropriations include \$193.9 million for the state's appellate court system, \$554.3 million for judicial branch agencies, and \$250.8 million for retirement and group insurance and Social Security and benefit replacement pay.

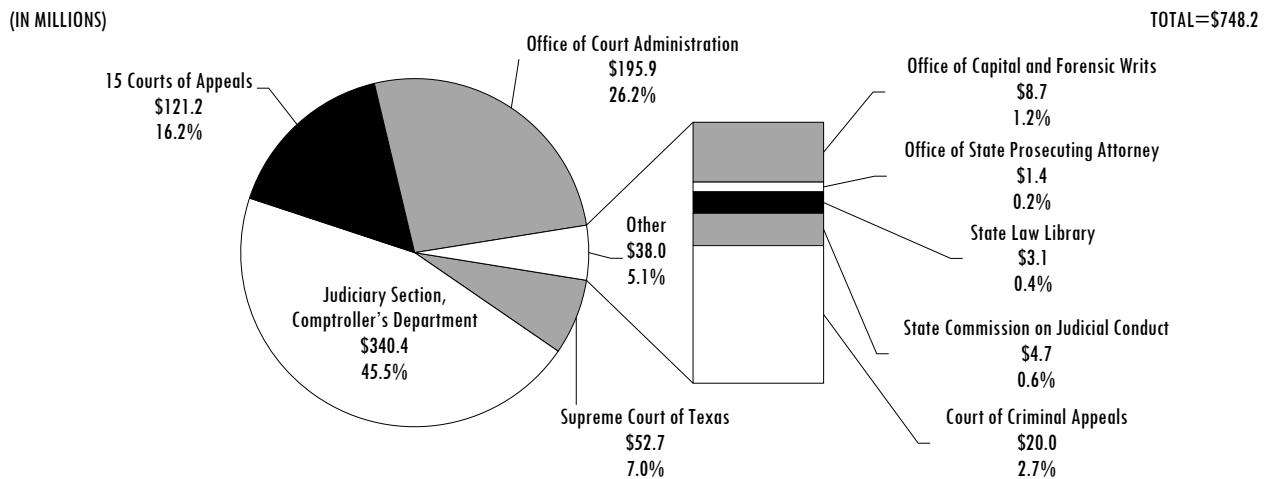
Figure 5 shows the share of General Revenue Funds appropriations by agency.

GENERAL REVENUE-DEDICATED FUNDS

The Judiciary's General Revenue–Dedicated Funds appropriations total \$206.1 million for the 2026–27 biennium. This amount includes \$0.8 million for retirement and group insurance and Social Security and benefit replacement pay and \$205.4 million from the following five General Revenue–Dedicated accounts:

- Account No. 540, Judicial and Court Personnel Training Fund;
- Account No. 5010, Sexual Assault Program;

FIGURE 5
JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS FROM GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS BY AGENCY
2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTE: Agency totals do not include \$250.8 million in General Revenue Funds appropriated for benefits.
 SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

- Account No. 5073, Fair Defense;
- Account No. 5157, Statewide Electronic Filing System; and
- Account No. 5173, Texas Forensic Science Commission.

Figure 6 shows the Judiciary's General Revenue–Dedicated Funds appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium by account.

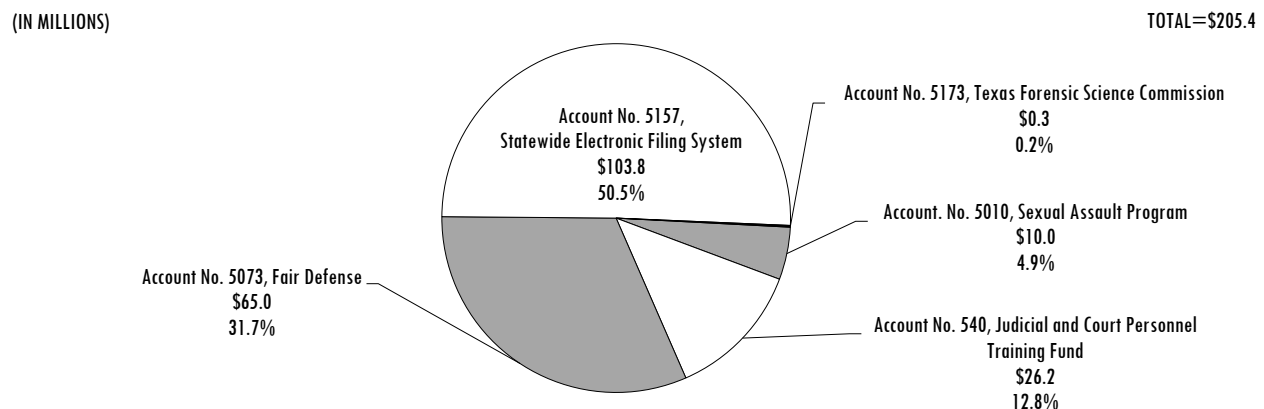
Figure 7 shows General Revenue–Dedicated Funds appropriations by agency for the 2026–27 biennium.

OTHER FUNDS

As shown in **Figure 8**, Other Funds appropriations to agencies of the Judiciary include \$181.8 million from the following three funds:

- the Assistant Prosecutor Supplement Fund;

FIGURE 6
JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS FROM GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED FUNDS BY ACCOUNT
2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTE: The total General Revenue–Dedicated Funds appropriations to judiciary agencies and courts does not include \$0.8 million for retirement and group insurance and Social Security and benefit replacement pay. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
 SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

- the Jury Service Fund; and
- the Judicial Fund.

Figure 9 shows Other Funds appropriations for judicial courts and agencies by fund for the 2026–27 biennium.

FEDERAL FUNDS

The Judiciary's Federal Funds appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium total \$3.9 million for the State Court Improvement Program.

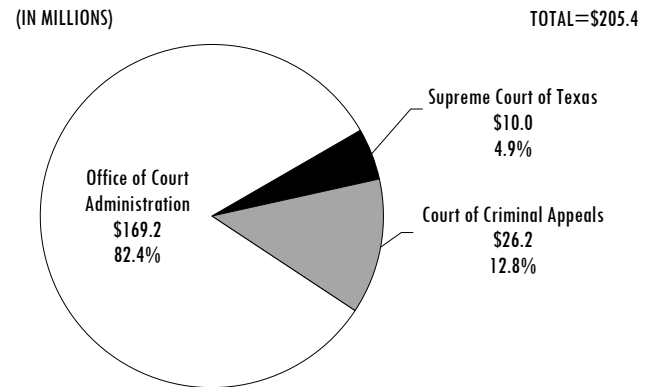
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND JUDICIAL RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

Judicial branch appropriations include \$264.5 million in All Funds for retirement and group insurance, and Social Security and benefit replacement pay.

These appropriations support retirement benefits for current and former state judges and justices through the pay-as-you-go Judicial Retirement System I (JRS I) and the actuarially funded Judicial Retirement System II (JRS II). Appropriations also fund the state's contributions to health insurance, Social Security, and retirement benefits for judicial staff other than judges.

JRS I is a closed, pay-as-you-go retirement plan for state judges and justices who held office before September 1, 1985. JRS I does not have a trust fund, and all benefits are paid by direct appropriations of General Revenue Funds.

FIGURE 7
JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS FROM GENERAL REVENUE—
DEDICATED FUNDS BY AGENCY
2026–27 BIENNIUM

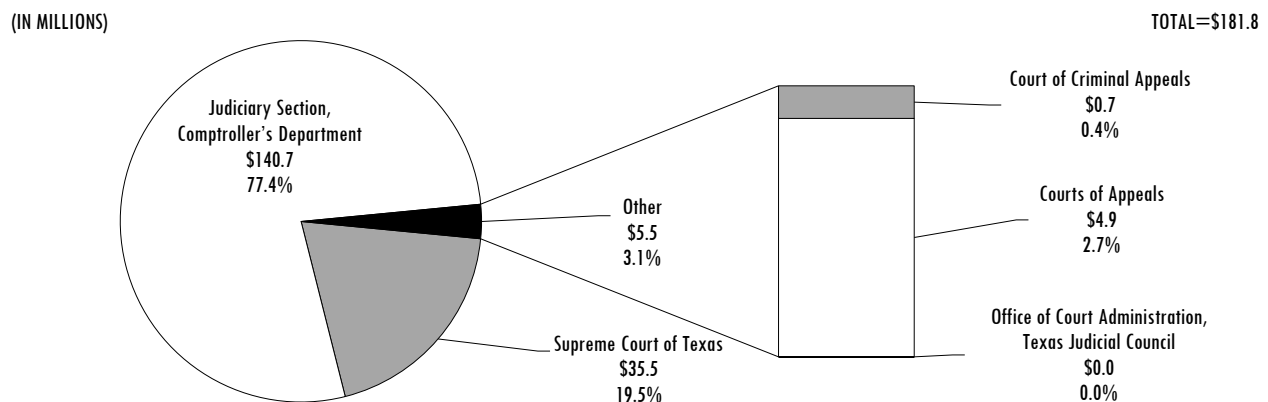


NOTE: Appropriations include \$0.8 million in retirement, benefits, and other appropriations, not shown.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

The Legislature replaced JRS I with the actuarially funded JRS II for state judges who took office after August 31, 1985, to decrease the long-term liabilities associated with a pay-as-you-go retirement plan. The state retirement contribution is 19.25 percent for the 2026–27 biennium. The contribution rate of a judge who took office during fiscal year 2013 or earlier is 6.0 percent. This contribution rate has increased gradually for judges who took office during subsequent fiscal years. The Texas Government Code, Section 840.102, sets

FIGURE 8
JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS FROM OTHER FUNDS BY AGENCY
2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTES: Amounts shown do not include \$20.3 million in Interagency Contracts. Total includes \$12.8 million appropriated for benefits, not shown.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

the contribution rate at 9.5 percent for a judge who took office after September 1, 2019.

SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION

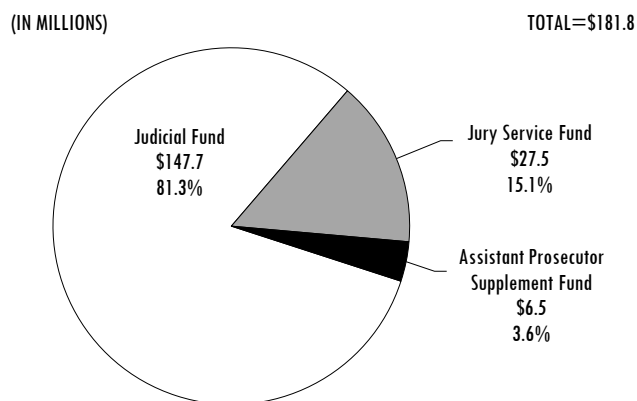
The following legislation passed by the 89th Legislature, Regular and Called sessions, 2025, affected the financing of the Judiciary.

Senate Bill 293, Regular Session, increases judicial salaries by increasing the state base salary of a district judge from \$140,000 to \$175,000, provides additional compensation to a business court judge, and revises the compensation structure of the chief justice or presiding judge of an appellate court and judges who serve as local administrative judges. The legislation calculates the retirement annuity for members of the elected class using a salary of \$175,000 and directs the Texas Ethics Commission to assess potential increases every five years beginning at the end of fiscal year 2030. The legislation also expands the definition of judicial misconduct or incapacity, revises procedures for judicial discipline, and requires the reporting of certain judicial transparency information. The 2026–27 GAA provides \$174.3 million in All Funds, including \$169.7 million in General Revenue Funds and \$4.6 million in Other Funds, to implement the legislation's provisions.

House Bill 40, Regular Session, makes various changes to the business court. The 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, established the business court as a specialized, statewide trial court to address complex business litigation and authorized the first five divisions of the business court. House Bill 40 removes the Sunset provision for six divisions of the business court, the Second, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Ninth, and Tenth, and keeps them subject to legislative appropriations. The legislation reduces the threshold of certain disputes eligible for business court consideration from \$10.0 million to \$5.0 million and expands the types of actions over which the business court has civil jurisdiction concurrent with district courts. House Bill 40 entitles a business court judge to reimbursement from the state for travel and other expenses, and it entitles a county to reimbursement from the state for business court accommodations in county facilities.

Senate Joint Resolution 27, Regular Session, revises the membership of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct and certain processes related to how it may issue discipline. Texas voters approved the constitutional amendment at the November 2025 election.

FIGURE 9
JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS FROM OTHER FUNDS BY FUND
2026–27 BIENNIUM



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

House Bill 16, Second Called Session, establishes 14 district courts located in the following counties: five in Harris County; two in Fort Bend County; one serving Colorado and Lavaca counties; and one each in Brazoria, Comal, Ellis, Montgomery, Rockwall, and Williamson counties. The legislation also establishes one county courts each in Harris and Maverick counties and one probate court in Hidalgo County. House Bill 16 revises the compensation rate for visiting judges at the appellate and district court levels and the compensation for a former judge or justice who serves as judicial mentor.

STATE FUNDING FOR APPELLATE COURT OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS

The appellate system in Texas includes the Supreme Court of Texas (SCOT), which has final appellate jurisdiction in civil and juvenile cases; the Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA), which has final appellate jurisdiction in criminal cases; and 15 Courts of Appeals, which have regional jurisdiction and are intermediate appellate courts for civil and criminal appeals from the trial courts.

Appellate courts review the actions and decisions of lower courts regarding questions of law or allegations of procedural error. These courts do not hear direct evidence, determine the facts of cases, or have juries. Appellate reviews typically are restricted to the evidence and exhibits presented in the trial court.

Figure 10 shows appellate court appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium.

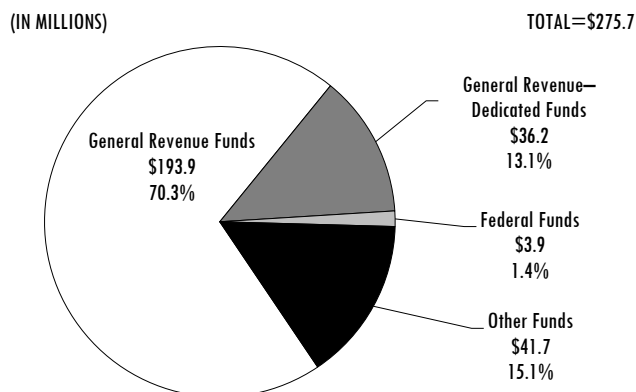
THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS

SCOT was established in 1845 and consists of a Chief Justice and eight other justices. In addition to its statewide final appellate jurisdiction in civil and juvenile cases, the court has original jurisdiction to issue writs and final jurisdiction over the involuntary retirement or removal of judges. Justices are elected to staggered six-year terms in statewide elections. Vacancies between elections are subject to appointment by the Governor and confirmation by the Senate.

The court's responsibilities also include the following duties:

- promulgating and enforcing rules of civil procedure and evidence;
- licensing and supervising attorneys;
- appointing members of the Texas Board of Law Examiners;
- processing declarations of intent to study law and applications for admission to the State Bar of Texas;
- supervising the Office of Court Administration and Judicial Branch Certification Commission;
- supervising funding for programs that provide civil legal services for indigent individuals;

FIGURE 10
APPELLATE COURT APPROPRIATIONS
2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTE: Totals do not include benefits.
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

- administering federal funding to strengthen courts for children, youth, and families in the child-protection system by operating the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth, and Families; and
- equalizing the dockets of the 15 Courts of Appeals.

The 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, appropriated \$107.5 million in All Funds for the 2026–27 biennium to support SCOT's operations and programs. This amount includes \$52.7 million in General Revenue Funds; \$10.0 million in General Revenue–Dedicated Funds from Account No. 5010, Sexual Assault Program; \$35.5 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund; \$5.0 million in Other Funds from Interagency Contracts; \$3.9 million in Federal Funds; and \$0.4 million in Appropriated Receipts.

SUPREME COURT OPERATIONS

Appropriations for the court's operations include \$17.8 million in All Funds. **Figure 11** shows appropriations for SCOT's operations by method of finance. Court operations are funded primarily by General Revenue Funds and Other Funds from the Judicial Fund and Appropriated Receipts. General Revenue Funds for court operations include \$4.5 million for judicial salaries, an amount determined by the tenure-based compensation structure established by the 86th Legislature, 2019.

SUPREME COURT CASELOAD

SCOT disposed of 1,323 matters during fiscal year 2025, including 111 regular causes, 788 petitions for review and 424 other writs and motions. Regular causes involve those in which four or more of the justices have decided in conference to consider a petition for review, petition for writ of mandamus or habeas corpus, or parental notification appeal. Regular causes also include direct appeals that SCOT has agreed to review and questions of law certified to the state from a federal appellate court. Most regular causes are set for oral argument in open court and reported in written opinions.

A petition for review is a filing presenting an argument that the court should review a ruling from one of the appellate courts. Petitions for review do not include petitions for writs of mandamus, writs of habeas corpus, writs of prohibition and injunction, or petitions to publish; parental notification appeals; or petitions for temporary injunctions.

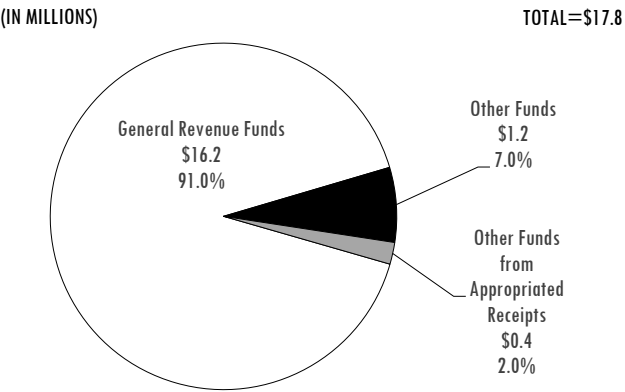
Figure 12 shows trends in the number of regular causes from fiscal years 2021 to 2025.

SUPREME COURT PROGRAMS

Programs administered by SCOT differ from court operations. Appropriations for programs support specific services, and appropriations for operations provide underlying support across all agency programs. Court programs include Basic Civil Legal Services (BCLS), the Children’s Commission, the Judicial Commission on Mental Health, and the Multidistrict Litigation program. Appropriations for all court programs total \$89.6 million in All Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

Figure 13 shows SCOT funding by program.

**FIGURE 11
APPROPRIATIONS BY METHOD OF FINANCE
FOR OPERATIONS OF THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS
2026–27 BIENNIUM**

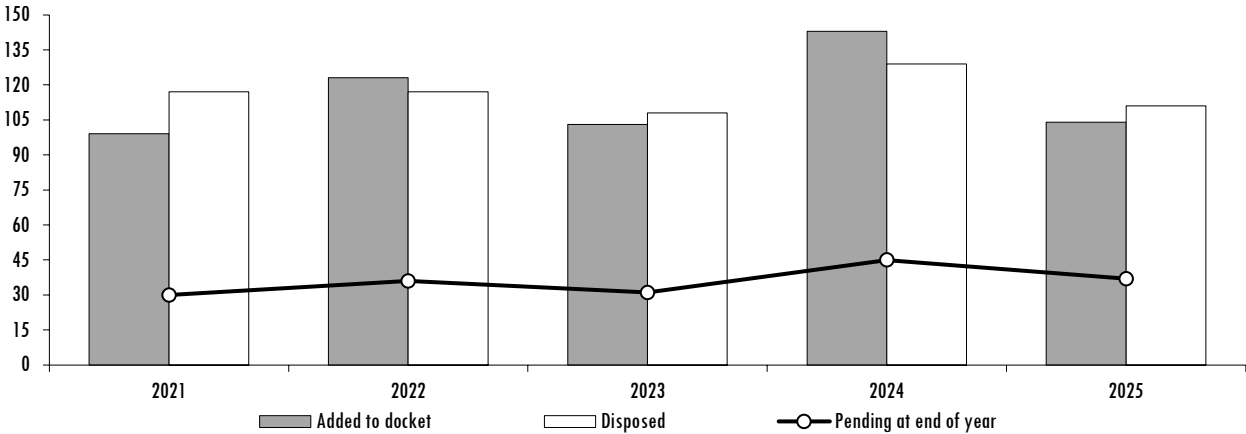


NOTE: Totals do not include benefits. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

BASIC CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES

SCOT’s BCLS program provides civil legal services for indigent clients in Texas. The Texas Access to Justice Foundation (TAJF) administers the BCLS Program. TAJF is a nonprofit organization that the court established in 1984 to manage grants to legal-aid organizations that provide these state-supported civil legal services. Using all sources of funding, Texas legal-aid organizations serve approximately 100,000 people each fiscal year. For the 2026–27 biennium, TAJF anticipates funding approximately 23 legal-aid providers.

**FIGURE 12
SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS REGULAR CAUSES, FISCAL YEARS 2021 TO 2025**

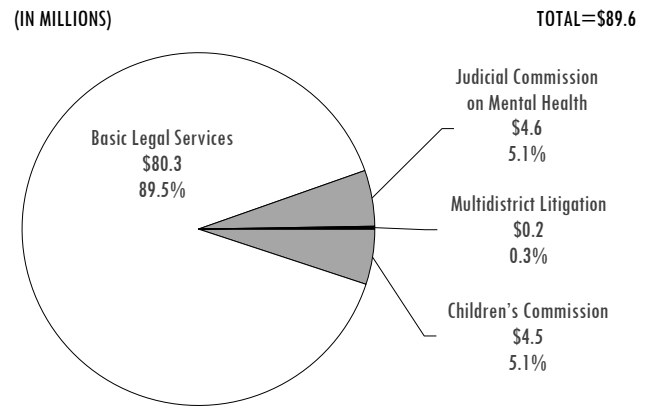


SOURCE: Office of Court Administration.

The BCLS program is funded from various sources within and outside of the General Appropriations Act (GAA), which include state funds, federal funding, donations or grants from foundations, and other funding sources such as Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts. **Figure 14** shows funding for BCLS from these sources for fiscal years 2021 to 2027. State funds represent an estimated 16.1 percent of total BCLS funding for the 2026–27 biennium.

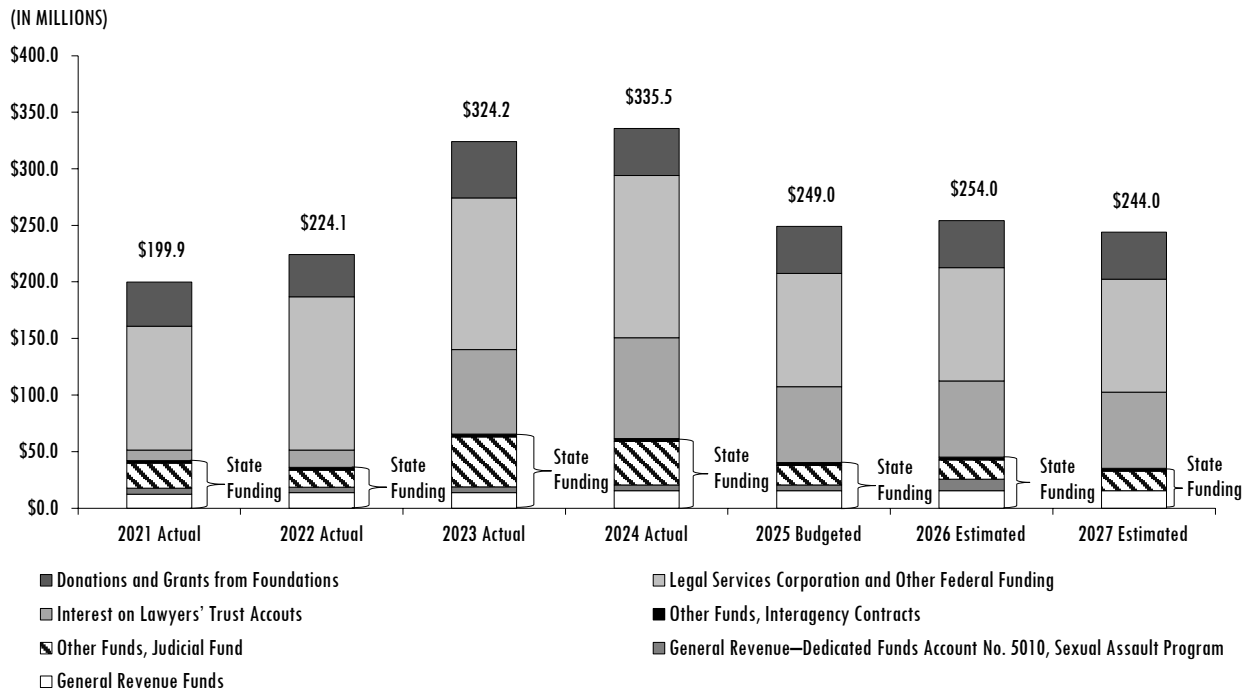
SCOT's appropriations for the BCLS program total \$80.3 million in All Funds for the 2026–27 biennium. Total funding includes \$34.3 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund, \$31.0 million in General Revenue Funds, \$10.0 million in General Revenue–Dedicated Funds from Account No. 5010, and \$5.0 million in Other Funds from Interagency Contracts.

**FIGURE 13
FUNDING FOR THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS
BY PROGRAM, 2026–27 BIENNIUM**



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

**FIGURE 14
BASIC CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES FUNDING SOURCES
FISCAL YEARS 2021 TO 2027**



NOTES:

- (1) Amounts shown for fiscal years 2021 to 2024 are actual; amounts shown for fiscal year 2025 are budgeted; and amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are estimated.
- (2) State funding includes appropriations from General Revenue Funds, General Revenue–Dedicated Funds, and Other Funds, including the Judicial Fund and Interagency Contracts.
- (3) Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts estimates for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are based on anticipated rates established by the Federal Reserve.

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board; Texas Access to Justice Foundation.

THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSION PROGRAM

The Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth, and Families, referred to as the Children's Commission program, supports the child protection system through collaborations among members of the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of government with other public and private stakeholders. The advisory Collaborative Council is chaired by a SCOT justice and includes more than 40 members. The commission includes four standing committees, including committees that support systems improvement, legal practice, data, and training. For the 2026–27 biennium, the program is appropriated \$4.6 million in All Funds, including \$3.9 million in Federal Funds and \$0.7 million in General Revenue Funds.

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

The Judicial Commission on Mental Health program is a joint commission of SCOT and the CCA. The commission develops and coordinates policy initiatives intended to improve the courts' interaction with children, adults, and families that have mental health needs. Program appropriations total \$4.6 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION PROGRAM

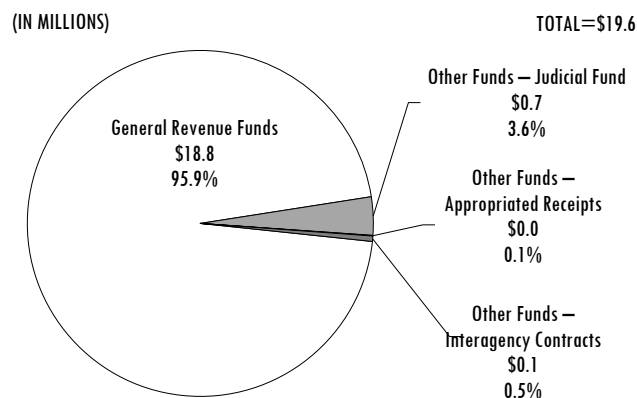
For the 2026–27 biennium, SCOT's Multidistrict Litigation program is appropriated \$0.2 million in General Revenue Funds for grants to trial courts and appellate courts for additional staff and technology to manage multidistrict litigation cases, such as asbestosis-related and silicosis-related cases.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS

The Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA) was established in 1891 and consists of a presiding judge and eight other judges. The court has statewide final appellate jurisdiction in criminal cases. It also has exclusive jurisdiction over appeals in death penalty cases and the power to issue writs. Other court responsibilities include promulgating rules of evidence and rules of appellate procedure for criminal cases. Judges serve staggered six-year terms following statewide elections, and vacancies are subject to gubernatorial appointment and the Senate's confirmation.

CCA is appropriated \$47.0 million in All Funds for the 2026–27 biennium to support operations and programs.

FIGURE 15
APPROPRIATIONS BY METHOD OF FINANCE
FOR COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS OPERATIONS
2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTES: Totals do not include benefits. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS OPERATIONS

Appropriations for the court's operations total \$19.6 million in All Funds, including \$18.8 million in General Revenue Funds and \$0.7 million in Other Funds. General Revenue Funds for court operations include \$3.9 million for judicial salaries, in accordance with the tenure-based compensation structure established by House Bill 2384, Eighty-sixth Legislature, 2019.

Figure 15 shows appropriations for CCA's operations by method of finance.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS CASELOAD

Most of CCA's caseload is mandated by the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 4, and includes review of applications for post-conviction habeas corpus relief in felony cases, original proceedings, and direct appeals. Original proceedings are filed directly with the court and include writs of certiorari, habeas corpus, mandamus, and prohibition. Direct appeals include death penalty appeals, DNA appeals, and appeals involving habeas corpus or extraordinary matters.

In addition to its mandatory caseload, decisions made by the Courts of Appeals in criminal cases may be appealed to the CCA through a petition for discretionary review. These petitions may be filed by the state, the defendant, or both. Figure 16 shows trends in the court's caseload in petitions for discretionary review from fiscal years 2021 to 2025.

During fiscal year 2025, 998 of these petitions were filed and 993 were disposed of, with 242 left pending.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS PROGRAMS

The court administers a grant program to provide continuing legal education and technical assistance for judges, court staff, prosecuting attorneys and their staff, and criminal defense attorneys that represent indigent defendants regularly in criminal matters.

Appropriations for the court's Judicial Education program total \$27.5 million in All Funds for the 2026–27 biennium. This amount includes \$1.3 million in General Revenue Funds and \$26.2 million in General Revenue–Dedicated Funds from Account No. 540, Judicial and Court Personnel Training. Account No. 540 is funded with court costs paid by individuals convicted of certain offenses, filing fee revenue, and fees of \$50 or less collected by SCOT and the 15 appellate courts.

The court's General Revenue Funds appropriation includes \$0.9 million for the court to contract statewide professional associations and other entities to provide continuing legal education, courses, and programs for judges and court staff regarding mental health issues and pretrial diversion. The appropriation also includes \$0.5 million to maintain, in coordination with SCOT, a training program to educate and inform judges and their staff regarding mental healthcare resources available in the state and \$0.4 million for continuing education for prosecuting and criminal defense attorneys.

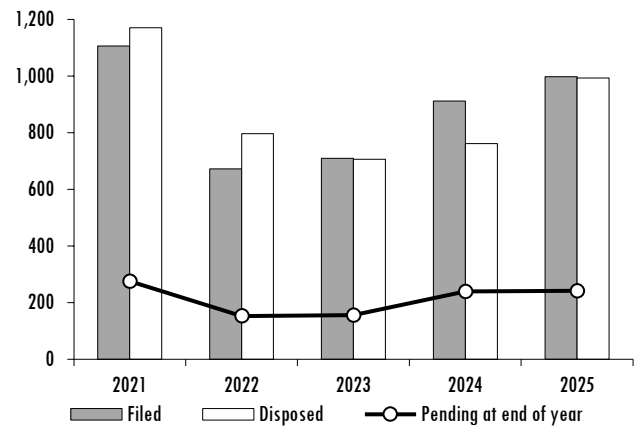
CCA staff monitor and audit grant use. **Figure 17** shows grant recipients for fiscal year 2026.

15 COURTS OF APPEALS

The Texas Constitution established the first intermediate appellate court in Texas in 1876. The Court of Appeals had appellate jurisdiction for all criminal and civil cases originating in the county courts. A constitutional amendment in 1891 authorized the Legislature to establish intermediate appellate courts at locations throughout the state. The most recently established appellate court, the Fifteenth Court of Appeals in Austin, began operating during fiscal year 2024. The appellate courts' jurisdiction does not extend to cases in which the death penalty has been assessed; appeals in these cases are filed directly to the CCA.

The state contains 15 appellate court districts (see **Figure 2** in the **Introduction** chapter). Each of the following cities contains one court: Amarillo, Beaumont, Corpus Christi–

FIGURE 16
PETITIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY REVIEW AT THE COURT
OF CRIMINAL APPEALS
FISCAL YEARS 2021 TO 2025



SOURCE: Office of Court Administration.

Edinburg, Dallas, Eastland, El Paso, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Texarkana, Tyler, and Waco. Austin and Houston each contain two courts. The number of justices at each court is set by statute and varies from three to 13. As of the 2026–27 biennium, 83 justices serve the 15 appellate courts.

The 89th Legislature, GAA, 2026–27 Biennium, appropriated \$127.2 million in All Funds to support the 15 courts. This amount includes \$121.2 million in General Revenue Funds and \$6.0 million in Other Funds, including funding from the Judicial Fund. Court operations include \$37.0 million in All Funds for judicial salaries, in accordance with the tenure-based compensation structure established by House Bill 2384, 86th Legislature, 2019.

Figure 18 shows appropriations for the appellate courts' operations by method of finance. The GAA does not include local funds used for appellate court operating costs or appellate court justices' salary supplements, except as a percentage of available funds shown in each court's bill pattern.

DOCKET EQUALIZATION

The Texas Government Code, Chapter 73, authorizes SCOT to transfer cases from one appellate court to another if SCOT determines good cause for the transfer. SCOT uses the docket equalization program to reduce disparities in the number of new cases filed per justice among the appellate courts. Appellate justices apply the law as it exists in the transferring court's appellate district. This practice avoids

FIGURE 17
FISCAL YEAR 2026 JUDICIAL EDUCATION GRANT RECIPIENTS

RECIPIENT	GRANT PURPOSE
Texas Center for the Judiciary	Training for judges and clerks serving in statutory county, district, and appellate courts
Texas Association of Counties	Continuing education and judicial reference materials for judges and clerks serving in constitutional county courts
Texas Municipal Courts Education Center	Training for judges and clerks serving in municipal courts including the following purposes: (a) direct training costs for clinics, and for judges and court staff regarding bail, fines, fees, requests for community service, jail commitments, and jail credits in cases involving indigent defendants; and (b) development of a mentor program for new municipal court judges, and production of webinars regarding legislative reform, bail, indigence, compliance, collections-improvement programs, alternate sentencing, case-flow management, and jail commitments
Texas Justice Court Training Center	Training for justices of the peace, clerks, and constables serving justice of the peace courts; support for education services and training regarding indigent defendants and mental health
Texas District and County Attorneys Association	Training for prosecutors, investigators, and other staff representing the government at district-level and county-level trial courts
Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association	Training for criminal defense attorneys that represent indigent defendants regularly in criminal matters
Center for American and International Law	Training for judges, prosecutors, and criminal defense attorneys
Texas District Court Alliance	Training for district clerks, deputy district clerks, and other court staff

SOURCE: Court of Criminal Appeals.

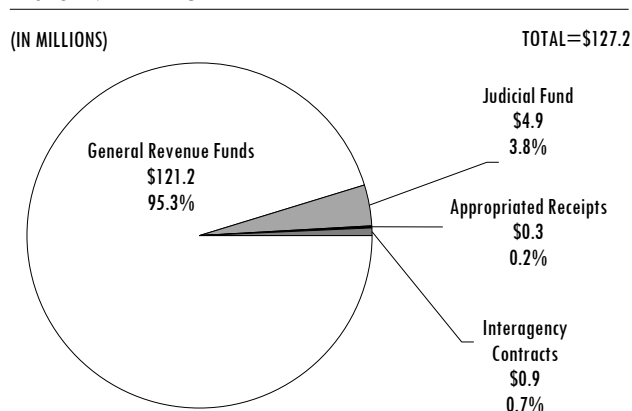
disparate effects on litigants and defendants in the cases' original jurisdictions.

During fiscal year 2025, SCOT transferred 627 cases to equalize workloads among the 15 appellate courts. **Figure 19** shows a comparison of the average number of new filings per justice before and after docket equalization. Before equalization, the number of new cases filed per justice ranged from 45 cases in the Fifteenth Court of Appeals, which has statewide jurisdiction, to 162 cases in the Second Court of Appeals, Fort Worth. Following equalization, the average filings per justice ranged from 85 at the Fifteenth Court, to 139 at the Third Court of Appeals, Austin. The statewide average number of new filings per justice was 116 cases before equalization and 117 after equalization.

APPELLATE COURT PERFORMANCE

The total clearance rate for the 15 appellate courts during fiscal year 2025 was 93.4 percent. A clearance rate measures the number of cases disposed as a percentage of filings during a reporting period. A clearance rate of 100.0 percent indicates that, during the year, the court disposed of the same number of cases as were added, resulting in no change to the court's case backlog.

FIGURE 18
APPROPRIATIONS BY METHOD OF FINANCE
FOR THE 15 COURTS OF APPEALS
2026–27 BIENNIUM

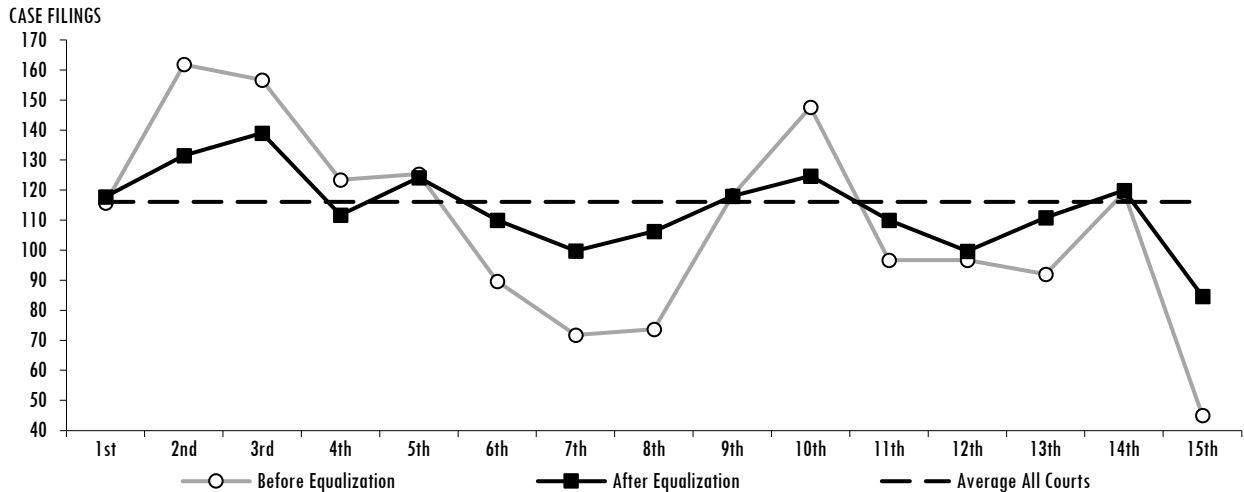


NOTE: Totals do not include benefits. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

During the 10.0-year period ending in fiscal year 2025, the average clearance rate for the appellate courts ranged from 92.9 percent during fiscal year 2022 to 114.0 percent during fiscal year 2021, as shown in **Figure 20**.

FIGURE 19
NEW FILINGS PER JUSTICE AT THE 15 COURTS OF APPEALS
FISCAL YEAR 2025 (1)



NOTE: (1) The Fifteenth Court of Appeals District, Austin, began operating during fiscal year 2024.
 SOURCE: Office of Court Administration.

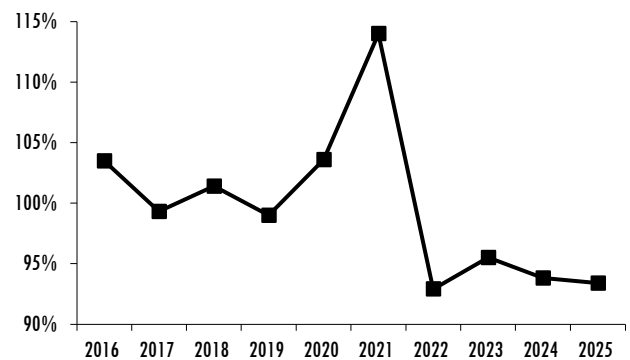
On average, during the 10.0-year period ending in fiscal year 2025, the appellate courts disposed of 9,674 cases per year, with 6,165 cases pending at the end of each year. At the end of fiscal year 2025, 6,862 cases were pending statewide, an increase of 1.2 percent from the previous year.

APPELLATE JUDICIAL SALARIES CONNECTED STATUTORILY TO DISTRICT JUDGE PAY

The Texas Government Code, Section 659.012, establishes a tiered, tenure-based compensation structure for certain judges and professional prosecutors that is calculated based on the amount the GAA sets as the base salary of a district judge. These judicial or prosecutorial salaries increase by percentages depending on the years of service for the judge or prosecutor.

The 2026–27 GAA, Article IV, Special Provisions – Judiciary, Section 7(d), sets the base salary of district judges at \$175,000. The Texas Government Code, Section 659.012, sets the salary for justices other than the chief justice of the Courts of Appeals, First to Fourteenth districts, at 110.0 percent of the district judge base salary (\$192,500) for the first four years of their service. After an appellate court justice has served for more than four years, the justice earns 110.0 percent of the \$192,500 base salary

FIGURE 20
AVERAGE CLEARANCE RATE FOR 15 COURTS OF APPEALS
FISCAL YEARS 2016 TO 2025



NOTE: The Fifteenth Court of Appeals District, Austin, began operating during fiscal year 2024.
 SOURCE: Office of Court Administration.

(\$211,750). Appellate court justices that serve eight years or more earn salaries equivalent to 120.0 percent of the \$192,500 base salary (\$231,000).

The Texas Government Code, Section 659.012(3), sets the base salary for justices other than the chief justice of the Fifteenth Court of Appeals District, Austin, at \$5,000 less than 120.0 percent of the state base salary of a district judge as set by the 2026–27 GAA (\$205,000).

FIGURE 21
JUDICIAL AND PROSECUTORIAL STATE COMPENSATION ESTABLISHED BY THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, SECTION 659.012
2026–27 BIENNIUM

JUDGE/PROSECUTOR	COURT/JUDICIAL DISTRICT/STATE AGENCY	SERVICE		
		STATE SALARY (0–4 YEARS)	TIER 1 (4–8 YEARS)	TIER 2 (8 OR MORE YEARS)
Chief Justice; Presiding Judge	Supreme Court of Texas; Court of Criminal Appeals	\$224,700	\$247,170	\$269,640
Justice; Judge	Supreme Court of Texas; Court of Criminal Appeals	\$210,000	\$231,000	\$252,000
Chief Justice	Courts of Appeals, First to Fourteenth districts	\$205,975	\$226,573	\$247,170
Justice	Courts of Appeals, First to Fourteenth districts	\$192,500	\$211,750	\$231,000
Chief Justice	Fifteenth Court of Appeals District, Austin	\$219,350	\$241,285	\$263,220
Justice	Fifteenth Court of Appeals District, Austin	\$205,000	\$225,500	\$246,000
Business Court Judge	Business Courts	\$200,000	\$220,000	\$240,000
District Judge	District Court	\$175,000	\$192,500	\$210,000

SOURCE: 89th Legislature, General Appropriations Act, 2026–27 Biennium, Article IV, Special Provisions – Judiciary, Section 7(d).

Figure 21 shows the state compensation amounts for each state judge and prosecutor position by years of service within each tier.

LOCAL FUNDS

The Texas Government Code, Chapter 22, authorizes the use of revenues collected from local consolidated filing fees authorized by the Texas Local Government Code, Sections 135.101 and 135.102, to support an appellate judicial system fund at each of the 15 appellate courts. These revenues provide funding for processing appeals from the county courts, statutory county courts, statutory probate courts, and district courts in the counties the appellate court serves. These revenues also defray the appellate courts' operating costs and expenses. The chief justice of each Court of Appeals is responsible for managing the money deposited in the court's judicial system fund and has sole discretion on the use of those funds, provided the uses are consistent with statute. **Figure 22** shows the collection of Chapter 22-authorized funds and other local funds by court during fiscal year 2025.

LOCAL FUNDS – SALARY SUPPLEMENT

Appellate court justices receive a local salary supplement in addition to their state salaries. These local salary supplements are funded voluntarily by counties within each of the appellate courts' districts. The Texas Government Code, Chapter 659, limits the total salary of an appeals court justice from state and county sources. That amount must be \$5,000 less than the state salary paid to a SCOT justice (\$210,000), which is \$205,000.

Counties provided local salary supplements to each appellate court during fiscal year 2025, except for the Fifteenth Court, which has statewide jurisdiction and its justices receive salary supplements directly from the state. However, the number of counties that provide a local salary supplement varies by court. During fiscal year 2025, approximately 96.3 percent of appellate justices received the maximum supplement.

Figure 22 shows the salary supplement for the 14 Courts of Appeals that receive a local salary supplement during fiscal year 2025. Local salary supplement funding totaled \$0.7 million during fiscal year 2025 for all 80 justices serving on these 14 courts.

LONGEVITY PAY

The Texas Government Code, Chapter 659, authorizes the 15 appellate courts and the Judiciary Section, Comptroller's Department, to provide active judges and justices with longevity pay. Judges receive an amount equal to 5.0 percent multiplied by the judge's or justice's monthly state salary starting with the month after the judge or justice completes 12.0 years of retirement service credit.

SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION

The following legislation from the 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, affected the financing of the judiciary.

Senate Bill 293 increases judicial salaries by increasing the state base salary of a district judge from \$140,000 to \$175,000, provides additional compensation to a business

FIGURE 22
APPELLATE COURTS ANNUAL COLLECTIONS AND SALARY SUPPLEMENTS, FISCAL YEAR 2025

COURT	JUSTICES	LOCAL FUNDS COLLECTIONS (1)	LOCAL SALARY SUPPLEMENT PER JUDGE
First Court of Appeals, Houston	9	\$336,076	\$9,000
Second Court of Appeals, Fort Worth	7	\$341,462	\$9,000
Third Court of Appeals, Austin	6	\$251,210	\$9,000
Fourth Court of Appeals, San Antonio	7	\$257,574	\$9,000
Fifth Court of Appeals, Dallas	13	\$350,252	\$9,000
Sixth Court of Appeals, Texarkana	3	\$64,557	\$8,001
Seventh Court of Appeals, Amarillo	4	\$66,907	\$9,000
Eighth Court of Appeals, El Paso	3	\$74,519	\$9,000
Ninth Court of Appeals, Beaumont	4	\$118,097	\$9,000
Tenth Court of Appeals, Waco	3	\$107,991	\$9,000
Eleventh Court of Appeals, Eastland	3	\$104,212	\$9,000
Twelfth Court of Appeals, Tyler	3	\$77,414	\$9,000
Thirteenth Court of Appeals, Corpus Christi–Edinburg	6	\$9,048	\$9,000
Fourteenth Court of Appeals, Houston	9	\$305,531	\$9,000
Total	80	\$2,464,850	

NOTES:

(1) The Texas Government Code, Chapter 22, authorizes the use of revenues collected from local consolidated filing fees to support an appellate judicial system fund at each Court of Appeals.

(2) The Fifteenth Court of Appeals, Austin, has statewide jurisdiction and its justices receive salary supplements directly from the state.

SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board; Office of Court Administration.

court judge, and revises the compensation structure of the chief justice or presiding judge of an appellate court, and any judge who serves as local administrative judge. The legislation calculates the retirement annuity for members of the elected class using a salary of \$175,000 and directs the Texas Ethics Commission to assess potential increases every five years beginning in fiscal year 2030. The 2026–27 GAA provides \$174.3 million in All Funds to implement the provisions of Senate Bill 293.

STATE FUNDING FOR JUDICIAL BRANCH AGENCY OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS

In addition to funding costs for appellate courts, trial courts, and prosecutors, the Legislature funds the following judicial branch agencies:

- Office of Court Administration (OCA) and Texas Judicial Council;
- Texas Indigent Defense Commission, which is attached administratively to OCA;
- Office of Capital and Forensic Writs;
- State Law Library;
- State Commission on Judicial Conduct; and
- Judiciary Section, Comptroller's Department.

Figure 23 shows appropriations to these agencies for the 2026–27 biennium.

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

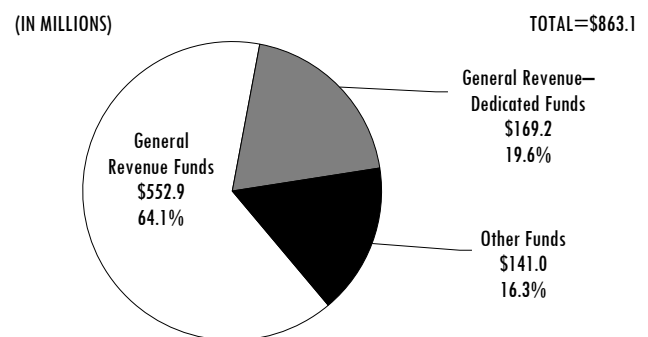
OCA was established in 1977 and operates under the direction of the Supreme Court of Texas (SCOT). OCA provides administrative support to the courts and several other judicial entities, some of which are attached administratively to the agency.

Appropriations for OCA for the 2026–27 biennium total \$365.3 million in All Funds, which consists of the following methods of finance:

- \$195.9 million in General Revenue Funds; and
- \$169.1 million in General Revenue–Dedicated Funds from the following accounts:
 - \$65.0 million from Account No. 5073, Fair Defense;
 - \$103.8 million from Account No. 5157, Statewide Electronic Filing System; and
 - \$0.3 million from Account No. 5173, Texas Forensic Science Commission; and
- \$0.3 million in Other Funds.

Other Funds do not include \$17.2 million in Interagency Contracts, of which \$15.3 million is from the Office of the Attorney General for child-support specialty court contracts.

FIGURE 23
APPROPRIATIONS BY METHOD OF FINANCE
FOR JUDICIAL BRANCH AGENCIES
2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTES:

- (1) Other Funds do not include \$17.2 million in Interagency Contracts at the Office of Court Administration, which consists of \$15.3 million from the Office of the Attorney General for child-support specialty court contracts, \$3.0 million in Criminal Justice Grants from the Office of the Governor for the Special Prosecution Unit, and several smaller contracts.
- (2) Totals do not include benefits.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

OCA provides information and technical assistance to more than 2,700 state and local courts. The agency also compiles judicial statistics for the Legislature, executive branch agencies, and the public.

The agency serves as staff for the Texas Judicial Council, which studies the judicial system and recommends policy improvements regarding the administration of justice to the Office of the Governor, the Legislature, and SCOT. The council includes representatives of the judiciary, the Legislature, the State Bar of Texas, and public stakeholders.

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS

STATEWIDE ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM

OCA manages a statewide electronic filing system known as eFileTexas.gov through a contract with a third-party vendor. The system enables attorneys to file civil cases electronically, including family and probate cases, in appellate courts, district courts, statutory county courts, constitutional county courts, and statutory probate courts. Appropriations for the program total \$97.5 million in General Revenue–Dedicated Funds from Account No. 5157 for the 2026–27 biennium.

Revenue to Account No. 5157 includes a portion of the civil filing fee paid to state and local courts for civil, probate, guardianship, and mental health filings; a \$30 filing fee collected by SCOT or any of the 15 Courts of Appeals; and 0.5485 percent of the court costs paid by individuals convicted of certain misdemeanors or felonies.

UNIFORM CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

OCA maintains the Uniform Case Management System to provide magistrates in certain counties with immediate access to critical information and to expedite the reporting of court records for federal firearm background checks. Appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium total \$5.2 million in General Revenue–Dedicated Funds from Account No. 5157.

GUARDIANSHIP ABUSE, FRAUD, AND EXPLOITATION DETERRENCE PROGRAM

OCA provides resources to courts relating to monitoring and compliance with guardianship matters, which includes reviewing and auditing cases to identify potential abuse, fraud, or financial exploitation. The program is available at no expense to counties. Appropriations for the program total \$4.3 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

REPORTING COMPLIANCE AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

The program provides support to courts through the assessment of data collection and reporting practices, offering tailored guidance on to improve court reporting accuracy. Appropriations total \$3.1 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

COURT SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The program provides support to courts and counties in assessing and improving personal and courthouse security through court security consultation, emergency preparedness training, and the implementation of privacy protections for judges. Appropriations total \$0.8 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

COURT CONSULTING SERVICES

OCA provides technical assistance and training to courts regarding court administration topics such as evaluating and implementing case management, establishing administrative programs, and advising jury management. OCA anticipates providing 274 educational presentations to various external groups regarding these topics during the 2026–27 biennium.

Appropriations for the program total \$3.0 million in All Funds, including \$2.4 million in General Revenue Funds and \$0.6 million in Interagency Contracts.

BAIL REFORM

Appropriations for the Bail Reform program total \$3.2 million in All Funds to implement provisions of Senate Bill 6, 87th Legislature, Second Called Session, 2021. This amount includes \$2.3 million in General Revenue Funds and \$0.9 million in General Revenue–Dedicated Funds from Account No. 5157 to maintain a public safety reporting system that is accessible to officials in each county and municipality and provides information for a magistrate to consider before setting bail for certain defendants. Appropriations include funding to develop training for magistrates regarding public reports and setting bail, developing required procedures and forms, and reporting required information.

CHILD SUPPORT COURTS

The Texas Family Code, Chapter 201, authorizes OCA to employ associate judges to hear child support enforcement cases during expedited timeframes pursuant to federal requirements. The agency maintains 43 child support courts statewide. Appropriations for the Child Support Courts program total \$23.5 million in All Funds. This amount includes \$8.2 million in General Revenue Funds and \$15.3 million in Other Funds through an Interagency Contract with the Office of the Attorney General to obtain Federal Funds pursuant to the U.S. Social Security Act, Title IV, Part D. These pass-through Federal Funds are used to pay associate judge salaries and program operating expenses.

CHILD PROTECTION COURTS

OCA maintains 30 child protection service areas in rural counties, whose primary costs are the salaries of associate judges and assistants. The Child Protection Courts are intended to decrease the time children are placed in temporary foster care by expediting the judicial administration of child abuse, neglect, and adoption cases. Appropriations for the Child Protection Courts program total \$18.2 million in All Funds, including \$18.1 million in General Revenue Funds and \$0.1 million in Interagency Contracts.

The associate judges who serve child support and child protection courts are appointed to four-year terms by the presiding judge of each administrative judicial region. The Texas Family Code, Sections 201.105 and 201.205,

set these associate judges' salaries at 90.0 percent of a district judge's salary with comparable years of service, or \$157,500.

TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION

The Texas Forensic Science Commission (TFSC) is attached administratively to OCA. TFSC investigates allegations of professional negligence or professional misconduct that could affect the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis conducted by an accredited laboratory. The agency also operates a licensing program for forensic analysts subject to accreditation and a forensic analyst apprenticeship program to address the growing need for forensic science professionals in the state.

Appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium total \$5.7 million in All Funds, including \$5.4 million in General Revenue Funds and \$0.3 million in General Revenue–Dedicated Funds from Account No. 5173, which is funded by forensic analyst license fees.

JUDICIAL BRANCH CERTIFICATION COMMISSION

The Judicial Branch Certification Commission (JBCC) oversees the certification, registration, and licensing of court reporters and court-reporting firms, guardians and guardianship programs, process servers, and licensed court interpreters. JBCC includes nine members appointed by SCOT that serve staggered terms and are advised by four boards, one for each of the four types of certifications that JBCC oversees. OCA staff provide administrative support for JBCC. Appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium total \$1.5 million in All Funds.

CASE LEVEL DATA SYSTEM

Appropriations for the Case Level Data System program total \$4.0 million in General Revenue Funds to maintain a cloud-based information technology (IT) system that collects and analyzes case-level data from district, county, justice, and municipal courts and from SCOT, the Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA), and the 15 Courts of Appeals.

BUSINESS COURT

The 89th Legislature, General Appropriations Act, 2026–27 Biennium, provides \$14.3 million in General Revenue Funds for the Business Court program to implement provisions of House Bill 19, 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, which established a specialized, statewide business trial court as a statutory court pursuant to the Texas Constitution, Article V, Section 1, to hear certain

business-related cases. The court, located in Austin, is served by 10 judges appointed by the Governor with advice and consent from the Senate.

INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION

The Indirect Administration program includes the agency's executive, legal, human resources, and information technology support to OCA's staff, courts, and other judicial branch agencies. Appropriations total \$30.1 million in All Funds.

TEXAS INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION

The Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) is a 13-member standing committee of the Texas Judicial Council that consists of eight ex officio members, including the Presiding Judge of CCA and the Chief Justice of SCOT, and five additional members appointed by the Governor. TIDC is attached administratively to OCA.

A combination of state and local funding supports indigent defense services, and counties provide most of the funding. **Figure 24** shows indigent defense funding at the state and local levels from fiscal years 2023 to 2025, and state appropriations for fiscal years 2026 and 2027. Appropriations for state indigent defense funding total \$168.1 million for the 2026–27 biennium.

TIDC carries out its responsibilities through four programs that provide financial and technical support to counties to develop and maintain quality, cost-effective indigent defense systems that meet the needs of local communities and the requirements of the constitution and state law.

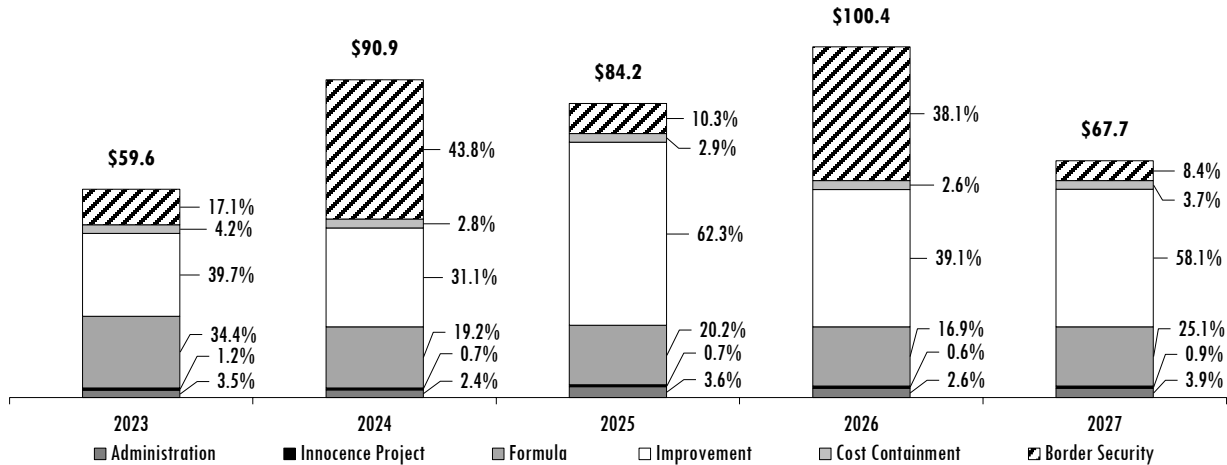
TIDC GRANT PROGRAMS

Appropriations for TIDC's grant programs for the 2026–27 biennium total \$117.7 million. This amount includes \$58.6 million in General Revenue–Dedicated Funds from Account No. 5073 and \$59.1 million in General Revenue Funds.

TIDC provides two types of grants to counties: formula grants and discretionary grants. TIDC distributes formula grants to all 254 Texas counties to provide constitutionally required indigent defense representation in compliance with the Texas Fair Defense Act of 2001. TIDC awards discretionary grants to help counties develop new programs or processes to improve indigent defense. These improvements may include funding for new public defender offices; new managed assigned counsel systems; mental health, juvenile, or other specialty defender offices; indigent defense coordinators; and other programs that implement

FIGURE 24
TEXAS INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION BUDGET BY PROGRAM
FISCAL YEARS 2023 TO 2027

(IN MILLIONS)



NOTE: Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are budgeted.
 SOURCE: Office of Court Administration.

cost-containment initiatives to limit local indigent defense cost increases.

BORDER SECURITY

Appropriations for the Border Security program total \$43.9 million in General Revenue Funds to provide indigent legal representation, foreign language interpreters for courts, costs for the adjudication of felony cases associated with Operation Lone Star, and for visiting judge costs.

TIDC INNOCENCE PROJECTS

The Innocence Project program provides grants of \$1.2 million to six state law schools (\$100,000 per school each fiscal year) to support student collaboration with attorneys to review noncapital criminal case convictions, research claims of actual innocence for wrongfully convicted individuals, and identify reforms to improve criminal defense practices. The funding provides law students with opportunities to gain practical experience while furthering their education and serving the public interest. These law schools include Texas Tech University, the University of Houston, the University of Texas at Austin, Texas Southern University, the University of North Texas, and Texas A&M University.

TIDC ADMINISTRATION

TIDC is appropriated \$5.3 million in All Funds for administration and operation expenses.

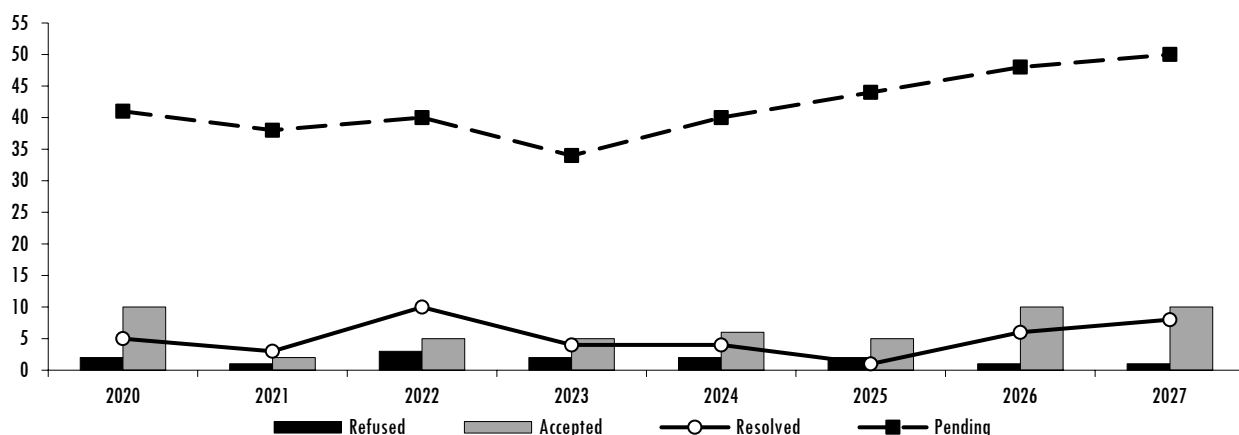
OFFICE OF CAPITAL AND FORENSIC WRITS

The Office of Capital Writs was established in 2010 to represent offenders sentenced to death in state post-conviction habeas corpus and related proceedings. The Eighty-fourth Legislature, 2015, renamed the agency the Office of Capital and Forensic Writs (OCFW) and expanded its powers and duties to include representing defendants in cases involving forensic sciences issues. OCFW's appropriations total \$8.7 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

OCFW staff investigators work with the agency's attorneys to identify any new evidence that could be included in the appeal. The convicting trial court may grant OCFW an evidentiary hearing, at which the agency may present new information that the court may not have considered during the trial. These proceedings, any answers or motions filed, exhibits introduced, and findings of fact and conclusions of law that are proposed by counsel and entered by the court are transmitted to CCA for review.

Figure 25 shows the number of cases OCFW processed from fiscal years 2020 to 2025 and projections for fiscal years 2026 and 2027. The Texas Government Code, Section 78.054(a)(1)–(4), authorizes OCFW to refuse an appointment if the appointment would result in a conflict of interest; the office determines it has insufficient resources to provide adequate representation for a

FIGURE 25
OFFICE OF CAPITAL AND FORENSIC WRITS CASELOAD HIGHLIGHTS
FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2027



NOTE: Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are projected.
 SOURCE: Office of Capital and Forensic Writs.

defendant; the office is incapable of providing representation for the defendant in accordance with the rules of professional conduct; or other good cause is shown for not accepting the appointment.

STATE LAW LIBRARY

The State Law Library (SLL) was established in 1971. Statute directs the library to maintain a legal reference facility for use by SCOT, CCA, the Office of the Attorney General, other state agencies, and Texas residents. The library maintains a collection of more than 100,000 items of primary and secondary source material regarding Texas law, information regarding Texas legal history, federal primary source materials, major law reviews, treatises and monographs on general law, and selected federal publications.

SLL also provides the following services:

- reference assistance to library patrons by phone, email, and postal mail;
- training to library patrons on legal research;
- topical guides regarding specific sections of law;
- reference and copy services to people incarcerated within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and their families; and
- remote access to its legal databases, electronic books, digitized historical statutes, and topical research guides.

Since fiscal year 2014, the library has provided remote access to its legal databases, electronic books, digitized historical statutes, and topical research guides maintained by library staff. The agency reports that registrants for these digital resources represent 249 of the 254 Texas counties.

Appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium total \$3.1 million in All Funds.

STATE COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT

The State Commission on Judicial Conduct (SCJC) was established by constitutional amendment in 1965 and consists of 13 members appointed by SCOT, and the Governor. The agency's constitutional mandate is to enforce the Code of Judicial Conduct promulgated by SCOT by considering allegations of judicial misconduct or incapacity from the public, which could lead to investigation by SCJC staff.

After an investigation, SCJC may dismiss the complaint or issue an order for additional education, suspension, or private or public sanction; or the judge may resign in lieu of disciplinary action. The judge may appeal any of these decisions to a panel of three appellate judges, known as a special court of review, which presides over a trial that is open to the public.

After a public trial or formal hearing, a special master reports findings of fact to SCJC, which then may vote for dismissal or public censure, or recommend removal or involuntary retirement to SCOT. A judge that receives a public censure

may appeal this decision to a special court of review, which may move for dismissal, affirm the SCJC's decision, or move for formal proceedings.

The following recent legislation has updated how the agency processes complaints and the makeup of the commission:

- House Bill 367, 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, which authorizes the SCJC to accept complaints, conduct investigations, and take actions regarding candidates for judicial office in the same manner as actions taken regarding judges;
- Senate Bill 293, 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, which expands the definition of willful or persistent misconduct for which SCJC may issue discipline, shortens the timeframes and revises the process for investigating and disposing of complaints, and authorizes SCJC to impose an administrative penalty for knowingly filing a false complaint; and
- Senate Joint Resolution 27, 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, is a voter-approved constitutional amendment that revises, among other items, the membership of the 13 commissioners to six justices or judges, two of whom must be trial court judges, appointed by SCOT and seven citizens at least age 35 appointed by the Governor with advice and consent of the Senate.

Appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium total \$4.7 million in General Revenue Funds for SCJC.

JUDICIARY SECTION, COMPTROLLER'S DEPARTMENT

The Judiciary Section, Comptroller's Department, coordinates the payment of salaries and expenses for all state district judges, district attorneys, and other prosecutors in Texas, including the Special Prosecution Unit headquartered in Walker County.

Appropriations for the Judiciary Section, Comptroller's Department, for the 2026–27 biennium total \$481.2 million in All Funds, including \$340.5 million in General Revenue Funds and \$140.7 million in Other Funds.

Other Funds include the following fund sources:

- \$106.7 million from the Judicial Fund;
- \$27.5 million from the Jury Service Fund; and

- \$6.5 million from the Assistant Prosecutor Supplement Fund.

These amounts do not include \$3.0 million in Interagency Contracts – Criminal Justice Grants provided to the Special Prosecution Unit headquartered in Walker County.

In addition, the Judiciary Section operates the following programs.

WITNESS EXPENSES

The Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Articles 24.28 and 35.27, provides for the reimbursement of travel expenses for witnesses called in criminal proceedings who reside outside of the county in which the trial takes place. The 2026–27 biennial appropriations for witness expenses total \$2.8 million in General Revenue Funds.

DEATH PENALTY REPRESENTATION

The Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 11.071, requires the state to provide compensation up to \$25,000 per appointment for counsel representing death-row inmates. Appropriations for death penalty representation total \$50,000 in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

INDIGENT INMATE DEFENSE

The Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 26.051(i), requires the state to reimburse a county for the defense of an indigent inmate charged with an offense committed while in a correctional facility's custody if it is determined that representation by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's State Counsel for Offenders would cause a conflict of interest. Appropriations for indigent inmate defense total \$0.1 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS

The Legislature appropriates funds to pay for the Texas judiciary's membership in the National Center for State Courts. Appropriations for this membership total \$1.2 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

JUROR PAY

The program provides funding to meet legal requirements that counties pay jurors at least \$20 on the first day of service and at least \$58 for each subsequent day. The state reimburses counties for \$14 on the first day and \$52 for each subsequent

day. Funding for the juror pay program totals \$38.1 million in All Funds, including \$27.5 million in Other Funds from the Jury Service Fund and \$10.6 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium. The state contribution toward juror pay is funded from revenues generated by a court fee charged upon conviction of any offense, other than pedestrian-related or parking-related offenses.

DOCKET EQUALIZATION

The program provides funding to support SCOT’s transfer of cases from one appellate court to another, including payment of travel expenses incurred by appellate justices and their staff that travel to hear cases transferred to them for disposition. Appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium total \$10,000 in General Revenue Funds.

STATE FUNDING FOR TRIAL COURTS

Trial courts are courts in which witnesses provide testimony, exhibits are offered as evidence, and hearings may be conducted before juries. Either the trial court judge or a jury reaches a decision based upon the evidence presented. The trial court structure in Texas has several levels. Each level handles different types of cases, with some overlapping jurisdictions.

District courts are the state trial court of general jurisdiction. County-level courts consist of constitutional county courts, statutory county courts, and statutory probate courts. In addition, each county has at least one justice court. Each incorporated city contains a municipal court. Cities finance all costs related to the operation of municipal courts, including judges' salaries. For more information on the levels of courts in the state, see the **Introduction** chapter.

Except where noted, state funding for trial courts is budgeted at the Judiciary Section, Comptroller's Department. Funding includes the base salary for district court judges and salary supplements for constitutional county, statutory county, and statutory probate judges.

The 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, appropriated \$322.7 million to support trial courts, including \$240.8 million in General Revenue Funds and \$81.9 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund. **Figure 26** shows these appropriations by method of finance.

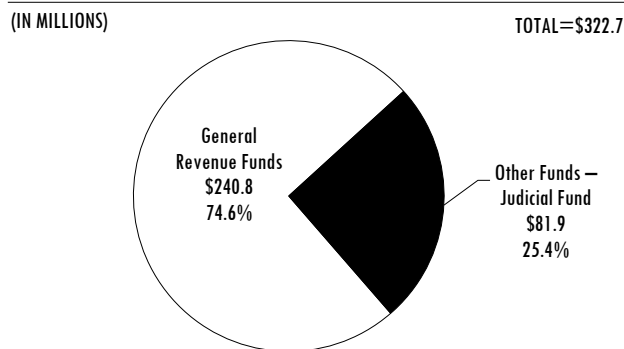
Figure 27 shows All Funds trial court appropriations for the 2026–27 biennium by type of expenditure. A total of \$212.4 million, approximately two-thirds of trial court appropriations, is appropriated for district courts. The courts' expenditures include district judge salaries and salary supplements, travel, per diem, and other staff and operating expenses. Appropriations for county courts total \$83.4 million to fund county judge salaries and supplements. Appropriations totaling \$26.9 million pay for the costs of retired and former district judges called to serve as visiting judges for district courts.

DISTRICT COURTS

District courts have original jurisdiction in the following types of cases:

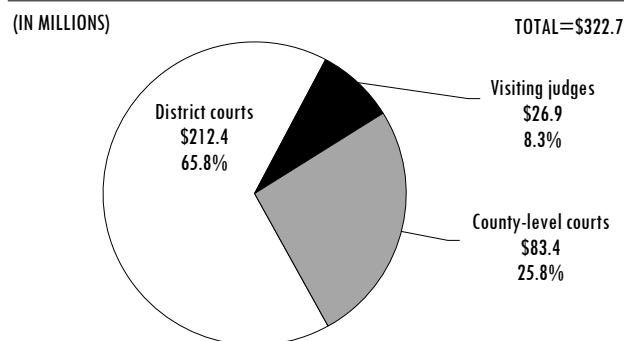
- felony criminal cases;
- divorce cases;

FIGURE 26
APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRIAL COURTS BY METHOD
OF FINANCE, 2026–27 BIENNIUM



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 27
APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRIAL COURTS BY TYPE
OF EXPENDITURE, 2026–27 BIENNIUM



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

- cases involving title to land;
- election contest cases;
- civil matters in which the amount of money or damages involved is \$500 or more; and
- any matter in which jurisdiction is not in another trial court.

Most district courts try criminal and civil cases, but courts in more populated counties may specialize in civil, criminal, juvenile, or family law matters.

As of January 2026, Texas has 510 district courts. The geographical area served by each court is established in statute. In less populated areas of the state, a single district

court may serve several counties, and several district courts may serve an urban county. House Bill 16, 89th Legislature, Second Called Session, 2025, established 14 new district courts. Five courts became effective on December 4, 2025; seven courts become effective September 1, 2026; and two courts become effective October 1, 2026.

The Texas Government Code, Section 659.012, establishes a tiered, tenure-based compensation structure for certain judges and professional prosecutors that is calculated from the base salary of a district judge. These salaries' calculations adjust to certain percentages of that base salary depending on the judge's years of service. A district judge earns an annual state salary of \$175,000 for the first four years of service. After the district judge has served more than four years, the judge earns 110.0 percent of the base salary (\$192,500). A district judge with more than eight years of service earns 120.0 percent of the base salary (\$210,000).

The Texas Government Code, Section 659.0125, authorizes a retired judge appointed to a multidistrict litigation pretrial court to receive \$52,500 annually, which is equivalent to the compensation and benefits paid to a presiding judge of an administrative judicial region pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 74.051(b).

Appropriations for district judge salaries total \$212.4 million for the 2026–27 biennium, including \$179.9 million in General Revenue Funds and \$32.5 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund.

COUNTY-LEVEL COURTS

The county-level court structure in Texas includes constitutional county courts; statutory county courts; and statutory probate courts.

Appropriations for county-level courts total \$83.4 million, including \$34.0 million in General Revenue Funds and \$49.4 million in Other Funds.

CONSTITUTIONAL COUNTY COURTS

The Texas Constitution, Article V, Section 15, provides that a county judge presides over a single constitutional county court in each of the state's 254 counties. Constitutional county courts have original jurisdiction over certain civil actions; probate, mental health, and guardianship cases; certain misdemeanors; juvenile matters; and appeals from lower courts. They also hear probate cases filed in the county unless a statutory probate court has been established.

Constitutional county courts have concurrent jurisdiction with justice courts, also known as justice of the peace courts, and district courts in certain civil cases. These cases include those in which the amount in controversy ranges from \$200 to \$10,000 (justice courts) or from \$500 to \$5,000 (district courts).

In addition to performing judicial functions, the county judge serves as the chief executive of county government. Judges may receive an annual salary supplement from the state equal to 18.0 percent of the district judge base salary if judicial functions account for at least 18.0 percent of their responsibilities or time at court. The base supplement is \$31,500 for the 2026–27 biennium.

Appropriations for constitutional county court supplements total \$17.9 million for the 2026–27 biennium, including \$13.0 million in General Revenue Funds and \$4.9 million in Other Funds.

STATUTORY COUNTY COURTS (COUNTY COURTS AT LAW)

In more populous counties, the county judge may focus exclusively on the administration of county government. For this reason, the Legislature established statutory county courts, also known as county courts at law, to aid the constitutional county court in its judicial functions. Statutory county courts include 262 county courts at law in 92 counties and two multicounty courts at law serving six counties. House Bill 16, 89th Legislature, Second Called Session, 2025, established a new statutory county court in Maverick County, effective December 4, 2025.

The legal jurisdiction for each statutorily established county court at law varies and may be concurrent in certain civil and criminal matters with the jurisdiction of the district courts in the county. County courts at law have varied civil jurisdiction, which typically operate at a level more than justice of the peace courts and less than district courts. County courts at law typically have appellate jurisdiction in cases appealed from justice of the peace and municipal courts.

The Texas Government Code, Section 25.0005(a), establishes the salary range for statutory county court judges. In accordance with the tiered, tenure-based compensation structure established by the Texas Government Code, Section 659.012, the minimum is \$1,000 less than the sum of the annual salary for a district judge with comparable years of service plus any salary supplements paid to a district judge in

the county. The maximum salary may not exceed \$1,000 less than the sum of the maximum combined annual salary from all state and county sources, including longevity pay, paid to a district judge in accordance with the structure established by Section 659.012. The Texas Government Code, Section 25.0015, requires the state to contribute 60.0 percent of a district judge's base salary (\$105,000) toward each statutory county court judge's salary.

The judge of a multicounty statutory county court earns a salary equal to 100.0 percent of the state base salary paid to a district judge, \$175,000, beginning in fiscal year 2026.

Appropriations to pay statutory county judge salary supplements for the 2026–27 biennium total \$58.6 million, including \$19.2 million in General Revenue Funds and \$39.4 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund.

STATUTORY PROBATE COURTS

The constitutional county court has original probate jurisdiction in most counties. In some counties, the Legislature by statute has established probate courts, which have original and exclusive jurisdiction of each county's probate matters, guardianship cases, and mental health commitments. Twelve counties have a total of 25 statutory probate courts. House Bill 16, 89th Legislature, Second Called Session, 2025, established one new statutory probate court in Hidalgo County.

The Texas Government Code, Section 25.0023, establishes the minimum and maximum salaries for statutory probate court judges. In accordance with the tiered, tenure-based compensation structure established by the Texas Government Code, Section 659.012, the minimum is equal to the sum of the annual salary for a district judge with comparable years of service plus any state and county contributions and supplements paid to a district judge in the county. The maximum is \$1,000 less than the highest salary a district judge can earn in the highest salary tier with maximum county supplement plus longevity pay. The Texas Government Code, Section 25.00211, requires the state to contribute 60.0 percent of a district judge's base salary (\$105,000) toward each statutory probate court judge's salary.

Appropriations to pay statutory probate judge salary supplements for the 2026–27 biennium total \$6.1 million, including \$0.9 million in General Revenue Funds and \$5.2 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund.

ADMINISTRATIVE JUDICIAL REGIONS

The Texas Government Code, Section 74.042, establishes 11 administrative judicial regions in Texas, each with one regional presiding judge designated by the Governor, as shown in the **Introduction** chapter, **Figure 3**.

The responsibilities of a judicial region's presiding judge include promulgating and implementing regional rules of administration; advising local judges regarding judicial management; making recommendations to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas regarding judicial assignments from outside the region and the organization, jurisdiction, operation, or procedures of the region; and serving for local administrative statutory county court judges in their absence.

Salaries for regional presiding judges are set by the Texas Government Code, Section 74.051(b) and (c). Regional presiding judges earn a base salary ranging from \$52,500 to \$78,750, depending on the judge's status as an active, former, or retired district judge and the number of district courts in the region. These salary costs are shared by the counties that constitute the region.

Appropriations for administrative judicial regions total \$0.8 million General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

COMPENSATION FOR TRIAL COURT JUDGES

Texas trial court judges are compensated through a combination of state and local funding, and statute bases amounts on the state salary of a district judge. **Figure 28** shows the statutory limits for state and local compensation for trial court judges.

Statute authorizes additional judicial salary supplements and payments. **Figure 29** shows these supplements, their amounts, and their statutory authorizations.

VISITING JUDGES

The 89th Legislature, General Appropriations Act (GAA), 2026–27 Biennium, appropriates \$26.9 million in General Revenue Funds to the Judiciary Section, Comptroller's Department, for visiting judges' salaries and expenses.

The presiding judges of the administrative judicial regions assign visiting judges at the trial court level. The most common reasons that district courts request visiting judges are for assistance with a heavy docket or to perform the duties of judges who are unavailable due to illness, vacation, or recusal. Civil litigants also have a onetime prerogative to remove visiting judges assigned to their cases.

FIGURE 28
STATE PORTION OF TRIAL COURT SALARIES BASED ON STATE DISTRICT JUDGE SALARY, 2026–27 BIENNIUM

POSITION	THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE AUTHORIZATION	SERVICE		
		0 TO 4 YEARS	4 TO 8 YEARS	8 YEARS OR MORE
District judge	§659.012(a)	\$175,000	\$192,500	\$210,000
Presiding judge of an administrative judicial region (active district judge)	§74.051(b)	≤\$52,500	≤\$57,750	≤\$63,000
Presiding judge of an administrative judicial region (retired or former district judge or appellate judge)	§74.051(c)	\$52,500– \$78,750	\$57,750– \$86,625	\$63,000– \$94,500
Constitutional county court judge	§26.006	\$31,500	\$34,650	\$37,800
Statutory county court judge (county court at law judge)	§25.0015	\$105,000	\$105,000	\$105,000
Statutory probate court judge	§§25.0023 and 25.00211	\$105,000	\$105,000	\$105,000
Multicounty statutory court judge	§25.2607(d)	\$175,000	\$192,500	\$210,000

NOTE: Amounts show state contribution only. Counties provide additional salary supplements. See **Appendix A** for combined salary amounts.
 SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board; Office of Court Administration.

FIGURE 29
OTHER STATE-PAID TRIAL COURT SALARY SUPPLEMENTS AND PAYMENTS, 2026–27 BIENNIUM

LOCAL SALARY OR SUPPLEMENT	AUTHORIZATION IN THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE	ANNUAL AMOUNT
District judge travel	Travel and other necessary expenses for district judges with multicounty jurisdictions (§24.019)	Varies
Judicial salary per diem	A per diem received when a trial court judge (district, statutory probate, or constitutional or statutory county court judge) is assigned to a case outside the district or county (§74.003(c) and §74.061(f))	\$25 per day
Local administrative district judge supplement	§659.012(d)(1-3) establishes the salaries of local administrative district judge supplement according to the number of district courts in the county: • three or four district courts – 3.0 percent greater than the base salary of a district court judge, \$180,250; • Five to nine district courts – 5.0 percent greater than the base salary of a district court judge, \$183,750; and • 10 or more district courts – 7.0 percent greater than the base salary of a district court judge, \$187,250	\$180,250- \$187,250
District judge or retired judge presiding over multidistrict litigation	A district judge or retired district judge who presides over multidistrict litigation involving claims for asbestos-related or silica-related injuries receives the maximum amount of compensation for a presiding judge of an administrative judicial region pursuant to §74.051(b) (§659.0125)	\$52,500
Longevity pay	Judicial officeholders with at least 12 years of service credit who receive a state salary and are members of either Judicial Retirement System plan I or II are entitled to monthly longevity pay (§659.0445)	5.0% of current monthly state salary

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

Presiding judges assigned 8,449 visiting judges during fiscal year 2025. **Figure 30** shows the reasons for those assignments. Voluntary recusals and needs for assistance with heavy dockets accounted for 41.9 percent of fiscal year 2025 assignments.

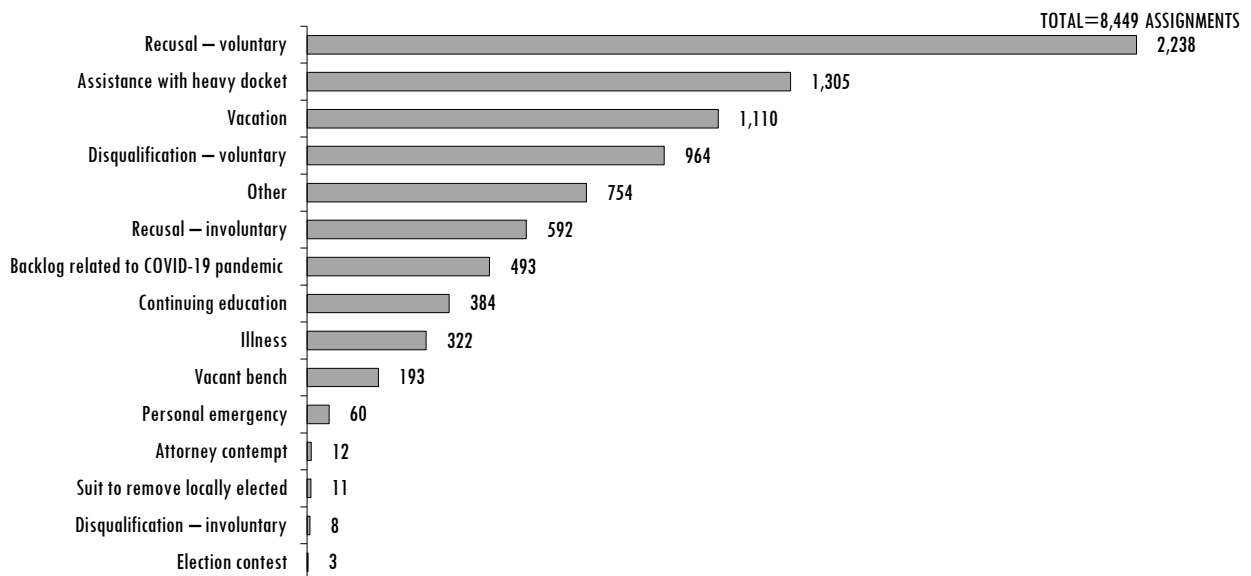
Figure 31 shows the number of visiting judge assignments by administrative judicial region during fiscal year 2025.

DISTRICT COURT PERFORMANCE

The Office of Court Administration (OCA) is required to report countywide clearance rates and backlog indexes for the district courts, pursuant to the 2026–27 GAA, Article IV, OCA, Rider 4(a), District Court Performance Measures.

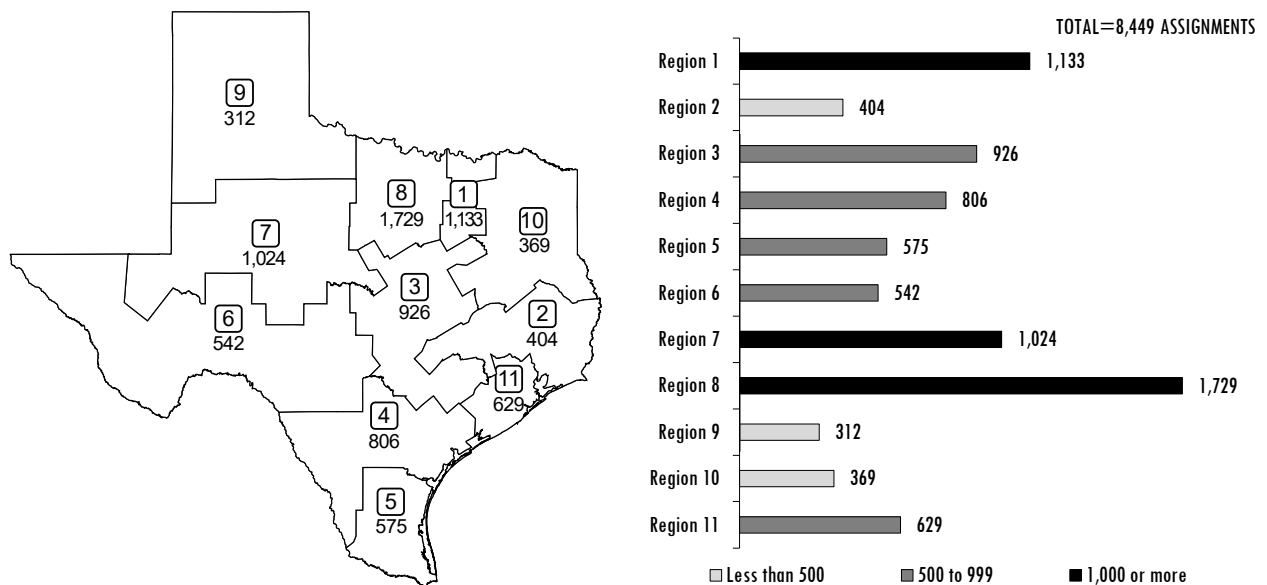
A clearance rate measures how effectively a court disposes of the cases added to its docket. The countywide clearance rate

FIGURE 30
REASONS FOR VISITING JUDGE ASSIGNMENTS, FISCAL YEAR 2025



SOURCE: Office of Court Administration.

FIGURE 31
VISITING JUDGE ASSIGNMENTS BY ADMINISTRATIVE JUDICIAL REGION, FISCAL YEAR 2025



SOURCE: Office of Court Administration.

formula required in Rider 4(a) is the number of cases disposed divided by the number of cases added to the docket. For example, a court that disposed 2,000 felony cases and added 2,100 felonies would have a clearance rate of 95.2 percent. A clearance rate of 100.0 percent indicates that the

court disposed the same number of cases as it added during the year.

A backlog index is the number of cases pending at the beginning of the year divided by the total number of cases disposed during the year. For example, if a court had 1,000

felony pending cases at the beginning of the year and disposed 2,000 felony cases, it would have a backlog index of 0.5. A backlog index of 1.0 means that the court disposed the equivalent of the pending caseload in one year.

OCA publishes the clearance rates and backlog indexes for the state's district courts at www.txcourts.gov/statistics.

STATE FUNDING FOR PROSECUTOR SALARIES AND PAYMENTS

The state funds prosecutor salaries and operations across several agencies, including the operations of the Office of the State Prosecuting Attorney (OSPA). State funding also provides for the salaries and certain expenses of county state prosecutors, including district attorneys, criminal district attorneys, and county attorneys performing the duties of district attorneys; the salaries of certain district attorneys and county attorneys; salary supplements for county prosecutors; and longevity pay for assistant prosecutors.

The state also funds the operations of the Special Prosecution Unit headquartered in Walker County, which prosecutes crimes within Texas Department of Criminal Justice and Texas Juvenile Justice Department facilities.

The State Prosecuting Attorney represents the state in matters before the Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA) and may represent the state in criminal cases before the 15 Courts of Appeals. District attorneys, criminal district attorneys, and county attorneys represent the state in criminal cases in district and county courts.

The 89th Legislature, General Appropriations Act (GAA), 2026–27 Biennium appropriates \$123.3 million in All Funds for prosecutor salaries and payments. This amount includes \$88.9 million in General Revenue Funds; \$24.8 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund; \$6.6 million in Other Funds from the Assistant Prosecutor Supplement Fund; and \$3.0 million in Other Funds from Criminal Justice Division Grants.

in Other Funds from the Assistant Prosecutor Supplement Fund; and \$3.0 million in Other Funds from Criminal Justice Division Grants.

Figures 32 and 33 show appropriations by method of finance and by program.

OFFICE OF THE STATE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

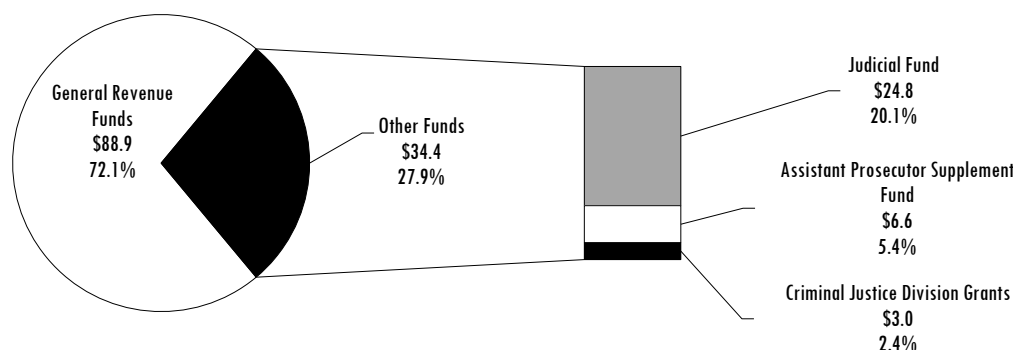
OSPA represents the state in all proceedings before CCA. The State Prosecuting Attorney is appointed by CCA and may represent the state in criminal cases before the 15 Courts of Appeals. The State Prosecuting Attorney is subject to the Texas Government Code, Chapter 46, which regulates the state's prosecuting attorney, all county prosecutors, and certain state prosecutors.

OSPA studies and considers the statewide effects of the CCA's opinions and decisions. The agency also monitors any appellate court opinions that reverse a criminal conviction or modify a trial court's judgment. OSPA focuses on the effect that an appellate opinion may have on the state's overall jurisprudence and intervenes as necessary to advance the state's interests. The agency also provides guidance and assistance to many local prosecutors.

FIGURE 32
APPROPRIATIONS FOR PROSECUTORS' SALARIES AND PAYMENT BY METHOD OF FINANCE
2026–27 BIENNIUM

(IN MILLIONS)

TOTAL=\$123.3



NOTES:

- (1) Totals exclude \$45,000 in Other Funds from Interagency Contracts at the Office of the State Prosecuting Attorney.
- (2) Totals may not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

Appropriations for the OSPA total \$1.4 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium. Statute calculates the State Prosecuting Attorney’s salary based on a district judge’s salary, and it is subject to the tiered, tenure-based compensation structure established by the Texas Government Code, Section 659.012.

STATE PROFESSIONAL PROSECUTORS

The Texas Government Code, Chapter 46, applies to certain state prosecutors, including district attorneys, criminal district attorneys, and county attorneys performing the duties of a district attorney who serves certain districts or counties. These prosecutors operate in jurisdictions in which state felony cases generate enough workload to occupy the prosecutor full-time, which prohibits them from practicing law privately while in office.

The Texas Government Code, Section 46.003, sets the state salary for each state prosecutor prohibited from private practice while in office at an amount equal to the annual state salary paid to a district judge with comparable years of service in accordance with the tiered, tenure-based compensation structure established by the Texas Government Code, Section 659.012.

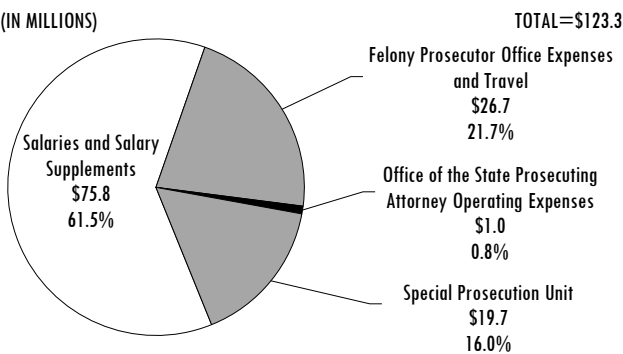
The Texas Government Code, Section 46.003(b) and (c), provides that a commissioners court may supplement the state prosecutor’s state salary and limits those supplements to an amount not less than the compensation it pays its highest paid district judge. If a state prosecutor’s total combined salary from all state and county sources exceeds the maximum combined base salary from all state and county sources for a district judge with comparable years of service as the state prosecutor, the state prosecutor’s state salary is reduced by the excess amount.

The 2026–27 GAA appropriates \$63.2 million in All Funds to pay the salaries of professional prosecutors, including \$44.6 million in General Revenue Funds and \$18.6 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund.

DISTRICT ATTORNEYS AND PROSECUTORS THAT ENGAGE IN PRIVATE PRACTICE

The Texas Government Code, Section 41.013, establishes the state salary for district attorneys and criminal district attorneys who are not prohibited from private practice while in office at 80.0 percent of the amount the state pays a district judge with comparable years of service, which starts at \$140,000 for the 2026-27 biennium. Statute does not prohibit local supplements for these prosecutors.

**FIGURE 33
APPROPRIATIONS FOR PROSECUTORS BY PROGRAM
2026–27 BIENNIUM**



NOTES:
(1) Totals exclude \$45,000 in Interagency Contracts at the Office of the State Prosecuting Attorney.
(2) Totals may not sum due to rounding.
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

The 2026–27 GAA appropriates \$2.1 million in All Funds to pay the salaries of this classification of prosecutors, including \$1.4 million in General Revenue Funds and \$0.7 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund.

**FAYETTE, JACKSON,
AND OLDHAM COUNTIES**

The state pays the salaries of the Jackson County Criminal District Attorney and the county attorneys of Fayette and Oldham counties. These prosecutors may engage in private practice while in office. These three prosecutors’ salaries are set by statute at the district attorney level, which is 80.0 percent of the amount the state pays a district judge with comparable years of service, \$140,000.

Statute requires Oldham County to pay \$28,500 of the county attorney’s total salary and the state to pay the balance. The Jackson County commissioner’s court may supplement the state salary of the criminal district attorney.

The 2026–27 GAA appropriates \$1.1 million in All Funds to pay the salaries of these prosecutors, including \$0.8 million in General Revenue Funds and \$0.3 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund.

HARRIS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Chapter 41, the state provides funds for prosecution in certain eligible counties in which a district attorney is not receiving a state salary. In practice, only the Harris County District Attorney is eligible for the funding. The Texas Government Code,

FIGURE 34
PROSECUTOR STATE SALARIES STATUTORILY CALCULATED BASED ON DISTRICT JUDGE SALARY, 2026–27 BIENNIUM

POSITION	THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE AUTHORIZATION	SERVICE		
		0 TO 4 YEARS	4 TO 8 YEARS	8 YEARS OR MORE
District judge	§659.012	\$175,000	\$192,500	\$210,000
State Prosecuting Attorney	§46.003 sets the State Prosecuting Attorney's salary at the district judge level	\$175,000	\$192,500	\$210,000
State prosecutors (1)	§46.003 sets the salaries for state prosecutors at the district judge level	\$175,000	\$192,500	\$210,000
District attorneys or criminal district attorneys (2)	§41.013 sets the salary for these district attorneys at no less than 80.0% of the district judge level	\$140,000	\$154,000	\$168,000
Fayette County Attorney	§45.175 sets the state salary for the Fayette County Attorney at the level of district attorneys paid by the state	\$140,000	\$154,000	\$168,000
Jackson County Criminal District Attorney	§44.220 sets the Jackson County Criminal District Attorney's salary at the level of district attorneys paid by the state and authorizes the county to supplement the state salary by an unspecified amount	\$140,000	\$154,000	\$168,000
Oldham County Attorney	§45.280 sets the Oldham County Attorney's salary at the district attorney level and requires Oldham County to pay \$28,500 of the total	\$111,500	\$125,500	\$139,500
Harris County Attorney	§43.180 sets the Harris County District Attorney's state salary at the district attorney level and requires Harris County to pay the attorney a salary of at least \$35,000	\$140,000	\$154,000	\$168,000

NOTES:

- (1) State prosecutors include district attorneys, criminal district attorneys, and county attorneys performing the duties of a district attorney that serves certain districts or counties. State prosecutors are prohibited from practicing law privately while in office.
- (2) These district attorneys are not prohibited from the private practice of law while in office.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

Section 43, sets the Harris County District Attorney's state salary at the district attorney level and requires Harris County to pay the attorney a salary of at least \$35,000. Like certain other professional prosecutors, the Harris County District Attorney is not authorized to practice law privately.

The 2026–27 GAA appropriates \$0.3 million in General Revenue Funds to pay the Harris County District Attorney's state salary.

Figure 34 shows all prosecutor salaries that statute calculates based on the salary of a district judge.

COUNTY PROSECUTOR SALARY SUPPLEMENTS

As officials of county government, county prosecutors receive local salaries at the county's discretion. Pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 46.0031, the state funds a salary supplement to these county attorneys ranging

from one-sixth to one-half of the district judge salary, which calculates to a range from \$29,167 to \$87,500. For the 2026–27 biennium, 172 county attorneys are eligible for state-paid salary supplements.

The 2026–27 GAA appropriated \$17.3 million in All Funds to pay county prosecutor supplements, including \$12.0 million in General Revenue Funds and \$5.3 million in Other Funds from the Judicial Fund.

ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR LONGEVITY PAY

The Texas Government Code, Section 41.106, provides prosecuting attorneys the discretion to set the salaries of their assistant prosecutors, subject to commissioners court approval. These salaries are paid by the county. Pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 41.252, assistant prosecutors are eligible for a longevity supplement from the state after accruing at least four years of service. The state

FIGURE 35
TEXAS PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS' SALARY SUPPLEMENTS
2026–27 BIENNIUM

POSITION	THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE AUTHORIZATION	SUPPLEMENT AMOUNT
State prosecutors	§46.003	Varies by county, paid by county
Harris County District Attorney	§43.180	≥\$35,000, paid by the county
Jackson County Criminal District Attorney	§44.220	At county's discretion
County attorney	§46.0031	\$29,166 to \$87,500, paid by the state
Assistant prosecutor longevity pay	§§41.253 and 41.255(d)	\$20 per month for each year of lifetime service credit, up to \$5,000 annually

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

provides longevity pay of \$20 per month for each year of lifetime service credit for assistant prosecutors, up to \$5,000 annually.

Assistant prosecutors that receive longevity pay may not practice law privately while in office if the prosecutor's salary from all sources is at least 80.0 percent of the state salary paid to a district judge, \$140,000.

The Assistant Prosecutor Supplement Fund is funded with two-thirds of each \$15 fee paid by a surety posting a bail bond. The remaining one-third of the fee collection is deposited to the General Revenue–Dedicated Account No. 5073, Fair Defense.

Figure 35 shows salary supplements established in statute and available to certain prosecutors.

The 2026–27 GAA appropriates \$9.5 million in All Funds for longevity pay for assistant prosecutors, including \$3.0 million in General Revenue Funds and \$6.5 million in Other Funds from the Assistant Prosecutor Supplement Fund.

PROSECUTOR TRAVEL AND OFFICE EXPENSES

Pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Chapter 43, a prosecuting attorney that performs official duties in a county other than the prosecutor's county of residence is entitled to travel and other necessary expenses, in accordance with travel limits for state employees.

The 2026–27 GAA appropriated \$0.4 million in General Revenue Funds for the biennium to pay the expenses of felony prosecutors while performing their duties.

The Texas Government Code, Section 46.004, also provides that a professional prosecutor may receive at least \$22,500 per year from the state to help defray the costs of salaries and office expenses. These funds may not be

used to supplement the state prosecuting attorney's or professional prosecutor's salaries. The Texas Government Code, Section 41.352, authorizes reimbursement to prosecuting attorneys for reasonable amounts incurred for extraordinary costs of prosecution of an offense against public administration. Appropriations for prosecutor office apportionments total \$8.3 million in General Revenue Funds for the 2026–27 biennium.

SPECIAL PROSECUTION UNIT

State funding for the Special Prosecution Unit (SPU) in Walker County for the 2026–27 biennium totals \$19.7 million in All Funds, including \$16.7 million in General Revenue Funds and \$3.0 million in Other Funds from Criminal Justice Division grants.

SPU has three divisions: Criminal, Juvenile, and Civil. The agency is headquartered in Huntsville, and certain staff also work from satellite offices. SPU is state-funded, but a portion of its appropriation pays Walker County to administer the unit's payroll and benefits. SPU's staff and the executive director receive their salaries, health insurance coverage, and retirement benefits from Walker County.

SPU is governed by an executive board of 11 elected district attorneys who have Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) or Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJJD) facilities in their districts. The executive board establishes SPU policies and procedures, approves expenditures, appoints the SPU's executive director, and holds annual elections for board members and sets the executive director's salary.

Figure 36 shows funding for SPU's three divisions by method of finance for the 2026–27 biennium.

CRIMINAL DIVISION

Crimes committed in TDCJ facilities are within the jurisdiction of the local elected district attorney; however, since many prison units are located in rural areas, prison caseloads may overburden the limited resources of local prosecutors. TDCJ's Office of the Inspector General refers cases to SPU's Criminal Division, which assists local district attorneys by prosecuting offenses committed, whether by inmates or staff, on property owned or operated by TDCJ. Offenses include violent crimes, weapons offenses, drug offenses, bribery, theft, civil rights violations, and other offenses.

The Criminal Division disposed of 1,210 cases during fiscal year 2025. Cases disposed include those that are not indicted by a grand jury, that end with a conviction, that are dismissed for various reasons by a judge, or that are "taken into consideration" as part of a plea to other charges.

JUVENILE DIVISION

SPU's Juvenile Division prosecutes crimes committed in TJJD facilities. The process for the Juvenile Division is the same as that of SPU's Criminal Division, except that the investigating and referring agency is the TJJD Office of the Inspector General.

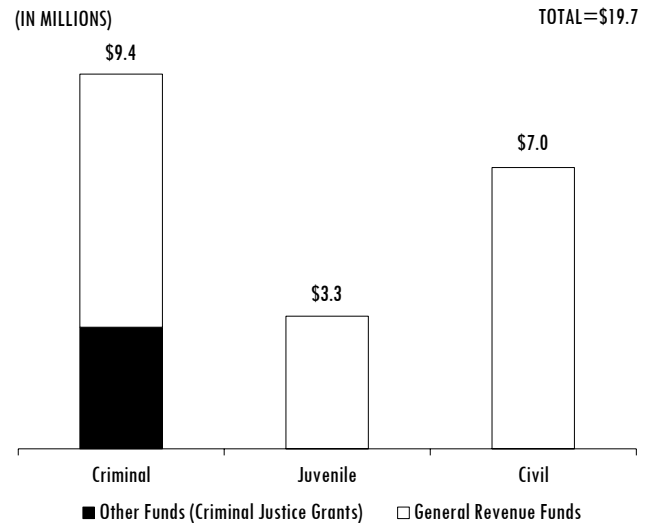
The Juvenile Division disposed of 442 cases during fiscal year 2025.

CIVIL DIVISION

SPU's Civil Division provides legal, financial, and technical assistance to local district attorneys seeking civil commitments of sexually violent predators. Civil commitment proceedings are jury trials held in the district court of the county of the offender's most recent conviction. If the court determines that the offender is a predator, the offender is committed to a Texas Civil Commitment Office (TCCO) facility for treatment and supervision. TCCO is attached administratively to the Health and Human Services Commission.

The Civil Division's operations are similar to those of the other two divisions, except that civil commitment cases can occur in any Texas county. The cases also may be complicated, expensive, and time-consuming, and often span more than one fiscal year. During fiscal year 2025, the Civil Division received 85 case referrals, filed 73 petitions for civil commitments, and disposed of 56 cases.

FIGURE 36
SPECIAL PROSECUTION UNIT DIVISION FUNDING
BY METHOD OF FINANCE
2026–27 BIENNium



NOTE: Totals may not sum due to rounding.
SOURCE: Special Prosecution Unit.

COURT-GENERATED STATE REVENUE SOURCES

Courts collect revenue for the state from civil cases filed and criminal cases disposed in the court system. Revenue from these sources fund the following five General Revenue–Dedicated accounts and three Other Funds:

- General Revenue–Dedicated Accounts:
 - Account No. 540, Judicial and Court Personnel Training Fund;
 - Account No. 5073, Fair Defense;
 - Account No. 5010, Sexual Assault Program;
 - Account No. 5157, Statewide Electronic Filing System;
 - Account No. 5173, Texas Forensic Science Commission; and
- Other Funds:
 - Judicial Fund;
 - Assistant Prosecutor Supplement Fund; and
 - Jury Service Fund.

Revenue from the filing of civil cases is collected primarily by county-level and district trial courts. The 15 Courts of Appeals, which have regional jurisdiction over civil cases, and the Supreme Court of Texas (SCOT), which has final statewide jurisdiction, collect a smaller amount of revenue from civil cases.

APPELLATE COURT-GENERATED REVENUE

SCOT and the appellate courts charge different types of filing fees for civil cases on appeal. The Texas Government Code, Section 51.005, establishes the base rates for certain fees and authorizes the clerk of SCOT to collect them. The Texas Government Code, Section 51.0051, authorizes SCOT to increase the fee amounts by up to an additional \$50 to defray court costs. SCOT is required to set the additional fee by order or rule. **Figure 37** shows fees charged for fiscal year 2026.

The Texas Government Code, Section 51.207, establishes the base rate for certain fees and authorizes the clerk of an appeals court to collect them. The Texas Government Code, Section

FIGURE 37
SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS CIVIL FILING FEES
FISCAL YEAR 2026

FEE	AMOUNT
Petition for review	\$155
Additional fee if petition for review is granted	\$75
Motion for extension of time	\$10
Petition for writ of mandamus, habeas corpus, prohibition, injunction, and other original proceedings	\$155
Certified copy including certificate and seal	\$0.50/page (\$5 minimum)
Comparing and certifying copy of document	\$0.50/page (\$5 minimum)
Motion for rehearing	\$15
Miscellaneous motions (not covered in other fees or in the Texas Government Code, §51.005)	\$10
Exhibits tendered for argument	\$25
Certified questions from federal courts	\$180
Direct appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas (SCOT) from a state district court	\$205
Any other proceeding filed in the SCOT	\$180

SOURCE: Supreme Court of Texas (SCOT).

51.208, authorizes an appellate court clerk to collect additional fee amounts equal to the additional fees set by SCOT. **Figure 38** shows fees for civil proceedings that the 15 Courts of Appeals charged for fiscal year 2026.

SCOT, the Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA), and the appellate courts also assess fees to publish or sell copies of court records to publishers and the public. The courts are appropriated collection amounts pursuant to the 89th Legislature, General Appropriations Act, 2026–27 Biennium, Article IX, Section 8.02, regarding reimbursements.

CONSOLIDATED COURT COSTS

Certain fees payable to the Comptroller of Public Accounts to defray court costs are assessed at more than one type of local jurisdiction. These fees are referred to as consolidated fees because they have been standardized across these jurisdictions. **Figure 39** shows the fee amounts and citations for consolidated fees on criminal convictions and civil actions.

Figures 40 and 41 show the allocation of consolidated fees on filing and conviction to various General Revenue–Dedicated Funds accounts and Other Funds.

GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED ACCOUNTS

ACCOUNT NO. 540, JUDICIAL AND COURT PERSONNEL TRAINING FUND

The Texas Government Code, Section 56.001, establishes the General Revenue–Dedicated Account No. 540, Judicial and Court Personnel Training Fund. Appropriations from Account No. 540 finance judicial education and other continuing legal education programs at the CCA, pursuant to the statute.

Figure 42 shows the fees that are assessed, collected, and deposited to Account No. 540.

Figure 43 shows the revenue deposited to Account No. 540 from fiscal years 2020 to 2027.

ACCOUNT NO. 5073, FAIR DEFENSE

Account No. 5073, established by the Texas Government Code, Section 79.031, funds the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC), which is attached administratively to the Office of Court Administration (OCA). TIDC develops policies and standards to determine qualifications for attorneys to represent indigent defendants. TIDC also provides grant funding to counties for indigent defense services. Appropriations from the account also fund the Office of Capital and Forensic Writs to

FIGURE 38
COURTS OF APPEALS CIVIL FILING FEES
FISCAL YEAR 2026

FEE	AMOUNT
Appeals to the Court of Appeals from district and county courts	\$205
Petition for permissive appeal	\$205
Original proceeding	\$155
Administering an oath with sealed certificate of oath	\$5
Certified copy including certificate and seal certification	\$1/page (\$5 minimum)
Comparing and certifying copy of document	\$1/page (\$5 minimum)
Motion for rehearing or for en banc reconsideration	\$15
Motion not otherwise listed	\$10
Exhibit tendered for oral argument	\$25

SOURCE: Courts of Appeals

represent people convicted of capital offenses, and certain others in noncapital cases, through the appellate process.

Figure 44 shows the fees that are assessed, collected, and deposited to Account No. 5073, including fee descriptions, statutory authority, and current assessments.

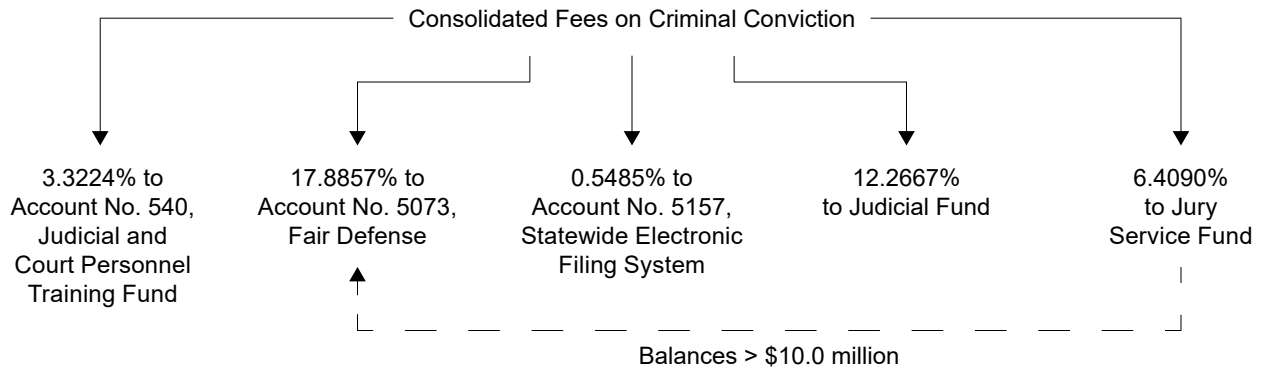
Figure 45 shows the revenue deposited to Account No. 5073 from fiscal years 2020 to 2027.

FIGURE 39
CONSOLIDATED COURT FEES
FISCAL YEAR 2026

FEE	THE TEXAS LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE AUTHORIZATION	CURRENT ASSESSMENT
Consolidated fee on a criminal conviction	§133.102(a)(1)	\$185 on conviction of a felony
	§133.102(a)(2)	\$147 on conviction of a Class A or Class B misdemeanor
	§133.102(a)(3)	\$62 on conviction of a non-jailable misdemeanor offense, including a criminal violation of a municipal ordinance, other than a conviction of an offense relating to a pedestrian or motor vehicle parking
Consolidated civil fee on filing a civil case	§133.151(a)(1)	\$137 on the filing of any civil, probate, guardianship, or mental health case
	§133.151(a)(2)	\$45 on any action other than an original filing (including any counterclaim, cross-action, intervention, contempt action, adverse probate action, interpleader, motion for new trial, motion to reinstate, or third-party action)
	§133.151(a-1)	\$21 on the filing of any civil case and on any action other than an original action in a justice court

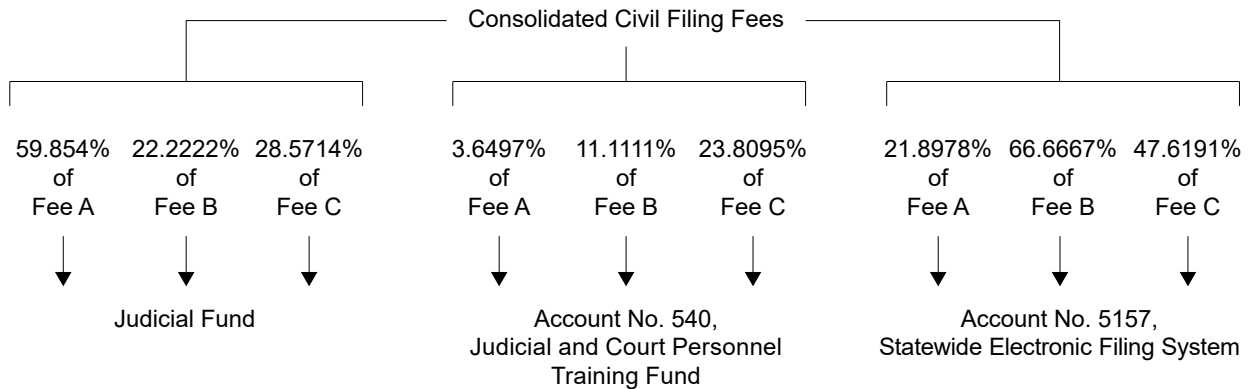
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 40
CONSOLIDATED FEES ON CRIMINAL CONVICTION
2026–27 BIENNIUM



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 41
CONSOLIDATED CIVIL FILING FEES
2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTE: Fee A=\$137 filing fee charged on civil, probate, guardianship, or mental health cases filed in district courts, statutory county courts, statutory probate courts, and county courts; Fee B=\$45 filing fee imposed on any action other than an original action subject to the \$137 fee; and Fee C=\$21 filing fee on any justice court filing of any civil case and on any action other than an original action for the civil case.

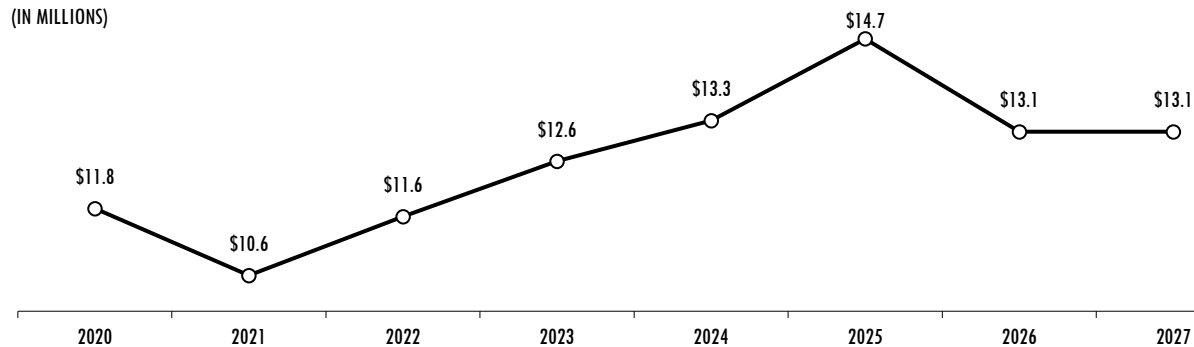
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 42
COURT FEES DEPOSITED TO GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 540,
JUDICIAL AND COURT PERSONNEL TRAINING FUND
FISCAL YEAR 2026

FEE	STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION	CURRENT ASSESSMENT
Consolidated fee on a criminal conviction	The Texas Local Government Code, §133.102(e)(10)	3.3224% of the consolidated court costs paid by individuals convicted of certain offenses (see Figure 40)
Consolidated civil fee on filing a civil case	The Texas Local Government Code, §§133.151(c)(4), 133.151(d)(3), and 133.151(e)(3)	A portion of the filing fees paid by individuals filing civil, probate, guardianship, or mental health cases. Account No. 540 receives 3.6497% from initial filings, 11.1111% of fees for action other than the initial filing, and 23.8095% of justice court filings (see Figure 41)
Appellate court fees	The Texas Government Code, §56.002	50.0% of fees collected pursuant to the Texas Government Code, §51.207, by the Courts of Appeals in civil case filings

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 43
REVENUE DEPOSITED TO GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 540,
JUDICIAL AND COURT PERSONNEL TRAINING FUND
FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2027



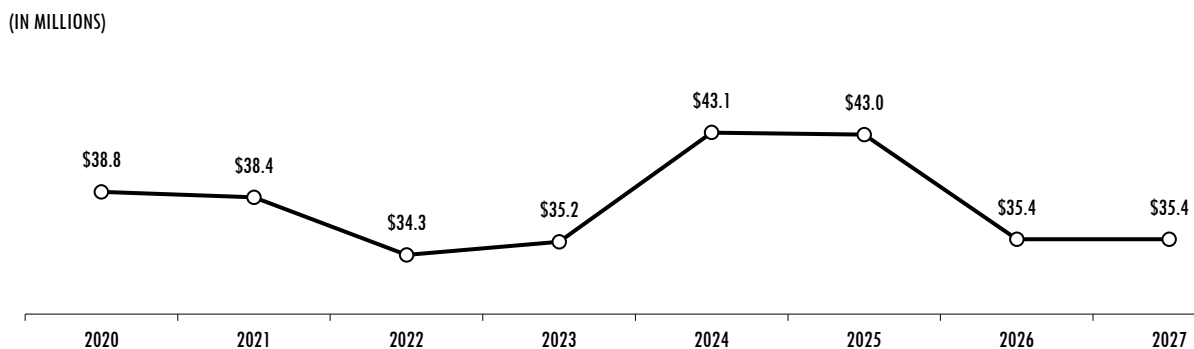
NOTE: Amounts for fiscal years 2020 to 2025 show actual revenues. Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are estimated.
 SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board; Comptroller of Public Accounts.

FIGURE 44
COURT FEES DEPOSITED TO GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 5073, FAIR DEFENSE
FISCAL YEAR 2026

FEE	STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION	CURRENT ASSESSMENT
Consolidated fee on criminal conviction	The Texas Local Government Code, §133.102(e)(12)	17.8857% of the consolidated court costs paid by individuals convicted of certain offenses (see Figure 40)
Surety posting a bail bond	The Texas Government Code, §41.258	One-third of each \$15 fee paid by a surety posting a bail bond and collected by the Comptroller of Public Accounts
State Bar of Texas membership fee	The Texas Government Code, §81.054(c)	50.0% of the State Bar of Texas membership fee collected by the Supreme Court of Texas
Jury Service Fund	The Texas Local Government Code, §133.122(b)	Unexpended balances in the Jury Service Fund that exceed \$10.0 million

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 45
REVENUE DEPOSITED TO GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 5073, FAIR DEFENSE
FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2027

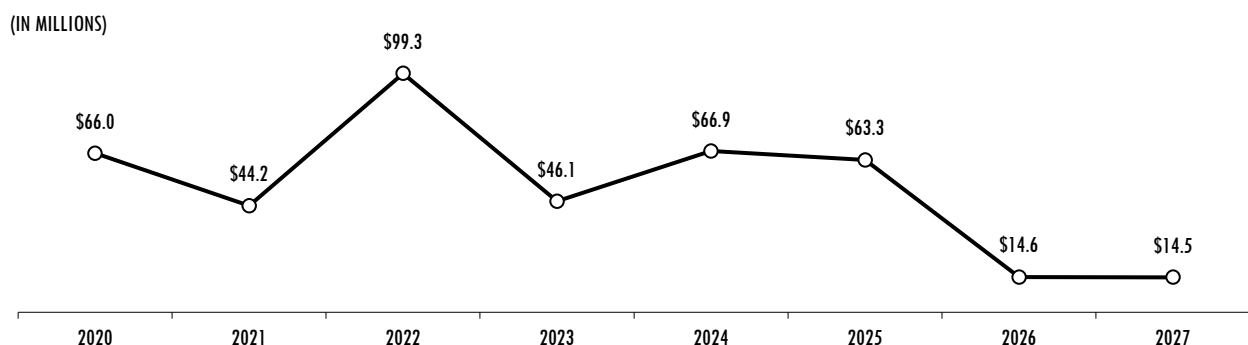


NOTE: Amounts for fiscal years 2020 to 2025 show actual revenues. Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are estimated.
 SOURCES: Legislative Budget Board; Comptroller of Public Accounts.

FIGURE 46**FEES DEPOSITED TO GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 5010, SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAM, FISCAL YEAR 2026**

SEE	STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION	CURRENT ASSESSMENT
Sexually oriented business	The Texas Business and Commerce Code, §§102.052 and 102.054	\$10 for each customer admitted
Community and parole supervision fines and fees for certain sex offender convictions	The Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, §42A.653; the Texas Government Code, §508.189	Varies
Postsecondary educational institution noncompliance with reporting requirements for sexual harassment and assault	The Texas Education Code, §51.258(b)	Not to exceed \$2.0 million

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 47**REVENUE DEPOSITED TO GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 5010, SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAM FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2027**

NOTE: Amounts for fiscal years 2020 to 2025 show actual revenues. Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are estimated.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board. Comptroller of Public Accounts.

ACCOUNT NO. 5010, SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAM

Account No. 5010, Sexual Assault Program, established pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 420.008, receives community and parole supervision fines and fees, fees collected from sexually oriented businesses, and administrative penalties from postsecondary educational institutions for noncompliance related to sexual harassment, assault, dating violence, and stalking.

Appropriations from the account support SCOT's Basic Civil Legal Services program in providing services to sexual assault victims, the Health and Human Services Commission for Child Advocacy programs, the Trustee Programs within the Office of the Governor and the Office of the Attorney General for grants for sexual violence awareness and education, and the Department of Public Safety for criminal investigations and crime laboratory services.

Figure 46 shows the fees that are assessed, collected, and deposited to Account No. 5010, including fee descriptions, statutory authorities, and current assessments.

Figure 47 shows the revenue deposited to Account No. 5010 from fiscal years 2020 to 2027.

Figure 48 shows 2026–27 biennial appropriations from Account No. 5010 by agency.

ACCOUNT NO. 5157, STATEWIDE ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM

Funds from Account No. 5157, established pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 51.852, are appropriated to OCA to support a statewide electronic filing system for courts. The agency also may use the fund to provide grants to counties to implement components of the system and for other information technology projects that the agency determines have statewide benefits.

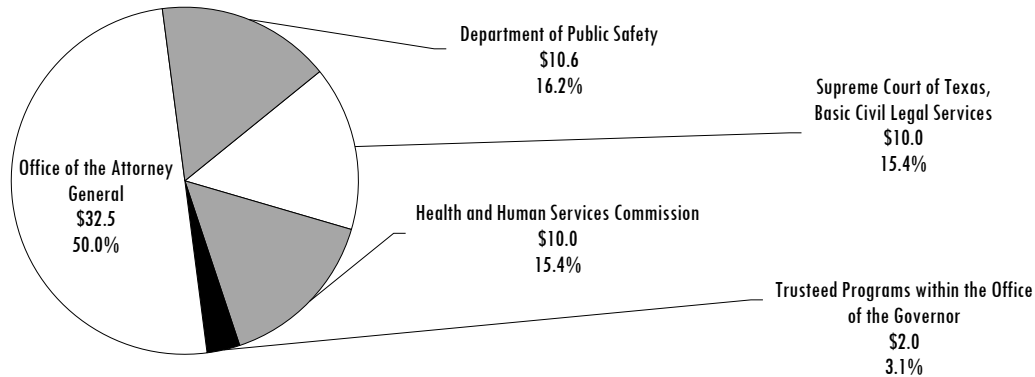
Figure 49 shows the fees that are assessed, collected, and deposited to Account No. 5157, including fee descriptions, statutory authorities, and current assessments.

Figure 50 shows the revenues deposited to Account No. 5157 from fiscal years 2020 to 2027.

FIGURE 48
APPROPRIATIONS FROM GENERAL REVENUE—DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 5010, SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAM, BY AGENCY
2026–27 BIENNIUM

(IN MILLIONS)

TOTAL=\$65.1



SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

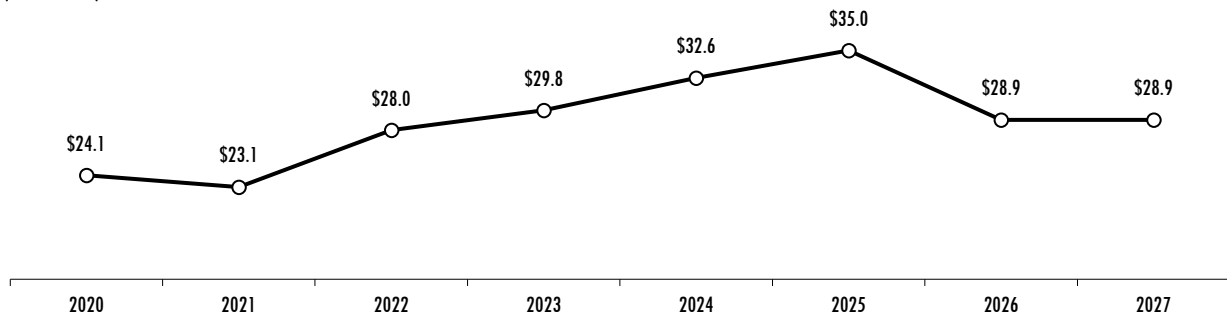
FIGURE 49
FEES ASSESSED, COLLECTED, AND DEPOSITED TO GENERAL REVENUE—DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 5157,
STATEWIDE ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM
FISCAL YEAR 2026

FEE	STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION	CURRENT ASSESSMENT
Consolidated fee on criminal conviction	The Texas Local Government Code, §133.102(e)(16)	0.5485% of the consolidated court costs paid by individuals convicted of certain offenses (see Figure 40)
Consolidated civil fee on filing a civil case	The Texas Local Government Code, §§133.151(c)(3), 133.151(d)(2), and 133.151(e)(2)	A portion of the filing fees paid by individuals filing civil, probate, guardianship, or mental health cases; the account receives 21.8978% from initial filings, 66.6667% of fees for action other than the initial filing, and 47.6191% of justice court filings (see Figure 41)
Appellate court electronic filing fee	The Texas Government Code, §51.851	\$30 fee collected by the Supreme Court of Texas and Courts of Appeals for the filing of any civil action or proceeding requiring a filing fee

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 50
REVENUE DEPOSITED TO GENERAL REVENUE—DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 5157, STATEWIDE ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM
FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2027

(IN MILLIONS)



NOTE: Amounts for fiscal years 2020 to 2025 show actual revenues. Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are estimated.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board. Comptroller of Public Accounts.

ACCOUNT NO. 5173, TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION

The General Revenue–Dedicated Account No. 5173, Texas Forensic Science Commission, established by the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 38.01, Section 13, is funded by forensic analyst license fees. Appropriations from the fund are made in the General Appropriations Act to OCA's Texas Forensic Science Commission strategy to pay for the administration and enforcement of forensic analyst licensing, crime lab accreditation, and other forensic programs.

Figure 51 shows the fees that are assessed, collected, and deposited to Account No. 5173 pursuant to the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 38, including fee descriptions and current assessments.

Figure 52 shows the revenues deposited to Account No. 5173 from fiscal years 2020 to 2027.

OTHER FUNDS

JUDICIAL FUND

The Judicial Fund, established by the Texas Government Code, Section 21.006, receives a portion of civil and criminal fees and penalties to fund basic civil legal services and to support the judicial branch. The funds are appropriated to SCOT, the Court of Criminal Appeals, the 15 Courts of Appeals, and the Judiciary Section, Comptroller's Department.

Figure 53 shows the fees that are assessed, collected, and deposited to the Judicial Fund, including fee descriptions, statutory authorities, and current assessments.

**FIGURE 51
TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION FEES DEPOSITED
TO THE GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO.
5173, TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION
FISCAL YEAR 2026**

FEE	CURRENT ASSESSMENT
Initial application fee for analysts	\$220
Initial application fee for technicians	\$150
Biennial renewal fee	\$200
Provisional license fee for analysts	\$110
Provisional license fee for technicians	\$75
License reinstatement	\$220
De minimis license fee	\$200
Uncommon forensic analysis license fee	\$200
Special examination fee	\$50

NOTE: All fees are collected pursuant to the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 38, which governs the Texas Forensic Science Commission.
SOURCE: The Texas Administrative Code, Title 37, Part 15, Chapter 651, Subchapter C, §651.207.

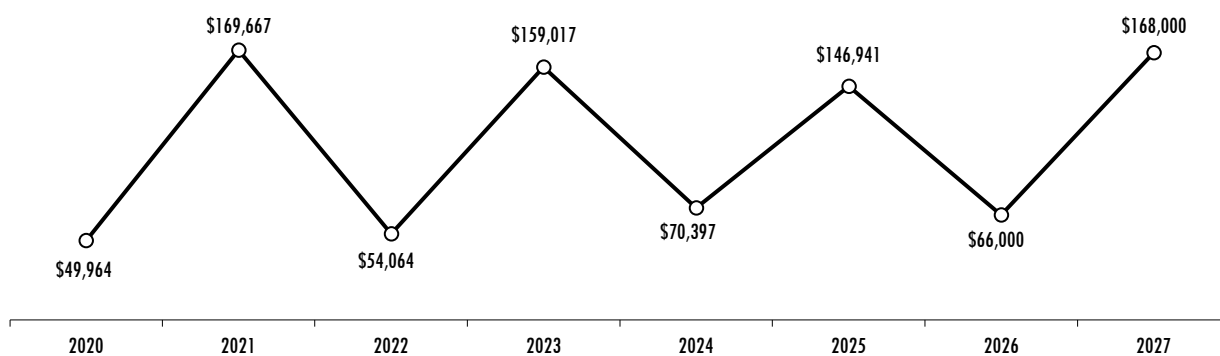
Figure 54 shows the revenues deposited to the Judicial Fund from fiscal years 2020 to 2027.

Figure 55 shows 2026–27 biennial appropriations from the Judicial Fund by agency.

ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR SUPPLEMENT FUND

The Assistant Prosecutor Supplement Fund, established by the Texas Government Code, Section 41.258, receives two-thirds of the \$15 fee paid by each surety posting a bail bond and collected by the Comptroller of Public Accounts.

**FIGURE 52
REVENUE DEPOSITED TO GENERAL REVENUE–DEDICATED ACCOUNT NO. 5173, TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION
FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2027**



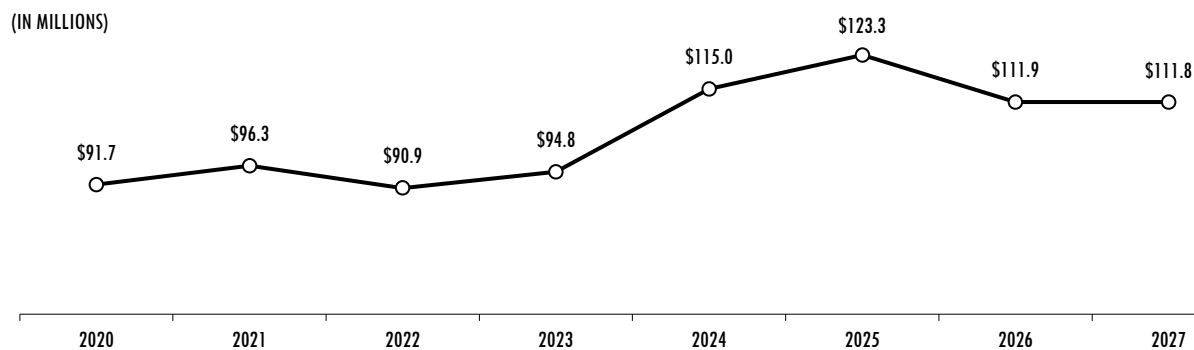
NOTE: Amounts for fiscal years 2020 to 2025 show actual revenues. Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are estimated.
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board. Comptroller of Public Accounts.

FIGURE 53
FEES DEPOSITED TO THE JUDICIAL FUND, FISCAL YEAR 2026

FEE	STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION	CURRENT ASSESSMENT
Consolidated fee on criminal conviction	The Texas Local Government Code, §133.102(e)(13)	12.2667% of the consolidated court costs paid by individuals convicted of certain offenses (see Figure 40)
Consolidated civil fee on filing a civil case	The Texas Local Government Code, §133.151(c)(1) and (2), §133.151(d)(1), and §133.151(e)(1)	A portion of the filing fees paid by individuals filing civil, probate, guardianship, or mental health cases. The account receives 59.854% from initial filings for court-related purposes, 14.5985% from initial filings for basic civil legal services, 22.2222% of fees for actions other than the initial filing, and 28.5714% of justice court filings (see Figure 41)
Appellate court fees	The Texas Government Code, §51.207(g)	50.0% of fees collected by the Courts of Appeals in civil case filings
Settlements and penalties	The Texas Business and Commerce Code, §17.463(f)(1)	50.0% of settlements and penalties collected by district or county attorneys for civil liability cases regarding the sale or production of synthetic controlled substances
Civil penalties	The Texas Government Code, §402.007	Civil penalties and restitution recovered by the Office of the Attorney General in any actionable matter pursuant to the Texas Business and Commerce Code; appropriations may fund only programs approved by the Supreme Court of Texas (SCOT) to provide basic civil legal services
Additional filing fees	The Texas Government Code, §§51.0051 and 51.208	Additional fees collected by SCOT and the appellate courts on filing of any application or proceeding requiring a filing fee. Fees recovered pursuant to §§51.0051 and 51.208 may be appropriated only to SCOT for court-related purposes
Interest on Lawyers' Trust Account (IOLTA)	The Texas Property Code, §74.604	The account receives money in unclaimed IOLTA accounts and unclaimed money in a client trust account held by a law firm; appropriations may fund only programs approved by SCOT to provide basic civil legal services to indigent individuals

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 54
REVENUE DEPOSITED TO THE JUDICIAL FUND, FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2027



NOTE: Amounts for fiscal years 2020 to 2025 show actual revenues. Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are estimated.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board. Comptroller of Public Accounts.

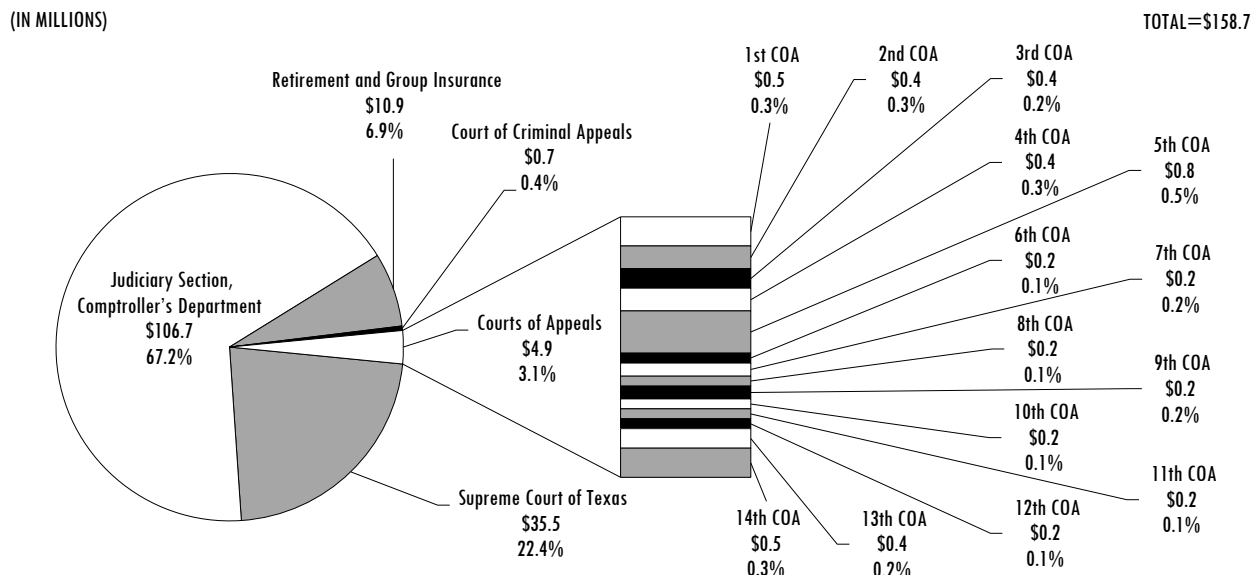
Funds are appropriated to the Judiciary Section, Comptroller's Department, to fund longevity supplements for eligible assistant prosecutors.

Figure 56 shows the revenues deposited to the Assistant Prosecutor Supplement Fund from fiscal years 2020 to 2027.

JURY SERVICE FUND

The Jury Service Fund, established by the Texas Local Government Code, Section 133.122(a), collects 6.409 percent of the consolidated criminal court costs paid by individuals convicted of certain offenses. The funds are appropriated to the Judiciary Section, Comptroller's Department, to provide juror reimbursements to counties.

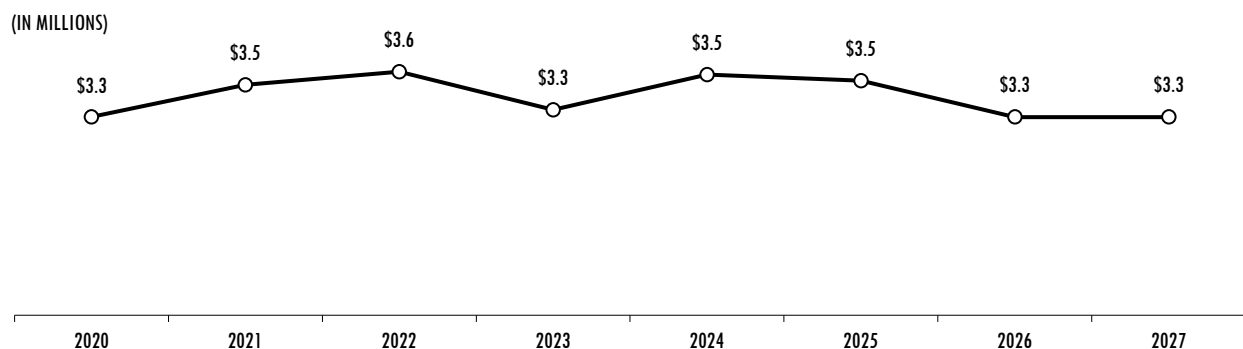
FIGURE 55
APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL FUND, 2026–27 BIENNIUM



NOTE: Courts of Appeals (COA) include the following districts: First Court of Appeals District, Houston; Second Court of Appeals District, Fort Worth; Third Court of Appeals District, Austin; Fourth Court of Appeals District, San Antonio; Fifth Court of Appeals District, Dallas; Sixth Court of Appeals District, Texarkana; Seventh Court of Appeals District, Amarillo; Eighth Court of Appeals District, El Paso; Ninth Court of Appeals District, Beaumont; Tenth Court of Appeals District, Waco; Eleventh Court of Appeals District, Eastland; Twelfth Court of Appeals District, Tyler; Thirteenth Court of Appeals District, Corpus Christi; and Fourteenth Court of Appeals District, Houston. The Fifteenth Court of Appeals, Austin, has statewide jurisdiction and does not receive appropriations from the Judicial Fund.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

FIGURE 56
REVENUE DEPOSITED TO THE ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR SUPPLEMENT FUND
FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2027



NOTE: Amounts for fiscal years 2020 to 2025 show actual revenues. Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are estimated.

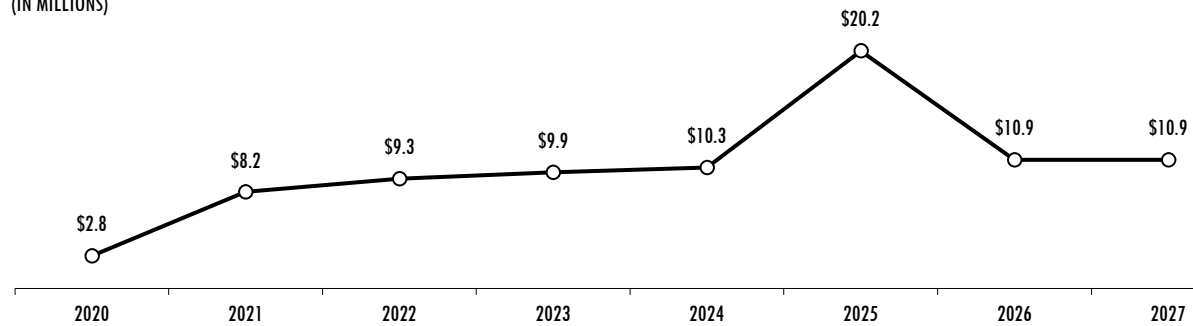
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board. Comptroller of Public Accounts.

Any unexpended balance in the fund that exceeds \$10.0 million is transferred to General Revenue–Dedicated Account No. 5073.

Figure 57 shows the revenue deposited to the Jury Service Fund.

FIGURE 57
REVENUE DEPOSITED TO THE JURY SERVICE FUND
FISCAL YEARS 2020 TO 2027

(IN MILLIONS)



NOTE: Amounts for fiscal years 2020 to 2025 show actual revenues. Amounts shown for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are estimated.
SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board. Comptroller of Public Accounts.

APPENDIX A – JUDICIAL SALARIES

JUDICIAL COMPENSATION

Most Texas judges and justices receive compensation from a combination of state and local sources. The Texas Government Code defines judge and justice state compensation in relation to the state salary of a district judge from both state and local sources. Pursuant to Sections 659.011 and 659.012, a district judge is paid a state salary of at least \$175,000 or an amount set in the General Appropriations Act. As of September 1, 2025, a district judge is paid a state salary of \$175,000.

From this benchmark, other types of judges and justices receive a state salary or salary supplement greater or less than that standard. Statute also authorizes local governments to provide a local supplement to state judges, except for the justices and judges on the Supreme Court of Texas (SCOT) and the Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA). Appellate and district judges who have completed at least 12 years of service

also receive longevity pay equal to 5.0 percent of the judge's current monthly state salary.

Figure A–1 shows the annual base state salary of Texas judges and justices for the 2026–27 biennium; the maximum or minimum amount of local supplement that may be provided, if applicable; and the total combined salary for each type of judge or justice. As shown in **Figure A–1**, a presiding judge of an administrative judicial region could be paid a total salary from state and local sources that exceeds the pay of a judge or justice on CCA or SCOT, including the Presiding Judge or Chief Justice, respectively, of each court. Amounts shown in **Figure A–1** do not include tenure-related pay or longevity pay. See **Figure 21** in the chapter regarding **State Funding for Appellate Court Operations and Programs** for details regarding tenure-related salary adjustments.

Court-specific statutes may exempt certain counties from providing a minimum salary to the statutory county judge.

FIGURE A–1
APPELLATE AND TRIAL COURT JUDICIAL BASE SALARIES OR SALARY SUPPLEMENTS LINKED TO STATE DISTRICT JUDGE PAY AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

JUDGE	STATE BASE COMPENSATION	LOCAL COMPENSATION	MAXIMUM SALARY	THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE DEFINITION
District Judge (base salary)	\$175,000	Up to \$25,000	\$200,000	State salary of \$175,000 (an amount set in the General Appropriations Act), with total salary from state and local sources not to exceed an amount that is \$5,000 less than the total salary of a Court of Appeals Justice (\$205,000), pursuant to §659.012(a)
Presiding Judge of the Administrative Judicial Region (active district judge)	N/A	Up to \$52,500	Up to \$52,500	Annual local supplement for an active judge of not more than 30.0% of a district judge's salary, set by the Texas Judicial Council and apportioned to each county in the judge's judicial region based on county population, pursuant to §74.051(b)
Presiding Judge of the Administrative Judicial Region (retired or former district judge, or retired appellate judge)	N/A	\$52,500 to \$78,750	\$52,500 to \$78,750	Annual local compensation for a retired or former judge set by the Texas Judicial Council and apportioned to each county in the judge's judicial region based on county population and on a sliding scale related to the number of courts in each region, pursuant to §74.051(c)
Court of Appeals (justice)	\$192,500	Up to \$12,500	\$205,000	State salary of 110.0% of a district judge's state salary, with total salary from state and local sources in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 less than the state salary provided for a justice of the Supreme Court of Texas (SCOT), pursuant to §659.012(a)(2)
Court of Appeals (Chief Justice)	\$205,975	Up to \$12,500	\$218,475	7.0%, or \$13,475 more than other justices of the Court of Appeals, pursuant to §659.012(a)(5)
15th Court of Appeals (justice)	\$205,000	No local supplement	\$205,000	State salary of \$5,000 less than 120.0% of the state base salary for a district judge, pursuant to §659.012(a)(3).

FIGURE A–1 (CONTINUED)
APPELLATE AND TRIAL COURT JUDICIAL BASE SALARIES OR SALARY SUPPLEMENTS LINKED TO STATE DISTRICT JUDGE PAY
AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

JUDGE	STATE BASE COMPENSATION	LOCAL COMPENSATION	MAXIMUM SALARY	THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE DEFINITION
15th Court of Appeals (Chief Justice)	\$219,350	No local supplement	\$219,350	7.0% or \$14,350 more than other justices of the 15th Court of Appeals, pursuant to §659.012(a)(5)
Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA) (judge) and SCOT (justice)	\$210,000	No local supplement	\$210,000	State salary of 120.0% of a district judge's state salary, pursuant to §659.012(a)(4)
CCA (Presiding Judge) and SCOT (Chief Justice)	\$224,700	No local supplement	\$224,700	7.0%, or \$14,700 more than other justices of SCOT or judges of CCA, pursuant to §659.012(a)(5)
Business Court (judge)	\$200,000	No local supplement	\$200,000	State salary of \$175,000 – §25A.011 Additional state salary of \$25,000, an amount equal to the maximum annual county supplement for district judges, pursuant to §659.012(a)(1) Business Court judges are not eligible for county supplements
Business Court (Presiding Judge)	\$212,250	No local supplement	\$212,250	State salary of a Business Court judge plus \$12,250 Business Court Presiding Judge supplement, pursuant to §659.012(d-1)
Multicounty statutory county judge	\$175,000	At the county's discretion	At the county's discretion	State salary of \$175,000, pursuant to §25.2607(d)
Statutory probate court judge	\$105,000	\$95,000 to \$139,500	\$200,000 to \$244,500	State pays \$105,000 or 60.0% of the state salary for a district judge, pursuant to §25.00211(a) Pursuant to §25.0023(a-2), the maximum salary counties may pay is \$1,000 less than the maximum combined salary paid to a district judge from all state and county sources pursuant to §659.012(b), including any longevity pay received pursuant to §659.0445(d) The minimum salary is at least equal to the combined salary paid to a district judge with comparable years of service and any state or contributions and supplements, excluding those received pursuant to §74.051
Statutory county court judge	\$105,000	\$95,000 to \$139,500	\$200,000 to \$244,500	State pays \$105,000 or 60.0% of the state salary for a district judge, pursuant to §25.0015 Pursuant to §25.0005(a-2), the maximum salary counties may pay is \$1,000 less than the maximum combined salary paid to a district judge from all state and county sources pursuant to §659.012(b), including any longevity pay received pursuant to §659.0445(d) The minimum salary is \$1,000 less than the combined salary paid to a district judge with comparable years of service and any state or contributions and supplements, excluding those received pursuant to §74.051.
Constitutional county court judge	\$31,500	Varies	Varies	State salary supplement of 18.0% of state base pay for a district judge for eligible county judges where 18.0% of the judge's functions are judicial, pursuant to §26.006(a)

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

HISTORY OF JUDICIAL COMPENSATION IN TEXAS

The latest judicial salary adjustment from \$140,000 to \$175,000 annually represents a 25.0 percent increase and

became effective September 1, 2025. **Figure A–2** shows a summary of selected legislative action affecting judicial pay since fiscal year 2013. Five legislatures acted to adjust judicial compensation.

FIGURE A–2
SELECT JUDICIAL PAY RAISES BY LEGISLATIVE SESSION SINCE 2013

LEGISLATION	SALARY ADJUSTMENTS
83rd Legislature, General Appropriations Act, 2014–15 Biennium, Article IV, Special Provisions, Section 11,	District judge salary increased from \$125,000 to \$140,000. Funding authorized for judicial pay raises of 12.0 percent. (1) Increased the state salary supplement of statutory county judges from \$75,000 to \$84,000. This increase may have increased county costs for statutory county judges by \$6,000 in counties that provide local supplements.
84th Legislature, 2015	Senate Bill 1025 increased the state-paid salary supplement for constitutional county judges from a sum-certain amount of \$15,000 to 18.0 percent of a district judge's salary, \$25,200. Senate Bill 1139 increased the state-paid supplement for the judge serving the state's first multicounty statutory court from \$84,000 (60.0 percent of the state pay of a district judge) to 100.0 percent of a district judge's state pay, \$140,000.
House Bill 2384, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019	Introduced a tiered judicial salary structure with base salaries for district judges set at: \$140,000 for district judges up to 4.0 years of service; 110.0% of the base district judge salary, \$154,000, for judges with up to 8.0 years of service; and 120.0%, \$168,000, for judges with 8.0 years or more of service. Lowered years of service required for longevity pay from 16 years to 12 years, and increased longevity pay from 3.1% to 5.0%. Based the salary of statutory county and probate court judges, the state prosecuting attorney, state prosecutors, district and criminal district attorneys, and the state supplement amount for county attorneys on the tiered salary structure. Set the salary of child support and child protection court associate judges at 90.0% of the base salary of a district judge. Set the salary of regional presiding judges at an amount not to exceed 30.0% of the base salary paid to a district attorney.
House Bill 3474, 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023	Amended statute to base the salaries of various judicial positions on that of a district court judge with comparable years of experience. These positions include statutory county court judges and county court at law judges set at a minimum of \$1,000 less than the salary of a district court judge; statutory probate and multicounty statutory court judges set at 100.0% of the district court judge salary; district attorneys and criminal district attorneys set at 80.0% of the district court judge salary; and the state prosecuting attorney and each state prosecutor at 100.0% of the district court judge salary.
Senate Bill 293, 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025	Increased the salary of a district court or business court judge from \$140,000 to at least \$175,000. Limits the combined base salary of district court or business court judges to \$5,000 less than the maximum combined base salary for a justice of a court of appeals other than a chief justice. Sets the additional state compensation of a chief justice or presiding judge of an appellate court equal to 7.0% of the salaries provided for the other justices or judges. Provides the following additional amounts of salary for district judges serving as local administrative judges based on the number of district courts in the administrative county: 3.0% for three or four district courts; 5.0% for five to nine courts; and 7.0% for 10 or more district courts.
House Bill 2529, 89th Legislature, Regular Session, 2025	Aligns the state salary supplement for certain county judges to 18.0% of the annual salary paid to a district judge with comparable years of experience.
House Bill 16, 89th Legislature, Second Called Session, 2025	Increases assigned judge compensation to that of a district judge with comparable years of service.

NOTE: (1) The 12.0 percent judicial pay raise effective September 1, 2013, was the first pay raise implemented since statutory county judge salaries were statutorily connected to district judge pay by the 80th Legislature, 2007.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

JUDICIAL COMPENSATION COMMISSION

Figure A–2 shows recent efforts to adjust judicial pay; however, the issue has been before the Legislature in nearly every session since the founding of the state. House Bill 3199, 80th Legislature, 2007, established the Judicial Compensation Commission (JCC) to provide recommendations regarding judicial pay. Before each legislative session, JCC reports recommendations to the Legislature regarding salaries to be paid by the state for all justices and judges of SCOT, CCA, the courts of appeals, and the district courts.

Pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 35.102, JCC considers the following eight factors when determining salary recommendations:

- skill and experience required of the judgeship;
- value of compensable service performed by justices and judges, as determined by reference to judicial compensation in other states and the federal government;
- value of comparable services performed in the private sector, including private judging, arbitration, and mediation;
- compensation of attorneys in the private sector;
- cost of living and changes in the cost of living;
- compensation from the state presently received by other public officials, including the following positions:
 - state constitutional officeholders;
 - deans, presidents, and chancellors of the public university system;
 - district attorneys; and
 - chiefs of police, county attorneys, and city attorneys in major metropolitan areas for which that information is readily available;
- other factors traditionally considered; and
- level of overall compensation that is adequate to attract the most highly qualified individuals, from diversity of life and professional experiences, to serve in the judiciary without unreasonable economic hardship and with judicial independence unaffected by financial concerns.

The JCC includes nine members, appointed by the Governor, serving staggered terms of six years. These terms expire February 1 each odd-numbered year. Qualifications for members include being registered to vote in Texas, not holding other public office or being an employee of the state, and not required to register as a lobbyist. Members of the JCC are not compensated for their service, although they can be reimbursed for reasonable related expenses, pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 35.008.

The JCC will release its next report December 1, 2026, in advance of the convening of the 90th Legislature, 2027.