

1-1 By: Hughes S.B. No. 2878  
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 14, 2025; April 7, 2025, read  
1-3 first time and referred to Committee on Jurisprudence; May 7, 2025,  
1-4 reported adversely, with favorable Committee Substitute by the  
1-5 following vote: Yeas 4, Nays 0; May 7, 2025, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

1-7	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-8	X			
1-9			X	
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12	X			

1-13 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 2878 By: Middleton

1-14 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
1-15 AN ACT

1-16 relating to the operation and administration of and practices and  
1-17 procedures related to proceedings in the judicial branch of state  
1-18 government, including court security, court documents and arrest  
1-19 warrants, document delivery, juvenile boards, and youth diversion;  
1-20 increasing a criminal penalty; authorizing fees.

1-21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-22 ARTICLE 1. DISTRICT COURTS AND DISTRICT ATTORNEYS

1-23 SECTION 1.01. Effective January 1, 2027, the heading to  
1-24 Section 24.127, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

1-25 Sec. 24.127. 522ND [SECOND—25TH] JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
1-26 ([~~COLORADO,~~] GONZALES AND[~~7~~] GUADALUPE[~~7~~ AND LAVACA] COUNTIES).

1-27 SECTION 1.02. Effective January 1, 2027, Section 24.127(a),  
1-28 Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

1-29 (a) The 522nd [Second—25th] Judicial District is composed of  
1-30 [~~Colorado,~~] Gonzales and[~~7~~] Guadalupe[~~7~~ and Lavaca] counties.

1-31 SECTION 1.03. Effective January 1, 2026, the heading to  
1-32 Section 24.451, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

1-33 Sec. 24.451. 274TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT (COMAL[~~7~~ GUADALUPE,  
1-34 AND HAYS COUNTIES).

1-35 SECTION 1.04. Effective January 1, 2026, Sections 24.451(a)  
1-36 and (c), Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

1-37 (a) The 274th Judicial District is composed of Comal[~~7~~

1-38 ~~Guadalupe,~~] and Hays counties.

1-39 (c) The 274th District Court has the same jurisdiction as  
1-40 the 22nd and the 207th district courts in Comal and Hays counties

1-41 [and concurrent jurisdiction with the 25th and Second 25th district  
1-42 courts in Guadalupe County].

1-43 SECTION 1.05. (a) Subchapter C, Chapter 24, Government  
1-44 Code, is amended by adding Sections 24.60035 and 24.60036 to read as

1-45 follows:  
1-46 Sec. 24.60035. 490TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT (BRAZORIA COUNTY).  
1-47 The 490th Judicial District is composed of Brazoria County.

1-48 Sec. 24.60036. 491ST JUDICIAL DISTRICT (BRAZORIA COUNTY).  
1-49 The 491st Judicial District is composed of Brazoria County.

1-50 (b) The 490th and 491st Judicial Districts are created on  
1-51 September 1, 2025.

1-52 SECTION 1.06. (a) Effective January 1, 2027, Subchapter C,  
1-53 Chapter 24, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 24.60037

1-54 to read as follows:  
1-55 Sec. 24.60037. 492ND JUDICIAL DISTRICT (COLORADO AND LAVACA  
1-56 COUNTIES). The 492nd Judicial District is composed of Colorado and

1-57 Lavaca counties.  
1-58 (b) The 492nd Judicial District is created on January 1,  
1-59 2027.

1-60 SECTION 1.07. (a) Subchapter C, Chapter 24, Government

Code, is amended by adding Sections 24.60046 and 24.60047 to read as follows:

Sec. 24.60046. 501ST JUDICIAL DISTRICT (FORT BEND COUNTY).  
The 501st Judicial District is composed of Fort Bend County.

Sec. 24.60047. 502ND JUDICIAL DISTRICT (FORT BEND COUNTY).  
The 502nd Judicial District is composed of Fort Bend County.

(b) The 501st and 502nd Judicial Districts are created on September 1, 2025.

SECTION 1.08. (a) Subchapter C, Chapter 24, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 24.60048 to read as follows:

Sec. 24.60048. 503RD JUDICIAL DISTRICT (ROCKWALL COUNTY).  
The 503rd Judicial District is composed of Rockwall County.

(b) The 503rd Judicial District is created on September 1, 2025.

SECTION 1.09. (a) Subchapter C, Chapter 24, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 24.60049 to read as follows:

Sec. 24.60049. 504TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT (ELLIS COUNTY). The 504th Judicial District is composed of Ellis County.

(b) The 504th Judicial District is created on September 1, 2025.

SECTION 1.10. (a) Effective January 1, 2027, Subchapter C, Chapter 24, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 24.60053 to read as follows:

Sec. 24.60053. 511TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT (COMAL COUNTY). The 511th Judicial District is composed of Comal County.

(b) The 511th Judicial District is created on January 1, 2027.

SECTION 1.11. (a) Subchapter C, Chapter 24, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 24.60054 to read as follows:

Sec. 24.60054. 512TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT (WILLIAMSON COUNTY). The 512th Judicial District is composed of Williamson County.

(b) The 512th Judicial District is created on September 1, 2025.

SECTION 1.12. Effective January 1, 2029, Section 43.101, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 43.101. 1ST JUDICIAL DISTRICT. The voters of [~~Sabine and~~] San Augustine County [~~counties~~] elect a district attorney for the 1st Judicial District who represents the state in the [~~that~~] district courts in that county [~~court only in those counties~~].

SECTION 1.13. (a) Effective January 1, 2029, Subchapter B, Chapter 43, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 43.1742 to read as follows:

Sec. 43.1742. 273RD JUDICIAL DISTRICT. The voters of Sabine County elect a district attorney for the 273rd Judicial District who represents the state in the district courts in that county.

(b) The office of district attorney for the 273rd Judicial District is created on January 1, 2029.

(c) The office of district attorney for the 273rd Judicial District exists for purposes of the primary and general elections in 2028.

SECTION 1.14. Effective January 1, 2029, Section 46.002, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 46.002. PROSECUTORS SUBJECT TO CHAPTER. This chapter applies to the state prosecuting attorney, all county prosecutors, and the following state prosecutors:

(1) the district attorneys for Kenedy and Kleberg Counties and for the 1st, 2nd, 8th, 9th, 18th, 21st, 23rd, 24th, 26th, 27th, 29th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 38th, 39th, 42nd, 43rd, 46th, 47th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 63rd, 64th, 66th, 69th, 70th, 76th, 79th, 81st, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 88th, 90th, 97th, 100th, 105th, 106th, 109th, 110th, 112th, 118th, 119th, 123rd, 132nd, 142nd, 143rd, 145th, 156th, 159th, 173rd, 196th, 198th, 216th, 220th, 229th, 235th, 253rd, 258th, 259th, 266th, 268th, 271st, 273rd, 286th, 287th, 329th, 344th, 349th, 355th, 369th, 452nd, and 506th judicial districts;

(2) the criminal district attorneys for the counties of Anderson, Austin, Bastrop, Bexar, Bowie, Brazoria, Caldwell,

Calhoun, Cass, Collin, Comal, Dallas, Deaf Smith, Denton, Eastland, Fannin, Galveston, Grayson, Gregg, Harrison, Hays, Hidalgo, Jasper, Jefferson, Kaufman, Kendall, Lubbock, McLennan, Madison, Medina, Navarro, Newton, Panola, Polk, Randall, Rockwall, San Jacinto, Smith, Tarrant, Taylor, Tyler, Upshur, Van Zandt, Victoria, Walker, Waller, Wichita, Wood, and Yoakum; and

(3) the county attorneys performing the duties of district attorneys in the counties of Andrews, Aransas, Burleson, Callahan, Cameron, Castro, Colorado, Crosby, Ellis, Falls, Freestone, Gonzales, Guadalupe, Lamar, Lamb, Lampasas, Lavaca, Lee, Limestone, Marion, Milam, Morris, Ochiltree, Oldham, Orange, Rains, Red River, Robertson, Rusk, Swisher, Terry, Webb, and Willacy.

SECTION 1.15. Effective January 1, 2026, the following provisions of the Government Code are repealed:

- (1) Sections 24.126(b) and (d);
- (2) Sections 24.127(b) and (c); and
- (3) Section 24.451(b).

## ARTICLE 2. STATUTORY COUNTY COURTS

SECTION 2.01. Section 22.004(h-1), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(h-1) In addition to the rules adopted under Subsection (h), the supreme court shall adopt rules to promote the prompt, efficient, and cost-effective resolution of civil actions filed in county courts at law in which the amount in controversy does not exceed \$325,000 [~~\$250,000~~]. The rules shall balance the need for lowering discovery costs in these actions against the complexity of and discovery needs in these actions. The supreme court may not adopt rules under this subsection that conflict with other statutory law.

SECTION 2.02. Section 25.0003(c), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c) In addition to other jurisdiction provided by law, a statutory county court exercising civil jurisdiction concurrent with the constitutional jurisdiction of the county court has concurrent jurisdiction with the district court in:

(1) civil cases in which the matter in controversy exceeds \$500 but does not exceed \$325,000 [~~\$250,000~~], excluding interest, statutory or punitive damages and penalties, and attorney's fees and costs, as alleged on the face of the petition; and

(2) appeals of final rulings and decisions of the division of workers' compensation of the Texas Department of Insurance regarding workers' compensation claims, regardless of the amount in controversy.

SECTION 2.03. Section 25.0007(c), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c) In a civil case pending in a statutory county court in which the matter in controversy exceeds \$325,000 [~~\$250,000~~], the jury shall be composed of 12 members unless all of the parties agree to a jury composed of a lesser number of jurors.

SECTION 2.04. Section 25.0062(b), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The district clerk serves as clerk of a county court at law in felony cases, in family law cases and proceedings, and in civil cases in which the matter in controversy exceeds \$325,000 [~~\$250,000~~]. The county clerk serves as clerk of a county court at law in all other cases. The district clerk shall establish a separate docket for a county court at law. The commissioners court shall provide the deputy clerks, bailiffs, and other personnel necessary to operate a county court at law.

SECTION 2.05. (a) Section 25.0092, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (a) and (d) and adding Subsection (c-1) to read as follows:

(a) In addition to the jurisdiction provided by Section 25.0003 and other law, and except as limited by Subsection (b), a county court at law in Atascosa County has concurrent jurisdiction with the district court in:

- (1) Class A and Class B misdemeanor cases;

4-1 (2) family law matters;  
 4-2 (3) juvenile matters;  
 4-3 (4) probate matters; ~~and~~  
 4-4 (5) appeals from the justice and municipal courts; and  
 4-5 (6) civil cases in which the matter in controversy  
 4-6 exceeds the maximum amount provided by Section 25.0003 but does not  
 4-7 exceed \$1 million, excluding interest, statutory or punitive  
 4-8 damages and penalties, and attorney's fees and costs, as alleged on  
 4-9 the face of the petition, including:

4-10 (A) a suit to decide the issue of title to real or  
 4-11 personal property;

4-12 (B) a suit for the enforcement of a lien on real  
 4-13 property;

4-14 (C) a suit for the trial of the right to property  
 4-15 valued at \$500 or more that has been levied on under a writ of  
 4-16 execution, sequestration, or attachment; and

4-17 (D) a suit for the recovery of real property.

4-18 (c-1) In addition to other assignments provided by law, a  
 4-19 judge of the county court at law in Atascosa County is subject to  
 4-20 assignment under Chapter 74 to any district court in Atascosa  
 4-21 County. A county court at law judge assigned to a district court  
 4-22 may hear any matter pending in the district court.

4-23 (d) The judge of a county court at law shall be paid as  
 4-24 provided by Section 25.0005 ~~[a total annual salary set by the~~  
 4-25 ~~commissioners court at an amount that is not less than \$1,000 less~~  
 4-26 ~~than the total annual salary received by a district judge in the~~  
 4-27 ~~county. A district judge's or statutory county court judge's total~~  
 4-28 ~~annual salary does not include contributions and supplements paid~~  
 4-29 ~~by a county]~~.

4-30 (b) Section 25.0092(a), Government Code, as amended by this  
 4-31 section, applies only to a case filed or proceeding commenced on or  
 4-32 after the effective date of this Act. A case filed or proceeding  
 4-33 commenced before that date is governed by the law in effect on the  
 4-34 date the case was filed or the proceeding was commenced, and the  
 4-35 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

4-36 SECTION 2.06. Section 25.0212, Government Code, is amended  
 4-37 by amending Subsections (a), (b), and (f) and adding Subsections  
 4-38 (i) and (j) to read as follows:

4-39 (a) In addition to the jurisdiction provided by Section  
 4-40 25.0003 and other law and except as limited by Subsection (b), a  
 4-41 county court at law in Bowie County has, concurrent with the  
 4-42 district court, the jurisdiction provided by the constitution and  
 4-43 by general law for district courts, including concurrent  
 4-44 jurisdiction in:

4-45 (1) specialty court programs;

4-46 (2) misdemeanor cases;

4-47 (3) family law cases and proceedings, including  
 4-48 juvenile matters; and

4-49 (4) probate and guardianship matters.

4-50 (b) A county court at law does not have jurisdiction of:

4-51 (1) felony criminal matters;

4-52 (2) suits on behalf of the state to recover penalties  
 4-53 or escheated property;

4-54 (3) misdemeanors involving official misconduct;

4-55 (4) contested elections; or

4-56 (5) civil cases in which the matter in controversy  
 4-57 exceeds the amount provided in Section 25.0003 ~~[\$200,000]~~,  
 4-58 excluding interest, statutory or punitive damages and penalties,  
 4-59 and attorney's fees and costs, as alleged on the face of the  
 4-60 petition.

4-61 (f) The ~~[commissioners court may authorize the judge of a~~  
 4-62 ~~county court at law to set the]~~ official court reporter of a county  
 4-63 court at law is entitled to compensation, fees, and allowances in  
 4-64 amounts equal to the amounts paid to the official court reporters  
 4-65 serving the district courts in Bowie County, including an annual  
 4-66 salary set by the judge of the county court at law and approved by  
 4-67 the commissioners court ~~[reporter's salary]~~.

4-68 (i) The jury in all civil or criminal matters is composed of  
 4-69 12 members, except in misdemeanor criminal cases and any other case

in which the court has concurrent jurisdiction with county courts under Section 25.0003(a), the jury is composed of six members.

(j) In matters of concurrent jurisdiction, a judge of a county court at law and a judge of a district court with jurisdiction in Bowie County may transfer cases between the courts in the same manner that judges of district courts may transfer cases under Section 24.003.

SECTION 2.07. (a) Effective January 1, 2027, Section 25.1101(b), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) Hidalgo County has the following statutory probate courts:

(1) ~~[one statutory probate court, the]~~ Probate Court No. 1 of Hidalgo County; and

(2) Probate Court No. 2 of Hidalgo County.

(b) On January 1, 2027:

(1) Probate Court No. 2 of Hidalgo County is created; and

(2) the Probate Court of Hidalgo County is redesignated as Probate Court No. 1 of Hidalgo County.

SECTION 2.08. (a) Section 25.1102(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) In addition to the jurisdiction provided by Section 25.0003 and other law, a county court at law in Hidalgo County has concurrent jurisdiction with the district court in:

(1) family law cases and proceedings; and

(2) civil cases ~~[in which the matter in controversy does not exceed \$750,000, excluding interest, statutory or punitive damages and penalties, and attorney's fees and costs, as alleged on the page of the petition].~~

(b) Section 25.1102(a), Government Code, as amended by this section, applies only to an action filed in a county court at law in Hidalgo County on or after the effective date of this Act. An action filed in a county court at law in Hidalgo County before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the date the action was filed, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 2.09. Section 25.1902(b-1), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b-1) In addition to the jurisdiction provided by Subsections (a) and (b), the county courts at law in ~~[County Court at Law No. 1 of]~~ Potter County have ~~[has]~~ concurrent jurisdiction with the district court in felony cases to conduct arraignments, conduct pretrial hearings, and accept pleas in uncontested matters.

SECTION 2.10. (a) Sections 25.0212(d) and 25.1723(c), Government Code, are repealed.

(b) Section 25.1723(c), Government Code, as repealed by this section, applies only to an action filed on or after the effective date of this Act. An action filed before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect immediately before that date, and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 2.11. Sections 25.0003(c), 25.0007(c), and 25.0062(b), Government Code, as amended by this article, apply only to a civil case filed in a statutory county court on or after September 1, 2025. A civil case filed in a statutory county court before that date is governed by the law in effect immediately before that date, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

### ARTICLE 3. VISITING JUDGES

SECTION 3.01. Section 25.0022, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (d), (h), (k), (o), (t), (u), and (w) and adding Subsection (k-1) to read as follows:

(d) The presiding judge shall:

(1) ensure the promulgation of local rules of administration in accordance with policies and guidelines set by the supreme court;

(2) advise local statutory probate court judges on case flow management practices and auxiliary court services;

(3) perform a duty of a local administrative statutory probate court judge if the local administrative judge does not

perform that duty;

(4) appoint an assistant presiding judge of the statutory probate courts;

(5) call and preside over annual meetings of the judges of the statutory probate courts at a time and place in the state as designated by the presiding judge;

(6) call and convene other meetings of the judges of the statutory probate courts as considered necessary by the presiding judge to promote the orderly and efficient administration of justice in the statutory probate courts;

(7) study available statistics reflecting the condition of the dockets of the probate courts in the state to determine the need for the assignment of judges under this section;

(8) compare local rules of court to achieve uniformity of rules to the extent practical and consistent with local conditions;

(9) assign or order the clerk who serves the statutory probate courts to randomly assign a judge or former or retired judge of a statutory probate court or a former or retired justice of an appellate court to hear a case under Section 25.002201(a) or 25.00255, as applicable; and

(10) require the local administrative judge for statutory probate courts in a county to ensure that all statutory probate courts in the county comply with Chapter 37.

(h) Subject to Section 25.002201, a judge or a former or retired judge of a statutory probate court or a former or retired justice of an appellate court may be assigned by the presiding judge of the statutory probate courts to hold court in a statutory probate court, a county court, or any statutory court exercising probate jurisdiction when:

(1) a statutory probate judge requests assignment of another judge to the judge's court;

(2) a statutory probate judge is absent, disabled, or disqualified for any reason;

(3) a statutory probate judge is present or is trying cases as authorized by the constitution and laws of this state and the condition of the court's docket makes it necessary to appoint an additional judge;

(4) the office of a statutory probate judge is vacant;

(5) the presiding judge of an administrative judicial district requests the assignment of a statutory probate judge to hear a probate matter in a county court or statutory county court;

(6) the statutory probate judge is recused or disqualified as described by Section 25.002201(a);

(7) a county court judge requests the assignment of a statutory probate judge to hear a probate matter in the county court; or

(8) a local administrative statutory probate court judge requests the assignment of a statutory probate judge to hear a matter in a statutory probate court.

(k) Except as provided by Subsection (k-1), the [The] daily compensation of a former or retired judge or justice for purposes of this section is set at an amount equal to the daily compensation of a judge of a statutory probate court in the county in which the former or retired judge or justice is assigned. A former or retired judge or justice assigned to a county that does not have a statutory probate court shall be paid an amount equal to the daily compensation of a judge of a statutory probate court in the county where the assigned judge or justice was last elected.

(k-1) Notwithstanding Subsection (k), a former or retired judge or justice assigned under this section to a statutory probate court in a county located in the Texas-Mexico border region, as defined by Section 2056.002(e), is entitled to compensation from the state in an amount equal to the maximum salary a district judge may receive from county and state sources under Section 659.012(a) if the presiding judge of the administrative judicial region in which the county lies certifies that exigent circumstances require the assignment and money has been appropriated specifically for that purpose.

(o) The county in which the assigned judge served shall pay out of the general fund of the county:

(1) expenses certified under Subsection (m) to the assigned judge; and

(2) the salary certified under Subsection (m) to the county in which the assigned judge serves, or, if the assigned judge is a former or retired judge or justice, to the assigned judge.

(t) To be eligible for assignment under this section, a former or retired judge of a statutory probate court or a former or retired justice of an appellate court must:

(1) not have been removed from office;

(2) certify under oath to the presiding judge, on a form prescribed by the state board of regional judges, that:

(A) the judge or justice has not been publicly reprimanded or censured by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct; and

(B) the judge or justice:

(i) did not resign or retire from office after the State Commission on Judicial Conduct notified the judge or justice of the commencement of a full investigation into an allegation or appearance of misconduct or disability of the judge or justice as provided in Section 33.022 and before the final disposition of that investigation; or

(ii) if the judge or justice did resign from office under circumstances described by Subparagraph (i), was not publicly reprimanded or censured as a result of the investigation;

(3) annually demonstrate that the judge or justice has completed in the past state fiscal year the educational requirements for an active statutory probate court judge;

(4) have served as an active judge or justice for at least 72 months in a district, statutory probate, statutory county, or appellate court; and

(5) have developed substantial experience in the judge's or justice's area of specialty.

(u) In addition to the eligibility requirements under Subsection (t), to be eligible for assignment under this section in the judge's or justice's county of residence, a former or retired judge of a statutory probate court or a former or retired justice of an appellate court must certify to the presiding judge a willingness not to:

(1) appear and plead as an attorney in any court in the judge's county of residence for a period of two years; and

(2) accept appointment as a guardian ad litem, guardian of the estate of an incapacitated person, or guardian of the person of an incapacitated person in any court in the judge's or justice's county of residence for a period of two years.

(w) A former or retired judge or justice who is assigned under this section is not an employee of the county in which the assigned court is located.

SECTION 3.02. Section 25.002201, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 25.002201. ASSIGNMENT OF JUDGE ON RECUSAL OR DISQUALIFICATION. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), not later than the 15th day after the date an order of recusal or disqualification of a statutory probate court judge is issued in a case, the presiding judge shall assign a statutory probate court judge or a former or retired judge of a statutory probate court or a former or retired justice of an appellate court to hear the case if:

(1) the judge of the statutory probate court recused himself or herself under Section 25.00255(g)(1)(A);

(2) the judge of the statutory probate court disqualified himself or herself under Section 25.00255(g-1);

(3) the order was issued under Section 25.00255(i-3)(1); or

(4) the presiding judge receives notice and a request for assignment from the clerk of the statutory probate court under Section 25.00255(1).

(b) If the judge who is the subject of an order of recusal or disqualification is the presiding judge of the statutory probate

courts, the chief justice of the supreme court shall assign a statutory probate judge, ~~[or]~~ a former or retired judge of a statutory probate court, or a former or retired justice of an appellate court to hear the case.

SECTION 3.03. Section 25.00255(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) Notwithstanding any conflicting provision in the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, Rules 18a and 18b, Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, apply to the recusal and disqualification of a statutory probate court judge except as otherwise provided by this section or another provision of this subchapter. The presiding judge:

(1) has the authority and shall perform the functions and duties of the presiding judge of the administrative judicial region under the rules, including the duty to hear or rule on a referred motion of recusal or disqualification or, subject to Subdivisions (2) and (3), assign a judge to hear and rule on a referred motion of recusal or disqualification;

(2) may assign a presiding judge of the administrative judicial region to hear and rule on a referred motion of recusal or disqualification only with the consent of the presiding judge of the administrative judicial region;

(3) may not assign a judge of a statutory probate court located in the same county as the statutory probate court served by the judge who is the subject of the motion of recusal or disqualification; and

(4) if the presiding judge is the subject of the motion of recusal or disqualification, shall sign and file with the clerk an order referring the motion to the chief justice of the supreme court for assignment of a presiding judge of an administrative judicial region, a statutory probate court judge, ~~[or]~~ a former or retired judge of a statutory probate court, or a former or retired justice of an appellate court to hear and rule on the motion, subject to Subdivisions (2) and (3).

SECTION 3.04. Section 74.003(e), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(e) A retired justice or judge assigned as provided by this section is entitled to receive, pro rata for the time serving on assignment, from money appropriated from the general revenue fund for that purpose, an amount equal to the compensation received from state and county sources by a justice of the court of appeals to which assigned. A former justice or judge assigned as provided by this section is entitled to receive, pro rata for the time serving on assignment, from money appropriated from the general revenue fund for that purpose, an amount equal to the compensation from the state received by a justice of the court of appeals to which assigned, and from county sources, an amount equal to the compensation received from county sources by a justice of the court of appeals to which assigned. For purposes of determining the amount to be paid to a former or retired justice or judge under this subsection, the compensation received from the state by a justice of the court of appeals to which the retired justice or judge is assigned is the amount equal to the state ~~[base]~~ salary paid to a justice of that court of appeals with eight years of service [as set by the General Appropriations Act] in accordance with Section 659.012(b)(2) ~~[659.012(a)]~~.

SECTION 3.05. Section 74.046(b), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) A presiding judge may appoint a judicial mentor or arrange for additional administrative personnel to be assigned to a court identified by the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System as needing additional assistance under Section 72.024(b-1). A former or retired judge or justice assigned as a judicial mentor under this subsection is entitled to the same salary, compensation, and expenses under Section 74.061 that the judge or justice would be entitled to if the judge or justice had been assigned under this chapter to serve as the judge of a trial court in the administrative judicial region of the court to which the judge or justice is assigned as a judicial mentor.

SECTION 3.06. Sections 74.061(h) and (i), Government Code,



9-1 are amended to read as follows:

9-2 (h) Notwithstanding Subsection (c), the salary from the  
 9-3 state of a retired judge or justice assigned to a district court is  
 9-4 determined pro rata based on the sum of the regular judge's salary  
 9-5 from the county plus the amount of the state ~~[base]~~ salary paid to a  
 9-6 district judge with eight years of service [as set by the General  
 9-7 Appropriations Act] in accordance with Section 659.012(b)(2)  
 9-8 ~~[659.012(a)]~~.

9-9 (i) Notwithstanding Subsection (d), the salary from the  
 9-10 state of a former judge or justice assigned to a district court is  
 9-11 determined pro rata based on the amount of the state ~~[base]~~ salary  
 9-12 paid to a district judge with eight years of service [as set by the  
 9-13 General Appropriations Act] in accordance with Section  
 9-14 659.012(b)(2) ~~[659.012(a)]~~.

9-15 ARTICLE 4. MASTERS, MAGISTRATES, REFEREES, AND ASSOCIATE JUDGES

9-16 SECTION 4.01. Article 2A.151, Code of Criminal Procedure,  
 9-17 is amended to read as follows:

9-18 Art. 2A.151. TYPES OF MAGISTRATES. The following officers  
 9-19 are magistrates for purposes of this code:

9-20 (1) a justice of the supreme court;  
 9-21 (2) a judge of the court of criminal appeals;  
 9-22 (3) a justice of the courts of appeals;  
 9-23 (4) a judge of a district court;  
 9-24 (5) an associate judge appointed by:  
 9-25 (A) a judge of a district court or a statutory  
 9-26 county court that gives preference to criminal cases in Jefferson  
 9-27 County;

9-28 (B) a judge of a district court or a statutory  
 9-29 county court of Brazos County, Nueces County, or Williamson County;  
 9-30 or

9-31 (C) a judge of a district court under Chapter  
 9-32 54A, Government Code;

9-33 (6) a criminal magistrate appointed by:  
 9-34 (A) the Bell County Commissioners Court;  
 9-35 (B) the Brazoria County Commissioners Court; or  
 9-36 (C) [(B)] the Burnet County Commissioners Court;  
 9-37 (7) a criminal law hearing officer for:

9-38 (A) Harris County appointed under Subchapter L,  
 9-39 Chapter 54, Government Code; or

9-40 (B) Cameron County appointed under Subchapter  
 9-41 BB, Chapter 54, Government Code;

9-42 (8) a magistrate appointed:  
 9-43 (A) by a judge of a district court of Bexar  
 9-44 County, Dallas County, or Tarrant County that gives preference to  
 9-45 criminal cases;

9-46 (B) by a judge of a criminal district court of  
 9-47 Dallas County or Tarrant County;

9-48 (C) by a judge of a district court or statutory  
 9-49 county court of Denton or Grayson County;

9-50 (D) by a judge of a district court or statutory  
 9-51 county court that gives preference to criminal cases in Travis  
 9-52 County;

9-53 (E) ~~[(D)]~~ by the El Paso Council of Judges;  
 9-54 (F) ~~[(E)]~~ by the Fort Bend County Commissioners  
 9-55 Court;

9-56 (G) ~~[(F)]~~ by the Collin County Commissioners  
 9-57 Court; or

9-58 (H) ~~[(G)]~~ under Subchapter JJ, Chapter 54,  
 9-59 Government Code;

9-60 (9) a magistrate or associate judge appointed by a  
 9-61 judge of a district court of Lubbock County, Nolan County, or Webb  
 9-62 County;

9-63 (10) a county judge;

9-64 (11) a judge of:

9-65 (A) a statutory county court;

9-66 (B) a county criminal court; or

9-67 (C) a statutory probate court;

9-68 (12) an associate judge appointed by a judge of a  
 9-69 statutory probate court under Chapter 54A, Government Code;

(13) a justice of the peace; and  
 (14) a mayor or recorder of a municipality or a judge of a municipal court.

SECTION 4.02. Chapter 54, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter A to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 54.001. QUALIFICATIONS. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) or another provision of this chapter and in addition to any other qualification required by law, a master, magistrate, referee, or associate judge appointed under this chapter must have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least five years before the date of appointment.

(b) A master, magistrate, referee, or associate judge appointed under the following provisions of this chapter must have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least two years before the date of appointment:

- (1) Section 54.991;
- (2) Section 54.1231;
- (3) Section 54.1501;
- (4) Section 54.1851;
- (5) Section 54.2001;
- (6) Section 54.2301; or
- (7) Section 54.2802.

SECTION 4.03. Chapter 54, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter EE to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER EE. BELL COUNTY CRIMINAL MAGISTRATES

Sec. 54.1601. APPOINTMENT. (a) The Commissioners Court of Bell County may select magistrates to serve the courts of Bell County having jurisdiction in criminal matters.

(b) The commissioners court shall establish the minimum qualifications, salary, benefits, and other compensation of each magistrate position and shall determine whether the position is full-time or part-time. Notwithstanding another provision of this chapter, to be eligible for appointment under this subchapter, a person must have been licensed to practice law in this state and in good standing with the State Bar of Texas for at least two years.

(c) A magistrate appointed under this section serves at the pleasure of the commissioners court.

Sec. 54.1602. JURISDICTION. A magistrate has concurrent criminal jurisdiction with the judges of the justice of the peace courts of Bell County.

Sec. 54.1603. POWERS AND DUTIES. (a) The Commissioners Court of Bell County shall establish the powers and duties of a magistrate appointed under this subchapter. Except as otherwise provided by the commissioners court, a magistrate has the powers of a magistrate under the Code of Criminal Procedure and other laws of this state and may administer an oath for any purpose.

(b) A magistrate shall give preference to performing the duties of a magistrate under Article 15.17, Code of Criminal Procedure.

(c) The commissioners court may designate one or more magistrates to hold regular hearings to:

- (1) give admonishments;
- (2) set and review bail and conditions of release;
- (3) appoint legal counsel; and
- (4) determine other routine matters relating to preindictment or pending cases within those courts' jurisdiction.

(d) In the hearings provided under Subsection (c), a magistrate shall give preference to the case of an individual held in county jail.

(e) A magistrate may inquire into a defendant's intended plea to the charge and set the case for an appropriate hearing before a judge or master.

Sec. 54.1604. JUDICIAL IMMUNITY. A magistrate has the same judicial immunity as a district judge.

Sec. 54.1605. WITNESSES. (a) A witness who is sworn and who appears before a magistrate is subject to the penalties for perjury and aggravated perjury provided by law.

(b) A referring court may fine or imprison a witness or

other court participant for failure to appear after being summoned, refusal to answer questions, or other acts of direct contempt before a magistrate.

SECTION 4.04. Section 54.302, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.302. QUALIFICATIONS. To be eligible for appointment as a magistrate, a person must[+] ~~[(1)] be a resident of this state[, and~~  
~~[(2)] have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.05. Section 54.652, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.652. QUALIFICATIONS. To be eligible for appointment as a magistrate, a person must[+] ~~[(1)] be a resident of this state[, and~~  
~~[(2)] have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.06. Section 54.802, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.802. QUALIFICATIONS. A master must[+] ~~[(1)] be a citizen and resident of this state[, and~~  
~~[(2)] have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.07. Section 54.853, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.853. QUALIFICATIONS. To be eligible for appointment as a criminal law hearing officer under this subchapter, a person must:

(1) be a resident of this state and the county;  
(2) ~~[have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years,]~~

~~[(3)] not have been defeated for reelection to a judicial office;~~

(3) ~~[(4)] not have been removed from office by impeachment, by the supreme court, by the governor on address to the legislature, by a tribunal reviewing a recommendation of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, or by the legislature's abolition of the judge's court; and~~

(4) ~~[(5)] not have resigned from office after having received notice that formal proceedings by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct had been instituted as provided in Section 33.022 and before the final disposition of the proceedings.~~

SECTION 4.08. Section 54.872, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.872. QUALIFICATIONS. To be eligible for appointment as a magistrate, a person must[+] ~~[(1)] be a resident of this state[, and~~  
~~[(2)] have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.09. Section 54.902, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.902. QUALIFICATIONS. To be eligible for appointment as a magistrate, a person must[+] ~~[(1)] be a resident of this state[, and~~  
~~[(2)] have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.10. Section 54.972, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.972. QUALIFICATIONS. A magistrate must[+] ~~[(1)] be a resident of this state and of Travis County[, and~~

~~[(2)] have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.11. Section 54.1173, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.1173. QUALIFICATIONS. A magistrate must:

(1) be a citizen of this state; and  
(2) be at least 25 years of age[, and  
~~[(3)] have been licensed to practice law in this state~~

~~for at least four years preceding the date of appointment].~~

SECTION 4.12. Section 54.1353, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.1353. QUALIFICATIONS. To be eligible for appointment as a criminal law hearing officer under this subchapter, a person must:

- (1) be a resident of Cameron County;
- (2) be eligible to vote in this state and in Cameron County;
- (3) be at least 30 years of age; and
- (4) ~~[be a licensed attorney with at least four years' experience, and~~
- ~~[(5)]~~ have the other qualifications required by the board.

SECTION 4.13. Section 54.1501(b), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The commissioners court shall establish the minimum qualifications, salary, benefits, and other compensation of each magistrate position and shall determine whether the position is full-time or part-time. ~~[The qualifications must require the magistrate to:~~

- ~~[(1) have served as a justice of the peace or municipal court judge, or~~
- ~~[(2) be an attorney licensed in this state.]~~

SECTION 4.14. Section 54.1804, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.1804. QUALIFICATIONS. A magistrate must~~+~~ ~~[(1)]~~ be a resident of this state and of the county in which the magistrate is appointed to serve under this subchapter~~+~~ ~~and~~

- ~~[(2) have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.15. Section 54.1851(b), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The commissioners court shall establish the minimum qualifications, salary, benefits, and other compensation of each magistrate position and shall determine whether the position is full-time or part-time. ~~[The qualifications must require the magistrate to have served as a justice of the peace or be an attorney licensed in this state.]~~

SECTION 4.16. Section 54.1953, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.1953. QUALIFICATIONS. A magistrate must:

- (1) be a citizen of this state; and
- (2) have resided in the county for at least six months before the date of the appointment~~+, and~~

- ~~[(3) have:~~
- ~~[(A) served as a justice of the peace for at least four years before the date of appointment, or~~
- ~~[(B) been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years before the date of appointment].~~

SECTION 4.17. Section 54.2202(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) To be eligible for appointment as a magistrate, a person must:

- (1) be a citizen of the United States; and
- (2) have resided in Collin County for at least the four years preceding the person's appointment~~+, and~~
- ~~[(3) have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.18. Section 54.2402(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) To be eligible for appointment as a magistrate, a person must:

- (1) be a citizen of the United States; and
- (2) have resided in Fort Bend County for at least the four years preceding the person's appointment~~+, and~~
- ~~[(3) have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.19. Section 54.2602, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.2602. QUALIFICATIONS. To be eligible for appointment as a magistrate, a person must ~~+~~ ~~[(1)] be a resident of this state[, and~~ ~~[(2)] have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.20. Section 54.2702(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) To be eligible for appointment as a magistrate, a person must be a resident of this state ~~[and~~ ~~[(1)] have served as a justice of the peace or municipal court judge for at least four years before the date of appointment,~~ ~~or~~ ~~[(2)] have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years before the date of appointment].~~

SECTION 4.21. Section 54.2802(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The district court judges with jurisdiction in Denton County and the judges of the criminal statutory county courts of Denton County shall appoint one or more judges to preside over the criminal law magistrate court. An appointed judge must:

(1) serve Denton County as a district court judge, a criminal statutory county court judge, an associate judge of a court with criminal jurisdiction, a magistrate, including a jail magistrate, a judge of a municipal court of record, or a justice of the peace;

(2) ~~[be a licensed attorney in good standing with the State Bar of Texas,~~ ~~[(3)] be authorized to access criminal history records under state and federal law;~~ ~~[(4)] have completed training necessary to serve as a magistrate in Denton County, as determined by the district court judges with jurisdiction in Denton County and the judges of the criminal statutory county courts of Denton County; and~~ ~~[(5)] meet the qualifications under Section 54.2807.~~

SECTION 4.22. Section 54.2807, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.2807. QUALIFICATIONS. To be eligible for appointment as the criminal law magistrate court associate judge, a jail magistrate, or another magistrate in the criminal law magistrate court, a person must ~~+~~ ~~[(1)] have been a resident of Denton County for at least two years preceding the person's appointment[, and~~ ~~[(2)] have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least four years].~~

SECTION 4.23. Section 54A.003, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54A.003. QUALIFICATIONS. To qualify for appointment as an associate judge under this subchapter, a person must:

(1) be a resident of this state and one of the counties the person will serve;

(2) have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least five ~~[four]~~ years;

(3) not have been removed from office by impeachment, by the supreme court, by the governor on address to the legislature, by a tribunal reviewing a recommendation of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, or by the legislature's abolition of the judge's court; and

(4) not have resigned from office after having received notice that formal proceedings by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct had been instituted as provided by Section 33.022 and before final disposition of the proceedings.

SECTION 4.24. Section 54A.103, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54A.103. QUALIFICATIONS. To qualify for appointment as an associate judge under this subchapter, a person must:

(1) be a resident of this state and one of the counties

the person will serve;

(2) have been licensed to practice law in this state for at least five [~~four~~] years;

(3) not have been removed from office by impeachment, by the supreme court, by the governor on address to the legislature, by a tribunal reviewing a recommendation of the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, or by the legislature's abolition of the judge's court; and

(4) not have resigned from office after having received notice that formal proceedings by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct had been instituted as provided in Section 33.022 and before final disposition of the proceedings.

SECTION 4.25. Section 54A.305(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) To be eligible for appointment as an associate judge under this subchapter, a person must:

(1) be a citizen of the United States;

(2) be a resident of this state for the two years preceding the date of appointment; and

(3) be:

(A) eligible for assignment under Section 74.054 because the person is named on the list of retired and former judges maintained by the presiding judge of the administrative judicial region under Section 74.055;

(B) eligible for assignment under Section 25.0022 by the presiding judge of the statutory probate courts; or

(C) licensed to practice law in this state for at least five years and have at least four years of experience in guardianship proceedings or protective services proceedings before the date of appointment as a practicing attorney in this state or a judge of a court in this state.

SECTION 4.26. The changes in law made by this article apply only to a master, magistrate, referee, or associate judge appointed under Chapter 54 or 54A, Government Code, as amended by this article, on or after September 1, 2025. A master, magistrate, referee, or associate judge appointed before that date is governed by the law in effect on the date the master, magistrate, referee, or associate judge was appointed, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

#### ARTICLE 5. BUSINESS COURT

SECTION 5.01. Section 659.012, Government Code, is amended by adding Subsection (a-1) to read as follows:

(a-1) In addition to the annual base salary from the state prescribed by Subsection (a), a judge of a division of the business court is entitled to an annual salary supplement from the state in an amount equal to the difference between the judge's annual base salary from the state and the maximum combined base salary from all state and county sources paid to a district judge under Subsection (a).

#### ARTICLE 6. JURORS

SECTION 6.01. Article 19A.051(c), Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended to read as follows:

(c) The judge shall test the qualifications for and exemptions [~~excuses~~] from service as a grand juror and impanel the completed grand jury as provided by this chapter.

SECTION 6.02. The heading to Subchapter C, Chapter 19A, Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER C. GRAND JUROR QUALIFICATIONS; EXEMPTIONS [~~EXCUSES~~]  
FROM SERVICE

SECTION 6.03. Article 19A.101, Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended to read as follows:

Art. 19A.101. GRAND JUROR QUALIFICATIONS; LISTS OF DISQUALIFIED PERSONS. (a) A person may be selected or serve as a grand juror only if the person:

(1) is at least 18 years of age;

(2) is a citizen of the United States;

(3) is a resident of this state and of the county in which the person is to serve;

(4) is qualified under the constitution and other laws

to vote in the county in which the grand jury is sitting, regardless of whether the person is registered to vote;

(5) is of sound mind and good moral character;

(6) is able to read and write;

(7) has never been convicted of misdemeanor theft [~~or a felony~~];

(8) has never been convicted of a felony;

(9) is not under indictment or other legal accusation for misdemeanor theft or a felony;

(10) [~~(9)~~] is not related within the third degree by consanguinity or second degree by affinity, as determined under Chapter 573, Government Code, to any person selected to serve or serving on the same grand jury;

(11) [~~(10)~~] has not served as a grand juror in the year before the date on which the term of court for which the person has been selected as a grand juror begins; and

(12) [~~(11)~~] is not a complainant in any matter to be heard by the grand jury during the term of court for which the person has been selected as a grand juror.

(b) On the third business day of each month, the clerk of the district court shall prepare:

(1) a list of persons who in the preceding month were disqualified from serving as a grand juror based on the person's citizenship [~~or indictment or conviction for misdemeanor theft or a felony~~] and send a copy of the list to:

(A) [~~(1)~~] the secretary of state;

(B) the voter registrar for the county in which the grand jury is sitting; and

(C) [~~(2)~~] the prosecuting attorney for the court to which the grand jurors were summoned for investigation into whether any person made a false claim concerning the person's qualification under Subsection (a)(2);

(2) a list of persons who in the preceding month were disqualified from serving as a grand juror based on the person's residency and send a copy of the list to:

(A) the secretary of state; and

(B) the voter registrar for the county in which the grand jury is sitting; and

(3) a list of persons who in the preceding month were disqualified from serving as a grand juror based on the person's indictment or conviction for misdemeanor theft or a felony and send a copy of the list to:

(A) the secretary of state;

(B) the voter registrar for the county in which the grand jury is sitting; and

(C) the prosecuting attorney for the court to which the grand jurors were summoned for investigation into whether any person made a false claim concerning the person's qualification under Subsection (a)(7), (8), or (9) [~~, (7), or (8)~~].

SECTION 6.04. Article 19A.105, Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended to read as follows:

Art. 19A.105. EXCUSE AND EXEMPTION [EXCUSES] FROM GRAND JURY SERVICE. (a) The court shall excuse from serving any summoned person who does not possess the requisite qualifications or who claims an exemption to which the person is entitled.

(b) The following qualified persons may be exempted [excused] from grand jury service:

(1) a person who is 75 years of age or older [~~than 70 years of age~~];

(2) a person responsible for the care of a child who is younger than 18 years of age and who will be without adequate supervision if the person serves on the grand jury;

(3) a student of a public or private secondary school;

(4) a person enrolled in and in actual attendance at an institution of higher education; and

(5) any other person the court determines has a reasonable excuse from service.

SECTION 6.05. Subchapter C, Chapter 19A, Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended by adding Articles 19A.106 and 19A.107 to

read as follows:

Art. 19A.106. PERMANENT EXEMPTION FOR ELDERLY. (a) A person who is entitled to exemption from grand jury service because the person is 75 years of age or older may establish a permanent exemption on that ground as provided by this article.

(b) A person may claim a permanent exemption by filing with the district clerk or the clerk of a district court in the county, through an electronic transmission, mail, or personal delivery, a signed statement affirming the person is 75 years of age or older and desires a permanent exemption on that ground.

(c) The district clerk shall maintain a current register of the name of each person who resides in the county and who has claimed and is entitled to a permanent exemption from grand jury service because the person is 75 years of age or older.

(d) On the third business day of each month, the district clerk shall prepare a list of persons who in the preceding month were permanently exempted from serving as a grand juror under this article or who rescinded a permanent exemption under Subsection (f) and send a copy of the list to the secretary of state and the voter registrar of each county served by the clerk.

(e) A person whose name appears on the register of persons permanently exempted from serving as a grand juror under this article may not be selected or summoned for grand jury service by any district judge in the county.

(f) A person who has claimed a permanent exemption from jury service under this article may rescind the exemption at any time by filing a signed request for the rescission with the district clerk or the clerk of a district court in the county. Rescission of a permanent exemption does not affect the right of a person who is 75 years of age or older to claim a permanent exemption at a later time.

Art. 19A.107. LIST OF DISQUALIFIED CONVICTED PERSONS. (a) The district clerk shall maintain a list of the name and address of each person who is disqualified under this subchapter from grand jury service because the person was convicted of misdemeanor theft or a felony.

(b) A person who was convicted of misdemeanor theft or a felony is permanently disqualified from serving as a juror.

(c) A person whose name appears on the list maintained under this article may not be selected or summoned for grand jury service by any judge of a district court served by the clerk.

(d) On the third business day of each month, the district clerk shall send a copy of the list maintained under this article to:

(1) the secretary of state;  
(2) the voter registrar for the county in which the grand jury is sitting; and

(3) the prosecuting attorney for the court to which the grand jurors were summoned for investigation into whether any person made a false claim concerning the person's qualification under Article 19A.101(a)(7) or (8).

SECTION 6.06. Sections 62.001(a) and (b), Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) The jury wheel must be reconstituted by using, as the source:

(1) the names of all persons on the current voter registration lists from all the precincts in the county; and

(2) all names on a current list to be furnished by the Department of Public Safety, showing the citizens of the county who:

(A) hold a valid Texas driver's license or a valid personal identification card or certificate issued by the department; and

(B) are not disqualified from jury service under Section 62.102(1), (2), (3), (7), or (8).

(b) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), the names of persons listed on a register of persons exempt from jury service may not be placed in the jury wheel, as provided by Sections 62.108 and [7] 62.109[~~7~~, ~~62.113~~, ~~62.114~~, and ~~62.115~~].



SECTION 6.07. Section 62.0132(g), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(g) The information contained in a completed questionnaire may be disclosed to:

(1) a judge assigned to hear a cause of action in which the respondent to the questionnaire is a potential juror;

(2) court personnel;

(3) a litigant and a litigant's attorney in a cause of action in which the respondent to the questionnaire is a potential juror; and

(4) other than information provided that is related to Section 62.102(2), (3), (7), (8), or (9) [~~62.102(8) or (9)~~], the voter registrar of a county in connection with any matter of voter registration or the administration of elections.

SECTION 6.08. Section 62.102, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 62.102. GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR JURY SERVICE. A person is disqualified to serve as a petit juror unless the person:

(1) is at least 18 years of age;

(2) is a citizen of the United States;

(3) is a resident of this state and of the county in which the person is to serve as a juror;

(4) is qualified under the constitution and laws to vote in the county in which the person is to serve as a juror;

(5) is of sound mind and good moral character;

(6) is able to read and write;

(7) ~~[has not served as a petit juror for six days during the preceding three months in the county court or during the preceding six months in the district court;~~

~~[(8)]~~ has not been convicted of misdemeanor theft ~~[or a felony]~~;

(8) has not been convicted of a felony; ~~[and]~~

(9) is not under indictment or other legal accusation for misdemeanor theft or a felony; and

(10) has not served as a petit juror for six days during the preceding three months in the county court or during the preceding six months in the district court.

SECTION 6.09. Section 62.106(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) A person qualified to serve as a petit juror may establish an exemption from jury service if the person:

(1) is ~~[over]~~ 75 years of age or older;

(2) has legal custody of a child younger than 12 years of age and the person's service on the jury requires leaving the child without adequate supervision;

(3) is a student of a public or private secondary school;

(4) is a person enrolled and in actual attendance at an institution of higher education;

(5) is an officer or an employee of the senate, the house of representatives, or any department, commission, board, office, or other agency in the legislative branch of state government;

(6) is summoned for service in a county with a population of at least 200,000, unless that county uses a jury plan under Section 62.011 and the period authorized under Section 62.011(b)(5) exceeds two years, and the person has served as a petit juror in the county during the 24-month period preceding the date the person is to appear for jury service;

(7) is the primary caretaker of a person who is unable to care for himself or herself;

(8) except as provided by Subsection (b), is summoned for service in a county with a population of at least 250,000 and the person has served as a petit juror in the county during the three-year period preceding the date the person is to appear for jury service; or

(9) is a member of the United States military forces serving on active duty and deployed to a location away from the person's home station and out of the person's county of residence.

SECTION 6.10. Section 62.107(c), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c) A person who files a statement with a clerk of the court, as provided by Subsection (a), claiming an exemption because the person is ~~[over]~~ 75 years of age or older, may also claim the permanent exemption on that ground authorized by Section 62.108 by including in the statement filed with the clerk a declaration that the person desires the permanent exemption. ~~The [Promptly after a statement claiming a permanent exemption on the basis of age is filed, the]~~ clerk of the court with whom the declaration [is] is filed shall notify ~~[have a copy delivered to]~~ the voter registrar of the county and the secretary of state.

SECTION 6.11. Section 62.108, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (a), (b), (c), and (e) and adding Subsection (c-1) to read as follows:

(a) A person who is entitled to exemption from jury service because the person is ~~[over]~~ 75 years of age or older may establish a permanent exemption on that ground as provided by this section or Section 62.107.

(b) A person may claim a permanent exemption:

(1) by filing with the district clerk ~~[voter registrar]~~ of the county, by mail or personal delivery, a signed statement affirming that the person is ~~[over]~~ 75 years of age or older and desires a permanent exemption on that ground; or

(2) in the manner provided by Section 62.107(c).

(c) The district clerk ~~[voter registrar]~~ of the county shall maintain a current register indicating the name of each person who has claimed and is entitled to a permanent exemption from jury service because the person is ~~[over]~~ 75 years of age or older.

(c-1) On the third business day of each month, the district clerk shall prepare a list of persons who in the preceding month claimed and were entitled to a permanent exemption under this section or who rescinded an exemption under Subsection (e) and send a copy of the list to the secretary of state and the voter registrar of each county served by the clerk.

(e) A person who has claimed a permanent exemption from jury service because the person is ~~[over]~~ 75 years of age or older may rescind the exemption at any time by filing a signed request for the rescission with the voter registrar of the county. Rescission of a permanent exemption does not affect the right of a person who is ~~[over]~~ 75 years of age or older to claim permanent exemption at a later time.

SECTION 6.12. Section 62.109, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (a), (b), (d), and (e) and adding Subsection (b-1) to read as follows:

(a) The judge of a district court or the district clerk ~~[by order]~~ may permanently or for a specified period exempt from service as a juror in all the county and district courts in the county a person with a physical or mental impairment or with an inability to comprehend or communicate in the English language that makes it impossible or very difficult for the person to serve on a jury.

(b) A person requesting an exemption under this section must submit to the court or the district clerk an affidavit stating the person's name and address and the reason for and the duration of the requested exemption. A person requesting an exemption due to a physical or mental impairment must attach to the affidavit a statement from a physician. The affidavit and physician's statement may be submitted to the court at the time the person is summoned for jury service or at any other time.

(b-1) The district clerk shall maintain a current list indicating the name of each person permanently or temporarily exempt under this section and the period of the exemption.

(d) A person included on the list maintained under Subsection (b-1) [listed on the register] may not be summoned for jury service during the period for which the person is exempt. The name of a person included on the list maintained under Subsection (b-1) [listed on the register] may not be placed in the jury wheel or otherwise used in preparing the record of names from which a jury

list is selected during the period for which the person is exempt.

(e) A person exempt from jury service under this section may rescind the exemption at any time by filing a signed request for the rescission with the district clerk ~~[voter registrar]~~ of the county.

SECTION 6.13. Sections 62.113(a) and (b), Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) The clerk of the court shall maintain a list of the name and address of each person who is ~~[excused or]~~ disqualified under this subchapter from jury service because the person is not a citizen of the United States.

(b) On the third business day of each month, the clerk shall send a copy of the list of persons ~~[excused or]~~ disqualified because of citizenship in the previous month to:

(1) the voter registrar of the county;

(2) the secretary of state; and

(3) the county or district attorney for an investigation of whether the person committed an offense under Section 13.007, Election Code, or other law.

SECTION 6.14. Sections 62.114(a) and (b), Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) The clerk of the court shall maintain a list containing the name and address of each person who is ~~[excused or]~~ disqualified under this subchapter from jury service because the person is not a resident of the county.

(b) On the third business day of each month, the clerk shall send a copy of the list of persons ~~[excused or]~~ disqualified in the previous month because the persons do not reside in the county to:

(1) the voter registrar of the county; and

(2) the secretary of state.

SECTION 6.15. Sections 62.115(c) and (d), Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

(c) The district clerk shall ~~[may]~~ remove from the jury wheel the jury wheel card for the person whose name appears on the list.

(d) On the third business day of each month, the clerk shall send ~~[to the secretary of state]~~ a copy of the list of persons disqualified because of a conviction of misdemeanor theft or a felony to:

(1) the secretary of state;

(2) the voter registrar of the county; and

(3) the prosecuting attorney for a court to which a person was summoned for investigation into whether the person made a false claim of qualification under Section 62.102(7) or (8) ~~[in the preceding month]~~.

SECTION 6.16. The changes in law made by this article apply only to a person who is summoned to appear for service on a grand jury or petit jury on or after September 1, 2025. A person who is summoned to appear for service on a grand jury or petit jury before that date is governed by the law in effect on the date the person was summoned, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

#### ARTICLE 7. COURT ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 7.01. Section 57.002(d), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(d) Subject to Subsection (e), in a county with a population of 50,000 or more, a court may appoint a spoken language interpreter who is not a certified or licensed court interpreter:

(1) if:

(A) ~~[(1)]~~ the language necessary in the proceeding is a language other than Spanish; and

(B) ~~[(2)]~~ the court makes a finding that there is no licensed court interpreter within 75 miles who can interpret in the language that is necessary in a proceeding; or

(2) if the court is a justice court, municipal court, or municipal court of record.

SECTION 7.02. Section 72.083, Government Code, is amended by adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

(c) Notwithstanding Subsection (b), if the director determines a performance measure listed in Subsection (b) does not

accurately reflect a court's performance in probate and mental health matters, the director may develop an alternative performance measure to assess the efficient and timely adjudication of those matters and include the alternative performance measure in the annual report required under Subsection (b).

SECTION 7.03. Section 74.051(c), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c) A presiding judge ~~[who is a retired or former district judge or a retired appellate judge and who presides over an administrative region with 30 or more district courts, statutory county courts, and retired and former judges named on the list maintained under Section 74.055 for the administrative region]~~ is entitled to an annual salary for each fiscal year, based on the number of district courts, business courts, and statutory county courts in the administrative region, the number of associate judges appointed by the presiding judge under Chapter 201, Family Code, and the number of retired and former judges named on the list maintained under Section 74.055 for the administrative region, in an amount equal to:

Number of Courts and Judges	Salary
<del>[30 to]</del> 49 or fewer	50 <del>[30]</del> percent of the state base salary paid to a district judge as set by the General Appropriations Act in accordance with Section 659.012(a)
50 to 69	55 <del>[35]</del> percent of the state base salary paid to a district judge as set by the General Appropriations Act in accordance with Section 659.012(a)
70 to 89	60 <del>[40]</del> percent of the state base salary paid to a district judge as set by the General Appropriations Act in accordance with Section 659.012(a)
90 or more	65 <del>[45]</del> percent of the state base salary paid to a district judge as set by the General Appropriations Act in accordance with Section 659.012(a)

SECTION 7.04. Section 74.091, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsections (b-1) and (b-2) to read as follows:

(b) In a county with two or more district courts the judges of those courts shall elect a district judge as local administrative district judge:

(1) for a term of ~~[not more than]~~ two years; or  
 (2) if the district judge's term ends before the second anniversary of the date the district judge is elected as local administrative judge, for the remainder of the district judge's term.

(b-1) The local administrative district judge may not be elected on the basis of rotation or seniority.

(b-2) If a majority of the judges cannot agree on the selection of a judge to serve as local administrative district judge, one of the judges shall notify the regional presiding judge who shall cast the deciding vote. A local administrative judge elected under this subsection shall serve for a term, set by the regional presiding judge, of not more than two years.

SECTION 7.05. Chapter 74, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter D-1 to read as follows:

#### SUBCHAPTER D-1. COURT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Sec. 74.0981. COURT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE. The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System shall hold an annual leadership conference to provide information to presiding judges of administrative regions, local administrative judges, and court administrators related to:

(1) court budgets and operational funding;  
 (2) court activity statistics and case-level

information on the amount and character of the business transacted by the state trial courts;

(3) the duties of a local administrative judge; and

(4) other matters related to court administration.

Sec. 74.0982. REIMBURSEMENT. The Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System may reimburse a presiding judge of an administrative region, a local administrative judge, or a court administrator for the expense of attending the leadership conference described by Section 74.0981 to the extent money is appropriated to the office for that purpose.

SECTION 7.06. Section 121.002(c), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c) Notwithstanding any other law, a specialty court program may not operate until the judge, magistrate, or coordinator:

(1) provides to the Office of Court Administration of the Texas Judicial System:

(A) written notice of the program;

(B) any resolution or other official declaration under which the program was established; and

(C) a copy of the program policy manual, participant handbook, or other adopted documentation describing the operational plan of ~~[applicable strategic plan that incorporates duties related to supervision that will be required under]~~ the program; and

(2) receives from the office written verification of the program's compliance with Subdivision (1).

SECTION 7.07. Section 659.012, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsection (d) and adding Subsection (d-1) to read as follows:

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision in this section or other law, ~~[in a county with more than five district courts,]~~ a district judge who serves as a local administrative district judge under Section 74.091 is entitled to an annual base salary from the state in the amount provided under Subsection (a) or (b) and an additional annual ~~[in the]~~ amount from the state equal to:

(1) in a county with three or four district courts, three percent of the annual base ~~[\$5,000 more than the maximum]~~ salary for a judge of a district court ~~[from the state to which the judge is otherwise entitled]~~ under Subsection (a);

(2) in a county with more than four but fewer than 10 district courts, five percent of the annual base salary for a judge of a district court under Subsection (a); or

(3) in a county with 10 or more district courts, seven percent of the annual base salary for a judge of a district court under Subsection (a) ~~[or (b)]~~.

(d-1) Notwithstanding any other provision in this section or other law, a judge of a division of the business court who serves as administrative presiding judge under Section 25A.009 is entitled to an annual base salary from the state in the amount provided under Subsection (a) or (b) and an additional annual amount equal to the amount provided under Subsection (d)(3).

SECTION 7.08. Section 74.051(b), Government Code, is repealed.

SECTION 7.09. Section 74.091, Government Code, as amended by this article, applies only to a local administrative judge elected on or after September 1, 2025.

#### ARTICLE 8. COURT CLERKS

SECTION 8.01. Subchapter D, Chapter 51, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 51.3033 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.3033. CERTIFIED COPIES. A certified copy made of an original document on file in a district clerk's office must include:

(1) on each page of the copy:

(A) the clerk's signature or initials;

(B) the district court seal; and

(C) a unique document certification and paginated page number; and

(2) on the final page of the copy:

(A) the clerk's attestation certifying that the copy is a true and correct copy of the original document filed in the clerk's office;

(B) the number of pages copied; and

(C) the date the copy was issued.

SECTION 8.02. Subchapter F, Chapter 51, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 51.503 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.503. CERTIFIED COPIES. A certified copy made of an original document on file in a joint clerk's office must include:

(1) on each page of the copy:

(A) the clerk's signature or initials;

(B) the applicable court's seal; and

(C) a unique document certification and paginated page number; and

(2) on the final page of the copy:

(A) the clerk's attestation certifying that the copy is a true and correct copy of the original document filed in the clerk's office;

(B) the number of pages copied; and

(C) the date the copy was issued.

SECTION 8.03. Chapter 191, Local Government Code, is amended by adding Section 191.0041 to read as follows:

Sec. 191.0041. CERTIFIED COPIES. A certified copy made of an original document on file in a county clerk's office must include:

(1) on each page of the copy:

(A) the clerk's signature or initials;

(B) a unique document certification and paginated page number; and

(C) either:

(i) the commissioners court seal on a copy of a document that is not a court document; or

(ii) the court seal on a copy of a court document; and

(2) on the final page of the copy:

(A) the clerk's attestation certifying that the copy is a true and correct copy of the original document filed in the clerk's office;

(B) the number of pages copied; and

(C) the date the copy was issued.

#### ARTICLE 9. YOUTH DIVERSION

SECTION 9.01. Article 45A.253(b), Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended to read as follows:

(b) A judge shall ~~may~~ allow a defendant who is a child, as defined by Article 45A.453(a), to elect at the time of conviction, as defined by Section 133.101, Local Government Code, to discharge the fine and costs by:

(1) performing community service or receiving tutoring under Article 45A.460, regardless of whether the applicable offense occurred at a location specified by Subsection (a) of that article; or

(2) paying the fine and costs in a manner described by Article 45A.251(b).

SECTION 9.02. (a) Chapter 45A, Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended to conform to Section 2, Chapter 525 (H.B. 3186), Acts of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, and Chapter 1033 (S.B. 24), Acts of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, and is further amended by adding Subchapter K to read as follows:

#### SUBCHAPTER K. YOUTH DIVERSION

Art. 45A.501. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Charge" means a formal or informal allegation of an offense, including a citation, written promise to appear, complaint, or pending complaint.

(2) "Child" has the meaning assigned by Article 45A.453(a).

(3) "Court" means a justice court, municipal court, or other court subject to this chapter.

(4) "Diversion" means an intervention strategy that redirects a child from formal criminal prosecution and holds the

child accountable for the child's actions. The term includes diversion under Article 45A.509 or 45A.510.

(5) "Offense" means a misdemeanor punishable by fine only, other than a traffic offense.

(6) "Parent" has the meaning assigned by Article 45A.457(a).

(7) "Service provider" means a governmental agency, political subdivision, open-enrollment charter school, nonprofit organization, or other entity that provides services to children or families.

(8) "Traffic offense" has the meaning assigned by Section 51.02, Family Code.

(9) "Youth diversion plan" means a plan adopted under Article 45A.506.

Art. 45A.502. APPLICABILITY. This subchapter applies only to a child who is alleged to have engaged in conduct that constitutes a misdemeanor punishable by fine only, other than a traffic offense.

Art. 45A.503. TRANSFER TO JUVENILE COURT NOT AFFECTED. Nothing in this subchapter precludes:

(1) a case involving a child from being referred, adjudicated, or disposed of as conduct indicating a need for supervision under Title 3, Family Code; or

(2) a waiver of criminal jurisdiction and transfer of a child's case as provided by Section 51.08, Family Code.

Art. 45A.504. DIVERSION ELIGIBILITY. (a) Except as otherwise provided by this subchapter, a child shall be diverted from formal criminal prosecution as provided by this subchapter.

(b) A child is eligible to enter into a diversion agreement under this subchapter only once every 12 months.

(b-1) A child is eligible to enter into a diversion agreement under this subchapter for more than one offense if the offenses are alleged to have occurred as part of the same criminal episode, as defined by Section 3.01, Penal Code.

(c) A child is not eligible for diversion if the child has previously had an unsuccessful diversion under this subchapter.

(d) A child is not eligible for diversion if a diversion is objected to by the attorney representing the state.

(e) A court may not divert a child from criminal prosecution as provided by this subchapter without the written consent of the child and the child's parent.

Art. 45A.505. DIVERSION STRATEGIES. (a) Diversion strategies include:

(1) requiring a child to participate in a program, including:

(A) a court-approved teen court program operated by a service provider;

(B) a school-related program;

(C) an educational program, including an alcohol awareness program, a tobacco awareness program, or a drug education program;

(D) a rehabilitation program; or

(E) a self-improvement program, including a program relating to self-esteem, leadership, self-responsibility, empathy, parenting, parental responsibility, manners, violence avoidance, anger management, life skills, wellness, or dispute resolution;

(2) referring a child to a service provider for services, including:

(A) at-risk youth services under Subchapter D, Chapter 137, Human Resources Code;

(B) juvenile case manager services under Article 45A.451;

(C) work and job skills training, including job interviewing and work preparation;

(D) academic monitoring or tutoring, including preparation for a high school equivalency examination administered under Section 7.111, Education Code;

(E) community-based services;

(F) mental health screening and clinical assessment;  
 (G) counseling, including private or in-school counseling; or  
 (H) mentoring services;  
 (3) requiring a child to:  
 (A) participate in mediation or other dispute resolution processes;  
 (B) submit to alcohol or drug testing; or  
 (C) substantially comply with a course of treatment prescribed by a physician or other licensed medical or mental health professional; and  
 (4) requiring a child, by court order, to:  
 (A) pay restitution not to exceed \$100 for an offense against property under Title 7, Penal Code;  
 (B) perform not more than 20 hours of community service; or  
 (C) perform any other reasonable action determined by the court.  
 (b) A diversion strategy may be imposed under:  
 (1) an intermediate diversion under Article 45A.509;  
 (2) a diversion by a justice or judge under Article 45A.510; or  
 (3) a system of graduated sanctions for certain school offenses under Section 37.144, Education Code.  
 (c) A diversion strategy under this subchapter may not require a child who is a home-schooled student, as defined by Section 29.916, Education Code, to:  
 (1) attend an elementary or secondary school; or  
 (2) use an educational curriculum other than the curriculum selected by the parent.  
 Art. 45A.506. YOUTH DIVERSION PLAN. (a) A youth diversion plan is a written plan that describes the types of strategies that will be used to implement youth diversion. A youth diversion plan does not limit the types of diversion strategies that may be imposed under a diversion agreement under Article 45A.508.  
 (b) Each justice and municipal court shall adopt a youth diversion plan.  
 (c) A youth diversion plan may be devised for a county or municipality or an individual court within a county or municipality.  
 (d) In accordance with Chapter 791, Government Code, a local government may enter into an agreement with one or more local governments to create a regional youth diversion plan and collaborate in the implementation of this subchapter.  
 (e) A youth diversion plan may include an agreement with a service provider to provide services for a diversion strategy.  
 (f) A youth diversion plan may contain guidelines for disposition or diversion of a child's case by law enforcement. The guidelines are not mandatory.  
 (g) A current youth diversion plan must be maintained on file for public inspection in each justice and municipal court, including courts that collaborate with one or more counties or municipalities.  
 (h) A court or local government may adopt rules necessary to coordinate services under a youth diversion plan or to implement this subchapter.  
 Art. 45A.507. YOUTH DIVERSION COORDINATOR. (a) A court may designate a youth diversion coordinator to assist the court in:  
 (1) determining whether a child is eligible for diversion;  
 (2) employing a diversion strategy authorized by this subchapter;  
 (3) presenting and maintaining diversion agreements;  
 (4) monitoring diversions;  
 (5) maintaining records regarding whether one or more diversions were successful or unsuccessful; and  
 (6) coordinating referrals to court.  
 (b) The responsibilities of the youth diversion coordinator



may be performed by:

(1) a court administrator or court clerk, or a person who regularly performs the duties of court administrator or court clerk;

(2) an individual or entity that provides juvenile case manager services under Article 45A.451;

(3) a court-related services office;

(4) a community supervision and corrections department, including a juvenile probation department;

(5) a county or municipal employee, including a peace officer;

(6) a community volunteer;

(7) an institution of higher education, including a public, private, or independent institution of higher education; or

(8) a qualified nonprofit organization as determined by the court.

Art. 45A.508. DIVERSION AGREEMENT. (a) A diversion agreement must identify the parties to the agreement and the responsibilities of the child and the child's parent to ensure their meaningful participation in a diversion under Article 45A.509 or 45A.510.

(b) Stated objectives in a diversion agreement must be measurable, realistic, and reasonable and consider the circumstances of the child, the best interests of the child, and the long-term safety of the community.

(c) A diversion agreement must include:

(1) the terms of the agreement, including one or more diversions required to be completed by the child, written in a clear and concise manner and identifying any offense or charge being diverted;

(2) possible outcomes or consequences of a successful diversion and an unsuccessful diversion;

(3) an explanation that participation in a diversion is not an admission of guilt and a guilty plea is not required to participate in a diversion;

(4) an explanation of the process that will be used for reviewing and monitoring compliance with the terms of the agreement;

(5) the period of the diversion;

(6) a verification that:

(A) the child and the child's parent were notified of the child's rights, including the right to refuse diversion; and

(B) the child knowingly and voluntarily consents to participate in the diversion; and

(7) written acknowledgment and acceptance of the agreement by the child and the child's parent.

(d) The terms of an agreement may vary depending on the circumstances of the child, including the child's age and ability, the charge being diverted, or the diversion strategy used.

(e) A charge may not be filed against a child or, if filed, shall be dismissed by the court if the child:

(1) does not contest the charge;

(2) is eligible for diversion under Article 45A.504; and

(3) accepts the terms of the agreement.

(f) Entering into a diversion agreement under this article extends the court's jurisdiction for the term of the agreement.

(g) On entering into a diversion agreement, a copy of the agreement shall be provided to the child and the child's parent, the clerk of the court, a youth diversion coordinator, and any person specified by the youth diversion plan.

Art. 45A.509. INTERMEDIATE DIVERSION. (a) If provided by a youth diversion plan, a youth diversion coordinator or juvenile case manager shall advise the child and the child's parent before a case is filed that the case may be diverted under this article for a reasonable period not to exceed 180 days if:

(1) the child is eligible for diversion under Article 45A.504;

(2) diversion is in the best interests of the child and promotes the long-term safety of the community;

(3) the child and the child's parent consent to diversion with the knowledge that diversion is optional; and

(4) the child and the child's parent are informed that they may terminate the diversion at any time and, if terminated, the case will be referred to court.

(b) The terms of a diversion agreement under this article must be in writing and may include any of the diversion strategies under Article 45A.505.

(c) The case of a child who successfully complies with the terms of a diversion agreement under this article shall be closed and reported as successful to the court.

(d) A child who does not comply with the terms of a diversion agreement under this article shall be referred to court under Article 45A.511.

Art. 45A.510. DIVERSION BY JUSTICE OR JUDGE. (a) If a charge involving a child who is eligible for diversion is filed with a court, and the child does not contest the charge, a justice or judge shall divert the case under this article without the child having to enter a plea.

(b) A diversion under this article may not exceed 180 days.

(c) The terms of a diversion agreement under this article must be in writing and may include any of the diversion strategies described by Article 45A.505.

(d) The case of a child who successfully complies with the terms of a diversion agreement under this article shall be closed and reported as successful to the court.

(e) A child who does not comply with the terms of a diversion agreement under this article shall be referred to court for a hearing under Article 45A.511.

Art. 45A.511. REFERRAL TO COURT. (a) A court shall conduct a non-adversarial hearing for a child who does not successfully complete the terms of a diversion under Article 45A.509 or 45A.510 and is referred to the court.

(b) The hearing is an opportunity for a justice or judge to confer with the child and the child's parent to determine whether a diversion should be declared unsuccessful by the court. The court may also hear from any person who may be of assistance to the child or the court in determining what is in the best interests of the child and the long-term safety of the community.

(c) After the hearing, a court may enter an order:

(1) amending or setting aside terms in the diversion agreement;

(2) extending the diversion for a period not to exceed one year from the initial start date of the diversion;

(3) issuing a continuance for the hearing for a period not to exceed 60 days to allow an opportunity for compliance with the terms of the diversion;

(4) subject to Subsection (d), requiring the child's parent to perform any act or refrain from performing any act as the court determines will increase the likelihood the child will successfully complete the diversion and comply with any other order of the court that is reasonable and necessary for the welfare of the child;

(5) finding the diversion successful on the basis of substantial compliance; or

(6) finding the diversion unsuccessful and:

(A) transferring the child to juvenile court for alleged conduct indicating a need for supervision under Section 51.08, Family Code; or

(B) referring the charge to the prosecutor for consideration of re-filing.

(d) An order under Subsection (c)(4) may not have the substantive effect of interfering with a parent's fundamental right to determine how to raise the parent's child, unless the court finds that the interference is necessary to prevent significant impairment of the child's physical, mental, or emotional health.

(e) An order under Subsection (c)(4) is enforceable against

the parent by contempt.

(f) The statute of limitations in Article 12.02 is tolled during the diversion period for purposes of Subsection (c)(6)(B).

Art. 45A.512. LOCAL YOUTH DIVERSION ADMINISTRATIVE FEE.

(a) The clerk of a justice or municipal court may collect from a child's parent an administrative fee not to exceed \$50 to defray the costs of the diversion of the child's case under this subchapter.

(b) The fee under this article may not be collected unless specified as a term of the diversion agreement accepted by the child's parent. If the fee is not paid after giving the child's parent an opportunity to be heard, the court shall order the parent, if financially able, to pay the fee to the clerk of the court.

(c) A court shall waive the fee if the child's parent is indigent or does not have sufficient resources or income to pay the fee.

(d) A court may adopt rules for the waiver of a fee for financial hardship under this article.

(e) An order under Subsection (b) is enforceable against the parent by contempt.

(f) The clerk of the court shall keep a record of the fees collected under this article and shall forward the funds to the county treasurer, municipal treasurer, or person fulfilling the role of a county treasurer or municipal treasurer, as appropriate.

(g) The fee collected under this article shall be deposited in a special account that can be used only to offset the cost of the operations of youth diversion programs under this subchapter.

(h) Except for the fee authorized under Subsection (a), a fee may not be assessed for a child diverted under this subchapter.

(i) The diversion of a child may not be contingent on payment of a fee under this article.

Art. 45A.513. DIVERSION RECORDS. (a) A justice or municipal court shall maintain statistics for each diversion strategy authorized by this subchapter.

(b) Other than statistical records, all records generated under this subchapter are confidential under Article 45A.462.

(c) All records of a diversion pertaining to a child under this subchapter shall be expunged without the requirement of a motion or request, on the child's 18th birthday.

(b) Section 2, Chapter 525 (H.B. 3186), Acts of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, which added Subchapter E, Chapter 45, Code of Criminal Procedure, is repealed.

(c) Section 4, Chapter 525 (H.B. 3186), Acts of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, which amended Article 45.041, Code of Criminal Procedure, is repealed.

#### ARTICLE 10. JUVENILE BOARDS

SECTION 10.01. Section 152.0191(a), Human Resources Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The juvenile board of Bee County is composed of the county judge, ~~and~~ the district judges in Bee County, and the judge of the 2nd Multicounty Court at Law.

SECTION 10.02. Section 152.1551(a), Human Resources Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The juvenile board of Live Oak County is composed of the county judge, ~~and~~ the district judges in Live Oak County, and the judge of the 2nd Multicounty Court at Law.

SECTION 10.03. Section 152.1621(a), Human Resources Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The juvenile board of McMullen County is composed of the county judge, ~~and~~ the district judges in McMullen County, and the judge of the 2nd Multicounty Court at Law.

#### ARTICLE 11. MISCELLANEOUS COURT PROVISIONS

SECTION 11.01. Sections 30.015(a) and (b), Civil Practice and Remedies Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) In a civil action filed in a district court, county court, statutory county court, or statutory probate court, each party or the party's attorney must provide the clerk of the court with written notice of the party's name, the party's ~~and~~ current residence or business address, and for a party who is an individual:

(1) the last three digits of the party's social

security number;

(2) the last three digits of the party's Texas driver's license; or

(3) the party's date of birth.

(b) Unless the party is the defendant in a tax suit, the [The] notice required by Subsection (a) may not be required from any party or party's attorney if the [such] party has not appeared or answered in the civil action.

SECTION 11.02. Articles 45A.302(b), (c), and (d), Code of Criminal Procedure, are amended to read as follows:

(b) In issuing the order of deferral, the judge may impose a special expense fee [fine] on the defendant in an amount not to exceed the amount of the fine that could be imposed on the defendant as punishment for the offense.

(c) The fee [fine] described by Subsection (b) may be collected at any time before the date on which the period of deferral ends. A judge who orders the collection of the fee [fine] must require that the amount of the fee [fine] be credited toward the payment of the amount of any fine imposed by the judge as punishment for the offense.

(d) The judge may elect not to impose the special expense fee [fine] for good cause shown by the defendant.

SECTION 11.03. Article 102.017, Code of Criminal Procedure, is amended by adding Subsection (e-1) to read as follows:

(e-1) In administering or directing funds under Subsection (e), a commissioners court shall prioritize the recommendations provided by a court security committee under Section 74.092(b), Government Code, and the governing body of a municipality shall prioritize the recommendations provided by a court security committee under Sections 29.014(d) and 30.00007(c), Government Code.

SECTION 11.04. Subchapter A, Chapter 58, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 58.010 to read as follows:

Sec. 58.010. CONFIDENTIALITY OF WARRANTS OF ARREST. Notwithstanding Article 15.26, Code of Criminal Procedure, an arrest warrant issued for a child and a complaint or affidavit on which an arrest warrant issued for a child is based are confidential and may be disclosed only to the following:

(1) the judge, probation officer, and professional staff or consultants of the juvenile court;

(2) a juvenile justice agency, as defined by Section 58.101;

(3) an attorney representing the child's parent in a proceeding under this title;

(4) an attorney representing the child;

(5) a prosecuting attorney; or

(6) with permission from the juvenile court, another individual, agency, or institution with a legitimate interest in the information or court.

SECTION 11.05. Section 29.014, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (c) and (d) and adding Subsection (e) to read as follows:

(c) The committee shall establish the policies and procedures necessary to provide adequate security to the municipal courts served by the presiding or municipal judge, as applicable, including by developing a court emergency management plan.

(d) A committee shall [may] recommend to the municipality the uses of resources and expenditures of money for courthouse security, but may not direct the assignment of those resources or the expenditure of those funds.

(e) Notwithstanding Section 551.001 or 552.003, a court security committee established under this section is not a governmental body for the purposes of Chapter 551 or 552.

SECTION 11.06. Section 30.00007, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (b) and (c) and adding Subsection (d) to read as follows:

(b) The presiding judge shall:

(1) maintain a central docket for cases filed within the territorial limits of the municipality over which the municipal

courts of record have jurisdiction;

(2) provide for the distribution of cases from the central docket to the individual municipal judges to equalize the distribution of business in the courts;

(3) request the jurors needed for cases that are set for trial by jury;

(4) temporarily assign judges or substitute judges to exchange benches and to act for each other in a proceeding pending in a court if necessary for the expeditious disposition of business in the courts;

(5) supervise and control the operation and clerical functions of the administrative department of each court, including the court's personnel, during the proceedings of the court; and

(6) establish a court security committee to adopt security policies and procedures for the courts served by the presiding judge, including by developing a court emergency management plan, that is composed of:

(A) the presiding judge, or the presiding judge's designee, who serves as presiding officer of the committee;

(B) a representative of the law enforcement agency or other entity that provides the primary security for the court;

(C) a representative of the municipality; and

(D) any other person the committee determines necessary to assist the committee.

(c) A court security committee shall ~~may~~ recommend to the governing body the uses of resources and expenditures of money for courthouse security, but may not direct the assignment of those resources or the expenditure of those funds.

(d) Notwithstanding Section 551.001 or 552.003, a court security committee established under this section is not a governmental body for the purposes of Chapter 551 or 552.

SECTION 11.07. Section 51.903(d), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(d) The district clerk may not collect a filing fee under Section 12.005, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, for a filing [a motion] under this section.

SECTION 11.08. Section 72.015(c), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c) The judicial security division shall:

(1) serve as a central resource for information on local and national best practices for court security and the safety of court personnel;

(2) provide an expert opinion on the technical aspects of court security; ~~and~~

(3) keep abreast of and provide training on recent court security improvements; and

(4) develop a model court emergency management plan as a resource for court security committees.

SECTION 11.09. Section 74.092, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

(a) A local administrative judge, for the courts for which the judge serves as local administrative judge, shall:

(1) implement and execute the local rules of administration, including the assignment, docketing, transfer, and hearing of cases;

(2) appoint any special or standing committees necessary or desirable for court management and administration;

(3) promulgate local rules of administration if the other judges do not act by a majority vote;

(4) recommend to the regional presiding judge any needs for assignment from outside the county to dispose of court caseloads;

(5) supervise the expeditious movement of court caseloads, subject to local, regional, and state rules of administration;

(6) provide the supreme court and the office of court administration requested statistical and management information;

(7) set the hours and places for holding court in the county;

(8) supervise the employment and performance of nonjudicial personnel;

(9) supervise the budget and fiscal matters of the local courts, subject to local rules of administration;

(10) coordinate and cooperate with any other local administrative judge in the district in the assignment of cases in the courts' concurrent jurisdiction for the efficient operation of the court system and the effective administration of justice;

(11) if requested by the courts the judge serves, establish and maintain the lists required by Section 37.003 and ensure appointments are made from the lists in accordance with Section 37.004;

(12) perform other duties as may be directed by the chief justice or a regional presiding judge; and

(13) establish a court security committee to adopt security policies and procedures for the trial courts served by the local administrative district judge, including by adopting a court emergency management plan, that is composed of:

(A) the local administrative district judge, or the judge's designee, who serves as presiding officer of the committee;

(B) a representative of the sheriff's office;

(C) a representative of a constable's office;

(D) a representative of the county commissioners court;

(E) ~~[(D)]~~ one judge of each type of court in the county, including a justice of the peace and excluding the judge of [other than] a municipal court or a municipal court of record;

(F) ~~[(E)]~~ a representative of any county attorney's office, district attorney's office, or criminal district attorney's office that serves in the applicable courts; and

(G) ~~[(F)]~~ any other person the committee determines necessary to assist the committee.

(c) Notwithstanding Section 551.001 or 552.003, a court security committee established under this section is not a governmental body for the purposes of Chapter 551 or 552.

SECTION 11.10. Section 74.092(b), Government Code, is redesignated as Section 74.0922, Government Code, and amended to read as follows:

Sec. 74.0922. DUTIES OF COURT SECURITY COMMITTEE. ~~[(b)]~~ A court security committee established under Section 74.092(a)(13) shall meet at least once annually and shall develop and submit recommendations ~~[may recommend]~~ to the county commissioners court on the uses of resources and expenditures of money for courthouse security, but may not direct the assignment of those resources or the expenditure of those funds.

SECTION 11.11. Section 51.303, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (b) and (f) and adding Subsection (d) to read as follows:

(b) The clerk of a district court shall:

(1) record the acts and proceedings of the court;

(2) enter all judgments of the court under the direction of the judge; ~~[and]~~

(3) record all executions issued and the returns on the executions; and

(4) accept an application for a protective order filed under Chapter 82, Family Code.

(d) Paper records must include a reference opposite each name to the minutes on which is entered the judgment in the case.

(f) A case with an electronic record must be searchable by each party's full name, the case number, and the date on which the record was made ~~[In addition to the other powers and duties of this section, a district clerk shall accept applications for protective orders under Chapter 71, Family Code].~~

SECTION 11.12. Section 574.001(b), Health and Safety Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (f), the application

must be filed with the county clerk in the county in which the proposed patient:

- (1) resides;
- (2) is located at the time the application is filed ~~is found~~; ~~or~~
- (3) was apprehended under Chapter 573; or
- (4) is receiving mental health services by court order or under Subchapter A, Chapter 573.

SECTION 11.13. Section 135.101(a), Local Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) A person shall pay in a district court, statutory county court, or county court in addition to all other fees and court costs a local consolidated filing fee of:

- (1) \$213 on filing any civil case except a probate, guardianship, or mental health case; and
- (2) \$35 on any action other than an original action for a case subject to Subdivision (1), including ~~an appeal and~~ any counterclaim, cross-action, intervention, contempt action, interpleader, motion for new trial, motion to reinstate, or third-party action.

SECTION 11.14. Section 615.003(a), Local Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) A county ~~[with a population of 150,000 or more]~~ may construct, enlarge, equip, and operate a parking lot or parking garage adjacent to or near the county courthouse.

SECTION 11.15. Section 42.07(b), Penal Code, is amended by amending Subdivision (1) and adding Subdivision (1-a) to read as follows:

(1) "Court employee" means an employee whose duties relate to court administration, including a court clerk, court coordinator, court administrator, law clerk, or staff attorney. The term does not include a judge.

(1-a) "Electronic communication" means a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic, or photo-optical system. The term includes:

(A) a communication initiated through the use of electronic mail, instant message, network call, a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, text message, a social media platform or application, an Internet website, any other Internet-based communication tool, or facsimile machine; and

(B) a communication made to a pager.

SECTION 11.16. Section 42.07(c), Penal Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c) An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor, except that the offense is:

- (1) a Class A misdemeanor if:
  - (A) ~~[(1)]~~ the actor has previously been convicted under this section; ~~or~~
  - (B) ~~[(2)]~~ the offense was committed under Subsection (a)(7) or (8) and:

(i) ~~[(A)]~~ the offense was committed against a child under 18 years of age with the intent that the child:

- (a) ~~[(i)]~~ commit suicide; or
- (b) ~~[(ii)]~~ engage in conduct causing serious bodily injury to the child; or

(ii) ~~[(B)]~~ the actor has previously violated a temporary restraining order or injunction issued under Chapter 129A, Civil Practice and Remedies Code; or

(C) the offense was committed against a person the actor knows is a court employee;

(2) a state jail felony if the offense was committed against a person the actor knows is:

- (A) a court employee and the actor has previously been convicted under this section; or
- (B) a judge; and

(3) a felony of the third degree if the offense was committed against a person the actor knows is a judge and the actor

has previously been convicted under this section.

SECTION 11.17. Section 21.049, Property Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 21.049. NOTICE OF DECISION OF SPECIAL COMMISSIONERS. The judge of a court hearing a proceeding under this chapter shall inform the clerk of the court as to a decision by the special commissioners on the day the decision is filed or on the next working day after the day the decision is filed. Not later than the next working day after the day the decision is filed, the clerk shall send notice of the decision by a delivery method described under Rule 21a, Texas Rules of Civil Procedure ~~[certified or registered United States mail, return receipt requested]~~, to the parties in the proceeding, or to their attorneys of record, at their addresses of record.

SECTION 11.18. Section 34.03(a), Tax Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The clerk of the court shall:

(1) if the amount of excess proceeds is more than \$25, before the 31st day after the date the excess proceeds are received by the clerk, send by a delivery method described by Rule 21a, Texas Rules of Civil Procedure ~~[certified mail, return receipt requested]~~, a written notice to the former owner of the property, at the former owner's last known address according to the records of the court or any other source reasonably available to the court, that:

(A) states the amount of the excess proceeds;

(B) informs the former owner of that owner's rights to claim the excess proceeds under Section 34.04; and

(C) includes a copy or the complete text of this section and Section 34.04;

(2) regardless of the amount, keep the excess proceeds paid into court as provided by Section 34.02(d) for a period of two years after the date of the sale unless otherwise ordered by the court; and

(3) regardless of the amount, send to the attorney general notice of the deposit and amount of excess proceeds if the attorney general or a state agency represented by the attorney general is named as an in rem defendant in the underlying suit for seizure of the property or foreclosure of a tax lien on the property.

SECTION 11.19. Section 521.243(a), Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) Unless the petition is dismissed under Section 521.2421(f), the clerk of the court shall send electronically or by a delivery method described by Rule 21a, Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, ~~[by certified mail]~~ to the attorney representing the state a copy of the petition and notice of the hearing if the petitioner's license was suspended, revoked, or canceled following a conviction for:

(1) an offense under Section 19.05 or Sections 49.04-49.08, Penal Code; or

(2) an offense to which Section 521.342 applies.

SECTION 11.20. The change in law made by this article to Section 574.001, Health and Safety Code, applies only to an application for court-ordered mental health services submitted on or after September 1, 2025.

SECTION 11.21. (a) Section 42.07, Penal Code, as amended by this article, applies only to an offense committed on or after September 1, 2025. An offense committed before that date is governed by the law in effect on the date the offense was committed, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose. For purposes of this section, an offense was committed before September 1, 2025, if any element of the offense occurred before that date.

(b) As soon as practicable after the effective date of this article, a court security committee shall develop a court emergency management plan as required by Section 29.014, 30.00007, or 74.092, Government Code, as amended by this article.

#### ARTICLE 12. CONFLICT; EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 12.01. To the extent of any conflict, this Act



33-1 prevails over another Act of the 89th Legislature, Regular Session,  
33-2 2025, relating to nonsubstantive additions to and corrections in  
33-3 enacted codes.

33-4 SECTION 12.02. Except as otherwise provided by a provision  
33-5 of this Act, this Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

33-6

\* \* \* \* \*