



OFFICE
OF
WILLACY COUNTY JUDGE



JUDGE JOHN F. GONZALES JR.
COUNTY COURT JUDGE
COUNTY JUDGE

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February 4, 2014

Joel Lieurance
Policy Monitor
Texas Indigent Defense Commission
209 West 14th Street, Room 202
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Willacy County Public Defender Response to Letter dated December 11, 2013

Dear Mr. Lieurance:

I write in response to the letter copied to me from you and dated December 11, 2013. This Response is regarding the three recommendations included in your letter and summarized on page five of the letter.

Recommendation 1: Inclusion of a record in the magistrate warnings form as to whether an Arrestee has requested appointment of counsel ~

√ The presiding judges of the magistrate courts (Justice and Municipal courts in Willacy County) were provided sample magistrate warnings forms suggested by The TIDC, and have been forwarding completed magistrate forms to the public defender's office. The completed forms do include a record of whether an arrestee has requested counsel.

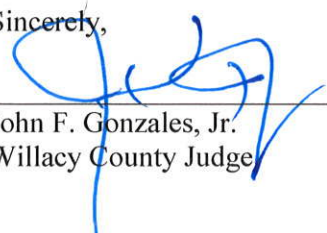
Recommendation 2: System to designate magistrate responsibilities among the Willacy County Justice and Municipal Courts so that Article 15.17 hearings occur in a timely manner ~

√ A system of rotation is to be instituted with a provision for substitution where a Magistrate judge designated by the rotation schedule is not available.

Recommendation 3: Filing of an Order appointing counsel in each case in the appropriate court Where an arrestee/ has requested, qualified for, and been appointed an attorney ~

√ The procedure for drafting and filing an Order appointing counsel in each of the Contingent scenarios where an arrestee or defendant may first request and be appointed counsel has been implemented according to the County's Plan on file with the TIDC.

Sincerely,



John F. Gonzales, Jr.
Willacy County Judge