

# **Texas Indigent Defense Commission**

# **Third Policy Monitoring Follow-up Review -- Dallas County**

September 11, 2013



Texas Indigent Defense Commission 209 W. 14th Street, Room 202 (Price Daniel Building) Austin, Texas 78701 Direct: 512.463.8015 Fax: 512.463.5724 Main line: 512.936.6994 Toll free in Texas: 866.499.0656 On the web: http://www.courts.state.tx.us/tidc

#### **OFFICERS:**

Honorable Sharon Keller Honorable Olen Underwood Chair – Presiding Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals Vice-Chair – Presiding Judge, 2<sup>nd</sup> Administrative Judicial Region of Texas

Austin, Presiding Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals

San Marcos, Judge in Hays County Court-at-Law #2

Houston, Chief Justice, First Court of Appeal

#### **EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:**

Honorable Sharon Keller Honorable Wallace Jefferson Honorable Roberto Alonzo Honorable Abel Herrero Honorable Sherry Radack Honorable Linda Rodriguez Honorable Royce West Honorable John Whitmire

#### **MEMBERS APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR:**

Honorable Jon Burrows
Mr. Don Hase
Mr. Anthony Odiorne
Honorable Olen Underwood
Honorable B. Glen Whitley
Temple, Bell County Judge
Attorney, Ball & Hase, Arlington
Burnet, Assistant Public Defender, Regional Public Defender for Capital Cases
Conroe, Presiding Judge, 2<sup>nd</sup> Administrative Judicial Region of Texas
Hurst, Tarrant County Judge

Austin, Chief Justice, Supreme Court

Dallas, State Representative

Dallas, State Senator

Houston, State Senator

Robstown, State Representative

#### STAFF:

James D. Bethke Edwin Colfax Dominic Gonzales Marissa Kubinski Joel Lieurance Wesley Shackelford Debra Stewart Joan Thomas Sharon Whitfield Bryan Wilson Director Project Manager Grant Program Specialist Executive Assistant Policy Monitor Deputy Director/Special Counsel Fiscal Monitor Fiscal Monitor Budget and Accounting Analyst Grants Administrator

#### MISSION

The Texas Indigent Defense Commission provides financial and technical support to counties to develop and maintain quality, cost-effective indigent defense systems that meet the needs of local communities and the requirements of the Constitution and state law.

# **Table of Contents**

Background	4
Overview of 2013 Follow-up Monitoring Review	
Status of Recommendations from July 2011 Review	
Recommendation from September 2013 Review	6
Progression of Recommendations and County's Actions from Past Visits	7
Transmittal of Requests for Counsel to the Appointing Authority	8
Timeliness of Misdemeanor Appointments	
Determinations of Indigence: In-court Appointments in Both Felony and Misdemeanor Cases	0
Fair, Neutral, and Non-discriminatory Attorney Selection Process1	2
Misdemeanor Appointments	2
Juvenile Appointments in the 304 <sup>th</sup> District Court	2
Conclusion	3
Appendix A – Distributions of Attorney Appointments1	4
Appendix B – Misdemeanor Attorney Appointment Management Report	6

### Background

#### 2007 Review

The Commission conducted an initial policy monitoring review of Dallas County in 2007 with on-site visits made between July 16 and July 20, 2007. The Commission issued a report with recommendations that focused on the timeliness of attorney appointments and the distribution of appointments. The district courts responded to the report and noted that computer system problems had been the main cause of late attorney appointments. The response stated that the courts would research the costs of having a pre-trial services department or magistrate court staff assist arrestees with affidavits of indigence. Concerning the fairness of appointments, the district courts stated that they would have IT Services give them access to wheel appointment data reports. The county courts later adopted the district courts' response.

#### 2009 Review

In May 2009, the Commission conducted a follow-up review to see if recommendations made regarding the 2007 review had been put into place. This report found that the County had the same issues with timely appointments and uneven appointment distributions that were noted regarding the 2007 visit. In response to the 2009 report, the County provided a definite action plan that called for a method to manage requests for counsel from arrestees in municipalities and for a new software system to manage attorney appointments.

Dallas County's action plan for managing requests for counsel was to work in two phases. In the first and interim phase, municipalities would fax requests for counsel to Dallas County. Dallas County would attempt to make appointments of counsel based on these faxes. In the second and permanent phase, Dallas County would conduct magistrate warnings via a videoconference system between the County and municipalities. The advantage of this second phase was that the centralized magistrate's warning system would create a more fool-proof method for ensuring timely appointments of counsel. A pilot project was to begin with Rowlett and Seagoville and later to expand to include all 23 municipal jails. At that point, all magistrate warnings would be conducted by Dallas County magistrates. After Dallas County began this project, it applied to the Commission for a grant to complete the project, so as to move into compliance with the FDA's requirements for prompt transmission of requests for counsel to the appointing authority and for prompt appointment of counsel by the appointing authority.

Dallas County's action plan for managing attorney appointments was to utilize new software functionality in Dallas County's AIS computer management system. The new software functionality would manage attorney appointments by allowing judges to appoint the top attorney on the appointment list or to appoint another attorney while providing a reason for skipping the top attorney on the list. The software system, AIS, is a server-based case management system that was designated to replace FORVUS, a mainframe-based system. The AIS system would also generate regular reports so judges could monitor how well the wheel was being followed.

#### 2011 Review

Commission staff conducted a second follow-up review in 2011. In this review, staff found that some municipalities had joined Dallas County's videoconference system. For these municipalities, clear methods of sending requests for counsel to Dallas County had been put in place so that requests could be promptly ruled upon by Dallas County. Under this system, Dallas County conducts the Article 15.17 hearings remotely, and all requests for counsel are processed by Dallas County.

Commission staff also found that some municipalities had not joined the videoconference system. For these municipalities, staff did not find clear or consistent methods for transmitting requests

for counsel to Dallas County. For these municipalities, communication links did not appear to be in place that would allow Dallas County to rule upon requests for counsel.

Regarding the timeliness of appointments, staff found that felony appointments met the Commission's threshold for presuming that a jurisdiction's processes are timely. (This analysis only considered requests that Dallas County was able to successfully receive and did not consider requests from municipalities that it did not successfully receive.) Misdemeanor appointments fell below the Commission's threshold but the percentage of timely misdemeanor appointments was much higher than in previous reviews.

In its analysis of counsel appointments, staff found that once counsel was appointed that the appointment might be voided if the defendant made bond. Defendants who bonded might be required to re-qualify as indigent at their initial appearance, and if determined to be indigent, new counsel might be appointed. These practices were problematic in light of the requirement from Article 26.04(p) of the Code of Criminal Procedure stating that once a defendant is determined to be indigent, the defendant is presumed to remain indigent unless a material change in the defendant's financial circumstances occurs. Article 26.04(j)(2) further requires that counsel represent defendants through case disposition unless good cause is found for removing the attorney. Dallas County responded to these findings by stating that the courts would immediately appoint counsel whether the defendant made bond or not and that the attorney appointed to the case would stay with the case.

Regarding the distribution of attorney appointments, staff found that based upon wheel appointment data for felony cases, the distribution of attorney appointments (for all felony wheels) met the Commission's thresholds for presuming a jurisdiction's appointments processes were fair, neutral, and nondiscriminatory. In misdemeanor cases, staff found that based on auditor data, this threshold was met for Spanish-speaking attorneys but not for non-Spanish attorneys. In juvenile cases, staff found that based on auditor data, Commission thresholds were met for both Spanish and non-Spanish attorneys in the 305<sup>th</sup> District Court and for Spanish-speaking attorneys in the 304<sup>th</sup> District Court. However, this threshold was not met for non-Spanish speaking attorneys in the 304<sup>th</sup> District Court.

### **Overview of 2013 Follow-up Monitoring Review**

Staff members Joel Lieurance and West Garrett conducted the third follow-up review with visits to Dallas County between June 17 and June 19, 2013 and with visits to municipalities between August 12 and August 13, 2013. The purpose of this review was to examine whether proposed action plans were put in place and whether the recommendations from the July 2011 follow-up review were implemented. During on-site visits, staff met with court managers, court coordinators, a Dallas County magistrate, juvenile court judges, municipal judges, and other municipal personnel. To ascertain the timeliness of misdemeanor appointments, we examined misdemeanor requests for counsel received by Dallas County between June 11 and June 13, 2013, and looked to see if resulting determinations of indigence were made within one working day (plus 24 hours allowed for transmitting the request to the courts). We also interviewed felony and misdemeanor court coordinators to determine processes for making in-court assignments of counsel. To ascertain whether the distribution of appointments was fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory, we examined auditor data for misdemeanors and hand tallies of appointments for juvenile cases.

# **Status of Recommendations from July 2011 Review**

### Transmittal of Request to Appointing Authority

**July 2011 Recommendation:** The current process for transmitting requests for counsel from the nonparticipating municipalities (municipalities who are not part of the videoconferencing system) to the appointing authority is not enabling Dallas County to meet Article 1.051 requirements for making timely appointments of counsel. A process must be established that allows Dallas County to meet its statutory obligations. *Successfully addressed*.

### **Timely Appointment of Counsel**

**July 2011 Misdemeanor Recommendation:** Dallas County must ensure that counsel is appointed to misdemeanor defendants within one working day of request (plus 24 hours allowed to transfer the request to the appointing authority). *Successfully addressed*.

### **Determinations of Indigence**

**July 2011 Felony Recommendation:** The felony courts must put in place a process that comports with Article 26.04(p) and may not deny indigence to those persons who previously qualified as indigent and who did not experience a material change in financial circumstances. *Successfully addressed*.

**July 2011 Misdemeanor Recommendation:** Appointments of counsel are not being made if the arrestee posted bond. Per Article, 1.051(j), appointment of counsel may not be delayed because the defendant posted bond. Per Article 26.04(m), indigence determinations may not consider whether a defendant has posted bond, except to the extent that it reflects the defendant's financial circumstances. *Successfully addressed*.

**July 2011 Misdemeanor Recommendation:** The misdemeanor courts must put in place a process that comports with Article 26.04(p) and may not deny indigence to those persons who previously qualified as indigent and who did not experience a material change in financial circumstances. *Successfully addressed*.

**July 2011 Misdemeanor Recommendation:** Per Article 26.04(j)(2), once an attorney is appointed to a case, the attorney cannot be replaced unless good cause is found. *Successfully addressed*.

### Fair, Neutral, and Non-discriminatory Attorney Selection Process

July 2011 Misdemeanor Recommendation: The misdemeanor courts must examine their methods of appointing counsel, in particular, with regard to non-Spanish speaking attorneys. *Not addressed*.

July 2011 Juvenile Recommendation: The 304<sup>th</sup> District Court must establish a method to more closely monitor its appointments, in particular, with regard to non-Spanish speaking attorneys. *Successfully addressed*.

## **Recommendation from September 2013 Review**

**September 2013 Misdemeanor Recommendation:** The misdemeanor courts must continue to examine their methods of appointing counsel, in particular, with regard to non-Spanish speaking attorneys. Dallas County must submit to the Commission a detailed action plan on how they will resolve this issue no later than November 1, 2013.

# Progression of Recommendations and County's Actions from Past Visits

Category and Initial Recommendation Year	Court Level	Status as of the September 2013 Review	Satisfied	Pending
Transmittal of Request to Appointing Authority (2009)	Felony and Misdemeanor	The 2013 review verified that municipalities conducting their own magistrate warnings have a clear method to transmit requests for counsel to Dallas County.	√	Tenung
Timely Appointment of Counsel (2007)	Felony	The 2011 review verified that requests for counsel received by Dallas County are processed in a timely manner.	$\checkmark$	
Timely Appointment of Counsel (2007)	Misdemeanor	The 2013 review verified that requests for counsel received by Dallas County are processed in a timely manner.	$\checkmark$	
Determination of Indigence (2011)	Felony	The 2013 review interviews indicated that persons who qualify as indigent and who make bond are <b><u>not</u></b> required to re-qualify for indigence at the initial appearance.		
Determination of Indigence (2011)	Misdemeanor	The 2013 review verified that persons who make bond have their requests for counsel ruled upon in a prompt manner.	$\checkmark$	
Determination of Indigence (2011)	Misdemeanor	The 2013 review interviews indicated that persons who qualify as indigent and who later make bond are <b><u>not</u></b> required to re-qualify for indigence at the initial appearance.		
Determination of Indigence (2011)	Misdemeanor	The 2013 review interviews indicated that if a person was initially appointed counsel that this counsel continues to represent the defendant unless good cause is found for replacement.		
Fair, Neutral, and Non-discriminatory Attorney Selection Process (2007)	Felony	The 2011 review verified that the distribution of felony appointments is within the Commission's thresholds for presuming a fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory appointment system.		
Fair, Neutral, and Non-discriminatory Attorney Selection Process (2007)	Misdemeanor	For non-Spanish speaking cases, the distribution of misdemeanor appointments does not meet the Commission's threshold for presuming a fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory appointment system. For Spanish-speaking cases, this threshold was met in the 2011 review.		
Fair, Neutral, and Non-discriminatory Attorney Selection Process (2009)	Juvenile - 304th District Court	The 2013 review verified that the distribution of juvenile appointments is within the Commission's thresholds for presuming a fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory		
Fair, Neutral, and Non-discriminatory Attorney Selection Process (2009)	Juvenile - 305th District Court	The 2011 visit verified that the distribution of juvenile appointments is within the Commission's thresholds for presuming a fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory appointment system.		

## Transmittal of Requests for Counsel to the Appointing Authority

Under Article 15.17 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, magistrates are required to ask and record whether an arrestee requests appointment of counsel. They are to ensure reasonable assistance in completing the necessary forms for requesting appointment of counsel and are to transmit the requests to the appointing authority within 24 hours of the request being made. Per Article 1.051(c) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the appointing judges or their designees have one working day from receipt of the request to determine indigence and to appoint counsel for detained persons.

Prior to the Commission's visit to Dallas County in 2009, persons arrested by the City of Dallas would be booked into the Dallas County Jail where Article 15.17 hearings would be conducted and where requests for counsel would be taken. However, such processes differed for persons arrested by other municipalities. For these municipalities, arrestees would be booked at their respective municipal jail and given magistrate's warnings. For these municipalities, there was no clear process for transmitting the request for counsel to Dallas County. It was not clear how requests for counsel made at municipalities could be ruled upon by Dallas County. After our visit in 2009, the County decided to implement a plan where all municipalities would fax Election of Counsel forms to Dallas County. The County would rule on these requests and appoint counsel if indigent. This was to be a temporary fix to the issue of transmitting requests for counsel.

For the permanent fix, Dallas County embarked on a program to link the County to the municipalities through a videoconference system. Magistrate judges from the County were to take over the role of conducting Article 15.17 hearings in the municipalities. The magistrates would note if a request for counsel was made, and the municipal jail would fax a form to the County listing the estimated income and assets of the defendant.

Dallas County began the videoconference magistrate warnings program by linking Rowlett and Seagoville to the County. The County did not have funds to link all municipal jails and applied to the Commission for a grant. The Commission approved a targeted specific grant in which Dallas County would receive grant funds in order to move into compliance with the requirements of the FDA. The Commission awarded \$256,773 for the program, which would be matched by an equal amount for the program from Dallas County. Several municipalities joined the program. Requests for counsel from the municipalities who joined the program follow a clear process where a cause number is assigned to the case (even though the case may not have been filed in the clerk's office) and assignments of attorneys can be matched to an individual case.

At the time of our 2013 visit, the videoconference magistrate warnings were conducted for all municipalities, except: Balch Springs; Garland; Glen Heights; Grand Prairie; Irving; Mesquite; Richardson; and the Tri-Cities jail (Cedar Hill, Desoto, and Lancaster). In these municipalities that did not utilize the videoconference system, staff attempted to determine if each had methods in place to transmit all requests for counsel to Dallas County in a manner that Dallas County could receive and rule upon.

During our interviews with municipalities, it was apparent that each municipality was in communication with Dallas County regarding appropriate methods form making these transmissions. The standard operating procedures for sending requests to Dallas County appeared to be in a transitory phase during our visit, and while we documented methods for sending requests, those methods may have been updated since our on-site visit. The monitor believes that regular communication links between the County and municipalities are necessary to ensure that all requests for counsel are sent by the municipalities and received by the County.

The monitor found that each municipality appeared to have procedures in place to take requests for counsel and to transmit the requests and associated paperwork to Dallas County. At the time of our visit, all municipalities had adopted the Election of Counsel Form used by Dallas County in determining indigence. All municipalities told us that they sent requests for counsel to Dallas County both for persons who bonded before transport to Dallas County and for persons who were transported to Dallas County. There was some variation in the fax numbers used for sending requests to Dallas County, but since Dallas County was in communication with these municipalities at the time of our visit, uniform fax numbers may have been adopted after we had met with the municipalities. One municipality stated that it sent requests for counsel with the inmate for arrestees who were transported to Dallas County, but this procedure may have been updated since our visit. See Table 1 below for a summary of how requests for counsel are sent by municipalities to Dallas County.

Municipality	Requests for counsel for persons who bond before transport to Dallas County are sent in the following manner:	Requests for counsel for persons who are transported to Dallas County are sent in the following manner:
Balch Springs	Fax: 214-712-5085	Fax: 214-712-5085
Garland	Fax: 214-712-5085	Fax: 214-712-5085
Glenn Heights	Fax: 214-653-5777	Fax: 214-653-5777
Grand Prairie	Fax: 214-653-5777	Fax: 214-653-5777
Irving	Fax: 214-653-5777	Fax: 214-653-5777
Mesquite	Fax: 214-653-5777	Fax: 214-653-5777
Richardson	Fax: 214-712-5085	Request sent with inmate to Dallas County
Tri-Cities (Cedar Hill, DeSoto,		
Lancaster)	Fax: 214-653-5777	Fax: 214-653-5777

**Status of July 2011 Recommendation:** Successfully addressed. Interviews with municipalities indicated that all municipalities not participating in Dallas County's video magistrate warnings have methods in place to transmit all requests for counsel to a specific location where they can be processed by Dallas County.

## **Timeliness of Misdemeanor Appointments**

The monitor attempted to determine the timeliness of misdemeanor appointments in Dallas County by examining 182 misdemeanor requests for counsel received by Dallas County between June 11 and June 14, 2013. Once a request for counsel is made, Article 15.17(a) allows 24 hours to transmit the request to the appointing authority. Once the request is received, Article 1.051(c) allows one working day for the courts to appoint counsel. Of the 182 records reviewed, a timely determination of indigence (either appointment of counsel or denial of indigence) was made in 177 of the cases (97% timely). This percent of timely indigence determinations falls within the Commission's threshold for presuming that a jurisdiction has procedures in place for ensuring timely appointment of counsel. See Table 2 below for a summary of the timeliness of misdemeanor indigence determinations obtained from our sample.

Dallas Misdemeanor Appointment Sample Data	Sample Size	Number from sample	Percent
Number of Indigence Determinations Examined	182		
Appointment / Denial of Indigence Occurred within:			
0 work days		76	41.8%
1 work day + 24 hour transfer		101	55.5%
Timely Determinations of Indigence		177	97.3%
Late Determinations of Indigence		5	2.7%

#### Table 2: Timeliness of Misdemeanor Appointments

**Status of July 2011 Recommendation:** Successfully addressed. When Dallas County successfully receives misdemeanor requests for counsel, the County has implemented procedures to promptly rule upon requests for counsel.

# Determinations of Indigence: In-court Appointments in Both Felony and Misdemeanor Cases

In the July 2011 review, the monitor found that the felony courts would make an initial appointment of counsel, but if an arrestee made bond, the appointment might be voided. The arrestee would have to re-apply for appointed counsel at the first appearance. If indigence was determined at the first appearance, the appointed attorney might differ from the initially appointed attorney.

In the July 2011 review, the monitor found that the misdemeanor courts would either delay an appointment of counsel or would void an appointment of counsel if an arrestee made bond. Like the felony courts, the arrestee would have to re-apply for appointed counsel at the first appearance.

In this 2013 review, the monitor interviewed sixteen felony and eight misdemeanor court coordinators to ask about procedures for appointing counsel, specifically focusing on whether indigence was affected by the fact that an arrestee made bond. In our interviews with court coordinators, the monitor found that coordinators generally did not appear to differentiate appointment procedures based upon whether an arrestee made bond. According to our interviews, determinations of indigence are generally made upon request whether an arrestee remains incarcerated or makes bond. Once appointed, the initial attorney remains on the case until case disposition. However, based upon a few of our interviews, the monitor could not clearly determine the procedures for appointing counsel in each court. It was apparent in our interviews that coordinators could benefit from periodic trainings

that could include a summary of recent legal matters, standardize local operating procedures, and provide for a question-and-answer session. See Table 3 below for a summary of court coordinators with whom the monitor met.

Felony Courts	Misdemeanor Courts
Criminal District Courts 1	County Criminal Courts 1
Criminal District Courts 2	County Criminal Courts 3
Criminal District Courts 3	County Criminal Courts 4
Criminal District Courts 4	County Criminal Courts 7
Criminal District Courts 5	County Criminal Courts 8
Criminal District Courts 7	County Criminal Courts 9
194th District Court	County Criminal Courts 11
	Dallas County Criminal
195th District Court	Court of Appeal 1
203rd District Court	
204th District Court	
265th District Court	
282nd District Court	
283rd District Court	
291st District Court	
292nd District Court	
363rd District Court	

 Table 3: Courts with Whom the Monitor Met

**Status of July 2011 Recommendation:** Successfully addressed. Based upon interviews, court coordinators appear to appoint counsel without regard to bond status of the arrestee. Appointments do not appear to be voided if a defendant makes bond. Once appointed to represent a client, counsel continues with the case unless good cause is found for replacement.

**September 2013 Non-mandatory Recommendation:** Coordinators could benefit from periodic trainings that could include a summary of recent legal matters, standardize local operating procedures, and provide for a question-and-answer session.

Dallas County's standard affidavit of indigence only asks defendants to state their annual income and the total value of their assets. Based upon past samples examined by the monitor, the monitor has seen that a large number of persons requesting counsel state that their income is \$0 and the value of their assets is \$0. In an effort to obtain more accurate financial information, Dallas County has undertaken a pilot project where financial screeners ask arrestees more detailed questions. The monitor observed the screeners gathering information from arrestees. The screening moved very quickly with several questions being asked of each arrestee. The typical interview took one to two minutes. If someone provided questionable answers, the screener asked a follow-up question to explain the answer.

## Fair, Neutral, and Non-discriminatory Attorney Selection Process

### **Misdemeanor Appointments**

In the July 2011 review, the monitor found that the distribution of appointments in non-Spanish speaking misdemeanor cases did not meet the threshold set by the Commission for presuming that a jurisdiction has a fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory appointment system. In the July 2011 review, the top 9.9% of recipient attorneys received 38.6% of available cases (or 3.9 times their representative share).

The monitor examined the issue once again in this 2013 review. To obtain a fair analysis of the issue, the monitor attempts to only examine appointments to attorneys who were on the appointment list for the entire year. In this instance, the monitor obtained the current appointment list (June 2013) and had previously obtained the appointment list from August 2011. The monitor only examined appointments to attorneys who were on both appointment lists. In the current 2013 review using FY2012 auditor data, the monitor found that of the 132 non-Spanish speaking attorneys who were on both appointment lists, the top thirteen attorneys (top 9.8%) received 34.2% of available appointments, or **3.5 times their representative share**. Title I § 174.28(c)(5)(C) of the Texas Administrative Code states:

A county is presumed to be in substantial compliance with the fair, neutral, and nondiscriminatory attorney appointment system requirement if, in each level of proceedings (felony, misdemeanor, and juvenile cases), the percentage of appointments received by the top 10% of recipient attorneys **does not exceed three times their respective share**. If the county can track attorney list changes, the monitor will only examine the distribution of cases for attorneys that were on the appointment list for the entire year. The top 10% of recipient attorneys is the whole attorney portion of the appointment list that is closest to 10% of the total list.

This distribution of appointments in non-Spanish speaking misdemeanor cases is outside of the Commission's threshold for presuming that a jurisdiction's appointment system is fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory. See Appendix A for pie charts showing the distribution of appointments.

Since the monitor's 2011 review, the misdemeanor courts have adopted the attorney appointment management report used by the felony courts (See Appendix B). This report allows one to examine how closely each court follows the appointment wheel. The monitor believes that such management reports are helpful as the collection of accurate data allows for processes to be analyzed and improved.

**Status of July 2011 Recommendation:** Not addressed. The misdemeanor courts must continue to examine their methods of appointing counsel, in particular, with regard to non-Spanish speaking attorneys. Dallas County must submit to the Commission a detailed action plan on how they will resolve this issue no later than November 1, 2013.

## Juvenile Appointments in the 304<sup>th</sup> District Court

In the July 2011 review, the monitor found that the distribution of appointments in non-Spanish speaking juvenile cases in the 304<sup>th</sup> District Court did not meet the threshold set by the Commission for presuming that a jurisdiction has a fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory appointment system. In the July 2011 review, the top 9.4% of recipient attorneys received 37.4% of available cases (or 4.0 times their representative share). This analysis used auditor data showing cases paid which did not separate attorneys by appointment wheel.

The monitor examined the issue once again in this 2013 review. In this latest analysis, the monitor was able to obtain appointment data (as opposed to cases paid data) from hand tallies made by persons appointing counsel over the course of the previous year. The appointments were separated according to wheel (one wheel for felony-level offenses and another for misdemeanor-level offenses). The monitor only examined appointments to attorneys who had been on the appointment list for the entire year. In this latest analysis, the monitor found that 23 non-Spanish speaking **felony-level attorneys** had been on the list for the entire year, and the top two attorneys (top 8.7%) received 9.4% of available appointments, or 1.1 times their representative share. For non-Spanish speaking misdemeanor-level attorneys (top 10.8%) received 16.4% of available appointments, or 1.5 times their representative share. Both of these distributions fall within the Commission's threshold for presuming that a jurisdiction's appointment system is fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory. See Appendix A for pie charts showing the distribution of appointments.

**Status of July 2011 Recommendation:** Successfully addressed. The distributions of both the felonylevel and the misdemeanor level appointments to non-Spanish speaking attorneys meet the Commission's threshold for presuming that a jurisdiction's appointment system is fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory.

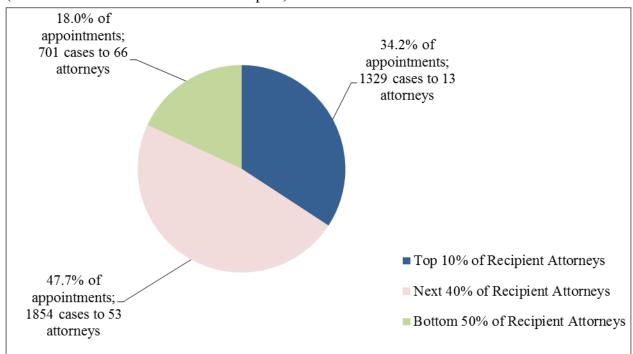
## Conclusion

Dallas County has made significant progress in addressing previous findings. We found several improvements in local processes including: the implementation of standard procedures for sending counsel requests to the County; timely appointments of counsel in misdemeanor cases; the implementation of standard methods for ensuring that bonded persons receive appointed counsel who continue representing them through case disposition; and even distributions of appointments in juvenile matters. The monitor found one past recommendation that still remains in effect; the distribution of misdemeanor appointments is still outside of our threshold for presuming a fair, neutral, and non-discriminatory appointment system. The monitor believes that with further training this issue can be addressed.

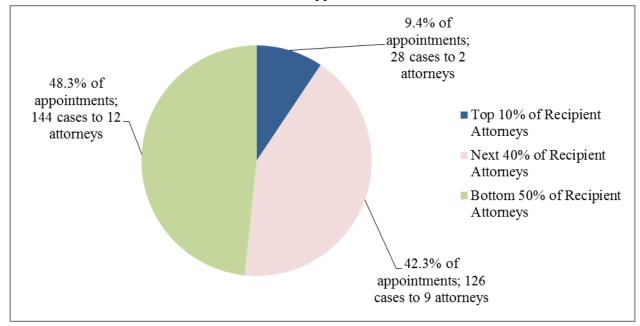
We thank Dallas County officials and staff and municipal officials and staff for their cooperation with this review. Dallas County officials appear willing to make necessary changes to improve the indigent defense system. As mandated by statute, we will monitor the County's transition and adjustments to Commission findings.

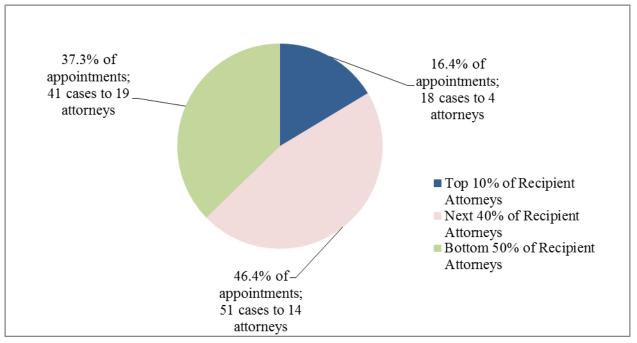
# **Appendix A – Distributions of Attorney Appointments**

**Distribution of non-Spanish Speaking Cases Paid to Misdemeanor Attorneys** (based on FY2012 misdemeanor cases paid)



Distribution of non-Spanish Speaking Juvenile Appointments to Felony-Level Attorneys in the 304<sup>th</sup> District Court (based on hand tallies of appointments)





Distribution of non-Spanish Speaking Juvenile Appointments to Misdemeanor-Level Attorneys in the 304<sup>th</sup> District Court (based on hand tallies of appointments)

# Appendix B – Misdemeanor Attorney Appointment Management Report

# Attorney Appointment Summary MISD

Appo fro	(1) Total (2) To bintments Repla om Wheel			(4) Total Misdemeanor Assignments	(5) Total Ad Hocs W/C Exceptions	D.
the second second	734	70	8710	9444	2714	8
	704	10	0/10	0-1-1	211-	•
	Lindowen waaraattaattaattaattaattaattaattaattaatt				ingen andere	Nan 1994 al 2011 de la companya de l
Court	(A) # Wheel Appointments	(B) # Wheel Replacements	(C) # AdHoc Appointments	(D) # PV Appointments	(E) # PD Appointments	
Sector Sector	ne dia dia mandri dia mandri dia dia dia dia dia dia dia dia dia di					A+C+D+E
MA	73	10	13	0	1190	1276
MB	177	4	115	0	365	657
MC	84	7	73	0	1032	1189
MD	2	1	0	0	2	4
ME	44	1	82	0	991	1117
MF	243	38	672	0	6	921
MG	23	5	301	0	333	657
MH	30	2	72	0	1039	1141
MJ	0	0	790	0	313	1103
MK	1	0	161	0	1232	1394
ML	6	1	36	0	67	109
MM	51	1	8	0	467	526
MN	0	0	391	0	296	687
Totals	734	70	2714	0	7333	9444

Wheel Total Atto	omeys on Wheel Total Whe	el Assignments
Misd A	188	246
Misd B	188	427
		673

1/1/2013 12:00:00	 6/17/2013 12:00:00
AM	AM

•



28.74

% Not Following Wheel (C)/(F)	# of Skips
1.02	5
17.50	0
6.14	0
0.00	0
7.34	0
72.96	0
45.81	0
6.31	0
71.62	0
11.55	2
33.03	0
1.52	0
56.91	0
28.74	7