

Texas court system

Law



The constitution establishes District Courts as state trial courts of general jurisdiction that provides single constitution in every County, presided by a county judge. The constitution provides the justice of the peace in every County. These justice courts solve criminal misdemeanor issues and small claims in courts. The legislature establishes Municipal Courts which are incorporated with the city of the state to solve criminal cases and city law violations. The Supreme Court of Texas is the final appellate jurisdiction in civil and small cases that issues writs. It has overall duties in the Texas court system. Supreme Court has powers to implement essential regulations of civil trial practice, procedure, verification, appellate proceedings and publish rules of administration in the State. The Supreme Court has one Chief Justice and eight Associate Justices who serve for six years (Brandon, Quarles and Mathew 2003).

Court of Criminals Appeals is Texas' criminal counterpart of Supreme Court. It constitutes of nine judges who are elected and appointed as justices of the Supreme Court. During the hearing of cases, the Court of Criminal Appeals sits in panels of three judges, of which two must agree on a conclusion. The Court of Appeals in Texas have intermediate jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases in each geographic Courts of Appeal District in the state. They have limited writ authority. The court of Appeals is divided into fourteen districts with one chief and two to twelve justices. Three justices may sit in a panel during case hearing and the majority must agree on the decision (Berry, Goldman and Janda 2008).

In District Courts, civil and criminal cases in Texas originated in this level.

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Both are considered Courts trial of General Jurisdiction. They handle small cases, felony criminal matters, and civil actions over 200 dollars, divorces, and title actions. County-level Courts in Texas is a trial court with limited jurisdiction. Constitutional County Courts have jurisdiction of fines greater than 500 dollars or jail sentence. Civil matters between 200 dollars and 5000 dollars and appeals from Municipal are also handled. County Courts have control over civil cases under 10, 000 dollars and partial control over criminal matters and Municipal Courts (May 1996).