# Judge Qualifications and Selection in the State of Texas

#### **Supreme Court**

Number: 1 chief justice and 8 justices.
Selection: Partisan, statewide election. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.

Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and judge of court of record together, for at least 10 years Term: 6 years.

#### **Court of Criminal Appeals**

Number: 1 presiding judge and 8 judges.
Selection: Partisan, statewide election. Vacancies
between elections filled by gubernatorial
appointment with advice and consent of Senate.
Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35
to 74; and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and
judge of court of record together, for at least 10 years.

Civil Appeals

Term: 6 years.

Criminal Appeals

## **Courts of Appeals**

**Number:** Each court has 1 chief justice and from 2 to 12 additional justices, for a total of 80 justices statewide.

Selection: Partisan election within each court of appeals district. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.

Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and judge of court of record together, for at least 10 years.

Term: 6 years.

# of court of record

## **District Courts**

Number: 1 judge per court.

**Selection:** Partisan, district-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.

Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 25 to 74; resident of the district for 2 years; and a practicing lawyer or judge, or both combined, for 4 years.

Term: 4 years.

# **County-Level Courts**

# **Constitutional County Courts**

Number: 1 judge per court.

Selection: Partisan, county-wide election.
Vacancies between elections filled by appointment by county commissioners.

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Qualifications: "Shall be well informed in the law of the State." (Law license not required.)

Term: 4 years.

# Statutory County Courts

Number: 1 judge per court.

**Selection:** Partisan, county-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by appointment by county commissioners.

Qualifications: Citizen of U.S., age 25 or older; resident of county for at least 2 years; and licensed attorney who has practiced law or served as a judge for 4 years.

Term: 4 years.

# **Statutory Probate Courts**

Number: 1 judge per court.

**Selection:** Partisan, county-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by appointment by county commissioners.

Qualifications: Citizen of U.S., age 25 or older; resident of county for at least 2 years; and licensed attorney who has practiced law or served as a judge for 5 years.

Term: 4 years.

#### **Justice Courts**

Number: 1 judge per court.

Selection: Partisan, precinct-wide election. Qualifications: No specific statutory or constitutional provisions apply.

Term: 4 years.

#### **Municipal Courts**

**Number:** Generally, 1 court per incorporated municipality and 1 judge per court. Statutes allow some city governing bodies to establish more than 1 court and/or more than 1 judge per court.

**Selection:** Elected or appointed by the governing body of the city as provided by city charter or ordinance.

Qualifications: Determined by the governing body of the city. Term: 2 or 4 years.