



**CENTERS OF
EXCELLENCE**
A Judicial Branch Initiative

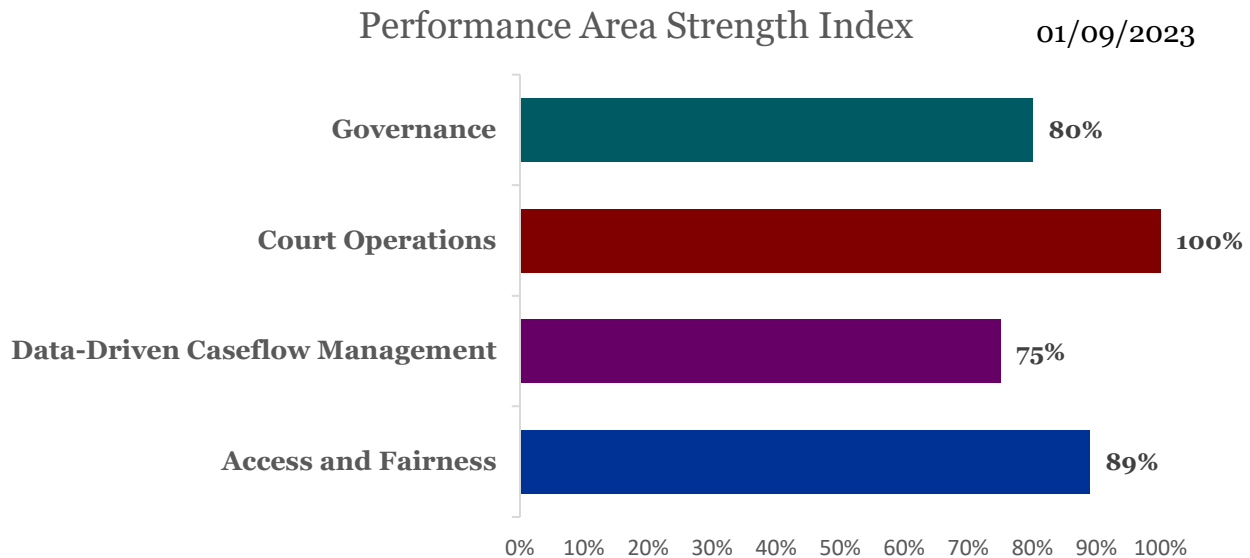
**Centers of Excellence Nomination Report on Waller County
Justice of the Peace Precinct 2, Waller, Texas**

Presiding Judge: Honorable J.R. Woolley
June 30th, 2023

Introduction to Waller County Justice of the Peace Precinct 2

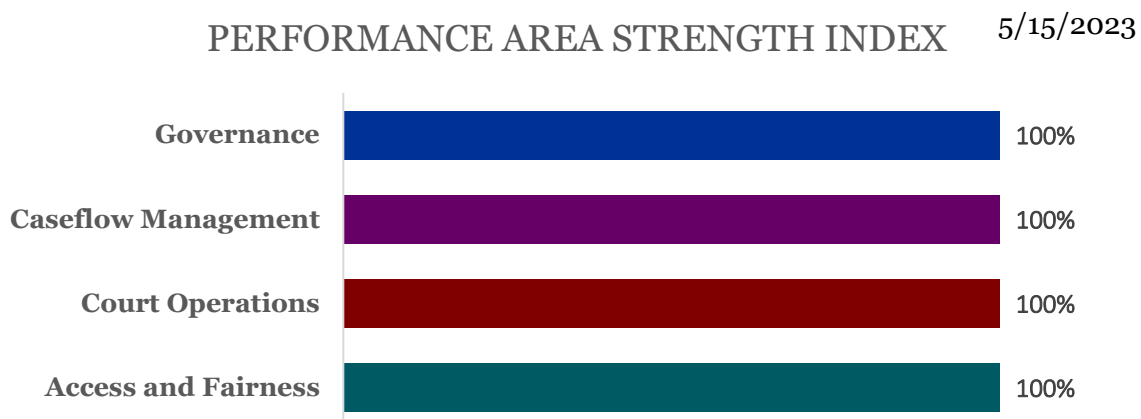
Justice of the Peace Precinct 2, Waller County, is one of four justices of the peace for Waller, serving approximately 61,000 residents with jurisdiction on Class C misdemeanors, traffic violations, small civil claims, landlord/renter conflicts, magistrate duties, and inquests.

Baseline Performance Measures:



Waller Justice of the Peace 2 was a strong performer in **Court Operations and Access and Fairness**. As part of their participation in the program, the court successfully drafted and enacted new local rules for Judicial Administration, raising their score in the **Governance** performance area. At the same time the court began utilizing its work in **Court Operations** to draft and enact **Caseflow Management** improvements and leveraging their case management system and paperless policies. Finally, the court connected with Justice of the Peace 3 in Rockwall, working together to draft and refine a language access plan now in place for both courts.

Post Centers of Excellence Performance Measures:

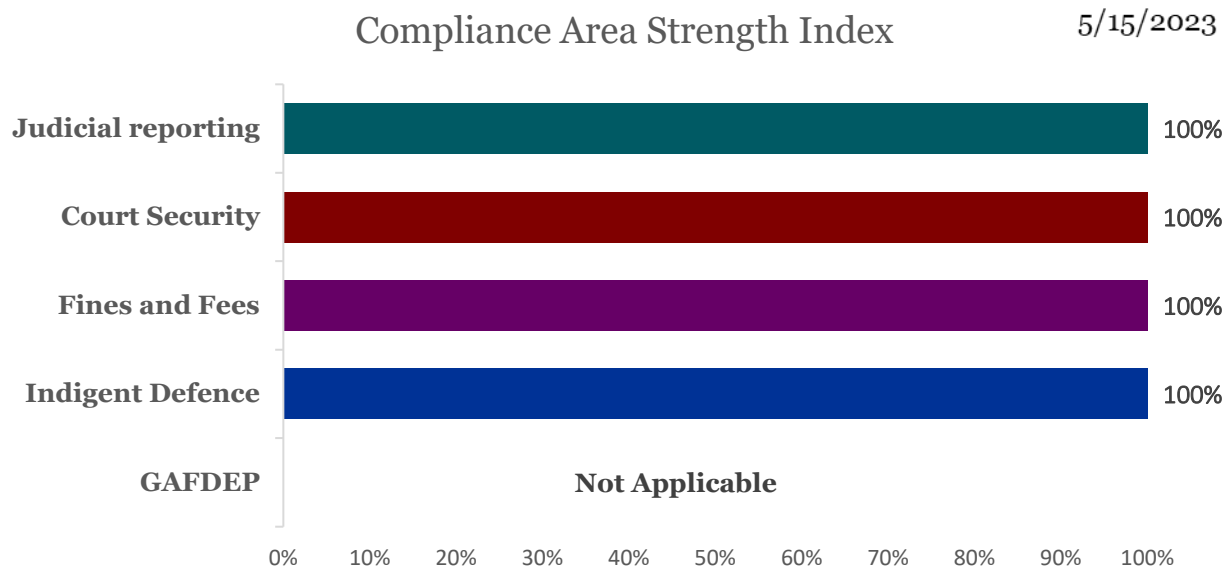


Judge J.R. Woolley operates one of the most technologically savvy courts to take part in the Centers of Excellence program. The court is entirely paperless and uses every opportunity to conduct business digitally by leveraging good caseflow management and court operations practices. His courtroom hosts a digital screen which the judge can broadcast out to, allowing for the judge to provide guidance and support to his court users from the bench.

That use of technology provides a steady workflow structure to court business, while allowing Judge Woolley the flexibility to carrying out the duties of office. Staff can carry out court business while the judge conducts magistrations remotely using Video Magistrate or attends to an inquest in the county. In practice, this allows the jail to maintain a necessary level of flexibility with its staff and detainees, while simultaneously ensuring that detainees are heard quickly and efficiently. And for inquests, it allows the judge the time needed to successfully fulfill the role, while ensuring that his staff is set up to successfully carry out the work of his court while he is out on a call.

Compliance Areas

Justice of the Peace 2, Waller County, maintained strong compliance with each required reporting area. Compared to County Courts at Law and District Courts with dual civil and criminal jurisdictions, Justices of the Peace have a narrower set of standards with regards to mandated reporting. However, they have a traditionally higher caseload overall as they are the court of first recourse for traffic violations and class C misdemeanors and simple civil matters in their respective counties. As such, they hold primary responsibility for the collections of fines and fees issued from their court. Judge Woolley ensures that his cases, payment plans, and fines are collected, paid, and reported accurately, while also managing probation and court check-ins for all the individuals he magistrates through a member of his staff, providing pretrial and monitoring services and monitoring for those he magistrates in the county.



Summary of Findings

Judge Woolley places a strong emphasis on having an efficient and well-run court, which in turn is focused on providing his court users and those he magistrates every opportunity to succeed and navigate the justice system. By leveraging technology, he sets clear conditions for bond in both the PSRS and in the county's Case Management System, allowing his DA and other county stakeholders to take over the case should further prosecution be warranted.

This focus ensures that everyone who engages with his court is given fair and equitable treatment and given every opportunity to succeed in meeting their obligations to the court. Judge Woolley has been a member of the Waller County EMS and volunteer fire department, was elected to County Sheriff, and has spent several years in his position as Justice of the Peace. In that time, he has forged long lasting and strong relationships across the rural communities of Waller County and its government. He is a conscientious and dedicated public servant, with a deep and meaningful focus on ongoing excellence in judicial administration.