



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

June 2016



Texas Judicial Council

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TECHNOLOGY & DATA

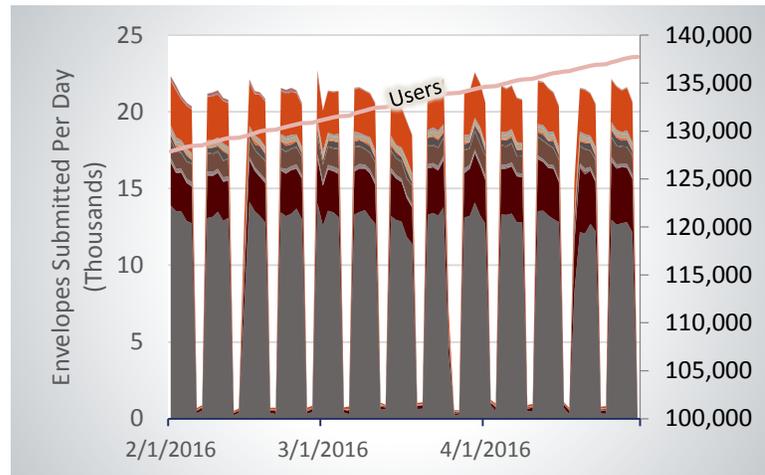
Information Services Division

OCA's Information Services Division (ISD) is instructed by the Legislature to directly provide staff and information technology equipment and services to the two high courts, the 14 intermediate appellate courts and five judicial branch state agencies. The division also provides staff to coordinate and facilitate the work of the Judicial Committee on Information Technology (JCIT).

eFiling

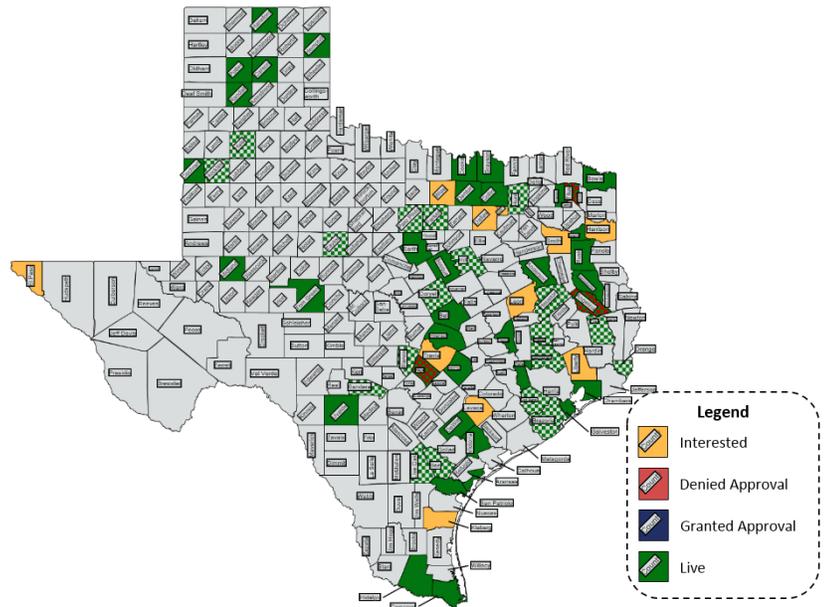
Civil

Civil e-Filing is now allowed in all 254 Texas counties and is mandatory in 118. The remaining 136 counties become mandatory on July 1. The system processes an average of 30,000 documents daily from almost 140,000 registered users.



Criminal

The Court of Criminal Appeals had a hearing on April 5th to hear the advantages and disadvantages to mandating criminal eFiling for subsequent criminal filings. The eFileTexas team continues to work with additional counties as permission is gained to implement criminal eFiling. As of May 1, 56 counties accept criminal eFiling (see map on right). In the current permissive environment, criminal eFilings have plateaued at 500-700 documents daily.



Judicial Access to Court Records

re:SearchTX

Development on the new tool to provide judges with remote access to electronic court records is nearly completion. The tool, re:SearchTX, is currently being tested by a small group of judges and will be made available to all judges starting in June 2016. Judges in less populous counties will receive access first. Only documents eFiled will be available in the system going back to January 2016.

The tool allows judges to filter eFiled documents down by county, court, case, party or a combination of those criteria. Judges can then save those results to "folders" for later viewing. It's expected that this tool

will have big benefits to judges that hear cases in multiple jurisdictions that do not share case management systems.

OCA expects to open access to the attorney of record on cases at the end of 2016.

Other Information Services Projects

- Implementation of online self-represented litigant (SRL) form preparation tool – As part of the e-Filing platform, OCA has made available to the Texas Legal Services Center (TLSC) the ability to implement the Guide and File System. This system provides online interviews using plain language to assist SRLs in completing forms. The system is available for use at <http://selfhelp.efiletexas.gov>. Seven interviews have been implemented including one that generates the Supreme Court approved forms for divorce with no children. TLSC has convened a workgroup to continue development of forms to be put onto this platform.
- Guardianship Compliance Tool – This tool will support the Guardianship Compliance project already underway (see report below). The tool will allow judges to require that guardians electronically file their initial inventories and annual reports. The system will then use a series of checks to look for potential financial abuse or exploitation and alert the judge. OCA expects to have the tool involved in a pilot court no later than December 2016.
- Replacing licensing database – OCA’s software that manages the licensing provided by the Judicial Branch Certification Commission is outdated and in need of several modern features including the ability for licensees to review their records and renew/pay for licenses online. A [request for offers](#) is currently out for bid and a decision is anticipated prior to the next judicial council meeting.
- Replacing court activity database – Over the last several legislative sessions, there has been an increased need for court data in order to satisfy judge, court personnel, public, media and legislator requests. Frequently the data collected is not granular enough to provide significant value. The database is also archaic and in need of modern features. The new system would work to ease the reporting burden of local clerks, as well as enhance the ability for OCA research staff and the public to look at data about the courts. OCA anticipates issuing a request for offers later this year.
- Infrastructure Upgrades – OCA has completed the workstation upgrades for judicial branch organizations supported by OCA Information Services. An upgrade to the wide area network (WAN) is currently underway and will be completed late June. Additional cybersecurity upgrades and server upgrades are planned for the fall. OCA Information Services will also be making Office365 available to all supported organizations later this summer as well.

eFileTexas Self Help April Statistics

- Over 6,163 sessions started
- Over 4,422 unique users
- 1,421 interviews completed

RESEARCH & COURT SERVICES

Collection Improvement Program

Technical Support

OCA continues to assist counties and cities required to implement a collection improvement program with either implementing a program or improving the operations of an established program.

The primary focus of the assistance provided to counties and cities by OCA's Collection Improvement Program (CIP) technical support staff is to ensure their compliance with key [program components](#).

Since February 2016, CIP staff have:

- Conducted 19 "spot checks" of programs required to implement a program to ensure continuing compliance with program components;
- Continued to compile data for Return on Expenditure reports;
- Finalized policies and established procedures for managing temporary waivers of the CIP reporting requirement in certain situations; and
- Continued drafting policies and establishing procedures for training and managing compliance with data verification audits.

Also, since February 2016, CIP staff have participated in the following training and assistance activities:

- Conducted regional collections training workshops in Conroe, Bastrop, Kyle, New Braunfels, and San Antonio.
- Delivered collections-related presentations at the Texas Justice Court Training Center's New Judges School in San Marcos and the annual conference of the Governmental Collectors Association of Texas.
- Conducted corrective strategy meetings designed to assist jurisdictions that have failed a compliance audit to develop a plan to correct deficiencies for Brazoria, Galveston, and Maverick counties.
- Staffed a Collections Improvement Program resource table at the Texas Justice Court Training Center judges and court staff schools in Rockwall, Galveston, San Antonio, and San Marcos.

Court Services Consultant

Providing Consulting Services

OCA's Court Services Consultant continues to work with Webb and Maverick counties on file/record management issues and improving case management practices related to court costs and collection issues. Additionally, phone and in-person assistance has been provided to courts on identifying data reporting issues and implementing caseflow management best practices. Assistance with the development and implementation of a caseflow management plan has begun in the 212th District Court in Galveston County.

Providing Training

The Court Services Consultant staffed an OCA resource table at the College for New Judges in December 2015 and the County and District Clerks Association Conference in March 2016. Over 40 judges and 300 clerks attended these events.

Shared Solutions

OCA staff continue to support the development of the next phase of the Judicial Council's Shared Solutions initiative. An updated model of supporting innovation and high performance in local courts and court systems is being developed to advance the Shared Solutions concepts.

Data Collection

Judicial Information Program

The Judicial Information Program collects, reports and analyzes court activity statistics, judicial directory information, and other information from the approximately 2,700 courts in the state; produces the [Annual Statistical Report for the Texas Judiciary](#), Texas Judicial System Directory, and other publications; and provides statistical and other information about the judicial branch to the legislature, state and federal agencies, local governments, private associations and public interest groups, and others. More than 150,000 statistical and other reports were received in FY2015.

Texas Judicial System Directory

Judicial Information completed the annual update of the [judicial directory database](#) and published the 2016 edition of the [Texas Judicial System Directory](#).

Legislative Changes affecting Data

[SB 1369](#), related to mandatory reporting of appointments and fees paid to attorneys ad litem, guardians, guardians ad litem, mediators and competency evaluators, goes into effect September 1, 2016.

During the period, staff have developed forms, instructions, frequently asked questions ("FAQ"), checklists, presentations and other resources related to the reporting requirements of this bill. Staff are in the process of developing webinars and working with a programmer to make changes to the current [appointments and fees](#) reporting database.

Presentations on SB 1369 and [HB 3994](#) (reporting of judicial bypass cases, effective January 1, 2016) were made at two statewide continuing education conferences and 5 regional meetings for county and district clerks.

Technical Assistance and Training

A significant amount of time of the Judicial Information Program's staff is devoted to providing ongoing support to the trial courts and clerks and their information technology staff or case management vendors on reporting issues. Since the last Council meeting, staff made numerous presentations at clerk education seminars held by the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, the Texas Justice Courts Training Center, and the County and District Clerks' Association.

Evaluating Judicial Workload in Child Protection Cases

In July 2015, OCA kicked off the Texas Child Protective Services Judicial Workload assessment project being funded by a grant from the Texas Children's Commission. The project is informed by the input of an

18-member Judicial Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) made up of judges and other child protection case stakeholders. The time study portion of the workload assessment was conducted October 26 through November 22, 2015, by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and will result in a method to objectively determine the number of judges necessary to process the CPS-filed caseload. As a follow up, NCSC surveyed the judges who participated in the time study regarding their perspectives on whether the time currently spent on these cases is sufficient to reasonably perform judicial duties in all phases of a child protection case. The JNAC met February 24, 2016, to review the workload data gathered by NCSC. The final report from NCSC is due in August.

Domestic Violence Resources Program

Protective Order Resource Attorney (PORA)

During the period, OCA's Protective Order Resource Attorney (PORA) continued to chair the OCA's [HB 2455](#) Task Force to promote uniformity in the collection and reporting of information relating to family violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking.

During the period, the PORA conducted several conference calls and meetings of the workgroups, which focused on data quality and uniformity surrounding protective orders, dating violence, criminal law, and human trafficking. The PORA also conducted another meeting of the full Task Force to update members on the activities of the workgroups. OCA must deliver a report with recommendations on issues of data quality and uniformity to the governor and legislature no later than September 1, 2016.

During the period the PORA also:

- Met by telephone with members of the University of California Berkley's Hague Domestic Violence Project to discuss the prospect of collaborating to create a bench guide to assist Texas judges in managing processes and substantive law applied in Hague Convention child abduction cases where domestic violence is a factor. The PORA is working with the Project to assemble a committee to create the bench guide and the committee's first meeting is scheduled to occur in August 2016.
- Met with representatives of the Texas Victim Services Association to begin planning a symposium on victims' issues to take place in October 2016.
- Attended the Texas Council on Family Violence Public Policy Committee meeting to begin collaborating on TCFV's legislative agenda for the 85th session of the Texas Legislature.
- Made a presentation to judges, attorneys, law enforcement, and advocates on family violence prosecution issues, magistrate's orders for emergency protection, and OCA's NICS Protective Order Record Improvement Project for a training event created by Texas RioGrande Legal Aid in Eagle Pass, Texas.
- Presented on family violence, Magistrate's Orders of Emergency Protection, TCIC reporting, and OCA's NICS Protective Order Record Improvement Project to members of the Texas Criminal Justice Information Users Group Annual Conference in Galveston. A similar presentation was made to law enforcement officers at the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center's Bailiffs and Warrant Officers Conference in Dallas, and to clerks at the County and District Clerks Association of Texas Education Seminar in Round Rock.

Language Access

OCA's Language Access Program staff assists courts in developing and implementing language access plans; provides training on language access issues and best practices; and works with Texas colleges and universities to develop college-level court interpreter training programs in an effort to increase the pool of licensed court interpreters in the State. Language Access Program staff also provide Spanish interpreting services via speakerphone or videoconference through the Texas Court Remote Interpreter Service (TCRIS). TCRIS services are available in all case types, for short, non-contested hearings involving limited or no evidence. TCRIS interpreters continue to provide regular interpretation and certain document translation services for courts across Texas.

Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders

The Texas Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders (WINGS) continues to address guardianship policy and practice issues, assess the state's system of guardianship and alternatives, and serve as an ongoing forum for problem-solving and networking. The WINGS group met on March 31 and received updates on the OCA Guardianship Compliance Project. The group heard reports from the various workgroups and discussed the implementation of relevant legislation passed during the 84th session. The group formed a new Outreach Workgroup to consolidate efforts in this area and discussed developing online training for guardians.

Research

OCA research staff continue to work with researchers at Texas A&M's Public Policy Research Institute on a pretrial release research project, which is being conducted under the charge of the council's [Criminal Justice Committee](#). The study, which will look at the pretrial release practices in jurisdictions around the state, is expected to inform judges and others about key program planning, design, and operations issues. In April, OCA research staff teamed up with PPRI staff to make a presentation on the project at the [Texas Association of Pretrial Services](#) annual conference in Conroe.

OCA's Research and Judicial Information staff travelled to El Paso in April for two days of training on court activity reporting and court performance.

COLLECTION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AUDIT

Article 103.0033(j) of the Code of Criminal Procedure requires OCA to periodically review mandatory local jurisdictions' compliance with the components of the Collection Improvement Program. Since the beginning of Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, the Collection Improvement Program – Audit Section has issued [reports](#) for 13 Compliance Audits. Of the 13 jurisdictions audited, 10 passed the audit (including three jurisdictions undergoing a follow-up audit), and 3 jurisdictions failed the compliance audit. Of the three jurisdictions that failed, one is working within the statutory 180-day grace period to re-establish compliance before further action is taken, while the remaining two jurisdictions are awaiting the beginning of a follow-up audit. Audit staff are currently working on nine (9) Compliance Audits and three (3) Post-implementation Rate Reviews.

SPECIALTY COURTS

Child Protection Courts/Child Support Courts Program

The Presiding Judges for the Administrative Judicial Regions (AJRs) held their annual retreat April 10-11, 2016, at the Lost Pines Resort and Spa in Bastrop. Topics discussed related to specialty courts were the creation of three new child protection courts in AJRs 3, 7 and 8 and caseloads for child protection and child support courts. Planning is underway for the CPC Judges Meeting and CPC Coordinator Training to occur at the 2016 Child Welfare Judicial Conference November 14-16, 2016, in Austin.

Effective June 1, 2016, Judge Deane Loughmiller will cover Rains and Van Zandt Counties. These counties were previously covered by Judge Hockett. She will no longer be assigned to those dockets.

Specialty Courts Program Coordinator

The Specialty Courts Program Coordinator (SCPC) attended the 2016 Texas Association of Drug Professionals (TADCP) Annual Training Conference April 20-22, 2016, in San Antonio. The TADCP membership unanimously voted to change the association's name to Texas Association of Specialty Court Professionals. The name change is aligned with the specialty court statute encompassing all specialty and problem-solving court types other than drug courts. The SCPC was invited by the Governor's Criminal Justice Division (CJD) staff to participate in the scoring of specialty court applications submitted to the CJD as a Merit Reviewer to the Governor's Specialty Courts Advisory Council (SCAC). The SCPC was also invited by Terrence Walton, Chief Operating Officer of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP), to join the *Standards Implementation Advisory Group*. This group of drug court practitioners and other stakeholders has been brought together to discuss how NADCP can best promote implementation of the Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards nationwide.

REGULATORY SERVICES

Judicial Branch Certification Commission (JBCC)

On September 1, 2014, the Judicial Branch Certification Commission (JBCC) began operation. The JBCC was established by the Texas Legislature, 83rd Regular Session, in [Senate Bill 966](#). The nine member Commission oversees certification, registration, licensing, and regulation of Court Reporters and Court Reporting Firms, Private Professional Guardians, Process Servers, and Licensed Court Interpreters.

JBCC Certifications, Registrations, and Licenses

Profession	Number of Certifications, Registrations, Licenses
Court Reporters	2,249 individuals and 333 firms
Guardians	440 individuals
Process Servers	3,408 individuals
Court Interpreters	463 individuals
TOTAL	6,893 individuals and firms

Recent Meetings of the JBCC and Advisory Boards

On May 6, 2016, the JBCC held its eighth meeting of the Commission. Since February 2016, there have been two advisory board meetings:

- Court Reporters Certification Advisory Board Meeting – April 1, 2016
- Guardianship Certification Advisory Board Meeting – April 14, 2016

Compliance Section Complaint Investigation and Resolution

Since the last Texas Judicial Council meeting there have been four complaint review committee meetings.

- Court Reporter Certification Complaint Review Committee meeting – February 26, 2016
- Process Server Certification Complaint Review Committee meeting - March 30, 2016
- Licensed Court Interpreter Complaint Review Committee meeting - March 30, 2016
- Court Reporter Certification Complaint Review Committee meeting – March 31, 2016

During FY 2016, the JBCC compliance team has opened 51 complaints filed with the Commission. There are currently 25 complaints in various stages of the complaint process: 8 court reporter, 8 process server, 8 guardian and 1 court interpreter complaint.

- Agendas for all meetings are posted on the JBCC website at <http://www.txcourts.gov/jbcc/meetings-agendas.aspx>.

Development of New Codes of Ethics and Standards

The JBCC continues to prepare the Codes of Ethics for each profession to submit to the Supreme Court. The Guardianship Code of Ethics was approved by the JBCC on May 6, 2016, and has been sent to the Supreme Court for review and adoption.

The new [Process Server Certification Code of Ethics](#) and the [Licensed Court Interpreter Code of Ethics](#) have been adopted by the Supreme Court and are posted on the JBCC website.

Revisions to the Court Reporter Code of Professional Conduct is in progress.

Best Practices for Licensed Court Interpreters is currently in development, and staff are also drafting updates to the Court Reporter Certification Uniform Format Manual (UFM).

Examinations for the JBCC

The JBCC certification staff administers and proctors the examinations for the Guardianship Certification written examination and the Licensed Court Interpreter (LCI) written and oral examinations. A vendor administers the written and skills examination for the Court Reporters Certification. An examination for process servers is currently being developed.

Court Reporter examinations were administered in April. There were 28 candidates for the oral skills portion and 16 took the written examination. Six new court reporters will be certified.

In April 2016, 30 candidates took the guardianship examination, 21 passed for a 70 percent pass rate.

The second round of LCI written and oral exams were administered in May 2016. There were 54 candidates for the written examination and 19 candidates for the oral exam.

Additional Projects for the JBCC

The certification team finalized the renewal of more than 1,601 certification and licensees to date; 973 court reporters, 133 court reporting firms, 273 court interpreters, 179 process servers, and 43 guardians.

On May 9, 2016, a Request for Offers (RFO) was posted to replace the current certification licensing database. June 16 is the deadline for the submission of offers for the system.

Certification staff is also working with certification advisory boards to develop a penalty matrix to create consistency relating to the complaint penalties and sanctions.

Guardianship Compliance Review Pilot Project

Pursuant to the Judicial Council recommendation from the Elders Committee, OCA obtained funding from the legislature to establish a pilot program to improve guardianship compliance. The Office of Court Administration has launched the Guardianship Compliance Project to provide additional resources to courts handling guardianship cases. The goal of this project is to help courts protect our most vulnerable citizens and their assets.

Through this project, guardianship compliance specialists will be available to:

- Review adult guardianship cases to identify reporting deficiencies by the guardian.
- Audit annual accountings and report findings back to the court.
- Work with courts to develop best practices in managing guardianship cases.

Assistance is available to counties without a statutory probate court that have a significant number of guardianship cases reported at no cost to the county. OCA will also develop an electronic database to monitor guardianship filings of initial inventory and annual accountings. Auditors are working with Hays, Guadalupe, Webb, and Comal Counties on this project.

The Office of Court Administration will report on the performance of the Guardianship Compliance Project in a study to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2017. The report will include at least the following:

- The number of courts involved in the guardianship compliance project.
- The number of guardianship cases reviewed by the guardianship compliance project.
- The number of reviewed guardianship cases found to be out of compliance with statutorily required reporting.
- The number of cases reported to the court for ward well-being or financial exploitation concerns.
- The status of technology developed to monitor guardianship filings

The Guardianship Compliance Project is modeled after the Minnesota's Conservator Account Auditing Program (CAAP).

- Minnesota operates statewide to audit conservator accounts and provide information and recommendations to the district courts and to conservators.
- The mission of the Conservator Account Auditing Program (CAAP) is to safeguard the assets of protected persons through the oversight of conservators by conducting professional compliance audits.

- Minnesota uses an online conservator account reporting application called MyMNConservator (MMC).

Conservatorship Accountability Project (CAP)

Texas has also received an implementation award to receive technical assistance to implement the Conservatorship Accountability Project (CAP). Indiana, Iowa, and Texas were selected to receive implementation awards; New Mexico and Nevada were provided planning awards. This project will use the extensive expertise and experience of the National Center for State Courts to support Texas' efforts in adapting the Minnesota "MyMNConservator" software, which allows conservators (known as guardians of the estate in Texas) to file their inventory and annual accountings electronically, integrating the software with our statewide electronic filing system. The red flag validation and implementation, standardized reports and alerts, and judicial response protocols in the system will greatly improve Texas judges' ability to protect assets and modernize and improve guardianship accounting with limited resources. This project coincides with the Office of Court Administration's Guardianship Compliance Pilot Project.

Guardianship Compliance Personnel

The project team has three guardianship compliance specialists reviewing the guardianship case files.

- Kim Bennink
- Rebecca Doolittle
- David Paniagua

Recent Guardianship Compliance Training

On May 26 and 27, the Guardianship Compliance team attended the Guardianship and Elder Law CLE in Austin.

Guardianship Compliance Participating Counties

Hays, Guadalupe, Webb, and Comal

- Met with Judges, court staff, and county clerks on details of project.
- All have been extremely cooperative with the project.
- Conducted an Initial Assessment and Program Survey.
- Conducted Review and audit of guardianship files for overall reporting compliance
 - Reviewing files for missing inventories, missing annual report of the persons, and missing annual accountings.
 - Completing audit sheet for each active case file
 - Compiling our findings on a spreadsheet to report
- Conducting financial audit of estates using Initial Inventories and Annual Accountings
- Working with the courts to develop notices to request missing reports and information
- Maintaining a list to recommend best practices for the courts and clerks

Hays County Data

- 656 Total Files Reviewed
 - 435 Recommended for Inactive Status (deceased ward, temporary guardianship, minor emancipated)

- 221 Total Active Cases
 - 66 Total Guardianships of the Person
 - 13 Total Guardian of the Estate
 - 142 Total Guardianships of Both Person & Estate
 - 39% Guardianships with Missing Annual Reports of the Person (82/208)
 - 47% Guardianships with Missing Annual Accountings (73/155)
 - 39% Guardianships with Missing Initial Inventories (61/155)
 - 41% Guardianships with Bonds waived
- Sent out standard and customized letters from the court on missing reports and red flags
 - Receiving responses and conducting audits of annual accounting
 - Estimate of the Value of the estates under guardianship: \$11,000,000 (conservative estimate)

Guadalupe County Data

- 205 Total Cases Reviewed
 - 46 Total Case Inactive Recommendations (deceased ward, temporary guardianship, minor emancipated)
- 159 Total Active Guardianships Audited
 - 84 Total Guardianships of the Person
 - 10 Total Guardian of the Estate
 - 65 Total Guardianships of Both Person & Estate
 - 24% Guardianships with no filed Initial Inventories. (18/75)
 - 27% Guardianships with no AAs filed. (20/75)
 - 23% Guardianships with no ARs filed. (34/149)
 - 36% Guardianships with waived bonds.
- Sent out standard and customized letters from the court on missing reporting's and red flags
 - Receiving responses and conducting audits of annual accountings
 - Estimate of the value of the estates under guardianship: \$2,972,902.20

Webb County Data

County Court at Law 1

- 694 Total Cases Reported
 - 677 Total Case Files Reviewed (17 missing)
 - 520 Total moved to Inactive status recommendation (deceased ward, temporary guardianship, minor emancipated)
- 157 Total active guardianships
 - 27 Total Guardianships of the Person
 - 4 Total Guardianships of the Estate
 - 126 Total Guardianships of Both Person & Estate
 - 75% Guardianships with no filed Initial Inventories. (97/130)
 - 81% Guardianships with no Annual Accountings filed. (105/130)
 - 80% Guardianships with no Annual Report of Person filed. (122/153)
 - 46% Guardianships with waived bonds.

County Court at Law 2

- 470 Total Cases Reported
- 228 Total Case Files Reviewed as of May 19
 - 194 Total moved to Inactive status recommendation

Comal County Information

- Contact with Judge Stephens about initiating the project in Comal County.
- Sent initial guardianship compliance project survey to Judge Stephens and County Clerk.
- Initiating the project in Comal County in the first week of June.

Additional Information and Observations

- May 16 - Auditors met with Webb County Court at Law 1 and requested list of addresses and provided templates for Court review to begin sending out notices for missing inventories, annual reports and annual accountings.
- On May 12 - attended a hearing in Guadalupe County with 40+ guardianship cases on the docket before Judge Dwyer. All cases on the docket are a direct result of information compiled and notices sent from the Guardianship Compliance Project.
- May 10 and 11 - met in Webb County with George Dziuk with the Legislative Budget Board (LBB). Provided George with an overview of the Guardianship Compliance Project and demonstrated the actual process for reviewing the guardianship files and documenting the project findings.
- Late or lack of required reporting of inventories, annual report of the person and annual accountings
- No backup bank statements, checks, or invoices for the annual accountings
- Unauthorized or unexplained ATM withdrawals
- Unauthorized or unexplained transfers
- Unauthorized or unexplained gifts to family members
- Payments to credit card accounts not listed on annual accounting
- Unauthorized or unexplained purchases
- No criminal background checks, no policy or procedures

TIMOTHY COLE EXONERATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

After the Commission's meeting on December 10, 2015, staff created, distributed, and analyzed the responses to two surveys to gather information on electronic recording. One survey was sent out to law enforcement agencies across the state. The second survey was distributed to judges, district attorneys and defense attorneys across the state who practice criminal law.

At the Commission's meeting on March 22, staff presented findings from the survey along with a potential policy recommendation draft on electronic recording. Commission members requested additional information prior to considering making any formal policy recommendations. Staff was asked to:

- Gather information on the total number of interrogations completed annually by each department as well as the number of those which were recorded. Eleven of the 14 departments contacted responded to the inquiry.

- Reach out to the Houston and Dallas police departments to have them complete the original survey on electronic recording.
- Draft a poll with different potential policy recommendations about electronic recording to gather the opinions of Commission members once the additional information on the volume of recording was gathered. The poll is in the process of being distributed.

Staff also:

- Met via conference call with the TCERC Advisory Board to discuss the next research topics on the Commission's agenda—mistaken eyewitness identification, false accusation and informant regulation.
- Met via conference call with national expert Professor Alexandra Natapoff on issues pertaining to jailhouse informants. Plans are being coordinated to accommodate for a presentation from Professor Natapoff at the next Commission meeting, which will likely be held in late June.