

OFFICE of COURT ADMINISTRATION  
**REPORT on CUSTOMER SERVICE**

for Fiscal Year 2018



## **Report on Customer Service for FY2018**

### **Overview of Agency Divisions and Programs**

The Office of Court Administration (OCA) provides a variety of services to judges, court clerks and other Texas judicial system officials. OCA also provides services to the presiding judges of the eleven administrative judicial regions, as well as policy and funding assistance to counties for indigent defense. The duties and activities of OCA include the following:

#### **Research and Court Services**

Research and Court Services Division (RCSD) staff are a resource for courts in key areas of court administration. The division provides technical support, consultation, and evaluation services to courts in a variety of areas and works with court and county leaders to establish and improve administrative programs and processes. RCSD staff provide language access services to courts throughout the state. RCSD staff also collect and analyze data from all courts and report on court activities.

#### **Information Services**

The Information Services Division provides information technology services to support the infrastructure for the Office of Court Administration, Supreme Court, Court of Criminal Appeals, Courts of Appeals, State Prosecuting Attorney, State Law Library, Judicial Conduct Commission, and Child Protection courts. The division provides case management systems for the appellate, child protection, and child support courts, and a data management system to maintain court statistics reported by the Texas courts. The division's Service Desk provides information and technical assistance to the appellate and trial courts, including training assistance to customers of state judicial systems. The Information Services Division also provides technical staff support to the Judicial Committee on Information Technology, the Council of Chief Justices, the Texas Judicial Council, the Texas Indigent Defense Commission, the Forensic Science Commission and the Administrative Presiding Judges.

#### **Docket Equalization**

OCA provides administrative support to the Supreme Court in the transfer of cases from one court of appeals to another to equalize dockets across the state. In conjunction with the Judicial Information program, this strategy compiles and analyzes caseload statistics, works with the Supreme Court to determine needed transfers, and provides funding for travel expenses incurred by appellate justices and their staff, who travel to hear cases transferred to them for disposition.

#### **Indigent Defense**

The Indigent Defense Division serves as staff to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission in developing policies and standards for providing legal representation and other defense services to indigent defendants, establishing a statewide county reporting plan for indigent defense information, providing technical support to counties relating to indigent defense, and directing and monitoring the distribution of funds to counties to provide indigent defense services.

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### **Children's Courts Program**

OCA provides administrative support to the presiding judges of the administrative judicial regions for its child support courts and child protection courts programs in accordance with Chapter 201 of the Texas Family Code. OCA employs a children's courts program manager to manage the administrative functions and provide customer service to the children's courts' personnel, and provides extensive additional staff support and services for the programs.

#### ***Child Support Courts***

The child support courts were created in response to the federal requirement that states create expedited administrative or judicial processes to resolve child support cases. OCA employs 43 associate judges, 1 visiting associate judge, and 44 court coordinators to hear and dispose of Title IV-D child support establishment and enforcement cases and paternity cases within the expedited time frames established by Chapter 201.110 of the Texas Family Code. The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) provides computer equipment and on-site technical support for this program.

#### ***Child Protection Courts***

The specialty child protection courts in Texas were created to assist trial courts in primarily rural areas in managing their child abuse and neglect dockets. The judges assigned to these dockets hear child abuse and neglect cases exclusively. Therefore, children can achieve permanency more quickly and the quality of placement decisions should be higher. OCA operates 24 child protection courts in 130 counties, with 19 associate judges, 9 assigned judges, and 24 court coordinators. In FY 2017, these courts held 41,335 hearings and issued 8,392 final orders.

### **Judicial Branch Certification Commission**

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 the certification, registration, licensing, and regulation of Court Reporters and Court Reporting Firms, Certified Guardians, Process Servers, and Licensed Court Interpreters.

### **Texas Forensic Science Commission**

The Texas Forensic Science Commission is a nine-member panel created by the Texas Legislature in 2005 that consists of seven scientists and two lawyers (one prosecutor and one defense attorney), all appointed by the Governor. Under its enabling statute, the Commission is required to investigate allegations of professional negligence or professional misconduct that would substantially affect the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis conducted by an accredited laboratory. The Legislature also requires the Commission to administer the Texas Crime Laboratory Accreditation and Forensic Analyst Licensing programs. The Commission is also actively engaged in various forensic development initiatives and works collaboratively with stakeholders in the criminal justice system to improve education and training in forensic science and the law.

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### Legal

The Legal Division gives legal advice to agency management, the Judicial Branch Certification Commission, and to judicial officers. It administers the children's courts programs by providing legal advice and administrative support to the presiding judges of the administrative judicial regions and to the associate judges and their staff. The division researches, writes, and publishes procedure manuals for district and county clerks, promulgates model forms, and facilitates other legal assistance to the judiciary.

### Finance and Operations

The Finance and Operations Division manages the fiscal activities of the agency, including accounting, purchasing, budgeting and state property accounting. The division is also responsible for the human resources function, as well as the operational support activities of the agency. The division provides support to the clerks and chief justices of the appellate courts and the presiding judges of the administrative judicial regions regarding legislative, fiscal, budgetary and other administrative issues. The division is also responsible for the audit function for the Collection Improvement Program.

### Survey Methodology

Since FY 2002, OCA has periodically distributed a *customer satisfaction survey* instrument developed using guidelines set forth in the Legislative Budget Board's *Agency Strategic Plan Instructions*. In FY 2018, OCA surveyed a majority of the 12,280 individuals identified as external customers in **Table 1**.

Customers were asked to respond to statements in the survey using a Likert scale with responses ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The survey instrument covered staff knowledge and courtesy, proper routing (communication) of the request or inquiry, timeliness of response, complaint handling, clarity and comprehensiveness of website and printed information, overall service quality, and suggestions for improvement of service delivery.<sup>1</sup> If customers had not received any services from OCA within the last 12 months, they were asked to indicate this on the survey and were directed to not respond to the remainder of the customer service questions.

A survey invitation to complete the online survey was distributed to customers for whom OCA had an email address. Customers were requested to complete the survey by May 18, 2018.

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<sup>1</sup> The survey instrument did not include a statement about facilities, as most interactions between OCA and its customers occur by telephone, mail or email.

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### Response Rates

Approximately 9 percent of customers surveyed returned responses. Forty-two percent (461) of the 1,089 respondents indicated they had not received any services from OCA within the last year and, therefore, did not answer any additional customer service questions. Of the 628 respondents who indicated they had interacted with OCA in the past 12 months, only 509 provided responses. Therefore, the resulting sample for data analysis totaled 509 responses.

<b>TABLE 1: INVENTORY OF EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS AND SURVEY DISTRIBUTION BY CUSTOMER GROUP</b>				
	<b>Number of Courts/ Regions/ Counties/ Organizations</b>	<b>Number of Customers</b>	<b>Survey Emailed</b>	<b>Total Surveys Sent</b>
Highest Appellate Court				
<i>Supreme Court</i>	1	10	10	10
<i>Court of Criminal Appeals</i>	1	10	10	10
Appellate Courts	14	93	93	93
Administrative Judicial Regions	11	11	11	11
District Courts	469	545	504	504 <sup>2,3</sup>
Constitutional County Courts	254	254	253	253 <sup>4</sup>
Statutory County Courts	264	278	261	261 <sup>5</sup>
Justices of the Peace Courts	802	802	769	769
Municipal Courts	938	1,296	1,193	1,193 <sup>6</sup>
District Clerks and County Clerks	254	443	443	443 <sup>7</sup>
Court Coordinators/Administrators	254	990	903	903
Court Collections Staff	347	325	313	313

<sup>2</sup> Many of these judges also serve as the local administrative judge for the district court(s) in the county. There are 139 local administrative district judges (59 district judges serve as local administrative judge in more than one county).

<sup>3</sup> Many of these judges also serve as the juvenile board chairman, as the chairman must be a district, statutory county court, or constitutional county court judge.

<sup>4</sup> Many county judges serve both as a trial court judge and as the administrative head of county government.

<sup>5</sup> Many of these judges also serve as the local administrative judge for the statutory county court(s) in the county. There are 93 local administrative statutory county court judges.

<sup>6</sup> Some municipal judges serve in one or more municipal courts. While 1,673 judge positions were reported to OCA in FY 2018, 1,293 individuals served in the positions.

<sup>7</sup> In 65 counties, one clerk serves as both district clerk and county clerk for the county.

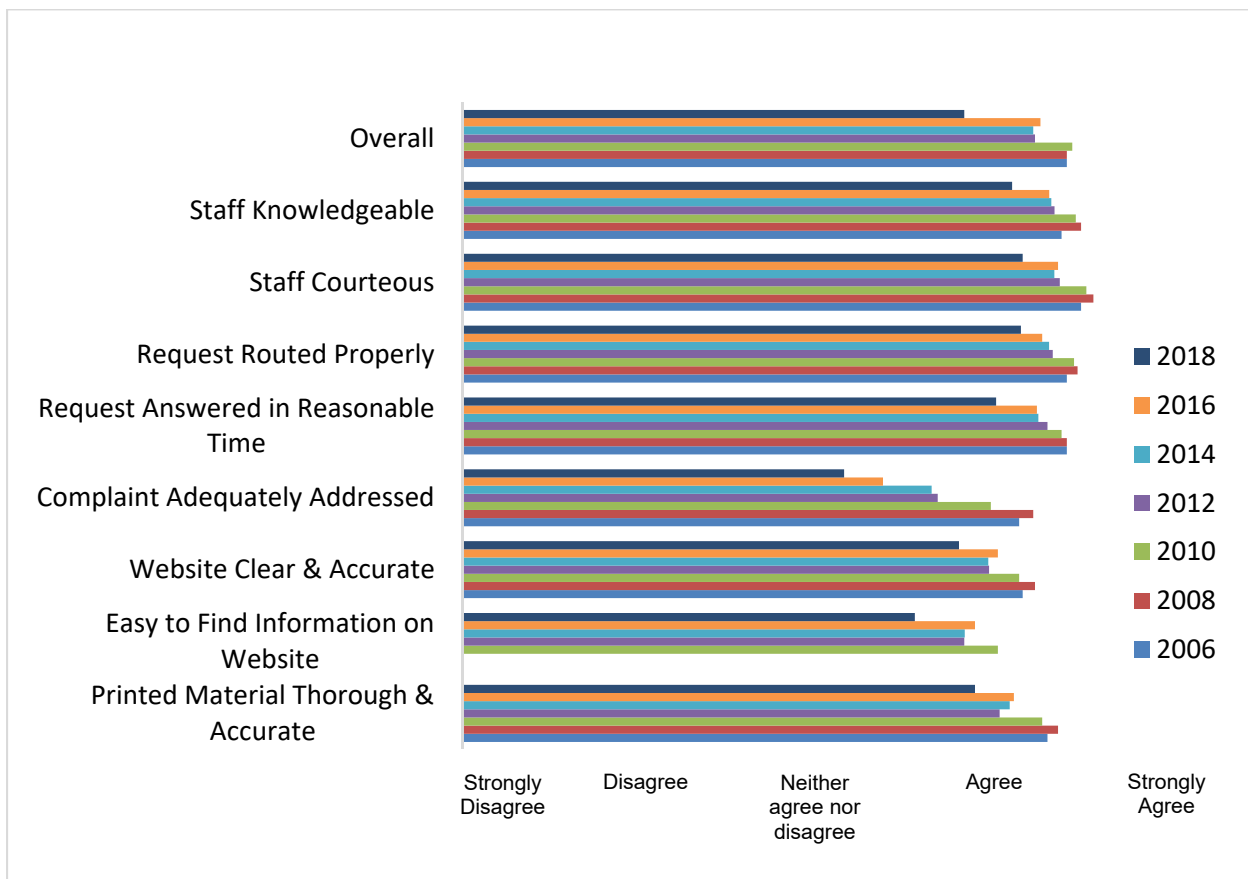
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County Auditors and County Treasurers	254	250	250	250
Court Reporting Firms/Court Reporters	342	2,511	2,511	2,511
Process Servers	N/A	3,489	3,460	3,460
Guardians	N/A	450	403	403
Court Interpreters	N/A	449	449	449
Judicial Branch Certification Commission	1	12	12	12
Judicial Compensation Commission	1	10	10	10
Judicial Committee on Information Technology	1	52	43	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,208</b>	<b>12,280</b>	<b>11,901</b>	<b>11,901</b>

### Customer Service Survey Results

Respondents have expressed satisfaction with OCA services over time, as **Figure 1** shows.

**FIGURE 1—SATISFACTION SCORES OVER TIME**



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**Table 2** provides the customer service performance measures. As **Table 3** shows, approximately 86 percent of respondents who received services from OCA within the last year rated their overall satisfaction between “3” and “5.”<sup>8</sup> The agency’s strongest element was staff courtesy (average score 4.17) and the lowest scoring element was addressing customer complaints (average score 3.16).

TABLE 2—CUSTOMER SERVICE PERFORMANCE MEASURES		
Type of Measure	Description	Performance
Outcome	Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Services Received	86.2%
Outcome	Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery	18.5%
Output	Number of Customers Surveyed	11,901
Output	Number of Customers Served	12,280
Efficiency	Cost Per Customer Surveyed	\$0.00*
Explanatory	Number of Customers Identified	12,280
Explanatory	Number of Customer Groups Inventoried	19

\*The Cost Per Customer Surveyed does not include staffing, information resources, or other “soft” costs. It includes only hard dollars spent to produce and distribute surveys. All surveys were distributed via email or fax, therefore there were no costs for distribution.

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<sup>8</sup> A rating of “3” corresponded to “Neither agree nor disagree” a “4” to “Agree,” and a “5” to “Strongly Agree.”

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**TABLE 3—FY 2018 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS\***

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Change from FY 2016 Survey</b>
Overall, I was satisfied with my experience with OCA. (n=509)	7.1%	6.7%	11.8%	44.0%	30.5%	—	3.84	-0.43
Staff members were knowledgeable. (n=500)	3.6%	4.6%	9.2%	38.6%	39.6%	4.4%	4.11	-0.21
Staff members were courteous and demonstrated a willingness to assist me. (n=503)	2.8%	6.4%	5.8%	37.6%	43.3%	4.2%	4.17	-0.20
My inquiry/request was routed to the proper person. (n=506)	2.6%	3.8%	7.1%	38.1%	36.6%	11.9%	4.16	-0.12
My inquiry/request was answered in a reasonable amount of time. (n=505)	5.5%	5.5%	7.7%	36.0%	37.0%	8.1%	4.02	-0.23
I made a complaint about services and it was adequately addressed. (n=498)	4.4%	3.4%	6.2%	7.6%	4.4%	73.9%	3.16	-0.22
The agency's website contains clear and accurate information. (n=503)	5.4%	7.2%	14.1%	38.2%	26.8%	8.4%	3.81	-0.22
It is easy to find the information I need on the agency's website. (n=504)	6.8%	13.3%	15.7%	33.3%	22.2%	8.7%	3.56	-0.34
The printed materials I received were thorough and accurate. (n=502)	2.4%	3.2%	12.6%	25.7%	19.7%	36.5%	3.90	-0.22

\*Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.