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The Honorable Sharon Keller
Presiding Judge, Court of Criminal
Appeals

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Honorable Brandon Creighton
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Mr. Gonzalo Rios
Honorable Missy Medary
Honorable Valerie Covey

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Geoffrey Burkhart

Report from the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) for the May 20, 2022 Texas Judicial Council Meeting

Here is a report on TIDC’s work from August 21—March 31. If you would like additional information, please contact **Executive Director Geoff Burkhart**: (512) 936-6999 or gburkhart@tidc.texas.gov.

TIDC Board and Committee Meetings

TIDC's Board held an Emergency Meeting on October 1 to discuss [Operation Lone Star](#) and consider making grant awards to provide indigent defense services in impacted counties. TIDC awarded over \$400,000 in funding to provide legal counsel along the border. The TIDC Board met on December 3 to discuss [this agenda](#). On March 2, the TIDC Grants and Reporting Committee met to discuss Improvement grant applications and modifications. On March 10, the [Full Board](#) met for updates from the Improvement, Policy, and Funding teams at TIDC. The next board meeting is on June 9 at 1:00 p.m. in the 1st floor conference room in the Tom C. Clark building.



TIDC at the Texas Legislature

Geoff Burkhart testified about Operation Lone Star in the House Corrections Committee on September 27 and at the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee Hearing on October 4. He also served as a resource witness at the House Appropriations Committee Hearing as they



considered distribution of federal funding on October 6 and On October 12, he served as a resource witness at a House Appropriations Committee meeting. On April 5, **Geoff Burkhart** testified at the [Senate Committee on Border Security hearing](#) with **Megan LaVoie**.

The 87th Texas Legislature adjourned sine die in October. During the final special session, the Legislature allocated federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. TIDC requested (1) \$63 million to help address the statewide COVID-related backlog (approximately 142,000 criminal cases); and (2) \$14 million to help replace lost general revenue-dedicated (GR-D) to the Fair Defense Account. Although the Legislature did not appropriate \$63 million for the backlog, [SB 8](#) does include nearly \$14 million to address TIDC’s COVID-related revenue shortfalls.

Staff Update

In addition to its normal monitoring, grants administration, and data collection, TIDC staff has been involved in the following:

- **Nicolas Sawyer, Bill Cox, Linda Gonzalez, Crystal Leff-Piñon, Olivia Lee, and Kristin Meeks** joined the TIDC staff. **Matthew Fischer** interned with TIDC this spring.
- TIDC staff has traveled to Parker, Zavala, Maverick, Bosque, Comanche, Archer, Clay, Wilbarger, Galveston, San Saba, and Mason Counties for fiscal and policy monitoring visits.
- TIDC staff has issued final fiscal monitoring reports for [Dallas](#), [Bastrop](#) and [Medina](#) Counties.
- TIDC staff has presented at several conferences and workshops including the [TAC Legislative Conference](#), the [NAPD 2021 Women's Conference](#), the [Texas Association of County](#)



[Auditors Conference](#), the Texas Association of Counties Judicial Education Conference, a Juvenile Training Immersion Program (JTIP) training on Effective Detention Hearing Advocacy, the University of Texas School of Law Children’s Rights Clinic, the Texas Association of Counties’ Spring Judicial Education Session in Lubbock on “Indigent Defense and Mental Health Issues,” and the [National Association for Public Defense's 2nd National Public Defense Virtual Conference](#).

- **Geoff Burkhart** was elected President of the [National Association for Public Defense](#)



[\(NAPD\)](#) for 2022 and served on the faculty for the NAPD’s Leadership

Institute in November. NAPD serves nearly 30,000 members nationwide.

- TIDC Chair **Presiding Judge Keller** and **Geoff** spoke at The William Wayne Justice Center for Public Interest Law at the University of Texas School of Law’s virtual symposium on the 20th Anniversary of the Fair Defense Act on January 28. This half-day virtual conference featured speakers discussing the past, present and future of the FDA in Texas. TIDC Senior Policy Analyst **Kathleen Casey-Gamez** helped organize and run the event.
- **Geoff** hosted the first virtual meetup for Indigent Defense Coordinators across the state on October 5. TIDC staff has since hosted regular meetups with the group.
- **Kathleen** has led regular National Association for Public Defense’s (NAPD) Indigent Defense Commissions Workgroup meetings with TIDC staff in attendance.
- TIDC Executive Assistant **Megan Bradburry** is now CAP certified from International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP).
- **Scott Ehlers** and Kathleen have attended regular [Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council](#) meetings on behalf of TIDC and OCA.



- In February and March, the TIDC Funding team hosted [Improvement Grant Application Training and Q&A webinars](#) for the upcoming FY 23 grants cycle.

Indigent Defense in the Media

[Lubbock Private Defender's Office appointing attorneys to migrants arrested under Operation Lone Star](#) (August)

[Texas House panel approves \\$1.8B spending proposal for border security](#) (August)

[Potter County Commissioners' Court approves of new public defense program](#) (September)

[Migrants being held in Texas prisons overwhelming state's judicial system](#) (September)

[Its Not All About the Money \(feat. Geoff Burkhart, TIDC\)](#) (October)

['Game changer': Bexar County hopes new public defense system will improve criminal justice in 2022](#) (November)

[03: Texas Public Defense with James McDermott and Scott Ehlers](#) (December)

["Listen, Hear my Side, Back Me up": What Clients Want from Public Defenders](#) (December)

[Organizers make progress in forming the Potter Armstrong County Indigent Defense Council](#) (January)

[How a Two-Way Text Messaging System Keeps People Out of Jail](#) (February)

[Governor Abbott, DPS, Texas National Guard Mark One Year Anniversary Of Operation Lone Star](#) (March)

[Why We Celebrate Gideon Day](#) (March)