## Judge Qualifications and Selection in the State of Texas

## **Supreme Court Court of Criminal Appeals** Number: 1 chief justice and 8 justices. Number: 1 presiding judge and 8 judges. Selection: Partisan, statewide election. Vacancies between Selection: Partisan, statewide election. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate. and consent of Senate. Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas: age 35 to 74: **Qualifications**: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas: age 35 to 74: and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and judge of court of and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and judge of court of record together, for at least 10 years. record together, for at least 10 years. Term: 6 years. Term: 6 years. Civil Appeals Criminal Appeals **15th Court of Appeals** 1-14th Courts of Appeals **Number**: Each court has 1 chief justice and from 2 to 12 Number: 1 chief justice and 2 additional justices. additional justices, for a total of 80 justices statewide. Selection: Partisan election within each court of Selection: Partisan election within each court of appeals district. Vacancies between elections filled by appeals district. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and judge of court of and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and judge of court of record together, for at least 10 years. record together, for at least 10 years. Term: 6 years. Term: 6 years. **Business Court District Courts** Number: 1 - 2 judges per division, 11 divisions. Number: 1 judge per court. Selection: Gubernatorial appointment with advice and **Selection**: Partisan, district-wide election. Vacancies consent of Senate. between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 or older; with advice and consent of Senate. resident of county in division for 5 years; and a lawyer Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 25 to 74; Appeals of practicing complex civil business litigation or transaction resident of the district for 2 years; and a practicing lawyer Death law, or judge of court with civil jurisdiction, or both or judge, or both combined, for 8 years. combined, for 10 years. Sentences Term: 4 years. Term: 2 years. **County-Level Courts Constitutional County Courts Statutory County Courts Statutory Probate Courts** Number: 1 judge per court. Number: 1 judge per court. Number: 1 judge per court. **Selection**: Partisan, county-wide election. Selection: Partisan, county-wide election. Selection: Partisan, county-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by Vacancies between elections filled by Vacancies between elections filled by appointment by county commissioners. appointment by county commissioners. appointment by county commissioners. Qualifications: "Shall be well informed Qualifications: Citizen of U.S., age 25 or Qualifications: Citizen of U.S., age 25 or in the law of the State." (Law license not older; resident of county for at least 2 older; resident of county for at least 2 years; and licensed attorney who has required.) years; and licensed attorney who has Term: 4 years. practiced law or served as a judge for 4 practiced law or served as a judge for 5 Term: 4 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**: Most appointed by the governing body of the city as provided by city charter or ordinance. A few elected.

**Qualifications**: Determined by the governing body of the city.

Term: 2 or 4 years.