# Judge Qualifications and Selection in the State of Texas

### Supreme Court

**Number**: 1 chief justice and 8 justices.
**Selection**: Partisan, statewide election. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.
**Qualifications**: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; practicing lawyer licensed in Texas for at least 10 years, or practicing lawyer licensed in Texas and judge of state or county court established by the Legislature by statute for combined total of at least 10 years; and has not had license revoked, suspended or subject to probated suspension during that period.
**Term**: 6 years.

### Court of Criminal Appeals

**Number**: 1 presiding judge and 8 judges.
**Selection**: Partisan, statewide election. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.
**Qualifications**: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; practicing lawyer licensed in Texas for at least 10 years, or practicing lawyer licensed in Texas and judge of state or county court established by the Legislature by statute for combined total of at least 10 years; and has not had license revoked, suspended or subject to probated suspension during that period.
**Term**: 6 years.

*Civil Appeals*

*Criminal Appeals*

### 15th Court of Appeals

**Number**: 1 chief justice and 2 additional justices.
**Selection**: Partisan election within each court of appeals district. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.
**Qualifications**: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; practicing lawyer licensed in Texas for at least 10 years, or practicing lawyer licensed in Texas and judge of state or county court established by the Legislature by statute for combined total of at least 10 years; and has not had license revoked, suspended or subject to probated suspension during that period.
**Term**: 6 years.

### 1st through 14th Courts of Appeals

**Number**: Each court has 1 chief justice and from 2 to 12 additional justices, for a total of 80 justices statewide.
**Selection**: Partisan election within each court of appeals district. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.
**Qualifications**: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; practicing lawyer licensed in Texas for at least 10 years, or practicing lawyer licensed in Texas and judge of state or county court established by the Legislature by statute for combined total of at least 10 years; and has not had license revoked, suspended or subject to probated suspension during that period.
**Term**: 6 years.

### Business Court

**Number**: 1 to 2 judges per division, 11 divisions.
**Selection**: Gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.
**Qualifications**: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 or older; resident of county in division for 5 years; licensed attorney in Texas practicing complex civil business litigation or transaction law, or judge of court with civil jurisdiction, or both combined, for 10 years; and has not had license revoked, suspended or subject to probated suspension during that period.
**Term**: 2 years.

### District Courts

**Number**: 1 judge per court.
**Selection**: Partisan, district-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.
**Qualifications**: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 25 to 74; resident of the district for 2 years; licensed to practice in Texas; practicing lawyer or judge of a court in Texas, or both combined, for 8 years; and has not had license revoked, suspended or subject to probated suspension during that period.
**Term**: 4 years.

*Appeals of Death Sentences*

### County-Level Courts

*Constitutional County Courts*

**Number**: 1 judge per court.
**Selection**: Partisan, county-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by appointment by county commissioners.
**Qualifications**: "Shall be well informed in the law of the State." (Law license not required.)
**Term**: 4 years.

*Statutory County Courts*

**Number**: 1 judge per court.
**Selection**: Partisan, county-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by appointment by county commissioners.
**Qualifications**: Citizen of U.S., age 25 or older; resident of county for at least 2 years; licensed to practice in Texas; and practicing lawyer or judge of court in Texas, or both combined, for 4 years.
**Term**: 4 years.

*Statutory Probate Courts*

**Number**: 1 judge per court.
**Selection**: Partisan, county-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by appointment by county commissioners.
**Qualifications**: Citizen of U.S., age 25 or older; resident of county for at least 2 years; licensed to practice in Texas; and practicing lawyer or judge of court in Texas, or both combined, for 5 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.