

Rider Comparison Packet

Conference Committee on Senate Bill 1

2026-27 General Appropriations Bill

Article IV – Judiciary

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION, TEXAS JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Differences Only - Excludes Capital

Senate

House

5. Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC).

- (a) **Consolidated Fees on Conviction.** Amounts appropriated above from the General Revenue-Dedicated Fair Defense Account No. 5073 in Strategy D.1.1, Texas Indigent Defense Commission, include court costs pursuant to Local Government Code, Chapter 133, Subchapter C, Criminal Fees.
- (b) **Grants to Counties.** Also, out of the amounts appropriated above in Strategy D.1.1, TIDC shall make grants to counties from the General Revenue-Dedicated Fair Defense Account No. 5073 in accordance with all uses authorized by Government Code, Chapter 79, with funds being disbursed by the Comptroller. Of this amount, \$2,566,528 in fiscal year 2026 and \$2,474,370 in fiscal year 2027 shall be distributed to counties that implement cost containment initiatives designed to limit local indigent defense cost increases. No portion of the appropriation governed by this subsection shall be used to offset the Office of Court Administration's administrative support provided to the TIDC except by mutual agreement of the TIDC and the Office of Court Administration.
- (c) **TIDC County Cost Reduction Report.** TIDC shall submit a report to the Legislature no later than December 1, 2026, detailing the effectiveness of various cost containment measures implemented by counties and proposing additional measures to reduce county operating costs with respect to indigent defense.
- (d) **Innocence Projects.** Out of amounts appropriated above in Strategy D.1.1, Texas Indigent Defense Commission, \$600,000 in each year of the biennium from the General Revenue-Dedicated Fair Defense Account No. 5073 shall be used by the Commission to contract with law schools at the University of Houston, the University of Texas, Texas Tech University, Texas Southern University, University of North Texas and Texas A&M University to support innocence project screening, investigation, and litigation activities regarding claims of actual innocence in non-capital cases in Texas and associated expenses necessary to conduct those activities. Funding shall be used to provide direct assistance to investigate actual innocence cases post-conviction and to pursue relief for defendants with credible claims of actual innocence, and shall not be used for legal clinic expenses, teaching, and student supervision. The amount of each contract with each university shall be \$100,000. Any unobligated and unexpended balances remaining from the \$600,000 in funds designated for innocence projects as of August 31, 2026, are appropriated to Strategy D.1.1, Texas Indigent Defense Commission, for the same purpose for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2026.

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OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION, TEXAS JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Differences Only - Excludes Capital
(Continued)

Senate

- (e) **Indigent Defense with Mental Illness.** Out of the amounts appropriated above in Strategy D.1.1, Texas Indigent Defense Commission, \$2,500,000 in General Revenue-Dedicated Fair Defense Account No. 5073 each fiscal year shall be used to provide funding to public defender offices and managed assigned counsel programs for the early identification and specialized representation of indigent defendants with a mental illness. The Commission shall use the funds to provide grants to public defender offices and managed assigned counsel programs to expand the capacity of existing mental health defender programs, to establish mental health defender programs in counties currently without these programs, and/or to sustain effective mental health defender programs.
- (f) **Rural Regional Public Defender Sustainability Grants - Wharton and Matagorda.** Out of amounts appropriated above in Strategy D.1.1, TIDC shall include grant funding to establish and operate on an ongoing basis a regional public defender office to serve Wharton and Matagorda Counties. TIDC shall fully fund approved program costs for the first year of the program and two-thirds of eligible costs in subsequent years.
- (g) **Allowable Uses of Grant Funds.** Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Act, funds appropriated to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission for grants to public defender offices for indigent defense shall not be used, directly or indirectly, to fund appellate proceedings.

House

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- (g) **Parental Representation.** Out of amounts appropriated above in Strategy D.1.1, TIDC shall make grants to counties in accordance with all uses authorized by Government Code, Chapter 79.037, for Family Protective Services and shall prioritize funding grants to counties that include pre-petition legal representation or early appointment of counsel to a parent during a Department of Family and Protective Services investigation of a parent.
- (h) **Far West Texas Regional Public Defender Sustainability Grants.** Out of amounts appropriated above in Strategy D.1.1, Texas Indigent Defense Commission, \$1,000,000 from the General Revenue Fund is appropriated in fiscal year 2026 to establish and operate on an ongoing basis a regional public defender office to serve Terrell and Val Verde Counties.

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION, TEXAS JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Differences Only - Excludes Capital
(Continued)

Senate

House

13. Contingency for Senate Bill 9. Out of amounts appropriated above the Office of Court Administration is appropriated \$323,559 in fiscal year 2026 and \$289,264 in fiscal year 2027 in General Revenue in Strategy A.1.1, Court Administration, and \$3,410,012 in fiscal year 2026 and \$101,412 in fiscal year 2027 in General Revenue and 2.0 FTEs each fiscal year in Strategy A.1.2, Information Technology, for the purposes of implementing the provisions of Senate Bill 9, or similar legislation, relating to the release of defendants on bail, the duties of a magistrate in certain criminal proceedings, the regulation of charitable bail organizations, and the notice provided by peace officers to victims of family violence, stalking, harassment, or terroristic threat.

OFFICE OF THE STATE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

Differences Only - Excludes Capital

Senate

House

2. **Contract Attorney Funding.** Amounts appropriated above in Strategy A.1.1, Representation
Before the CCA, include \$285,497 in General Revenue Funds for one-time costs associated with
the agency entering a contract for a temporary attorney.