

**FAIR DEFENSE ACT
APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES
177TH DISTRICT COURT**

In furtherance of the Fair Defense Act's primary goal of providing qualified counsel to indigent defendants, and in accordance with the procedures of the alternative plan adopted by the judges trying criminal cases in Harris County, the 177th District Court will use a Combination Method of appointing attorneys that combines *individual case* and *term* appointment methods.

INDIVIDUAL CASE APPOINTMENTS. The Court will use the *individual case* method to appoint attorneys to represent indigent defendants in 1) capital cases, 1) first-degree felony cases; 2) second-degree felony cases; 3) third-degree and state jail felony cases; 4) appeals; and 5) in cases as deemed necessary by the court.

TERM APPOINTMENTS. The Court will appoint one qualified attorney for a one-year term. The *term* attorney will be appointed to handle a limited number of PIA cases, motions to revoke probation or adjudicate guilt. Term attorney will receive appointments to represent no more than 5 defendants each day and will carry a caseload of approximately 35 indigent defendants' cases. The *term* attorney will be paid in accordance with the fee schedule adopted by the Harris County judges and approved by Commissioners Court.

No *term* attorney will be allowed to contribute funds to the judge's re-election campaign.

The establishment of a one-year term and the specified conditions of appointment are intended by the Court to ensure the independence of any attorney selected for *term* appointment. If a *term* attorney is terminated during the term, the Court will state its reasons for such action and will immediately begin accepting applications for a replacement attorney.

One-year term appointments will overlap for a period of one month to ensure a smooth transition.

QUALIFICATIONS.

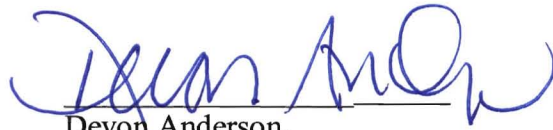
Individual Case Appointments Criteria. Attorneys selected for *individual case* appointments must meet the qualifications established by the board of judges and appropriate to the offense with which defendant is charged.

Term Appointment Criteria. In addition to the qualifications established by the board of judges, an attorney selected for *term* appointment must meet the qualifications established by the Board of Judges applicable to second-degree appointments, must also:

1. retain pending assigned cases at the end of the term;
2. have extensive experience in dealing with defendants on probation or deferred adjudication;
3. have no past public disciplinary action and no pending disciplinary action by the state bar;
4. have the means of producing typewritten motions, briefs and orders;
5. have resources for legal research; and
6. participate in professional legal organizations.

APPLICATION FOR TERM APPOINTMENT. An applicant shall submit a written application to the Central Appointment Coordinator in the District Court Administrative Office no later than 3 p.m. Thursday, December 4, 2008. See *Standards and Procedures* 8.8.

Date signed: October 23, 2008


Devon Anderson,
Judge, 177th District Court