

**FAIR DEFENSE ACT
APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES
337TH 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 337th District Court will use a **combination method** of appointing attorneys that combines *individual case, limited term, and term* appointment methods. Attorneys will be paid in accordance with the established fee schedule.

INDIVIDUAL CASE APPOINTMENTS (See *Standards and Procedures*): The Court will use the *individual case* method to appoint attorneys to represent indigent defendants as deemed necessary by the court.

LIMITED TERM APPOINTMENTS (See *Standards and Procedures*): Attorneys will be appointed for a *limited term* consisting of one day or one week to represent indigent defendants as needed. Appointments shall be made consistent with attorney's qualifications and the needs of the Court. The Court shall appoint no more than 5 new defendants a day to a weekly or daily *limited term* attorneys.

TERM APPOINTMENTS FOR POST CONVICTION DNA PROCEEDINGS (See *Standards and Procedures*): The Court will appoint an attorney for a one-year *term* appointment to handle all post-conviction DNA proceedings, including motions filed under Chapter 64 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, and any resultant appeals.

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.

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.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Individual Case Appointments: 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. See *Standards and Procedures*.

Limited Term Appointment: Attorneys selected for *limited term* appointments must meet the qualifications established by the board of judges and appropriate to the offense with which defendant is charged. See *Standards and Procedures*.

Term Appointment For Post Conviction DNA Proceedings: Attorneys selected for *term* appointments must meet the qualifications established by the board of judges. See *Standards and Procedures*.

Applications for Term Appointments (See *Standards and Procedures*): Attorneys shall submit their request for appointment to the Central Appointment Coordinator no later than 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 1, 2011, for consideration of the assignment for the term beginning January of the following year. The court, in its discretion, may conduct interviews of qualified applicants.

Date signed: October 21, 2011


Herb Ritchie,
Judge, 337th District Court