



Family Protection Representation

2023 Data Report



August 2024

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Introduction

On September 1, 2023, following the passage of SB 2120 (88th Legislature), the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) assumed new responsibilities to oversee and improve the family protection representation system. Family protection representation is the court-appointed legal representation of children and indigent parents involved in cases alleging child abuse and neglect against a parent by the Texas Department of Family and Protection Services (DFPS).

The Texas Family Code gives children and certain parents a right to an attorney in civil legal cases alleging child abuse or neglect against a parent by DFPS.ⁱ Lawsuits brought against a parent by DFPS alleging child abuse or neglect are incredibly serious and have long-term effects on the families involved, including the possibility of permanent family separation. Providing families with access to high-quality legal counsel is a determining factor in whether the child protection system is able to protect children and keep safe families together.

Following the passage of SB 560 (86th Legislature), TIDC began collecting family protection representation data in November of 2021 on behalf of the Texas Judicial Council. TIDC will continue data collection efforts as part of its ongoing responsibility to oversee the family protection representation system. Expenditure reports must be submitted by the County Auditor, or its local equivalent, every year.ⁱⁱ Family protection representation plans must be submitted biennially by the Local Administrative District Judge.ⁱⁱⁱ Following the passage of SB 2120 (88th Legislature), attorneys are also required to report their percentage of legal practice time spent on family protection representation each year.^{iv}

The data collected has largely revealed that spending and local practices for family protection representation vary by jurisdiction. The family protection representation system is nearly completely reliant on private assigned counsel lists overseen and managed by local judges. Many jurisdictions struggle with having enough attorneys to cover family protection representation needs.

Although SB 2120 (88th Legislature) gave TIDC new responsibilities to oversee and improve the family protection representation system, the legislature did not provide an appropriation to support



the work. Family protection representation is currently nearly 100% dependent on county funds. A small number of counties access their federal Title IV-E dollars that reimburse a percentage of family protection representation expenses back to the spending entity.

Additional support for family protection representation through funding and technical assistance will be critical in the coming years to ensure that the child welfare system in Texas can provide crucial services to children and families. **TIDC has included an exceptional item request in its 2026-2027 Legislative Appropriations Request for \$47.5 million to provide grant funding and technical assistance for counties, as well as 5 TIDC staff to run the program.**

Spending Summary

Total reported statewide county spending is:

\$62,780,536

Total number of counties reporting expenditures:

236

Statewide per capita county spending is:

\$2.07

Total amount of state funds to support family protection representation:

\$0.00

Number of counties accessing Federal Title IV-E dollars for family protection representation in 2023:

24

Spending Detail

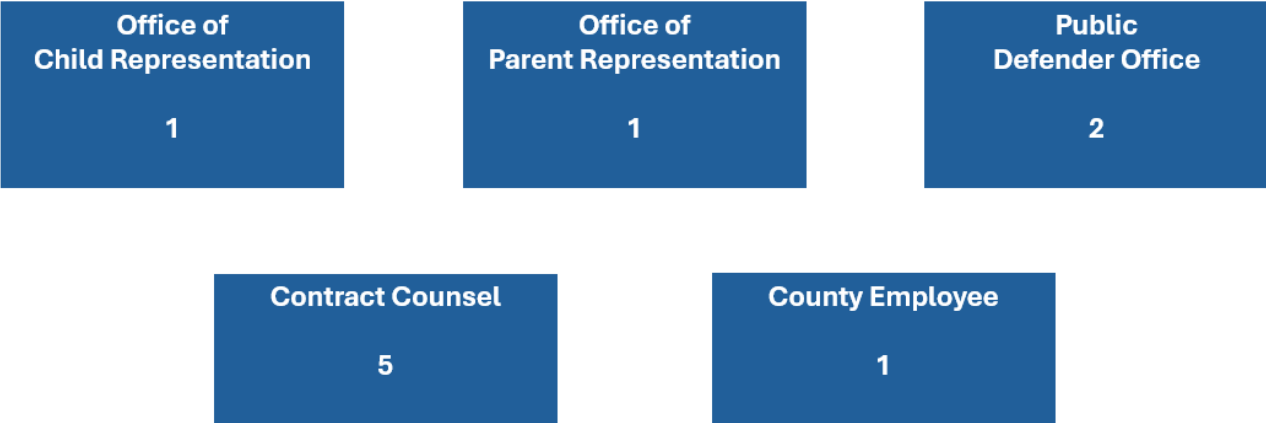
SPENDING HISTORY

The Texas Indigent Defense Commission began collecting information regarding family protection representation expenditures in 2021. This information is key in understanding the overall landscape of family protection representation in Texas. Spending for the last three fiscal years is as follows: FY21 - \$66,238,774, FY22 - \$61,573,531, and FY23 - \$62,780,536.

METHOD OF FAMILY PROTECTION REPRESENTATION DELIVERY

Although the Texas Family Code allows family protection representation to be provided through offices of child and parent representation and managed assigned counsel programs^y, nearly all Texas counties rely on lists of private assigned counsel that are managed by local judges. There is currently only one office of child representation and one office of parent representation, and there are no managed assigned counsel programs that provide family protection representation in the state.

Very few counties reported expenses for family protection representation delivery methods outside of private assigned counsel lists. Of counties reporting family protection representation expenditures, 226 rely solely on private assigned counsel lists to provide the representation. Below is the breakdown of number of counties that reported family protection representation delivery methods outside of private assigned counsel lists:



Spending Detail

FY23 PER CAPITA SPENDING BREAKDOWN

Although statewide per capita spending on family protection representation was \$2.07, individual county spending varies widely in Texas. Among counties that reported expenditures, per capita spending ranges from \$0.13 to \$13.99. Over 50% of the counties that reported expenditures spent less than \$2.00 per capita. Only 14% of counties reporting expenditures spent more than \$5.00 per capita.

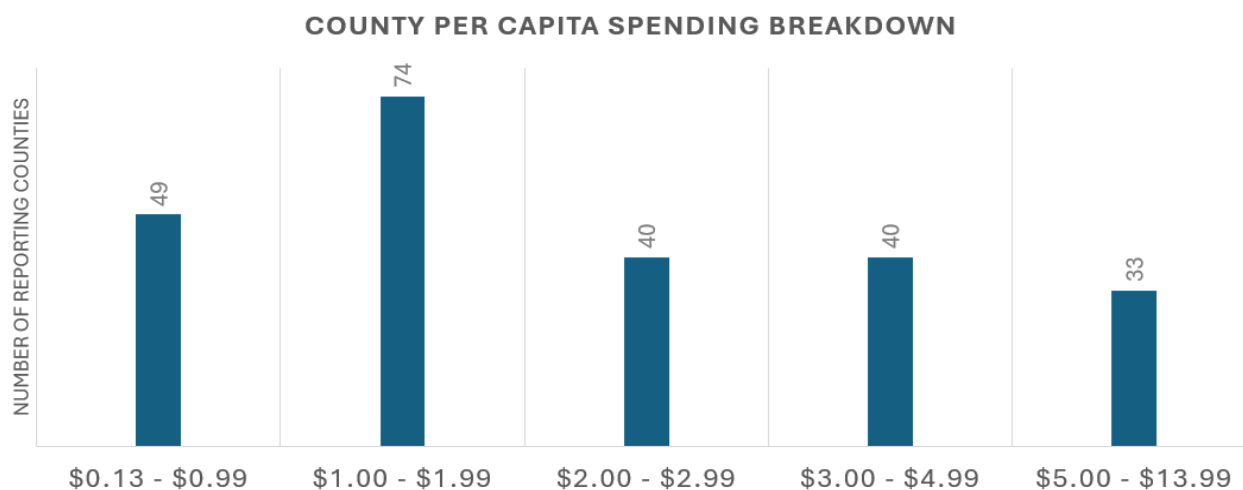


Figure 1

SPENDING & EXITS FROM DFPS CONSERVATORSHIP

When a child is legally removed from their parents, DFPS is named as the Temporary Managing Conservator (TMC) of the child.^{vi} When a parent’s rights to a child are permanently terminated after a TMC case, DFPS is often named as the child’s Permanent Managing Conservator (PMC).^{vii} After a TMC case, DFPS can also sometimes be named as PMC of a child and a parent is also named a Joint Managing Conservator (JMC) or a Possessory Conservator (PC) of the child.^{viii} Any time a child is in the conservatorship of DFPS, the over-arching goal for the child is to achieve permanency and leave the legal conservatorship of DFPS to a forever home with a parent, relative, or other loving caregiver.^{ix} Family reunification with a parent is generally considered the preferred permanency goal for children who are in the conservatorship of the DFPS. ^x

Spending Detail

As FY23 per capita county family protection representation spending increases, the average number of children leaving DFPS conservatorship per 10,000 children in a county also increases.

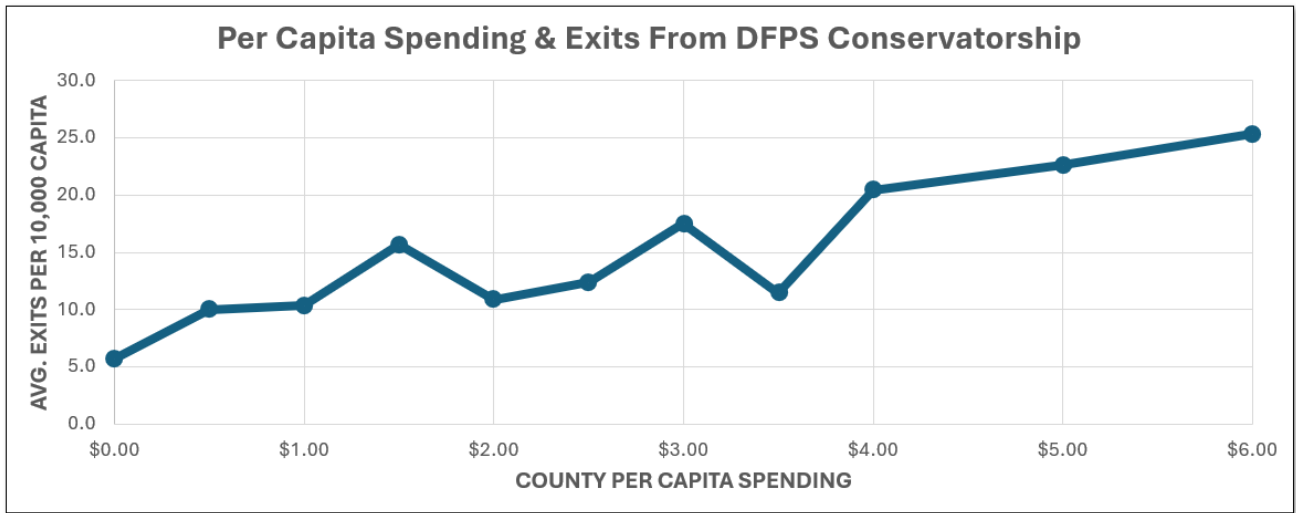


Figure 2

When looking specifically at family reunification with a parent, as FY23 per capita family protection representation spending increases, the average number of children reuniting with a parent per 10,000 children in a county also increases.

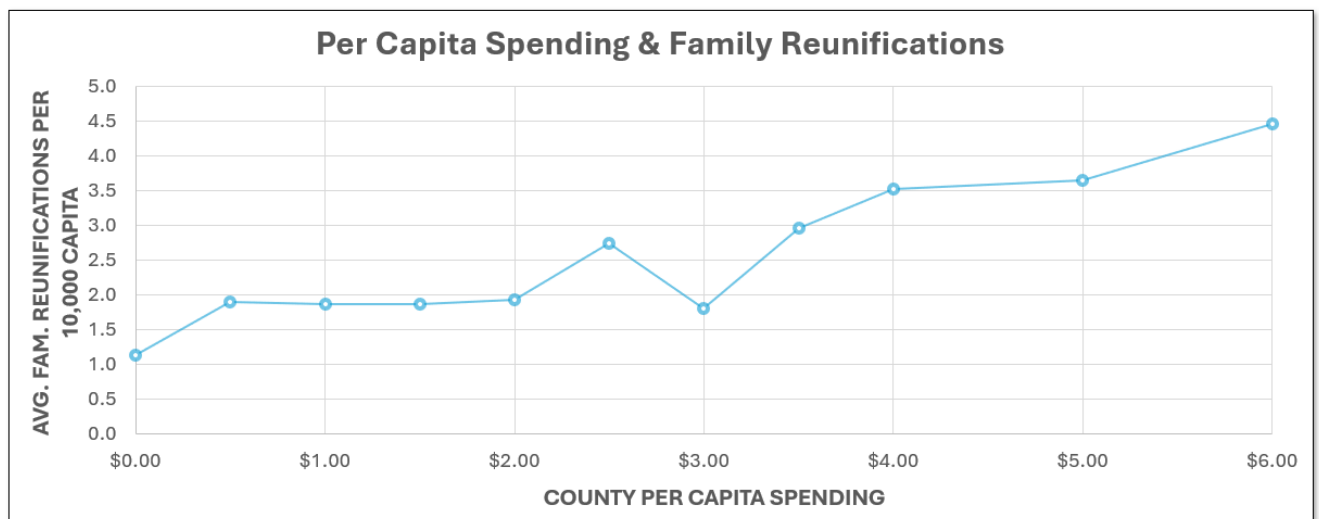


Figure 3

Local Capacity

Child protection cases are unique as they usually require more attorneys than traditional litigation. A child protection case will often require at least 3 court-appointed attorneys for the family - an attorney for a child, an attorney for a mother, and an attorney for a father. Commonly, a child protection case may need more than 3 court-appointed attorneys. This usually occurs when there is more than one father in a case or legal conflicts within a sibling group requiring separate attorney appointments for the children. Due to complicated family dynamics, it is not uncommon for a single child protection case to require 4 or more court-appointed attorneys.

Nearly every county in Texas solely relies on private assigned counsel to provide statutorily required legal representation to children and indigent parents in child protection cases. Of counties submitting a report, 213 counties reported having one list of private assigned counsel available to accept appointments in child protection cases, 33 counties reported having multiples lists of attorneys that accept appointments in child protection cases, and 8 counties did not submit information about their court-appointment list.

Many areas in Texas are experiencing a shortage of attorneys who are available to take court appointments in child protection cases. At 52%, over half of the counties in Texas report having 9 or fewer attorneys on their Family Protection Representation appointment lists.

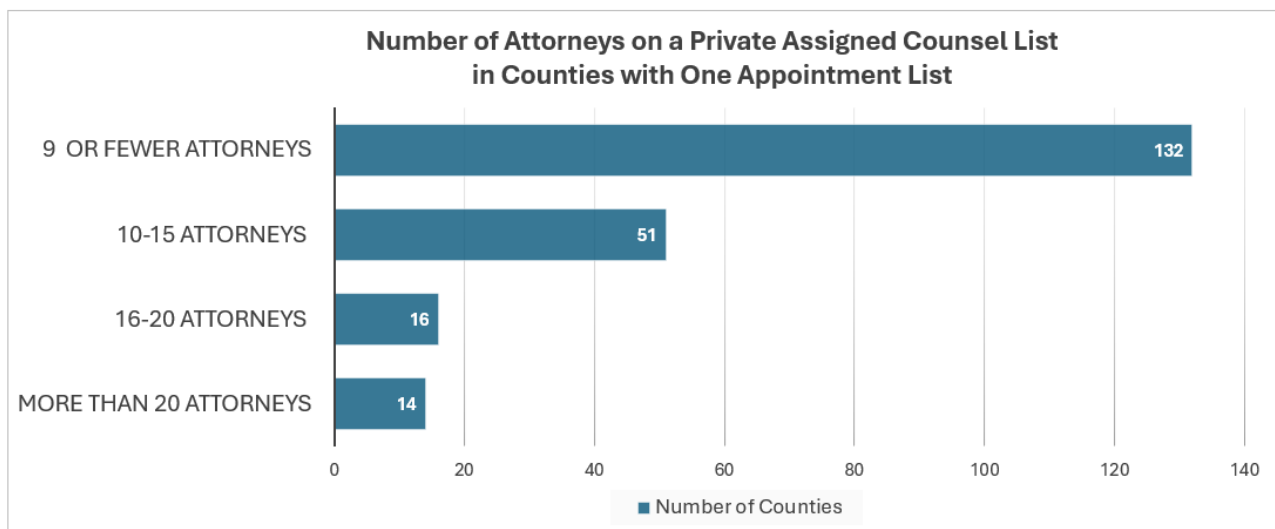


Figure 4

Local Capacity

TIDC first began collecting biennial reports on numbers of attorneys on family protection representation lists from counties in 2021. This information was due to TIDC again in November of 2023. Between 2021 and 2023 a significant number of Texas counties experienced a decrease in the numbers of attorneys accepting family protection representation appointments. Only 21% of Texas counties reported an increase in the number of attorneys on their family protection representation appointment lists.

Change in Number of Attorneys on Court-Appointment List from 2021-2023

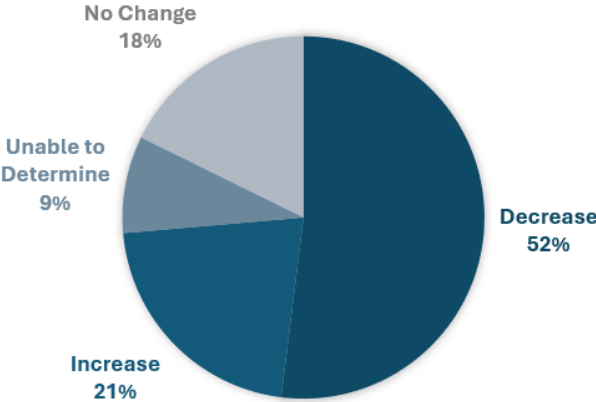


Figure 5

Additionally, there is a lack of attorneys who accept court-appointments for child protection cases that are on appeal. Nearly half of the counties in the state (46) report having 2 or fewer attorneys that accept family protection representation appeals in their county.

Numbers of Attorneys Accepting Appellate Appointments in Each County

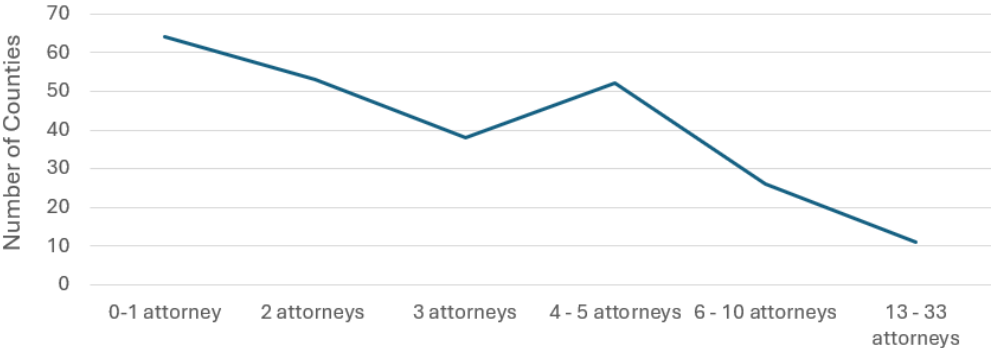


Figure 6

Local Capacity

In 2023, TIDC began collecting attorney practice time reports from lawyers that accept family protection representation appointments. In the first year of reporting, TIDC received family protection representation practice time reports from 1,088 attorneys. Of the attorneys submitting a practice time report, 42% received their Texas bar license in the 1990s or before.

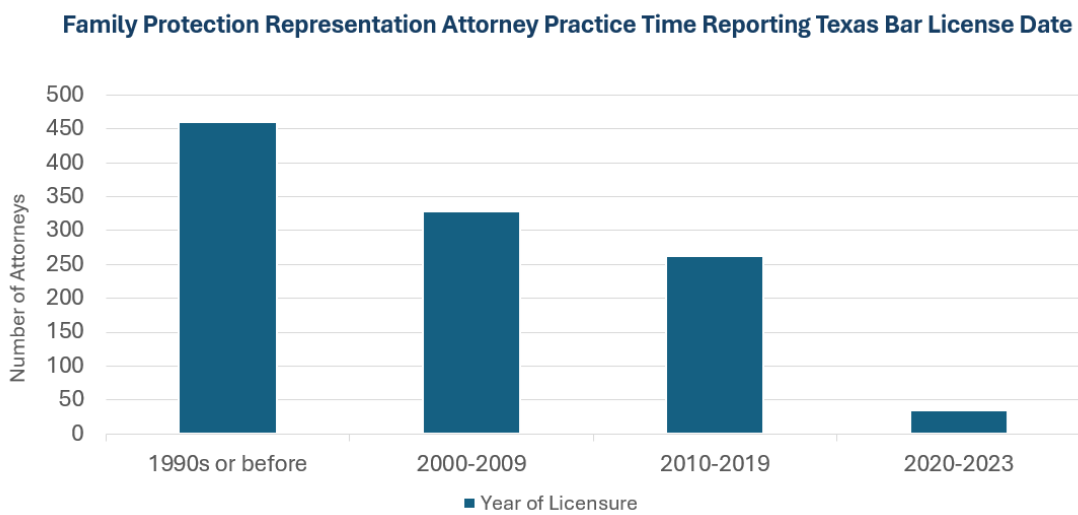


Figure 7

Although the number of family protection representation attorney practice time reports submitted does not include every single attorney that accepts court-appointments in child protection cases, the information does show a concerning trend. In a field that already has strained capacity, the lack of newer attorneys accepting court appointments indicates that the system may be further strained in coming years if additional support is not provided.

Attorney Education & Oversight

ATTORNEY EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

The practice of law requires that attorneys engage in ongoing continuing education to ensure that they can provide effective counsel to their clients. All attorneys licensed in Texas must complete at least 15 hours of continuing legal education (CLE) every year to maintain their bar license. The Texas Family Code requires that attorneys complete at least three hours of CLE relating to representing children in child protection cases when accepting appointments to represent children and at least three hours of CLE relating to representing parents in child protection cases when accepting appointments to represent parents and follow the same requirements in each subsequent year while accepting appointments.^{xi}

At 74% of the state, 188 Texas counties report requiring attorneys complete at least three hours of CLE upon accepting family protection representation appointments. Only 38 counties require attorneys to complete more than six hours of CLE to qualify as court-appointed counsel in child protection cases. Although the Texas Family Code requires attorneys to complete CLE each year they are accepting family protection representation appointments, only 72% of Texas counties report requiring that attorneys accepting family protection representation appointments to complete annual CLE to remain on the appointment list.

APPOINTED COUNSEL LIST OVERSIGHT

Nearly every Texas county solely relies on lists of private assigned counsel to provide family protection representation. These lists are usually managed by local judges that oversee child protection cases. Over one-quarter of Texas counties (27%) report having no procedure for attorneys to remain on their court-appointment lists after the attorney is initially appointed. Additionally, 36 counties report having no procedure to involuntarily remove attorneys from their court-appointment list.

Timing & Duration of Appointment

The Texas Family Code has various requirements for when and how long parents and children should have an attorney appointed to them in a case filed by DFPS. These rules are dependent on the type of case and whether the person being appointed an attorney is a parent or a child. Some Texas counties provide earlier and more expanded representation than is required and some counties do not follow all statutory requirements in all circumstances.

TIMING OF APPOINTMENT OF ATTORNEY IN A TMC CASE

In cases where DFPS is seeking conservatorship of a child and/or termination of parental rights (TMC case), a child should have an attorney appointed immediately after the suit has been filed and before the full adversary hearing of the court.^{xii} The overwhelming majority of Texas counties report appointing attorneys for children in a TMC case at the initial ex parte hearing in accordance with the statutes. A small number of Texas counties report appointing attorneys for a child in TMC cases at the adversary hearing, which does not follow statutory requirements.

Timing of Initial Appointment of Attorney for a Child in TMC case

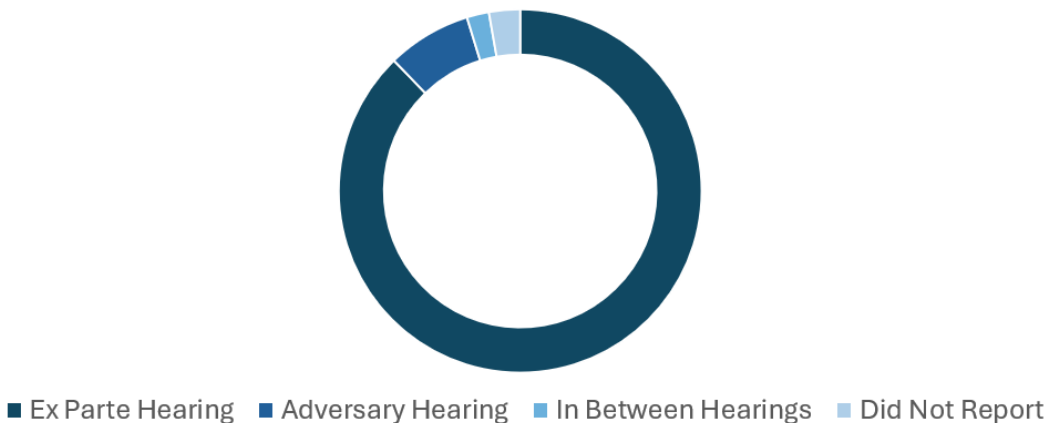


Figure 8

Timing & Duration of Appointment

The rule for timing of appointment for parents in TMC cases is different than the rule for children. In a TMC case, the court may appoint an attorney for a parent when a court issues an emergency order but is not required to do so.^{xiii} The court must appoint an attorney for an indigent parent in a TMC case when the parent responds in opposition to the request for conservatorship and/or termination of parental rights.^{xiv} The earliest this usually can occur is at the adversary hearing often occurring two weeks after an emergency order removing a child from a parent has been signed. Over 50% of Texas counties report appointing attorneys for parents at the initial ex parte hearing when emergency orders are issued and provide early appointment of counsel.

Timing of Initial Appointment of Attorney for a Parent in TMC case

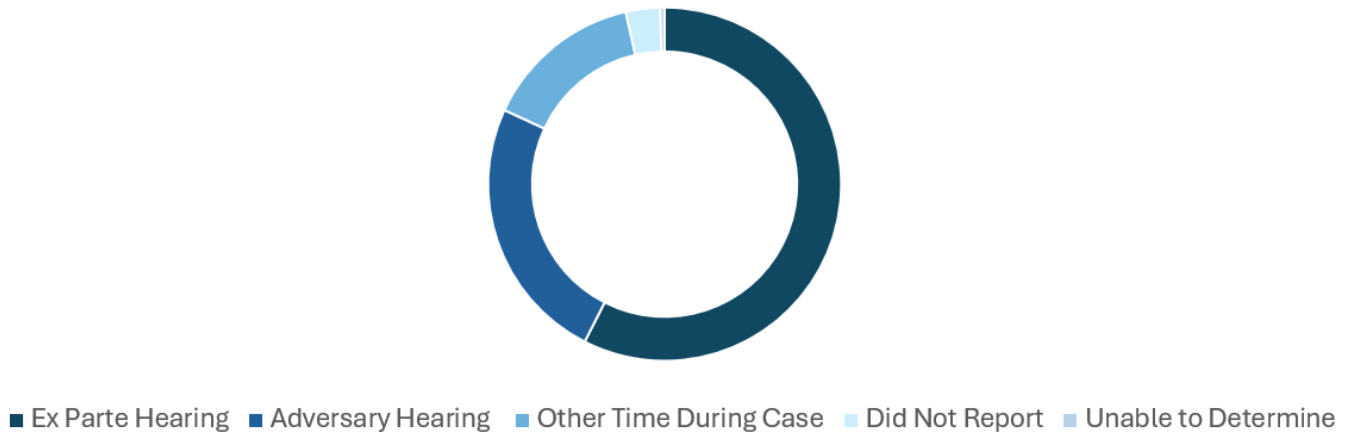


Figure 9

TIMING OF APPOINTMENT OF ATTORNEY IN A COURT-ORDERED SERVICES CASE

Court-ordered services (COS) cases have different names depending on where you are in the state. Some other names for court-ordered services cases are orders for required participation, motion for required participation, and participation in services. No matter the local name for the case, this type of case is the same. In a court-ordered services case, DFPS is seeking that one or both parents be ordered to complete various services to address allegations of child abuse and/or neglect.^{xv} In this type of case, DFPS is not seeking conservatorship of a child or the termination of the parent’s rights to a child.

Timing & Duration of Appointment

In a court ordered services case, the Texas Family Code requires that both parents and children have an attorney appointed to them “immediately after the filing but before the hearing;” the hearing must occur no more than 14 days after the petition is filed.^{xvi} Although the majority of Texas counties comply with statute, with 70% of counties reporting appointing an attorney for a child and 56% reporting appointing an attorney for a parent immediately at the ex parte hearing, a significant number of counties report not appointing attorneys for parents and children in COS cases in accordance with statute.

Timing of Initial Appointment of Attorney for a Child in COS case

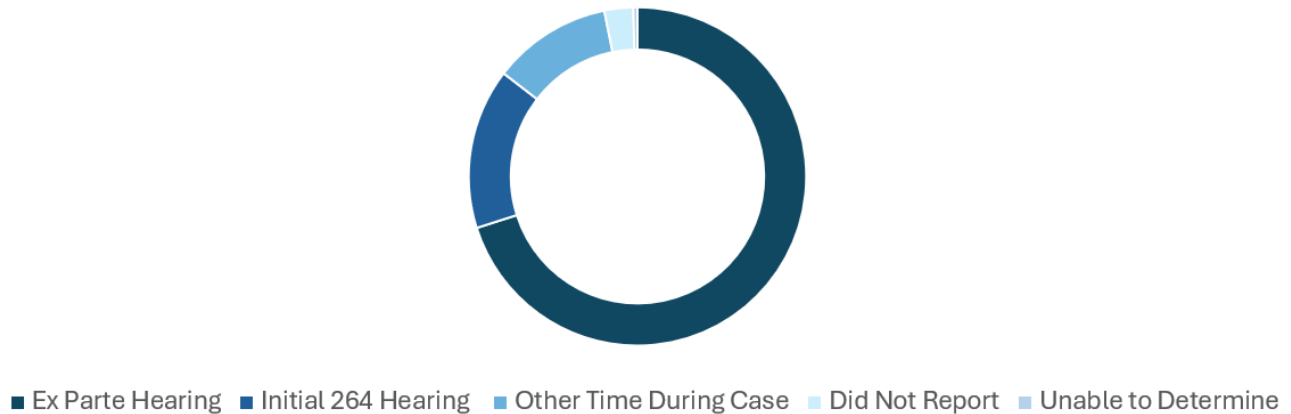


Figure 10

Timing of Initial Appointment of Attorney for a Parent in COS case

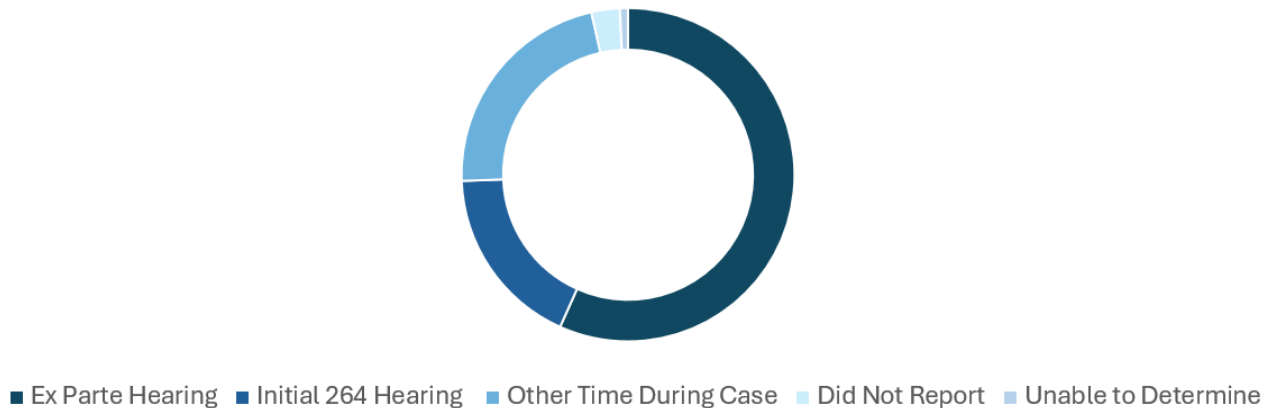


Figure 11

Timing & Duration of Appointment

DURATION OF APPOINTMENT OF ATTORNEY FOR A CHILD

When a child is in the TMC of DFPS, there is a statutory limit on how long that type of case can continue.^{xvii} At the conclusion of the TMC phase, if a child is not returned home with a parent or placed with a non-parent in a final conservatorship order, then DFPS should be named Permanent Managing Conservator (PMC) of the child.^{xviii} When a child is in the PMC of DFPS, regular review hearings before the court must occur and DFPS must complete progress reports.^{xix} Although a child could remain in PMC until the age of 18 or beyond,^{xx} the continued goal for a child is exiting the system through adoption or a final conservatorship order with a loving adult.^{xxi}

When the child is in the PMC of DFPS, the law requires that an attorney ad litem or a guardian ad litem must be appointed to represent the child.^{xxii} The court may appoint both an attorney ad litem and a guardian ad litem for a child in the PMC of DFPS.^{xxiii} The attorney ad litem may serve in the dual role as both an attorney ad litem and a guardian ad litem.^{xxiv} An attorney ad litem is required to represent the “interests of the child.”^{xxv} A guardian ad litem is required to represent the “best interests of the child” and does not have to be a licensed attorney.^{xxvi} An overwhelming majority of the state, at 213 counties, reports continuing the appointment of an attorney for a child in PMC. Only 13% of Texas counties report that they do not automatically continue the appointment of an attorney for a child in PMC.

Continuation of Attorney Ad Litem for Child in the PMC of DFPS

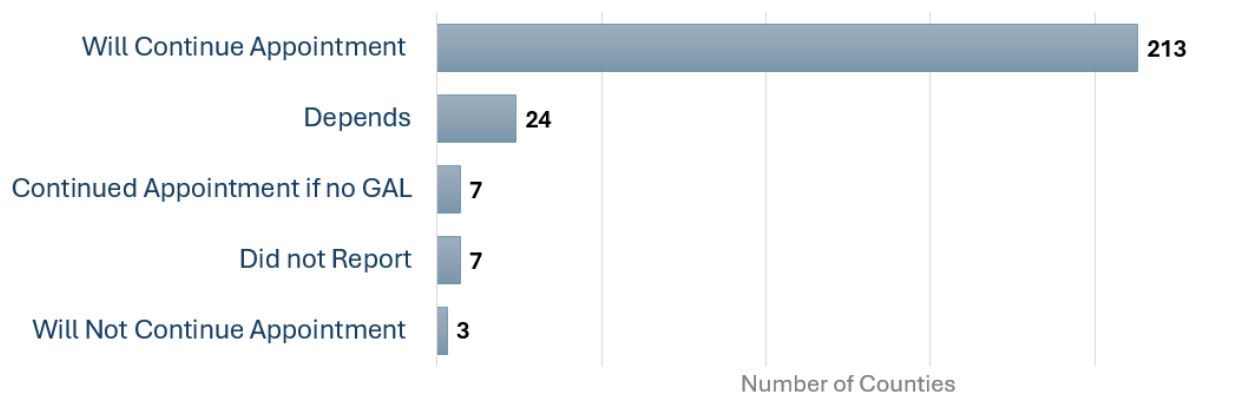


Figure 12

Attorney Compensation

Texas counties are required to submit their fee schedule used for family protection representation to TIDC on November 1 of each odd-numbered year.^{xxvii} In 2023, **211** counties submitted a fee schedule clearly indicating a fee structure for family protection representation. An additional **20** counties provided a fee schedule without clear information relevant to family protection representation, and **23** counties provided no fee schedule at all.

There are no specific guidelines for how attorneys who accept family protection representation cases are to be paid in Texas. Payment methods and rates vary throughout the state. Different payment methods used are hourly rates, flat fee rates, and capped rates. Nearly half of Texas counties use a standard hourly rate to pay attorneys that provide family protection representation. Of those 122 counties, 102 use a single standard hourly rate, 19 use an hourly rate range, and 1 county reported using an hourly rate but did not explain what the rate is. Reported hourly pay rates range from \$35.00 per hour to \$300.00 per hour.

Single standard hourly pay rates begin at \$60 per hour and top out at \$200 per hour, with \$100 per hour being the most frequently used rate.

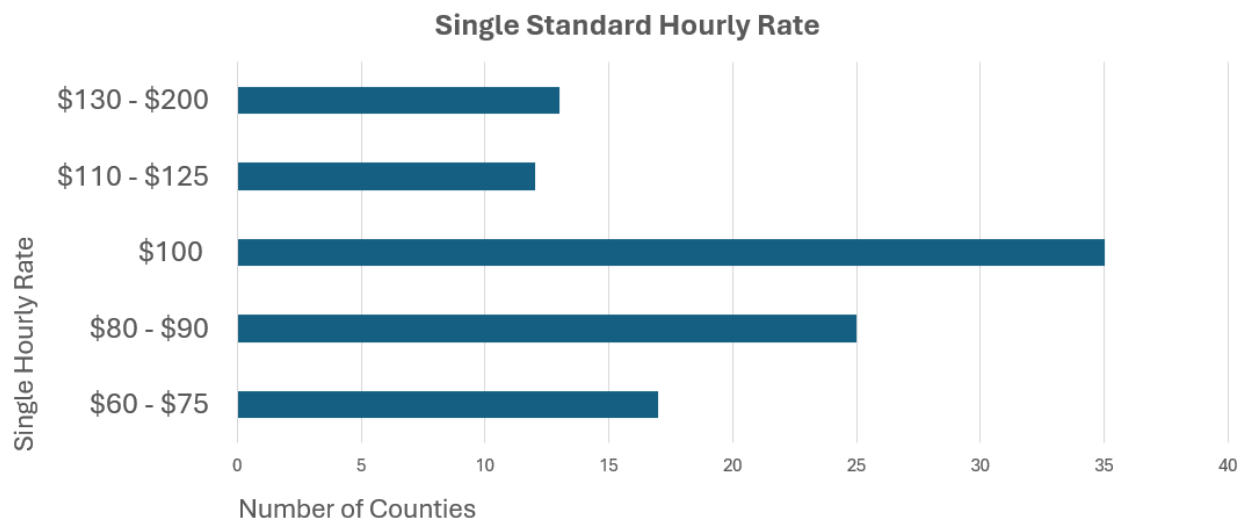


Figure 13

Attorney Compensation

Pay rates for counties that use a standard hourly rate range span from \$35 - \$75 per hour to \$100 - \$300 per hour.

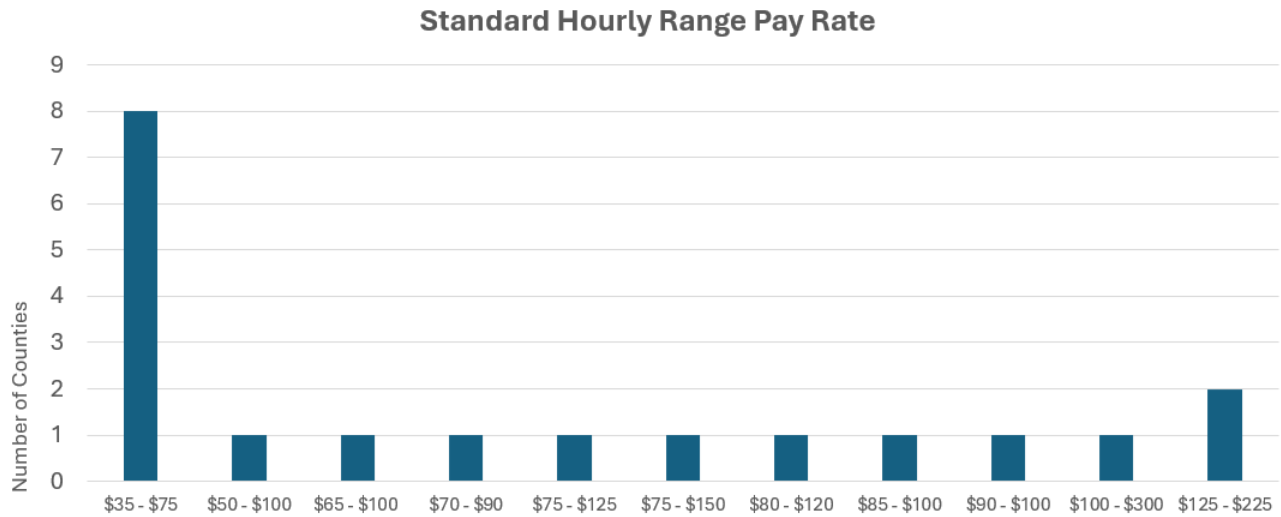


Figure 14

Although child protection cases brought by DFPS have limited variation – they are either a COS case, a TMC case, or a PMC case, and the legal petitioner is always the state agency DFPS, pay rates vary significantly throughout the state. Facts and families may be different, but the legal structure and state agency bringing the suit forward are consistent no matter what jurisdiction an attorney is practicing in. Attorney pay rates are largely dependent on local county financial ability to pay.

Conclusion

Family protection representation is incredibly important work that affects tens of thousands of Texas families and children every year. High quality family protection representation is an integral piece of a well-functioning child protection system. Children and families facing a child protection case need high-quality legal counsel to ensure that their rights are protected, their voices are heard, and children are safe.

The current family protection representation system in Texas is completely dependent on county funding. Spending on family protection representation is inconsistent throughout the state. Many jurisdictions in Texas are experiencing an inadequate number of attorneys who are willing to accept family protection representation appointments. If the current trend of decreasing numbers of attorneys continues, a significant number of counties will not be able to meet their statutory obligations to families involved in child protection cases.

Data provided by counties shows that the management, oversight, and application of family protection representation varies throughout the state. Requirements and procedures for joining appointment lists are inconsistent. Timing of appointments for parents and children vary with some counties exceeding statutory requirements, some counties following basic legal requirements, and some counties not meeting statutory requirements. Additionally, many counties, but not all, provide children attorneys through the PMC phase of a case. Finally, attorney pay rates vary substantially among jurisdictions.

Although TIDC has new responsibilities to improve the family protection representation system, there are currently no state funds to support this work. **To address this need, TIDC has included an exceptional item in its 2026-2027 Legislative Appropriations Request for \$47.5 million to provide grant funding and technical assistance to counties, as well as 5 TIDC staff to run the program.** This support will be key in preventing the family representation system from reaching a crisis point.



Appendix A

COUNTY SPENDING TABLE

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Anderson	\$64,921
Andrews	\$27,263
Angelina	\$357,136
Aransas	\$40,622
Archer	\$15,967
Armstrong	\$5,940
Atascosa	\$80,049
Austin	\$18,450
Bailey	\$12,030
Bandera	\$79,900
Bastrop	\$337,157
Baylor	\$13,485
Bee	\$157,793
Bell	\$1,422,916
Bexar	\$4,035,166
Blanco	\$73,764
Borden	\$0.00
Bosque	\$50,249
Bowie	\$245,406
Brazoria	\$773,941
Brazos	\$448,855
Brewster	\$26,623

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Briscoe	\$2,360
Brooks	\$16,542
Brown	\$68,314
Burleson	\$62,690
Burnet	\$266,734
Caldwell	\$75,172
Calhoun	\$22,789
Callahan	\$101,499
Cameron	\$418,636
Camp	\$123,728
Carson	\$7,866
Cass	\$61,470
Castro	\$6,794
Chambers	\$64,505
Cherokee	\$82,802
Childress	\$8,970
Clay	\$21,411
Cochran	\$4,275
Coke	\$7,140
Coleman	\$64,5212
Collin	\$1,166,244
Collingsworth	\$11,534
Colorado	\$5,529
Comal	\$338,113

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Comanche	\$123,364
Concho	\$3,315
Cooke	\$65,218
Coryell	\$187,715
Cottle	\$8,396
Crane	\$0.00
Crockett	\$15,291
Crosby	\$9,400
Culberson	\$19,798
Dallam	\$13,040
Dallas	\$3,676,357
Dawson	\$11,194
Deaf Smith	\$13,686
Delta	\$3,000
Denton	\$2,261,939
Dewitt	\$61,715
Dickens	\$0.00
Dimmit	\$27,445
Donley	\$1,070
Duval	\$34,550
Eastland	\$94,079
Ector	\$519,113
Edwards	\$476
El Paso	\$1,015,773

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Ellis	\$302,966
Erath	\$24,735
Falls	\$73,128
Fannin	\$151,684
Fayette	\$14,654
Fisher	\$7,218
Floyd	\$1,260
Foard	\$1,000
Fort Bend	\$638,895
Franklin	\$1,500
Freestone	\$17,853
Frio	\$47,360
Gaines	\$5,415
Galveston	\$687,090
Garza	\$7,596
Gillespie	\$38,270
Glasscock	\$0.00
Goliad	\$40,215
Gonzales	\$24,639
Gray	\$59,213
Grayson	\$239,726
Gregg	\$309,334
Grimes	\$50,222
Guadalupe	\$98,438

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Hale	\$50,662
Hall	\$13,704
Hamilton	\$6,821
Hansford	\$2,223
Hardeman	\$5,330
Hardin	\$242,647
Harris	\$9,231,954
Harrison	\$77,800
Hartley	\$3,680
Haskell	\$39,630
Hays	\$400,220
Hemphill	\$3,600
Henderson	\$508,165
Hidalgo	\$814,976
Hill	\$109,263
Hockley	\$45,955
Hood	\$101,539
Hopkins	\$19,563
Houston	\$26,718
Howard	\$57,102
Hudspeth	\$0.00
Hunt	\$429,269
Hutchinson	\$113,470
Irion	\$2,006

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Jack	\$43,387
Jackson	\$56,016
Jasper	\$205,157
Jeff Davis	\$0.00
Jefferson	\$310,695
Jim Hogg	\$7,450
Jim Wells	\$58,492
Johnson	\$257,903
Jones	\$100,725
Karnes	\$15,312
Kaufman	\$257,802
Kendall	\$38,942
Kenedy	\$0.00
Kent	\$0.00
Kerr	\$101,758
Kimble	\$11,387
King	\$0.00
Kinney	\$29,718
Kleberg	\$38,600
Knox	\$10,817
La Salle	\$15,784
Lamar	\$82,250
Lamb	\$13,093
Lampasas	\$173,128

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Lavaca	\$19,643
Lee	\$41,679
Leon	\$10,271
Liberty	\$183,173
Limestone	\$45,613
Lipscomb	\$3,848
Live Oak	\$5,119
Llano	\$255,278
Loving	\$0.00
Lubbock	\$791,590
Lynn	\$15,027
Madison	\$26,757
Marion	\$8,696
Martin	\$16,259
Mason	\$3,991
Matagorda	\$105,228
Maverick	\$29,297
McCulloch	\$54,364
McLennan	\$948,260
McMullen	\$0.00
Medina	\$155,227
Menard	\$3,121
Midland	\$112,418
Milam	\$86,919

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Mills	\$14,156
Mitchell	\$34,652
Montague	\$136,211
Montgomery	\$1,091,611
Moore	\$0.00
Morris	\$59,197
Motley	\$560
Nacogdoches	\$50,054
Navarro	\$216,562
Newton	\$33,668
Nolan	\$100,307
Nueces	\$697,245
Ochiltree	\$25,365
Oldham	\$1,200
Orange	\$310,497
Palo Pinto	\$69,580
Panola	\$81,890
Parker	\$565,939
Parmer	\$14,882
Pecos	\$32,126
Polk	\$60,810
Potter	\$283,289
Presidio	\$0.00
Rains	\$36,458

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Randall	\$405,265
Reagan	\$1,161
Real	\$4,025
Red River	\$10,000
Reeves	\$8,225
Refugio	\$38,077
Roberts	\$1,200
Robertson	\$185,763
Rockwall	\$40,567
Runnels	\$20,642
Rusk	\$129,096
Sabine	\$25,413
San Augustine	\$15,146
San Jacinto	\$31,743
San Patricio	\$139,909
San Saba	\$40,935
Schleicher	\$0.00
Scurry	\$121,267
Shackelford	\$17,216
Shelby	\$18,880
Sherman	\$11,180
Smith	\$950,000
Somervell	\$11,975
Starr	\$171,368

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Stephens	\$75,243
Sterling	\$2,408
Stonewall	\$0.00
Sutton	\$5,035
Swisher	\$16,400
Tarrant	\$3,054,958
Taylor	\$2,038,092
Terrell	\$0.00
Terry	\$14,480
Throckmorton	\$0.00
Titus	\$93,959
Tom Green	\$394,541
Travis	\$8,094,216
Trinity	\$19,175
Tyler	\$125,861
Upshur	\$91,228
Upton	\$6,530
Uvalde	\$23,947
Val Verde	\$75,080
Van Zandt	\$237,509
Victoria	\$472,346
Walker	\$15,176
Waller	\$40,438
Ward	\$27,954

County	FY23 Total Expenditures
Washington	\$112,598
Webb	\$69,675
Wharton	\$71,568
Wheeler	\$17,186
Wichita	\$578,543
Wilbarger	\$34,918
Willacy	\$29,950
Williamson	\$720,604
Wilson	\$40,634
Winkler	\$10,360
Wise	\$306,329
Wood	\$164,715
Yoakum	\$5,100
Young	\$11,466
Zapata	\$4,900
Zavala	\$0.00

Appendix B

COUNTIES THAT DID NOT SUBMIT FAMILY PROTECTION REPRESENTATION PLAN INFORMATION

Fisher

Mitchell

Polk

San Jacinto

Stephens

Trinity

Young

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- ⁱ See Texas Family Code §§ 107.012, 107.013, 161.003, 264.203.
- ⁱⁱ See Texas Government Code § 79.0365.
- ⁱⁱⁱ *Id.*
- ^{iv} See Texas Family Code § 107.0042.
- ^v See Texas Family Code Chapter 107, Subchapters G, H.
- ^{vi} See Texas Family Code Chapter 262.
- ^{vii} See Texas Family Code § 161.207.
- ^{viii} See Texas Family Code § 263.404.
- ^{ix} See Texas Department of Family and Protective Services website: *Permanency Options and Efforts*
https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Child_Protection/Adoption/permanency_options.asp
- ^x *Id.*
- ^{xi} See Texas Family Code §§ 107.004, 107.0131.
- ^{xii} Texas Family Code § 107.012.
- ^{xiii} See Texas Family Code § 107.0141.
- ^{xiv} See Texas Family Code § 107.013.
- ^{xv} See Texas Family Code § 264.203.
- ^{xvi} *Id.*
- ^{xvii} See Texas Family Code §263.401.
- ^{xviii} See Texas Family Code §§ 161.207, 263.404.
- ^{xix} See Texas Family Code §§ 263.501-263.5031
- ^{xx} See Texas Family Code Chapter 263, Subchapter G
- ^{xxi} See Texas Department of Family and Protective Services website: *Permanency Options and Efforts*
https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Child_Protection/Adoption/permanency_options.asp
- ^{xxii} Texas Family Code § 107.016.
- ^{xxiii} *Id.*
- ^{xxiv} *Id.*
- ^{xxv} Texas Family Code § 107.012.
- ^{xxvi} See Texas Family Code § 107.011.
- ^{xxvii} Texas Government Code § 79.0365(a)(2).