



August 28, 2026

CHAIR:

Honorable Missy Medary
Corpus Christi, Presiding Judge,
5th Administrative
Judicial Region of Texas

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:

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Honorable Brent Hagenbuch
Honorable Phil King
Honorable Emily Miskel
Honorable Joseph "Joe" Moody
Honorable David J. Schenck
Honorable John Smithee

MEMBERS APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR:

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Honorable Missy Medary
Honorable James R. "J.R." Woolley, Jr.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Scott Ehlers

The Honorable Weldon P. Cude
Atascosa County Judge
Via E-mail: wcude@co.atascosa.tx.us

RE: FY2027 Statement of Grant Award – Grant Number R-2026-07197

Dear Judge Cude:

I am pleased to inform you that the Texas Indigent Defense Commission has awarded Atascosa County a FY2027 Improvement Grant of **\$1,881,010** for the Atascosa Area Advocates Regional Public Defender's Office. Your Statement of Grant Award for FY2027 is attached. Please sign the last page to accept the award and become eligible for payments.

Congratulations to Atascosa County on taking the lead in Texas by developing and continuing this indigent defense program. If you have any questions or need clarification of the information contained in this letter or the Statement of Grant Award, please contact Edwin Colfax, TIDC's Director of Grant Funding, at (512) 463-2508 or email the Grants Department at grants@tidc.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Missy Medary
Chair, Texas Indigent Defense Commission
Presiding Judge, 5th Administrative Judicial Region of Texas

Copy: tbarrera@co.atascosa.tx.us
sesparza@co.atascosa.tx.us



Statement of Grant Award

FY 2027 Improvement Grant

Grantee	Atascosa County
Grant #	R-2026-07197
Program Title	ATASCOSA AREA ADVOCATES PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE
Grant Period	10/1/2026 – 9/30/2027
Award Amount	\$1,881,010

The Texas Indigent Defense Commission (herein, TIDC) has awarded the above-referenced grant to Atascosa County (herein, the Grantee) for indigent defense services. The authorized official named on the grant application must sign this Statement of Grant Award and return it to the Commission to accept the award. The grantee will not receive any grant funds until this notice is executed and returned to the TIDC.



Approved Program Budget

Personnel	Salary	\$ 139,050
Personnel	Salary	\$ 380,070
Personnel	Salary	\$ 1,417,280
Personnel	Salary	\$ 8,500
Personnel	Fringe Benefits	\$ 174,069
Personnel	Fringe Benefits	\$ 303,660
Personnel	Fringe Benefits	\$ 148,785
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Office Supplies - Ongoing	\$ 12,000
Contract Services	Other Contract Services	\$ 55,650
Contract Services	Other Contract Services	\$ 7,500
Training	Registration & Tuition	\$ 5,000
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Professional Memberships & Dues	\$ 5,000
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Other Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses	\$ 5,000
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Legal Research Subscriptions	\$ 17,500
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Other Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses	\$ 2,000
Travel and Transportation	Case Related Travel	\$ 50,000
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Other Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses	\$ 30,000
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Other Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses	\$ 1,000
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Other Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses	\$ 5,000
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Insurance	\$ 1,200
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Software - Case Management	\$ 28,000
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Other Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses	\$ 10,000
Supplies & Direct Operating Expenses	Other Supplies and Direct Operating Expenses	\$ 250
Contract Services	Legal	\$ 15,000

TOTAL BUDGET	\$2,821,514.00
FUNDS FROM OTHER SOURCES – COUNTY CONTRIBUTIONS	\$940,504.00
TIDC SUSTAINABILITY GRANT	\$1,881,010.00

Grant Terms and Conditions

General Terms and Conditions

- The authorized official for the grantee accepts the grant award.
- The authorized official, financial officer, and program director, referred to below as grant officials, must comply with the terms of the grant program as written in the TIDC Request for Applications issued in 2026, including the rules and documents adopted by reference in the Commission's Grant Rules in Title 1, Part 8, Chapter 173, Texas Administrative Code.
- The grant officials understand that a violation of any term of the grant may result in the Commission placing a temporary hold on grant funds, permanently de-obligating all or part of the grant funds, requiring reimbursement for funds already spent, or barring the organization from receiving future grants.
- The grant officials agree to implement the program as described in the final grant application.
- Any indigent defense plan documents submitted to the Commission must continue to meet all grant eligibility requirements.
- The judges hearing criminal and juvenile matters must amend the Indigent Defense Plan for their respective courts to include the program funded under this award as necessary and submit it to the Commission by November 1, 2026.
- Disbursement of funds is always subject to the availability of funds.
- This grant requires quarterly progress reports to provide information on the operation of the program. TIDC will create a progress report to document the work performed in this program. The Grantee may request modifications to the report. See the Timeline for Reporting and Fund Distribution at the end of this document for dates.
- The Grantee must submit expenditure reports to obtain reimbursement of expended funds based on actual expenditures on the program. Grant funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis according to the funded percentage in the award and proportional to the Grantee's required match. See the Timeline for Reporting and Fund Distribution at the end of this document for dates.
- The Grantee must provide to TIDC the minimum job requirements and a full job description of the staff positions specified under this project for approval before positions are publicly posted.
- Requests to revise the scope, target, or staffing of the project, or substantively alter project activities require advance written approval from TIDC.
- Budget adjustments consisting of reallocations of funds among or within budget categories in excess of \$10,000 or ten percent of the original approved budget, whichever is less, are considered budget adjustments and are allowable only with prior approval of the executive director of TIDC.

- All grant modification requests must be submitted in writing and signed by the Authorized Official designated in the TIDC Improvement Grant Program Commissioners Court Resolution.
- This award covers one fiscal year of operation. If the program is eligible for renewal, the Grantee must submit a continuing grant application and Commissioners Court Resolution as described in the Improvement Grant Request for Applications for each subsequent year of funding.
- If the award is eligible for renewal, the equipment costs and other start-up costs in the first-year budget will not be carried forward into subsequent years of funding.
- Contracts with third parties for indigent defense services under this grant must be provided to TIDC and approved prior to execution.
- Grantees that use grant funds to contract for services must include in the contract provisions to monitor each contract that is for more than \$10,000 per year. These provisions must include specific actions to be taken if the grantee discovers that the contractor's performance does not meet the operational or performance terms of the contract.
- A county shall continue to operate or participate in a program funded by a TIDC Improvement or Sustainability Grant for the duration of the grant funding and 48 additional months following the end of grant funding, unless for good cause as determined by TIDC. Otherwise, TIDC may impose a remedy for noncompliance under Title 1 Texas Administrative Code 173.307.

Program Specific Terms and Conditions – Regional Public Defenders

- The Grantee will directly operate the Atascosa Area Advocates Regional Public Defender's Office as defined in Article 26.044 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure to provide indigent defense services to 4 counties, including Atascosa, Frio, Karnes, and Wilson. Participating counties will execute interlocal agreements with the Grantee reflecting the scope of services and each participating Grantee's contribution to the cost of the program not covered by this grant.
- The Grantee must provide to TIDC copies of all interlocal agreements with counties participating in the regional public defender program.
- The Grantee must develop and maintain a Regional Public Defender Oversight Board in accordance with Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Article 26.045 to oversee the operation of this regional program and that incorporates stakeholders from the expansion counties funded under this grant. The Grantee must submit a draft policy detailing how the members are selected and the duties and procedures of the board to TIDC for feedback and approval prior to finalization. The Oversight Board must meet at least quarterly.

- The program's Oversight Board is responsible for recommending to the Commissioners Court the selection of the Chief Public Defender. The Chief Public Defender will be responsible for the implementation of this program and will hire staff sufficient to operate the department.
- The Grantee must provide to TIDC a Leadership Selection Plan for review and approval prior to posting the Chief Defender position. See "Texas Chief Defender Sample Hiring Rubric" and "Sample Chief Public Defender Job Description," available at <http://www.tidc.texas.gov/improvement/system-building>.
- The Grantee must develop a written policy that includes caseload standards for the public defender office as required in Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Articles 26.044 and that is consistent with research-based weighted caseload guidelines published by TIDC. The caseload policy must require the Chief Public Defender to review caseloads at least quarterly. The Chief Public Defender must notify TIDC and the program's Oversight Board in writing if caseloads exceed the adopted standards.
- Staffing with attorneys and support personnel must be supported by sufficient caseloads.
- The Commissioners Court must adopt a public defender plan of operation or proposal that addresses the elements enumerated in Article 26.044 (c-1), Code of Criminal Procedure.
- The judges must submit a copy of the public defender plan of operation or proposal approved by the applicable commissioners court as part of each indigent defense plan applicable to cases in which the public defender's office will provide representation, as required by Section 79.036(a)(2), Government Code.
- A Public Defender Office Case Representation Policies and Procedures Manual must be developed and provided to the Commission with the second quarterly progress report. The Public Defender Office should consider relevant professional standards of representation such as the Texas State Bar Performance Guidelines for Non-Capital Criminal Defense Representation when developing the manual. Any revised versions of the Policies and Procedures Manual must be submitted with regular quarterly progress reports.
- The Grantee must track public defender employee data necessary and submit the public defender salary section of the annual Indigent Defense Expenditure Report detailing hire dates, separation dates, vacancies, and actual salaries for each grant-funded position.
- The Public Defender's Office must record attorney and support staff work time in a manner that allows for accurate completion of the Indigent Defense Expenditure Report and Public Defender Addendum. Records must contain sufficient detail to allocate time and salary across categories of offenses (capital, non-capital felony, misdemeanor, juvenile, felony appeals, misdemeanor appeals, and juvenile appeals) and to document the number of cases disposed by attorney for each court.

Timeline for Reporting and Fund Distribution

Reports will be submitted on-line at <https://txcourts-tide.fluxx.io>

Reporting Period	Type Report Due	Date Report Due	Fund Distribution Date
October 2026 through December 2026	Grant Expenditure Report Report Progress Report	January 15, 2027	February 2027
January 2027 through March 2027	Grant Expenditure Report Report Progress Report	April 15, 2027	May 2027
April 2027 through June 2027	Grant Expenditure Report Report Progress Report	July 15, 2027	August 2027
July 2027 through September 2027	Grant Expenditure Report Report Progress Report	October 15, 2027	December 2027

Grant Acceptance and Agreement

The authorized official for this grant program has read the preceding conditions and indicates acceptance of the grant and agreement to the terms and conditions by signing this Statement of Grant Award included below.

Signature of Authorized Official

Judge Weldon P. Cude

Name & Title

Monday September 14, 2026

Date