

Complexities in the Geographical Jurisdictions of District Courts As of October 2009

To understand the complexities stemming from the piecemeal creation of District Courts in Texas, a taxonomy of jurisdictional boundary-overlap patterns was developed. Because most courts' boundaries overlap wholly or partially with some other court, the state's 452 District Courts cover its 254 counties in 96 distinct areas. Each area is defined by a lack of overlapping boundaries with other areas.

The taxonomy is useful because it allows us to understand a very complex geographical system by understanding a small number of patterns occurring within that system. Six patterns emerged from an analysis of geographical boundaries. The frequency of the six patterns is shown in the table below. Examples of each pattern and further details follow the table.

| Jurisdictional Overlap Patterns | Number of Areas | Number of Counties | Number of Courts |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Single County / Multiple Courts / No Courts Serve Another County | 26 | 26 | 265 |
| Single County / Single Court / Court Does not Serve Another County | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| Multiple Counties / Multiple Courts / Identical Jurisdictions | 6 | 23 | 13 |
| Multiple Counties / Single Court | 25 | 71 | 25 |
| Multiple Counties / Multiple Courts / One Separate Jurisdiction | 14 | 47 | 56 |
| Multiple Counties / Multiple Courts / Many Separate Jurisdictions | 10 | 72 | 78 |
| TOTAL | 96 | 254 | 452 |

Single County / Multiple Courts / No Courts Serve Another County

| <i>County</i> | <i>Number of Courts</i> | <i>County</i> | <i>Number of Courts</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Harris | 59 | Williamson | 5 |
| Dallas | 39 | Midland | 5 |
| Tarrant | 27 | Smith | 4 |
| Bexar | 25 | Ector | 4 |
| Travis | 17 | Brazos | 3 |
| Hidalgo | 11 | Gregg | 3 |
| Collin | 9 | Orange | 3 |
| Jefferson | 8 | Wichita | 3 |
| Montgomery | 7 | Angelina | 2 |
| Denton | 6 | Ellis | 2 |
| Galveston | 6 | Kaufman | 2 |
| Fort Bend | 6 | Nacogdoches | 2 |
| McLennan | 5 | Parker | 2 |
| TOTAL Counties = 26 | | TOTAL Courts = 265 | |

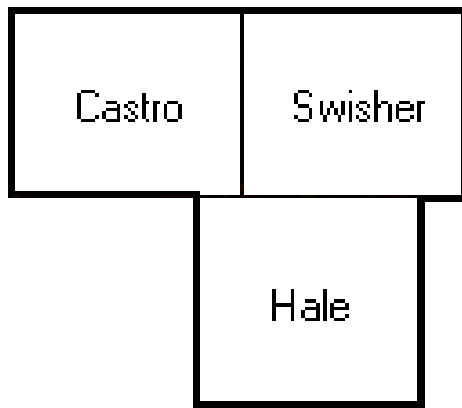
Single County / Single Court / Court Does not Serve Another County

| <i>Counties with a Single District Court</i> | |
|--|------------|
| Cooke | Milam |
| Coryell | Navarro |
| Eastland | Palo Pinto |
| Erath | Rockwall |
| Harrison | Rusk |
| Hill | Van Zandt |
| Hood | Wood |
| Lamb | |
| TOTAL Counties = 15 | |
| TOTAL Courts = 15 | |

Multiple Counties / Multiple Courts / Identical Jurisdictions

An Example from the Ninth Administrative Judicial Region

| <i>Court</i> | <i>Counties in Jurisdiction</i> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 64 th District Court | Castro, Hale, & Swisher |
| 242 nd District Court | Castro, Hale, & Swisher |



| | | | | | | | | |
|------------|---------|------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|----------|-----------|--------|
| Dallam | Sherman | Hansford | Ochiltree | Lipscomb | | | | |
| Hartley | Moore | Hutchinson | Roberts | Hempill | | | | |
| Oldham | Potter | Carson | Gray | Wheeler | | | | |
| Deaf Smith | Randall | Armstrong | Donley | Collingsworth | | | | |
| Pamer | Castro | Swisher | Biscoe | Hell | Childress | | | |
| Boley | Lamb | Hale | Floyd | Motley | Cottle | Hardeman | Wilbarger | |
| Cochran | Hockley | Lubbock | Crosby | Dickens | King | Foard | Knox | Baylor |
| Yoakum | Terry | | | | | | | |

Counties Sharing Multiple Courts

3 Counties:

Castro, Hale & Swisher
 Dimmit, Maverick & Zavala
 Polk, San Jacinto & Trinity

4 Counties:

Blanco, Burnet, Llano, & San Saba

5 Counties:

Atascosa, Frio, Karnes, La Salle & Wilson
 Aransas, Bee, Live Oak, McMullen & San Patricio

TOTAL Counties = 23

Courts

2 Courts: 64 & 242
2 Courts: 293 & 365
2 Courts: 258 & 411

2 Courts: 33 & 424

2 Courts: 81 & 218

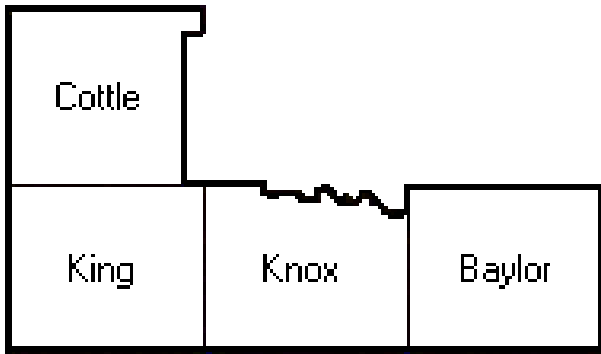
3 Courts: 36, 156 & 343

TOTAL Courts = 13

Multiple Counties / Single Court

An Example from the Ninth Administrative Judicial Region

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Court</i> | <i>Counties in Jurisdiction</i> |
| 50 th District Court | Baylor, Cottle, King & Knox |



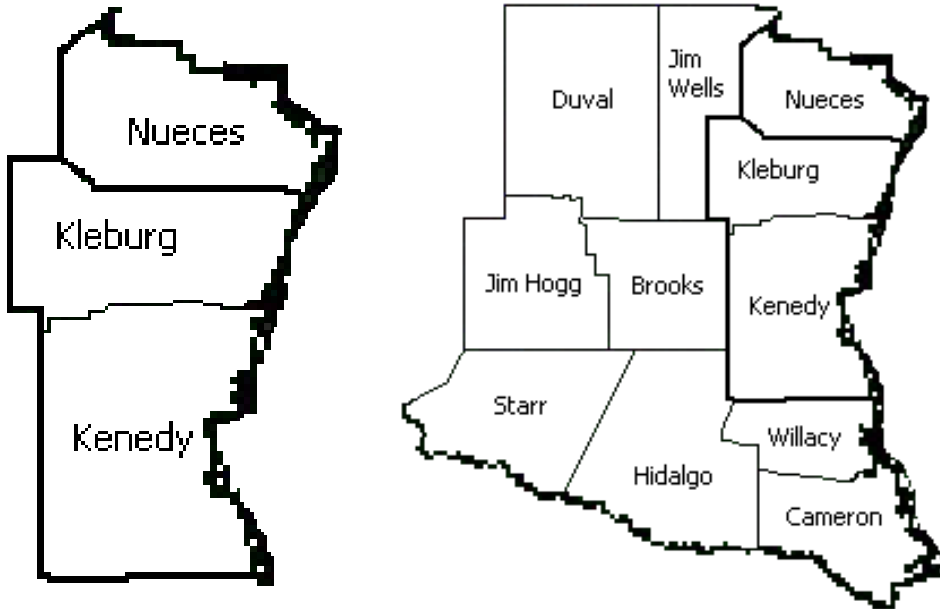
| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|---------|------------|----------|---------------|-----------|----------|-----------|--|--|
| Dallen | Sherman | Hanford | Dochtree | Lipscomb | | | | | |
| Hartley | Moore | Hutchinson | Roberts | Hempill | | | | | |
| Oldham | Potter | Carson | Gray | Wheeler | | | | | |
| Deaf Smith | Randall | Armstrong | Donley | Collingsworth | | | | | |
| Parmer | Castro | Swisher | Briscoe | Hall | Childress | | | | |
| Bailey | Lamb | Hale | Floyd | Motley | Cottle | Hardeman | | | |
| Cochran | Hockley | Lubbock | Cosby | Dickens | King | Foard | Wilbarger | | |
| Yoakum | Terry | | | | | | | | |

| Counties Per Court | Counties Sharing a Single Court | Administrative Judicial Region |
|--|---|--|
| <i>Two</i> (11 Courts in 22 Counties) | Falls & Robertson (82 nd) Brooks & Jim Wells (79 th) Borden & Scurry (132 nd) Jones & Shackelford (259 th) Stephens & Young (90 th) Jack & Wise (271 st) Terry & Yoakum (121 st) Deaf Smith & Oldham (222 nd) Cochran & Hockley (286 th) Bailey & Parmer (287 th) Brown & Mills (35 th) | 3 rd 5 th 7 th 7 th 8 th 8 th 9 th 9 th 9 th 9 th |
| <i>Three</i> (8 Courts in 24 Counties) | Bosque, Comanche & Hamilton (220 th) Medina, Real & Uvalde (38 th) Fisher, Mitchell & Nolan (32 nd) Andrews, Crane & Winkler (109 th) Glasscock, Howard & Martin (118 th) Loving, Reeves & Ward (143 rd) Archer, Clay & Montague (97 th) Foard, Hardeman & Wilbarger (46 th) | 3 rd 6 th 7 th 7 th 7 th 7 th 8 th 9 th |
| <i>Four to Five</i> (6 Courts in 25 Counties) | Haskell, Kent, Stonewall & Throckmorton (39 th) Dawson, Gaines, Garza & Lynn (106 th) Dallam, Hartley, Moore & Sherman (69 th) Briscoe, Dickens, Floyd, & Motley (110 th) Baylor, Cottle, King & Knox (50 th) Carson, Childress, Collingsworth, Donley & Hall (100 th) | 7 th 7 th 9 th 9 th 9 th 9 th |
| Total Counties = 71 | | Total Courts = 25 |

Multiple Counties / Multiple Courts / One Separate Jurisdiction

An Example from the Fifth Administrative Judicial Region

| <u>Court(s)</u> | <u>Counties in Jurisdiction</u> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 28, 94, 117, 148, 214, 319 & 347 | Nueces |
| 105 | Kenedy, Kleburg, & Nueces |



Counties Sharing Several Courts

Bell & Lampasas (3rd AJR)
 Crosby & Lubbock (9th AJR)
 Johnson & Somervell (8th AJR)
 Webb & Zapata (4th AJR)
 Chambers & Liberty (2nd AJR)
 Cameron & Willacy (5th AJR)
 Hansford, Hutchinson & Ochiltree (9th AJR)
 Kenedy, Kleburg & Nueces (5th AJR)
 Callahan, Coleman & Taylor (7th AJR)
 Duval, Jim Hogg & Starr (5th AJR)
 Bastrop, Burleson, Lee & Washington
 Calhoun, De Witt, Goliad, Jackson, Refugio & Victoria (4th AJR)
 Gray, Hemphill, Lipscomb, Roberts & Wheeler (9th AJR)
 Bandera, Gillespie, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, McCulloch, Mason & Menard (6th AJR)

Primary County

Bell
 Lubbock
 Johnson
 Webb
 Liberty
 Cameron
 Hutchinson
 Nueces
 Taylor
 Starr
 Bastrop
 Victoria
 Gray
 Kerr

Courts

27, 146, 169, 264 & 426
 72, 99, 137, 140, 237 & 364
 18, 249 & 413
 49, 111, 341 & 406
 75, 253 & 344
 103, 107, 138, 197, 357, 404, 444 & 445
 84 & 316
 28, 94, 105, 117, 148, 214, 319 & 347
 42, 104, 326 & 350
 229 & 381
 21, 335 & 423
 24, 135, 267 & 377
 31 & 223
 198 & 216

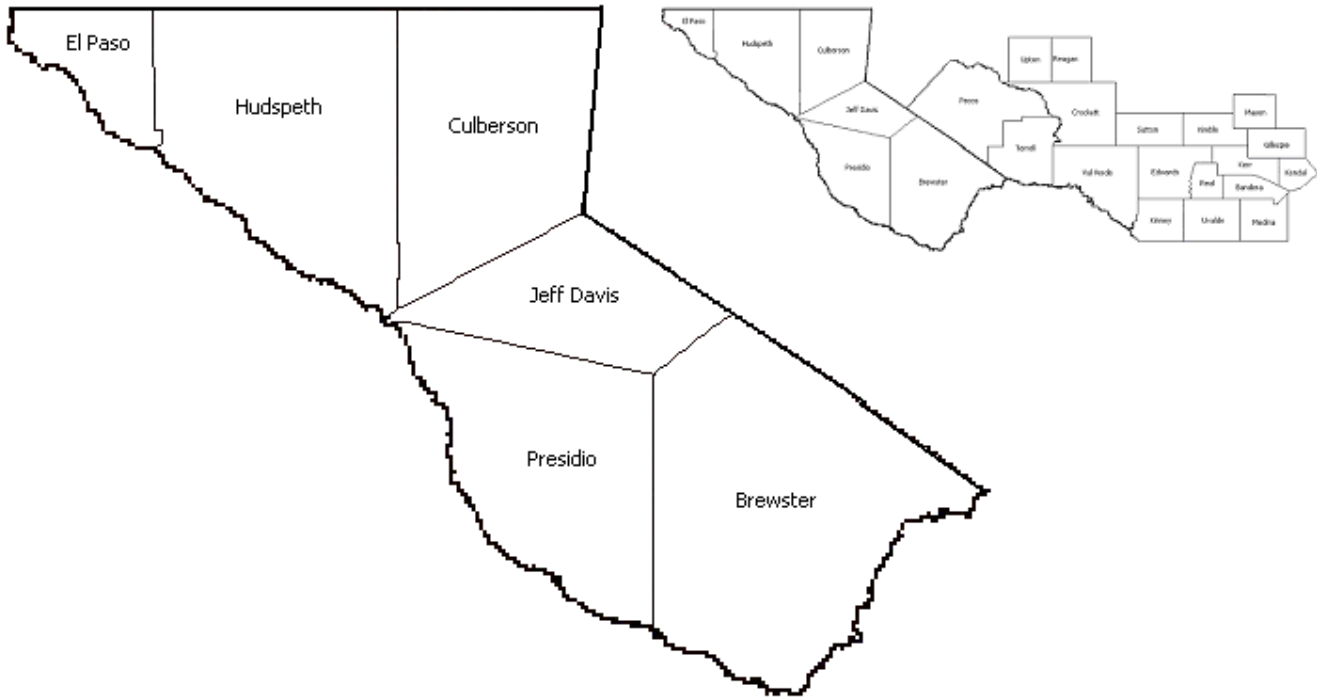
TOTAL Counties = 47

TOTAL Courts = 56

Multiple Counties / Multiple Courts / Many Separate Jurisdictions

An Example from the Sixth Administrative Judicial Region

| <u>Court</u> | <u>Counties in Jurisdiction</u> |
|--|--|
| 34, 40, 41, 65, 120, 168, 171, 210, 243, 327, 346, 383 & 384 | El Paso |
| 205 394 | Culberson, El Paso, & Hudspeth Brewster, Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, & Presidio |



Counties Sharing Several Courts

3 Counties: Armstrong, Potter & Randall

3 Counties: Brazoria, Matagorta & Wharton

5 Counties: Camp, Marion, Morris, Titus & Upshur

6 Counties: Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis & Presidio

7 Counties: Coke, Concho, Irion, Runnels, Schelicher, Sterling & Tom Green

7 Counties: Caldwell, Colorado, Comal, Gonzales, Guadalupe, Hays & Lavaca

8 Counties: Hardin, Jasper, Newton, Panola, Sabine, San Augustine, Shelby & Tyler

9 Counties: Crockett, Edwards, Kinney, Pecos, Reagan, Sutton, Terrell, Upton & Val Verde

11 Counties: Bowie, Cass, Delta, Fannin, Franklin, Grayson, Hopkins, Hunt, Lamar, Rains, & Red River

13 Counties: Anderson, Austin, Cherokee, Fayette, Freestone, Grimes, Henderson, Houston, Leon, Limestone, Madison, Walker & Waller

TOTAL Counties = 72

Courts

5 Courts: 47, 108, 181, 251 & 320

7 Courts: 23, 130, 149, 239, 300, 329 & 412

3 Courts: 76, 115 & 276

18 Courts: 34, 41, 65, 120, 168, 171, 205, 210, 243, 327, 346, 383, 384, 388, 394, 409, 448 & Crim. District Court No. 1

4 Courts: 51, 119, 340 & 391

8 Courts: 22, 25, 2nd 25, 207, 274, 421, 428 & 433

6 Courts: 1, 1A, 88, 123, 273 & 356

3 Courts: 63, 83 & 112

12 Courts: 5, 6, 8, 15, 59, 62, 102, 196, 202, 336, 354, & 397

12 Courts: 2, 3, 12, 77, 87, 155, 173, 278, 349, 369, 392 & 506

TOTAL Courts = 78