

CHAPTER 163

S.B. No. 659

AN ACT

relating to the administration of the justice courts in Harris County.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:*

SECTION 1. The subchapter heading to Subchapter F, Chapter 75, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER F. ADMINISTRATION OF CERTAIN  
[COUNTY] COURTS

SECTION 2. The section heading to Section 75.403, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 75.403. PRESIDING JUDGE FOR CERTAIN [IN] HARRIS COUNTY COURTS.

SECTION 3. Subchapter F, Chapter 75, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 75.404 to read as follows:

Sec. 75.404. PRESIDING JUDGE FOR HARRIS COUNTY JUSTICE COURTS. (a) *The justices of the peace in Harris County may select from among themselves a presiding judge.*

(b) *The presiding judge shall be selected during the month preceding the term the judge is to serve by a two-thirds vote of the judges. The presiding judge serves a term of one year unless by a vote of two-thirds of the judges the selection is canceled and another judge is selected to serve the unexpired term. Each judge shall enter on the minutes of the court an order reciting the selection of the presiding judge.*

(c) *A copresiding judge may be selected in the same manner as the presiding judge. The copresiding judge serves when the presiding judge is absent or disabled for any reason and has the same duties as the presiding judge.*

(d) *The presiding judge shall preside at any session of the judges.*

(e) *If a justice of the peace in Harris County is absent or for any reason unable to preside, the presiding judge may appoint a former justice of the peace who served as a justice of the peace in this state and who consents to the appointment as a special judge to preside for the justice of the peace. The presiding judge may designate the duration of the appointment, not to exceed 60 days, and may revoke an appointment at any time. The qualifications, duties, and powers of a special judge are the same as for the regular justice of the peace.*

(f) *The commissioners court may compensate the special judge.*

SECTION 4. The importance of this legislation and the crowded condition of the calendars in both houses create an emergency and an imperative public necessity that the constitutional rule requiring bills to be read on three several days in each house be suspended, and this rule is hereby suspended.

Passed the Senate on April 2, 1987, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; and that the Senate concurred in House amendment on May 12, 1987, by a viva-voce vote.

Passed the House, with amendment, on May 8, 1987, by a non-record vote.

Approved May 25, 1987.

Effective Aug. 31, 1987, 90 days after date of adjournment.