



JOHN R. ROACH, JR.
Judge, 296th Judicial District Court
Collin County Courthouse
McKinney, Texas 75071

972-548-4409; Metro 972-424-1460 x. 4409

MEMORANDUM

To: Bill Bilyeu, County Administrator
From: Judge John R. Roach, Jr.
Subject: Justification for Additional District Courts
Date: November 10, 2014

Recently, you approached me to discuss the impending need for additional district courts. You had suggested that we come up with a standardized number (of some sort) that we could depend on year-after-year when discussing the need for new courts.

While we have depended significantly on the Office of Court Administration statistics and recommendations as to the need for new courts, the analysis can be complex and difficult to understand and convey.

STANDARDIZED NUMBER BASED ON COUNTY COMPARISONS

We have devised a more simplistic method to determine the need for judicial officers. We began our analysis by examining the "cases added" in the ten most populous counties in Texas. This is a direct, easily ascertainable number. Our analysis also includes the number of full-time judicial officers in each of those counties.

However, we did not include El Paso County because it shares judicial officers with other counties. We also excluded Collin County because with 2,141 new case filings per judicial officers it skews the numbers as well.

According to these figures, the following indicates the average number of cases added per judicial officer in 2013:

<u>County</u>	<u>Cases per FTE</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Cases per FTE</u>
Collin	2,141	Tarrant	1,473
Denton	1,945	Travis	1,375
Harris	1,888	Bexar	1,360
Hidalgo	1,815	Fort Bend	1,330
Dallas	1,493		

Average with Collin County = 1,647

w/o Collin County = 1,585

These numbers show that the average number of new cases filed in the district court in the ten largest counties in Texas (excluding El Paso and Collin) is 1,585.

Dividing the average number of new cases filed in Collin County (19,710) by the average new cases filed in the ten largest counties in Texas (1,585) indicates a need for 12.4 district courts. $19,710/1,585=12.4$.

Our current number of judicial officers is 9.3. ***This indicates the need for an additional 3 Collin County District Courts through 2014.***

As we go forward, this matrix should be utilized to determine judicial officer need. Once our average cases added per judicial officer exceeds 1,585, a new district court should be created.

OCA FORMULA

We have been working closely with OCA to compile statistical data utilized to determine that need, based on weighted caseload studies. The basic premise of a weighted caseload study involves several elements:

- All case types should be given individual judicial time and attention
- The amount of time should be proportional to what each case warrants
- Cases vary in their degree of complexity
- More complex cases require more time to process
- Consideration for case-related and non-case-related activities
- Calculation of implied judicial officer need includes three factors: filings, case weights, and the judicial officer year value.

Based on these complex OCA calculations, Collin County currently has a need for 12.6 FTEs. Our current FTE count is 9.3. ***The OCA indicates that Collin County has the need for 3.3 Collin County District Courts through 2014.***

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the pure statistical analysis as indicated above, it is important to note that Collin County remains one of the fastest growing counties in the United States. With that growth comes with it more crime, divorces, civil suits, etc. The courts must be prepared to handle these new cases.

In particular, Collin County has been fortunate enough to attract companies like State Farm and Toyota. I am certain that those companies analyzed the jury verdicts and the court system of Collin County as a factor in choosing to relocate here. I anticipate all of their contracts will have venue clauses which will mandate that all disputes arising from any dispute must be litigated in Collin County, Texas. In addition, since their corporate headquarters are in Collin County, most often, proper venue for suing these corporations will be Collin County, Texas. Of course, this is in addition the criminal, civil and family law cases which will arise from their respective employees.

It is my position that we must be ready to handle the influx of cases as a result of us being one of the fastest growing counties in the United States as well as being prepared to be efficient as possible for those companies and employees who have decided to relocate to our great County. You can bet that other companies looking at Collin County will be watching how we handle it.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to work with the Commissioners' Court in determining the need for new courts and the fact that we were included early in the conversation.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss this critical need in further detail.



JUDGE PRESIDING