

# Texas Local Court Structure

## County-Level Courts (510 courts – 510 judges)

### Constitutional County Courts (254 courts) (one court in each county)

#### *Jurisdiction*

- Original jurisdiction in civil actions between \$200 and \$10,000.
- Probate (contested matters may be transferred to District Court).
- Exclusive original jurisdiction over misdemeanors with fines greater than \$500 or jail sentence.
- Juvenile matters.
- Appeals de novo from lower courts or on the record from municipal courts of record.

### Statutory County Courts (238 courts) (established in 88 counties)

#### *Jurisdiction*

- All civil, criminal, original, and appellate actions prescribed by law for constitutional county courts.
- Jurisdiction over civil matters up to \$200,000 (some courts may have higher maximum jurisdiction amount).

### Statutory Probate Courts (18 courts) (established in 10 counties)

#### *Jurisdiction*

- Limited primarily to probate matters.

County Trial  
Courts of  
Limited  
Jurisdiction



## Justice Courts<sup>1</sup> (817 courts – 817 judges)

(Established in precincts within each county)

#### *Jurisdiction*

- Civil actions of not more than \$10,000.
- Small claims.
- Criminal misdemeanors punishable by fine only (no confinement).
- Magistrate functions.

## Municipal Courts<sup>2</sup> (926 cities – 1,288 judges)

#### *Jurisdiction*

- Criminal misdemeanors punishable by fine only (no confinement).
- Exclusive original jurisdiction over municipal ordinance criminal cases.<sup>3</sup>
- Limited civil jurisdiction.
- Magistrate functions.

Local Trial  
Courts of  
Limited  
Jurisdiction

1. All justice courts and most municipal courts are not courts of record. Appeals from these courts are by trial de novo in the county-level courts, and in some instances in the district courts.

2. Some municipal courts are courts of record—appeals from those courts are taken on the record to the county-level courts.

3. An offense that arises under a municipal ordinance is punishable by a fine not to exceed: (1) \$2,000 for ordinances that govern fire safety, zoning, and public health or (2) \$500 for all others.