

# 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.