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TJCTC

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TEXAS JUSTICE COURT TRAINING CENTER

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CAN COUNTY COURTS SEND CASES BACK TO JUSTICE COURT AFTER AN APPEAL IS PERFECTED?

By Rob Daniel
Program Attorney

After a justice court's judgment (in either a criminal or civil trial) has been appealed to a county court and placed on a docket, may the county court send the case back to the justice court so that the justice court's original judgment may be enforced? Generally speaking, the answer is no. Over the past few months, we've received several questions on this topic from justices of the peace and court personnel, many of whom have received a "writ of procedendo" from a county court instructing the justice court to enforce its original judgment. In this article, we'll discuss why the Texas Justice Court Training Center discourages the use of writs of procedendo. We'll also provide some helpful suggestions regarding what justice courts should do when a court of intermediate appeal attempts to "remand" a case to justice court.

Some of you may be asking yourselves: what is a writ of procedendo? An appellate court may issue this writ when it sends a case back to a trial court so that proceedings may continue in the lower court. However, it's important to remember that in Texas, county courts to which municipal and justice courts judgments are appealed hear the case de novo rather than reviewing the proceedings in the lower court. Therefore, county courts which hear appeals from lower courts function as trial courts, not as appellate courts. Since county courts are not true appellate courts, the first question we must ask is: does Texas law authorize a county court to issue a writ of procedendo?

The Texas Constitution explicitly authorizes the Supreme Court of Texas and the Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas to issue writs of procedendo. TEX. CONST. art. V, § 3 & 5. Chapter 4 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and Chapter 22 of the Government Code also explicitly authorize the Supreme Court and the Court of Criminal Appeals to issue writs of procedendo. TEX. CRIM. PROC. CODE ANN. § 4.04 (Vernon 2012); TEX. GOV'T. CODE ANN. § 22.002 (Vernon 2012). The Constitution does not explicitly authorize the issuance of a writ of procedendo by a county court. The only other courts explicitly authorized by Texas law to issue writs of

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Update from the General Counsel

By Bronson Tucker

We are in the middle of our 2013-14 calendar, and it has been enjoyable being out on the road and chatting with you all about the new Civil Rules of Procedure for Justice Court. Most of you seem to like the changes, and hopefully as time goes on, you will grow to like them even more!

Our webinars continue to be successful. Just a reminder, we do have those posted on our website, tjctc.org, with webinars posted on such topics as Evictions, ODL and DL Suspensions, Collection of Fees and Costs, Noncompliant Criminal Defendants, Processing Juvenile Cases, and more! Check them out on the site, and sign up for one or two if you haven't yet. Again, feedback has been quite positive.

We have been asked when we will have updated publications out. I apologize that they are not out yet. Our travel schedule is pretty hectic, and between phone and our email and the message board, we answer about 4000 legal questions a year. I can tell you that it is a top priority and we look forward to releasing some very user-friendly publications and forms sometime this spring.

Look forward to seeing you at a judge school, court personnel seminar, a 10 hour workshop, or virtually in one of our webinars!

Bronson

SENDING APPEALS BACK (CONT. FROM P. 1)

procedendo are the county courts at law of El Paso County, and only when hearing an appeal from a municipal court of record. TEX. GOV'T. CODE ANN. § 30.00136 (Vernon 2012).

Article V of the Texas Constitution does authorize constitutional county courts to issue "writs necessary to enforce their jurisdiction." TEX. CONST. art. V, § 16. Additionally, a statutory county court may issue "all writs necessary for the enforcement of the jurisdiction of the court." TEX. GOV'T. CODE ANN. § 25.0004 (Vernon 2012). But what do these phrases mean? Several cases involving the lower Texas appellate courts shed light on this subject.

Like county courts, the lower Texas appellate courts also have the power to issue "writs necessary to enforce their jurisdiction." TEX. GOV'T. CODE ANN. § 22.221 (Vernon 2012). Several appellate courts have indicated that this general writ power gives a court the ability to issue "extraordinary writs," including a writ of procedendo, but only when the writ is necessary to enforce the court's jurisdiction. *In Re Salas*, 994 S.W.2d 422 (Tex. App.—Waco 1999), In re Yates, 193 S.W.3d 151 (Tex. App.—Houston [1st Dist.] 2006), *In re Tarvin*, No. 01-11-01127-CV, 2012 WL 1454496 (Tex. App.—Houston [1st Dist.] April 24, 2012) (not designated for publication), *In re Mitchell*, No. 04-10-00202-CR, 2010 WL 1233979 (Tex. App.—San Antonio March 31, 2010) (not designated for publication).

One may easily conclude from the material above that a county court possessing general writ power may issue a writ of procedendo only when such a writ is necessary to enforce the court's jurisdiction. We therefore turn to our next question: is the issuance of such a writ necessary to enforce the court's jurisdiction after an appeal from justice court has been perfected?

In criminal cases, when a party perfects an appeal from justice or municipal court, "all further proceedings in the case in the justice or municipal court shall cease," and the case shall proceed "as if the prosecution had been originally commenced in [the county] court." TEX. CRIM. PROC. CODE ANN. § 45.043 & 44.17 (Vernon 2012). In Texas, criminal proceedings are "originally commenced" by the return of an indictment or the filing of an information, and only

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SENDING APPEALS BACK (CONT. FROM PAGE 2)

the court in which a valid indictment or information is pending has jurisdiction to enter a judgment in a criminal case. TEX. CONST. art. V, § 12; TEX. CRIM. PROC. CODE ANN. Ch. 21 (Vernon 2012); *Trejo v. State*, 280 S.W.3d 258 (Tex. Crim. App. 2009).

With regard to civil cases, the Thirteenth Court of Appeals has written that "When an appeal from a justice court judgment is perfected in a county court, the judgment of the justice court is annulled." *In re Garza*, 990 S.W.2d 372, 374 (Tex. App.—Corpus Christi 1999, no pet.) The Second Court of Appeals, quoting an unpublished opinion by the First Court of Appeals, has stated that "[I]t is well-settled that perfection of an appeal to county court from a justice court for trial de novo vacates and annuls the judgment of the justice court." *Williams v. Schneiber*, 148 S.W.3d 581 (Tex. App.—Fort Worth 2004, no pet.) Furthermore, once an appeal in a civil matter has been perfected, "the case *must* be tried de novo in the county court." TEX. R. CIV. P. 506.3, emphasis added.

Therefore, the principle is the same in criminal and civil cases; once an appeal from the justice court has been perfected, jurisdiction lies exclusively in the county court. *Miller v. Henderson*, No. 06-12-00093-CV, 2013 WL 656852 (Tex. App.—Texarkana February 21, 2013) (not designated for publication). There is no jurisdictional question for the county court to decide, and it follows that a county court may not issue a writ "necessary to enforce its jurisdiction" when no jurisdictional question or conflict exists. Additionally, because jurisdiction lies exclusively in the county court following appeal, a justice court lacks jurisdiction to take further action once a case has been appealed to the county court. *Ex Parte Swift*, 358 S.W.2d 629 (Tex. Crim. App. 1962).

For these reasons, courts of appeal have long frowned upon the issuance of a writ of procedendo following the perfection of an appeal from a justice court. *Ex Parte Swift*, *Texas & P. Ry. Co. v. Power*, 263 S.W. 635 (Tex. Civ. App.—Fort Worth 1924), *Harter v. Curry*, 103 S.W. 445 (Tex. Civ. App. 1907).

A May 2004 newsletter article published by the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center appears to approve of the line of cases cited in the paragraph above, citing the Court of Criminal Appeals' opinion in *Ex Parte Swift* to support the conclusion that "once the appeal [is] perfected, procedendo [is] no longer an option."

Therefore, it is the opinion of the Texas Justice Court Training Center that: 1) a county court may only issue the extraordinary writ of procedendo when such a writ is necessary to enforce its jurisdiction; 2) no question of jurisdiction exists following an appeal to county court from the judgment a justice or municipal court; and 3) when no jurisdictional question exists, a county court may not issue a writ of procedendo, and such a writ will not lie in the justice court; and 4) a judgment entered by a justice court as instructed by such a writ is void.

But what if there is a defect in the appeal bond filed with the justice court? Such defects would certainly seem to create a jurisdictional question which would allow a county court to issue a writ of procedendo to enforce its jurisdiction. However, the Seventh Court of Appeals has stated that a county court's issuance of a writ of procedendo after the court "concluded that it did not have jurisdiction" was "unauthorized." *Cavazos v. Hancock*, 686 S.W.2d 284 (Tex. App.—Amarillo 1985), citing *Llano Improvement & Furnace Co. v. White*, 5 Tex. Civ. App. 109, 23 S.W. 594 (1893, no writ). The *Cavazos* court stated that when a county court lacks jurisdiction to hear an appeal, it should instead "dismiss the appeal and assess costs." This dismissal requires the lower court to enforce its judgment.

On the other hand, Texas courts of appeal have at times ordered county courts to issue a writ of procedendo to a lower court when the county court lacks jurisdiction. *Houston v. T.C. Ry. Co. v. Bounds*, 277 S.W. 401 (Tex. Civ. App.—Waco 1925), *Hubbert v. Texas Cent. R. Co.*, 24 Tex. Cvi. App. 432, 59 S.W. 292 (Tex. Civ. App. 1900). These cases seem to indicate that a county court may issue a writ of procedendo to "enforce its jurisdiction" when it encounters a defect in an appeal from a justice court.

(We also note that several courts of appeal have stated that when a party appeals a justice court's judgment to the county court by writ of certiorari, the county court may issue a writ of procedendo when the writ of certiorari is dismissed. *Roberts v. Kirk*, 43 S.W.2d 966 (Tex. Civ. App.—Galveston 1931), *Coffman v. National Motor Products Co.*, 26 S.W.2d 921 (Tex. Civ. App.—Dallas 1930), *Clark v. Hutton*, 28 Tex. 123 (Tex. 1866). Interestingly, it appears that a county court's issuance of a writ of procedendo was once explicitly authorized by statute in such circumstances. *Texas Novelty Advertising Co. v. Bay Trading Co.*, 206 S.W. 729 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1918), citing "Article 756, R.S. 1911." It is unclear what, if any, effect these cases have on a county court's ability to issue a writ of procedendo in a direct appeal.)

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PROCEDENDO/APPEALS (CONT. FROM P.3)

A writ of procedendo therefore seems to be unnecessary (if not unauthorized) when a county court dismisses an appeal for lack of jurisdiction. In other words, although there is some support in Texas law for the issuance of the writ when the county court lacks jurisdiction, it is not the only available method to return the case to the lower court. As the Seventh Court of Appeals' opinion in *Cavazos* points out, a county court's order of dismissal for lack of jurisdiction should suffice to: a) dispose of the case at the county court level; and b) indicate to the lower court that its judgment may be enforced. Given the choice between a simple order of dismissal and an unusual, extraordinary writ, we choose to advise courts to take the simpler path.

(Similarly, when a prosecutor and a defendant agree to "remand" a case in which appeal has been perfected to justice court, the prosecutor may dismiss the complaint pending in the county court and may file a new complaint in the justice court to achieve the same effect as a writ of procedendo. Thus, even if one takes the position that the issuance of a writ of procedendo is authorized in such circumstances (TJCTC does not), it cannot be said that the issuance of the writ is necessary.)

Therefore, because some caselaw indicates that a county court does not have authority to issue a writ of procedendo when dismissing an appeal for lack of jurisdiction, and because the same effect may be achieved by issuing a simple order of dismissal and transmitting such to the lower court, the Texas Justice Court Training Center discourages the issuance of a writ of procedendo in such circumstances.

So, what should a justice court do if it a county court "remands" the case after an appeal has been perfected? Because the justice court's appeal was vacated when the appeal was perfected in the county court, TJCTC's first recommendation is to take no further action in the case. We also recommend explaining to the litigants and the court which issued the writ of procedendo why the justice court cannot take action. Then, wait for appropriate action to be taken. Appropriate action may include further proceedings in the county court (since it has exclusive jurisdiction) which will resolve the case. Appropriate action may also include the dismissal of proceedings in the county court and the filing of a new criminal complaint in the justice court. The filing of a new charging instrument gives the justice court personal jurisdiction over the defendant. The justice court may proceed and place the case on the appropriate docket.

If you have additional questions, remember that you can always contact the Training Center by phone or by posting a question to our website.

REVIEW OF NEW JUVENILE PROCEDURES & LAWS

Thea Whalen
Program Attorney, TJCTC

The 83rd Legislative session brought several changes to the way schools handle juvenile behavior. The general effect served to de-emphasize criminal offenses and focus instead on school discipline. This is a summary of those issues that you are likely to face in your court.

New Laws

One change brought by Senate Bill 1114 is that a warrant can no longer be issued for a person younger than 17 years old for a Class C Education Code misdemeanor. Those offenses include failure to attend school, trespass on school grounds, possession of intoxicants on public school grounds, disruption of classes, disruption of transportation, and possession of dietary supplements. Education Code §37.085. In addition, Senate Bill 393 states that no citation may be issued for "school offenses." School offenses are fine-only offenses, other than traffic, committed on school property. This does not mean that there is no consequence for juveniles who commit these offenses. First, they may be disciplined by the school through the graduated sanctions found in Education Code §37.144. Second, the student may be taken into custody directly. And finally, the officer may file a sworn complaint as provided by Education Code §37.146 or Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 45.058. The outcome of these changes is to encourage the school to handle routine disciplinary issues and discourage officers from simply 'writing a citation' and moving on. It requires more consideration and effort instead of immediately making every behavior situation a criminal case. However, if it is conduct that needs the attention of the court system, the student can be still be arrested or have a sworn complaint filed.

The two above mentioned complaints have specific requirements. The §37.146 Education Code complaint must be sworn to by a person who has personal knowledge of the underlying facts for probable cause and must contain a statement from a school employee stating if the child is eligible for or receives "special education" services and what graduated sanctions, if any, were imposed on the child before the complaint was filed. Prosecuting attorneys may adopt rules for these complaints in order to determine probable cause, review the complaint for legal sufficiency, and see that justice is done. A summons may be issued after a complaint is filed. Education Code §37.145 and §37.147.

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REVIEW OF NEW JUVENILE LAWS FROM THE RECENT LEGISLATIVE SESSION (CONT. FROM P. 4)

The other type of complaint, from Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 45.058(i), may only be issued against a juvenile who is 12 years or older, if the offense alleged is a school offense. It requires that any citation or complaint must have an offense report, a statement by a witness to the conduct, and statement by any victim of the alleged conduct. The prosecutor cannot go to trial unless the officer complied with requirement of the CCP. This does not mean that the court should assume the role of reviewing for compliance, but the court should make the statements open and available to your prosecutor so that they may review them. If a child is younger than 12 years of age, an officer cannot issue a citation or file a complaint for an offense on school property, including offenses on vehicles owned by school. Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 45.058 (j).

We have not had the opportunity to see how these complaints are working in your courts yet, but do believe that a complaint filed based on these circumstances would likely need to meet both the Education Code and Criminal Code of Procedure criteria.

A few other laws passed by the 83rd Legislature contained in Senate Bills 114 and 393 include the fact that a student cannot be prosecuted for disruption of classes or school activities at their own school. Only a non-student of the school may be prosecuted. Also, no student enrolled in school may be charged with disruption of transportation. Education Code §37.124 (a) & 37.126 (a). The age for defense of disruption of class, activity or transportation was changed from 6th grade or lower to 'younger than 12.' Education Code §37.124 (d).

Capacity Issues

Along with offense changes, the Legislature focused on concern for a juvenile's capacity to appear in a courtroom environment. Senate Bill 393 modified Penal Code 8.08 to state that if a defendant, state, parent, or court makes a motion, there **must** be a hearing to determine if probable cause exists that the child lacks capacity to understand the criminal proceedings, the wrongfulness of their conduct, or, to shape their conduct to the appropriate requirements. If the court finds this juvenile does lack this capacity, the complaint shall be dismissed by the court. If the charges are re-filed, it must be transferred to juvenile court.

Senate Bill 393 also modified Penal Code 8.07(e). It now states it is a "presumption" that a child under 15 cannot commit a criminal offense, other than juvenile curfew. The prosecution can "prove to the court by a preponderance of the evidence" that the actor had "sufficient capacity" to understand the conduct was wrong. We think that this requirement may be satisfied by including a statement in the complaint from the prosecutor that the juvenile did understand their actions, assuming the juvenile pleads guilty or nolo contendere. We would recommend that the judge admonish the juvenile that a guilty plea means that they are accepting the statement in the complaint. If the juvenile pleads not guilty, the state must prove capacity at trial.

Confidential Records

Senate Bill 394 and House Bill 528 modified Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 44.2811 and 45.0217, and Family Code §58.00711 to make **all** juvenile records confidential. Prior to this legislative year, only satisfied judgments were confidential. Now, information regarding current charges, dismissals, acquittals, and deferrals must not be released to anyone but a special list of qualified individuals or agencies. This list includes judges or court staff, a criminal justice agency for a criminal justice purpose (defined by Section 411.082), the Department of Public Safety, an attorney for a party to the proceeding, the child defendant, and the defendant's parent, guardian, or managing conservator.

The military is **not** included in this list. We think that means that the defendant or their parents may request a copy of the criminal record and provide that to the military. However, we do not think that a waiver signed by the defendant is necessarily adequate.

As with all new laws, it may take some time to see how they actually work in practice. If we learn of any new interpretations or angles, we will be sure to update you.

DWI AND OCCUPATIONAL DRIVER'S LICENSES

By Rob Daniel
Program Attorney, TJCTC

The vast majority of you are aware that justice courts may now issue occupational driver's licenses. We've received several questions regarding whether a justice court may issue an occupational license if the petitioner's license has been suspended "for DWI." The answer to that broad question is "it depends." In this article, we'll walk through some common issues relating to occupational licenses and driving while intoxicated.

Justice courts **may issue** an occupational license if a person's license has been suspended for refusing to give a breath/blood sample or providing a sample with a BAC greater than 0.08 following an **arrest** for DWI. The licensee may file a petition with any justice court in the county where he or she lives or any justice court in the county where the offense occurred. TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. § 521.242 (Vernon 2012).

Justice courts **may not issue** an occupational license if a person's license has been suspended due to a **conviction** for DWI. The licensee may file a petition only with the court which issued the judgment of conviction. *Id*. If the Department of Public Safety suspended a DWI offender's license based on conviction for DWI and he or she files a petition for an occupational license in justice court, you should enter an order denying the petition. (Sample order forms are available on the TJCTC website.) Following your denial of the petition, the licensee may re-file his or her petition in the appropriate court.

When a person's license has been suspended following a DWI arrest, keep in mind that you'll need to have information regarding that person's criminal history in order to determine when your order will take effect. TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. § 521.251 (Vernon 2012). Do not ask a peace officer or prosecutor to print a copy of the petitioner's criminal history. The petitioner should provide this information in the petition. (Sample petition forms are available on the TJCTC website.) If the petitioner fails to include such information in the petition, we recommend setting the case for a hearing. At the hearing, we recommend developing the facts of the case in order to determine whether the petitioner's license has previously been suspended as the result of a conviction for an intoxication-related offense and/or whether the petitioner's license has previously been suspended as the result of an "alcohol-related or drug-related enforcement contact." The latter term is defined by Section 524.001 of the Transportation Code, and includes refusing to give a breath/blood sample or providing a sample with a BAC greater than 0.08 following an arrest for DWI.
If the petitioner's license has been suspended as the result of an "alcohol-related or drug-related enforcement contact" within the past five years, your order does not take effect until 91 days following the date on which the petitioner's license was suspended. TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. § 521.251 (Vernon 2012).

If the petitioner's license has previously been suspended within the past five years as the result of a conviction for DWI-1st, intoxication assault, or intoxication manslaughter, your order does not take effect until 181 days following the date on which the petitioner's license was suspended. *Id*.

If the petitioner's license has previously been suspended within the past five years as the result of a **subsequent** conviction for DWI, intoxication assault, or intoxication manslaughter, your order does not take effect until 1 year following the date on which the petitioner's license was suspended. *Id*.

We've also had several justices of the peace ask whether an order granting an occupational license may restrict the petitioner to the use of a vehicle equipped with an ignition interlock device if the petitioner's license was suspended for an alcohol-related offense. Chapter 521 contains no explicit authority for such a provision within an order unless a conviction for DWI prompted the petitioner's license suspension. (As noted above, justice courts are unable to grant occupational licenses when the petitioner's license has been suspended as the result of a conviction for DWI.)

However, we recommend that you develop the facts of the case in order to determine whether the defendant has been restricted to the use of a vehicle equipped with an ignition interlock device as a condition of bond. If such a condition exists, we recommend notifying the Department of Public Safety of its existence, and attaching a copy of the bond condition to your order granting the occupational license if practicable. Such notification will require DPS to issue an occupational license which "authorizes the person to operate only a motor vehicle equipped with an ignition interlock device." TEX. TRANSP. CODE ANN. § 521.2465 (Vernon 2012).

If you have questions about issuing occupational licenses following a DWI-related driver's license suspension, please contact the Training Center by phone or by posting a question to our website.

AG OPINION AND CASELAW UPDATE

By Bronson Tucker
General Counsel

As we went to press, the Court of Criminal Appeals released the opinion in the *Johnson v. State* case that we had discussed in prior newsletters and classes dealing with bills of costs. The opinion, found at 2014 WL 714736 (Tex.Crim.App.), reinstated the court costs that had been assessed against Johnson, and found that there did not need to be an itemized list of costs in the judgment. So what does your court need to do to ensure that you are validly and legally collecting court costs?

We recommend the following:

1) Include in the judgment an order to pay costs. This order can, but is not required to, specifically itemize the current costs.
2) Create, or be prepared to immediately create (as in push a button and it prints) an itemized bill of costs, breaking down all court costs assessed in a case.
3) This bill of costs should be signed by the judge, not the clerk (the clerk can stamp the judge's signature, with the permission of and under the supervision of the judge.
4) Send a copy of the bill of costs along with the judgment in the case in the event that the defendant perfects an appeal.

Following these four simple steps will ensure that there can be no questioning your court's assessment of court costs.

In early January, AG Opinion GA-1035 was released, addressing a potential conflict in the bills that were passed by the 83rd Legislature dealing with the confidentiality of juvenile records.

However, the AG ruled that the bills did **not** conflict, which means that as of January 1, 2014, as discussed in Thea's article above, HB 528 will be in effect, making basically all records involving someone under 17, other than traffic, confidential.

The opinion also addressed the question if that also mandates that the docket be made confidential and the proceedings closed to the public. The AG's opinion was that the bill does **not** mandate that the docket is confidential or that the proceedings be closed.

Another AG Opinion released recently was GA-1034, discussing whether or not the provisions of SB 389 were constitutional. If you recall, that was the bill that changed the determination of court costs from the offense date to the conviction date. At our first Legislative Update, there was some confusion as to whether or not that bill applied to justice court. Afterward, it was determined that it did **not** apply to justice court. So, as was the case prior to the 83rd Legislature, justice court will continue to assess court costs based on the **date of the offense**, and **not the date of the conviction**. We wanted to reiterate this, especially in light of the fact that we were unsure of its application at the first Legislative Update.

For the record, the AG did approve of the law making court costs based off of the conviction date instead of the offense date, so that might be something that comes back during 2015.

We are still awaiting word from the AG about the issue of whether or not there may be a filing fee charged in ODL cases. This is currently the second-oldest unanswered opinion request, so we expect that a final answer will be forthcoming shortly.

Until then, we recommend following the recommendation of your county auditor and maintaining consistency among the various courts in your county.

Another pending AG request of import to JPs is the question of whether or not justices of the peace have "family law jurisdiction" allowing them to waive the 72-hour waiting period, allowing someone to get married immediately after receiving the marriage license. TJCTC training is that JPs do **not** have that jurisdiction, however, we will continue to monitor the situation.

To stay up to date, be sure to keep your email address up to date with TJCTC, monitor your spam folder, and also like our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter, @TJCTC.

DWI BOND CONDITION SCHEMATIC PROGRAM

The Texas Justice Court Training Center's bond schematic program assists Texas counties in creating consistent conditions of bond in all DWI cases. TJCTC works with all stakeholders (including all criminal magistrates, prosecutors, and probation departments) in participating counties to establish a system for setting, monitoring, and enforcing appropriate conditions of bond. If you are interested in having your county participate in this program, please contact Rob Daniel at 512-347-9927.

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Our Mission Statement

"The mission of the Texas Justice Court Training Center is to provide quality education opportunities for justices of the peace, constables and court personnel, insuring the credibility of, and confidence in, the justice courts enabling them to better serve the people of The State of Texas."

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