

Municipal Courts Research Guide

Overview

This research guide includes information and resources on municipal courts and governance. Sometimes referred to as “traffic court,” municipal court is a court with “jurisdiction (usually civil and criminal) over cases arising within the municipality in which it sits.” (*Black’s Law Dictionary, 11th ed.*) Examples of types of cases that can be heard in a municipal court include dangerous dog hearings, code enforcement hearings, and zoning violations. The resources listed below are not exhaustive and may not include the most up-to-date information. It is for information purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice or act as the substitute for legal counsel.

Related guides: Ordinances

Statutes and Codes

Texas Statutes Online www.statutes.capitol.texas.gov

City of Fort Worth Code of Ordinances
https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/ftworth/latest/ftworth_tx/0-0-0-1

Texas Code of Criminal Procedure

- Ch. 45 Justice and Municipal Courts
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/CR/html/CR.45.htm>
- Ch. 45A Justice and Municipal Courts
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/CR/html/CR.45A.htm>

Texas Government Code

- Ch. 29 Municipal Courts
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/html/GV.29.htm>

- Ch. 30 Municipal Courts of Record
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/html/GV.30.htm>

Texas Local Government Code

- Title 2. Organization of Municipal Government, Chs. 5-62
 - Ch. 51 General Powers of Municipalities
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/LG/html/LG.51.htm>

Secondary Resources in Print

Texas Criminal Practice Guide REF KFT 1775 .T49

- Vol. 1, §2.05 Justice and Municipal Courts
- Vol. 1, §3.06 Appeal from Justice and Non-record Municipal Courts
- Vol. 1, §3.07 Appeal from Municipal Courts of Record

Texas Practice Series REF KFT 1280. T4

- Vol. 23, Ch. 15 Municipal Court

Texas Jurisprudence Pleading and Practice Forms REF KFT 1730 .A65 T482

- Vol. 10A, §200B:59 Municipal Courts

Texas Municipal Zoning Law KFT 1658 .D8

Municipal Law and Practice KFT 1280 .T4

Texas Jurisprudence KFT 1265. T48

- Vol. 12, §37 Appointment or Election and Tenure of Municipal Court Clerks
- Vol. 22, §129 Municipal Court Jurisdiction

Strategy and Tactics in Municipal Zoning KF 5698 .C7

CLE Materials

Advanced Government Law (PDF only)

- 2024 Ch. 13 Constitutional Issues and Municipal Ordinances Regarding Charitable Feeding

Online Resources

Judicial Directory Database (Texas Office of Court Administration) – *can search by County and/or court*
<https://card.txcourts.gov/DirectorySearch.aspx>

Municipal Court (City of Fort Worth)
<https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/departments/municipal-court>

Municipal Ordinances (TSLL)
<https://www.sll.texas.gov/law-legislation/texas/municipal-laws-and-ordinances/>

Municipal Courts: A Primer on What They Do and a Look at the National Conversation Regarding Indigent Defendants (State Bar of Texas)
<https://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=articles&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=43958>

Texas Municipal Courts Education Center (TMCEC)

- Free Online Books: Online Bench Book, Online Forms Book, Level I Study Guide, Level II Study Guide
<https://www.tmcec.com/resources/books/>
- Mechanics of Appeals: Courts of Record and Courts of Non Record
<https://www.tmcec.com/public/files/File/Course%20Materials/FY11/Judges/appeals/materials.pdf>
- Jury Charges
<https://www.tmcec.com/resources/jury-charges/>
- Truant Conduct
<https://www.tmcec.com/resources/truancy/>

Legal Assistance

Legal Lines – Ask Attorneys simple legal questions (free service)

- Tarrant County LegalLine Sign-up
<https://www.tarrantbar.org/>
- Dallas County LegalLine Sign-up
<https://www.dallasbar.org/index.cfm?pg=legalline>

Tarrant County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service: 817-336-4101 (\$20 for the first 30 minutes)