

**Texas Board of Criminal Justice**



**Independent  
Ombudsman Resolution  
Fiscal Year 2024 Report**

**December 2024**

## Texas Board of Criminal Justice

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## Overview

As required by the 88th Texas Legislature General Appropriations Act for the 2024-2025 biennium by Article V, Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Rider 46, the TDCJ is required to provide an annual public report on the activities of the Ombudsman. Additionally, Rider 30 requires the Ombudsman to respond to all agency and legislatively referred complaints in a timely manner and to develop performance measures, trend analysis, and a method of resolution for issues presented.

The Ombudsman accounts for number and types of inquiries made, the resolution of each inquiry, and how each inquiry was resolved.

## Office of the Independent Ombudsman

In accordance with Section 493.016 of the Texas Government Code, the Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ) Independent Ombudsman Program provides a single point of contact for elected officials and members of the public who have inquiries regarding the agency, inmates or staff. When necessary, investigations shall be coordinated through appropriate TDCJ officials. The Office of the Independent Ombudsman strives to provide timely responses to the public.

The TBCJ Independent Ombudsman Program facilitates public access to agency staff through coordination with divisional offices. Public knowledge of the program and its procedures is available through the TDCJ website. Informational posters, both in English and Spanish, have been placed on TDCJ correctional facilities, secure parole facilities, and district parole offices. The posters outline how the Independent Ombudsman can be contacted. The TDCJ website provides contact information for each ombudsman section.

The program follows Texas Government Code § 493.016; the Governor's Compact with Texans; and TBCJ Board Policy (BP) 01.08, "Independent Ombudsman Policy Statement."

In FY 2024, the Independent Ombudsman Office hosted three Texas Inmate Advocacy Group Video Conferences and attended two TDCJ Summits.



## Executive Summary

This report contains information regarding inquiries closed from September 1, 2023, through August 31, 2024 (FY 2024). During FY 2024, resolutions were provided for 9,468 inquiries based on the following Independent Ombudsman inquiry categories:

INQUIRY CATEGORIES	TOTAL
Emergency	1,946
Legal	66
Victim	15
Classification	608
Religion	19
Disciplinary	755
Communication	711
Transportation	6
Health Services	874
Grievance Program	296
Facility Operations	1,977
Parole	614
Staff Complaints	665
Other/Miscellaneous	814
FYI/Referrals/Thank You	102

**OMBUDSMAN CATEGORIES TOTAL 9,468**



## Ombudsman Reporting Resolutions

### Emergency

#### Allegations/Threats and/or Physical harm from another Inmate, Request for protection, Extortion to include obtaining currency, property, or demanding the performance of an action by coercion, deception, or violence.

<i>Resolutions/Outcomes</i>	<i>Reporting</i>
Duplicate request from same complainant	2
Additional information received from requester	4
Not satisfied with response/rebuttal provided	2
General information provided/Policy or process explained	558
Request to disregard	2
Decline to investigate, reason provided	8
Referred to unit administration	39
Referred to PREA*	11
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	323
Request additional information from complainant	2
Referred to TDCJ Health Services	10
Grievance filed and pending outcome	1
Chain of command information provided	3
Investigated, complaint substantiated	208
Other action taken	7
Requested action approved/taken	8
Referred to OIG**	78
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	246
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,512</b>

#### Physical Harm or Threats of Physical Harm from Staff

<i>Resolutions/Outcomes</i>	<i>Reporting</i>
General information provided/Policy or process explained	109
Referred to unit administration	4
Request additional information from complainant	1
Chain of command information provided	2
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	3
Decline to investigate, reason provided	3
Referred to PREA*	0
Referred to OIG**	176
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>304</b>



<b>Medical Emergencies</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
General information provided/Policy or process explained	18
Referred to unit administration	29
Referred to OIG**	2
Referred to TDCJ Health Services	6
Investigated, complaint substantiated	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56</b>

<b>Allegations of Sexual Assault/Sexual Abuse (penetration of the anus, sexual organ, or mouth of another person by any means, without that person's consent, sexual contact between the genitals of one person and the genitals, mouth, anus, or hands of another person, to include sexual fondling, without that person's consent) *</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
General information provided/Policy or process explained	24
Additional information received from requester	1
Other action taken	1
Referred to unit administration	2
Referred to PREA*	46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>74</b>

## Legal

<b>Access to Courts, Indigent Supplies, Telephone Access to Attorneys, Law Library, Attorney Visits, Notary Work, Open Records Requests, Legal Issues not otherwise specified</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
General information provided/Policy or process explained	53
Decline to investigate, reason provided	1
Access to Courts issue resolved	1
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	5
Request action approved/taken	1
Grievance filed and pending outcome	2
Chain of command information provided	1
Not satisfied with response/Rebuttal	1
Duplicate request from same requester	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>66</b>



## Victim

<b>Victim</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Referred to District Parole Office	1
Referred to BPP	2
General information provided/Policy or process explained	11
Parole support or protest letter received	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>

## Classification

<b>Housing/Unit Assignment, Job Assignment, Restrictive Housing, Education/Vocational Training, Rehabilitation Programs, Classification Status and/or Custody Level, Furlough/Work Release/Emergency Absences, Security Threat Group, Time Calculations, Classification Issues not otherwise specified</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Other action taken	24
Decline to investigate, reason provided	4
Referred to unit administration	2
General information provided/Policy or process explained	500
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	10
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	12
Referred to OIG**	5
Maintenance order submitted	1
Referred to District Parole Office	2
Chain of command information provided	16
Investigated, complaint substantiated	1
Referred to TDCJ Health Services	5
Not TDCJ jurisdiction	4
Request to disregard	5
Request approved/Corrective action taken	5
Records corrected	1
Grievance filed and pending outcome	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>599</b>

<b>Transfers within State (facility transfer requests)</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
General information provided/Policy or process explained	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>





## Religious

<b>Religious Service/Membership, Religious Paraphernalia, Religious Grooming, Discrimination based on Religion, Religious Issues not otherwise specified</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
General information provided/Policy or process explained	16
Decline to investigate, reason provided	1
Grievance filed and pending outcome	1
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>

## Disciplinary

<b>Improperly Charged, Notice/Service Deficiency, Investigation Deficiency, Failure to allow, call, or interview witnesses and/ or cross examination, Denied Presentation of Documentary and/or Other Evidence, Hearing/Investigation was not impartial, Counsel Substitute Deficiency, Insufficient/Improper Evidence to Support Findings, Improper Punishment, Accused Excluded from Hearing, Conspiracy/Retaliation, Frivolous Issue, Disciplinary Overturn Request, Disciplinary Issues not otherwise specified</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Additional information received from requester	1
Request action approved/taken	1
Grievance filed and pending outcome	20
Request to disregard	1
Other action taken	7
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	3
Not satisfied with response/Rebuttal	3
Decline to investigate, reason provided	10
Chain of command information provided	1
Investigated, complaint substantiated	1
General information provided/Policy or process explained	701
Pending litigation/General information provided	1
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	2
Disciplinary overturned	2
No contact information for requester	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>755</b>



## Communication

<b>Visitation, Telephone Access, Access to Forms, General Mail, Packages, Publications, Special/Legal/Media Mail, Mail not being delivered in accordance with Correspondence Rules Time Limits, Issues not otherwise specified</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Decline to investigate, reason provided	5
Additional information received from requester	2
Request to disregard	2
Not satisfied with response/Rebuttal	1
Grievance filed and pending outcome	2
Other action taken	30
Records corrected	3
Referred to unit administration	3
General information provided/Policy or process explained	597
Request additional information from complainant	2
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	3
Telephone access/information provided	2
Visitation issue investigated and corrected	5
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	13
Property replaced/settlement/returned	2
Maintenance order submitted	4
Investigated, complaint substantiated	4
Request approved/action taken	5
Chain of command information provided	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>694</b>

<b>Inmate Well Being</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Chain of command information provided	1
Referred to unit administration	2
General information provided/Policy or process explained	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>

## Transportation

<b>Transportation (any issue regarding inmate movement via bus, van, etc.)</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Other action taken	1
Referred to TDCJ Health Services	1
General information provided/Policy or process explained	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>



## Health Services

<b>Housing Based on Medical Restrictions, Medical Personnel, Confidentiality/Privacy of Medical Information, Work Assignment Based on Medical Restrictions, Countermanded Medical Orders, Access/Denial to Medical Care and Services, Dental, Health Records, Infectious Diseases, Medical Classification/Health Summary [HSM-18], Medical Pass Issues, Medication Issues, Psychiatric/Psychological Programs, Not Satisfied with Treatment, Assistive Disability Services – ADS, Podiatry, Ophthalmology/Optomery/Glasses, Medical Transfers, Medical Copayment, Ancillary Medical Services, Medical Issues not otherwise specified</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Other action taken	40
Not satisfied with response/Rebuttal	2
Referred to TDCJ Health Services	212
Request to disregard	1
Chain of command information provided	4
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	1
Grievance filed and pending outcome	1
Decline to investigate, reason provided	5
Referred to unit administration	5
General information provided/Policy or process explained	596
Seen by medical/Medication provided/Co-pay issues addressed	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>874</b>

## Grievance Program

<b>Allegations against Grievance Staff, Procedure, Processing, and/or Response Time, Access to Grievance Forms</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Other action taken	1
Additional information received from requester	1
Request approved/Corrective action taken	3
Decline to investigate, reason provided	2
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	3
Requested additional information from complainant	1
No contact information for requester	1
Chain of command information provided	1
Grievance filed and pending outcome	84
General information provided/Policy or process explained	199
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>296</b>



## Facility Operations

<b>Food, Commissary, Trust Fund, Sanitation, Necessities, Activity Rotation, Living &amp; Working Conditions, Grooming, Recreation, Showers, Confiscated/Contraband Property, Property Policy Questions/Complaints, Property Lost/Damaged/Stolen, Searches, Maintenance, Facility Lockdown, Inmate Drug Testing Procedures, Craft Shop</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Grievance filed and pending outcome	21
Other action taken	43
General information provided/Policy or process explained	1,311
Decline to investigate, reason provided	11
Referred to unit administration	15
Maintenance order submitted	9
Request to disregard	6
Investigated, complaint substantiated	21
Additional information received from requester	2
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	50
Referred to OIG**	2
Records corrected	1
Necessities provided	2
Chain of command information provided	18
Not satisfied with response/Rebuttal	5
No contact information for requester	2
Request approved/corrective action taken	11
Property replaced/returned/settlement	3
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	10
Not TDCJ jurisdiction	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,546</b>

<b>Living Conditions (Pest Control)</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Other action taken	4
Request approved/corrective action taken	1
General information provided/Policy or process explained	9
Request additional information from requester	1
Maintenance order submitted	3
Investigated, complaint substantiated	6
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	8
Referred to unit administration	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>



<b>Facility concerns not otherwise specified</b>	
<i>Resolutions/Outcomes</i>	<i>Reporting</i>
Other action taken	11
General information provided/Policy or process explained	176
Maintenance order submitted	2
Request approved/corrective action taken	4
Referred to TDCJ Health Services	5
Referred to unit administration	5
Investigated, complaint substantiated	19
Decline to investigate, reason provided	1
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	164
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	10
No contact information for requester	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>398</b>

## Parole

<b>Parole Status and/or Parole Review Process Inquiry</b>	
<i>Resolutions/Outcomes</i>	<i>Reporting</i>
Other action taken	16
Parole support or protest letter received	2
Referred to District Parole Office	8
Request to disregard	2
Requested additional information from complainant	2
Decline to investigate, reason provided	1
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	1
General information provided/Policy or process explained	478
Not TDCJ jurisdiction	1
Referred to BPP	56
Chain of command information provided	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>580</b>

<b>Community Supervision Programs</b>	
<i>Resolutions/Outcomes</i>	<i>Reporting</i>
Chain of command information provided	1
No contact information for complainant	1
Referred to District Parole Office	3
General information provided/Policy or process explained	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>



<b>Parole Division Policy/Procedure Inquiry/ISF Release Inquiry</b>	
<i>Resolutions/Outcomes</i>	<i>Reporting</i>
Referred to BPP	2
Other action taken	1
Chain of command information provided	1
Parole support or protest letter received	1
Decline to investigate, reason provided	1
General information provided/Policy or process explained	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>

<b>Support/Non-Support Letters for Parole Release</b>	
<i>Resolutions/Outcomes</i>	<i>Reporting</i>
General information provided/Policy or process explained	6
Parole support or protest letter received	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>

## Staff Complaint

<b>Use of Force, Use of Chemical Agents, Allegations of Criminal Activity by Staff, Allegations of Retaliation/Harassment for Use of Grievance Procedure, Allegations of Harassment for Contributing to or Cooperating with an Official Investigation, Threats from Staff, Allegations of Profanity/Racial Slurs/Taunting/Badgering/Intimidation, Allegations of Denial/Interference with Activity, Allegations of Unprofessional Staff Conduct, Staff Issues Not Otherwise Specified</b>	
<i>Resolutions/Outcomes</i>	<i>Reporting</i>
General information provided/Policy or process explained	410
Other action taken	21
Request approved/Corrective action taken	2
Additional information received from requestor	9
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	36
Investigated, complaint substantiated	3
Referred to TDCJ Health Services	3
Request to disregard	5
Chain of command information provided	15
Referred to District Parole Office	3
Referred to unit administration	22
Decline to investigate, reason provided	29
Not satisfied with response/Rebuttal	4
Not TDCJ jurisdiction	1
Requested additional information from requestor	2
Referred to OIG**	74
Inmate reassigned unit/housing/job/class/program	5



Referred to PREA*	5
Property replaced/returned/settlement	1
Records corrected	1
No contact information for requester	1
Pending litigation/Provided general information	4
Grievance filed and pending outcome	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>665</b>

## Other/Miscellaneous

<b>Allegations against Inmates</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Other action taken	3
Not satisfied with response/Rebuttal	1
Investigated, complaint unsubstantiated	1
General information provided/Policy or process explained	26
Not TDCJ jurisdiction	1
Referred to unit administration	3
Chain of command information provided	1
Referred to District Parole Office	1
Investigated, complaint substantiated	1
Referred to OIG*	47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85</b>

<b>Other (general information questions: phone number/address, email addresses, directions to units, pick up procedures for releasees, etc.)</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Additional information received from requester	14
Not satisfied with response/Rebuttal	3
Other action taken	30
Decline to investigate, reason provided	3
General information provided/Policy or process explained	600
Referred to unit administration	2
Referred to OIG**	17
Requested additional information from complainant	6
No contact information for requester	3
Pending litigation/Provided general information	2
Request approved/Corrective action taken	1
Referred to BPP	4
Chain of command information provided	8
Not TDCJ jurisdiction	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>703</b>



<b>Improper – TDCJ does not have the authority to address the issue(s).</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
General information provided/Policy or process explained	23
Not TDCJ jurisdiction	2
No contact information for requester	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>

## FYI/Referrals/Thank You

<b>FYI – Ombudsman office cc'd on inquiries from or to various TDCJ officials/offices. Filed for informational purposes only.</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Additional information received from requester	67
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67</b>

<b>Telephone/Internet/Mail Contacts - Used when Ombudsman office receives numerous letters – same subject, same requester.</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Duplicate request from same requester	26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>

<b>Compliment/Thank You/Rebuttal</b>	
<b>Resolutions/Outcomes</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
Not satisfied with response/Rebuttal	8
Compliment/Thank you	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>

## Total Inquiries

<b>TOTAL 9,468</b>
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*\*Referred to Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)" indicates the resolution code used to close out the inquiry however, all sexual assault/abuse allegations are referred to PREA and Office of the Inspector General .*

*\*\* "Referred to Office of the Inspector General (OIG)" indicates the resolution code used to close out the inquiry however, all inquiries involving complaints of physical harm by staff are referred to OIG.*





## Performance Measures

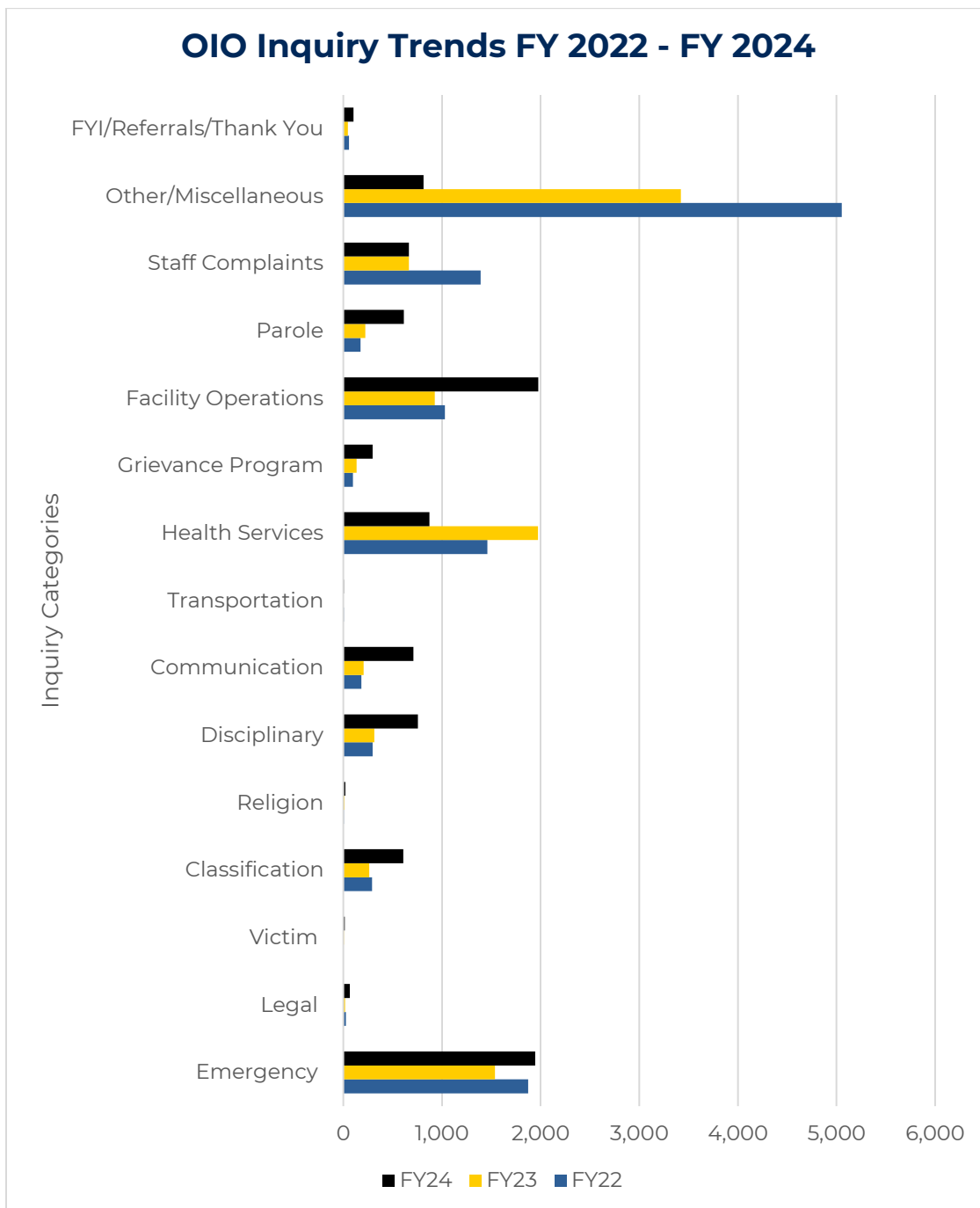
The Texas Board of Criminal Justice Office of the Independent Ombudsman strives to answer all legislative, agency and general correspondence within 30 calendar days in accordance with the department manual ([Office of the Independent Ombudsman Manual \(texas.gov\)](https://www.texas.gov)). In instances when this is not feasible, extensions may be needed to complete a thorough and accurate investigation and report.

Due to a lapse in the license for a software platform providing statistical analysis needed to calculate the performance measurements, the FY 24 performance measure could not be calculated.



# Trend Analysis

The Texas Board of Criminal Justice Office of the Independent Ombudsman began operations in April 2021; therefore, the gathering of information to provide a statistical analysis of trends began with Fiscal Year 2022. The data below reflects the volume of issue categories cited in case filings over the past three fiscal years.





## Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by the Texas Board of Criminal Justice Office of the Independent Ombudsman.



[www.tdcj.texas.gov](http://www.tdcj.texas.gov)