

CONTRACT FOR LEGAL SERVICES TO CRIMINAL DEFENDANTS

This Contract is made by and between Morris County, Texas (“County”), a political subdivision of the State of Texas, and G.F. Stovall State Bar No. 19336450 (“Attorney”) on the 13th day of September 2021. The purpose of this agreement is for the County to provide legal services to indigent defendants in the Criminal Courts of Morris County. Attorney has agreed to provide all services requested, except for those hereinafter described.

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties agree as follows:

1. Term. The term of this Contract shall be for twelve (12) months, beginning on October 1, 2021 and ending on September 30, 2022, unless sooner terminated as set forth herein.
2. Compensation. The County will pay Attorney during the term hereof based upon the Attorney Fee Schedule attached to the Morris County Indigent Defense Plan for Morris County, Texas. A check payment will be made upon receipt of services rendered in direct correlation with Commissioners Court which is typically the second and last Mondays of each month for twelve months. Attorney shall submit an itemized fee voucher to the appointing authority prior to being forwarded to the financial officer for payment.
3. Standard of Performance.
 - (a) Attorney will be appointed upon a judicial determination of conflict of interest between a criminal defendant and the County’s primary contract service provider.
 - (b) Attorney will provide all services required by Senate Bill 7 as passed by the 77th Session of the Texas Legislature in 2001. (As it amends the Texas Code of Criminal Procedures).
 - (c) Attorney shall provide competent, zealous legal services to each client in a professional, skilled manner consistent with the Attorney’s responsibilities under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct and the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.
 - (c) Attorney shall ensure continuity of representation of the client unless relieved or replaced in accordance with art. 26.04(j)(2) of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.
 - (d) Attorney must submit an invoice to be approved by the Morris County Judge or District Judge’s prior to any payment being made under this Contract, in accordance with art. 26.05 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. The invoice must include the case number, the type of case (adult felony, adult misdemeanor, and juvenile) as well as the number of hours spent on the case.

- (e) Attorney must maintain the minimum qualifications to practice law in the state of Texas, and must immediately inform the County Judge of any change in the status of the Attorney's licensure. The Attorney must provide the County with proof of licensure in good standing upon request. Attorney qualifications shall equal or exceed the qualifications provided in the indigent defense procedures adopted pursuant to Article 26.04, Code of Criminal Procedure, including in Morris County's Indigent Defense Plans.
- (f) Attorney agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Morris County from any and all claims rising from the delivery of professional services under this contract.
- (g) Attorney must report to the County Judge the number of continuing legal education hours completed. Attorneys must complete at least 6 hours of continuing legal education pertaining to juvenile law during each 12-month reporting period or be currently certified in juvenile law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Attorneys must complete at least 6 hours of continuing legal education pertaining to criminal law during each 12-month reporting period or be currently certified in criminal law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.
- (h) Attorney shall maintain the ability to receive facsimile correspondence twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week at an office regularly open for the practice of law.
- (i) Attorney must provide quality, effective legal assistance and representation to clients to whom Attorney is assigned.
- (j) Attorney shall complete all cases once representation is commenced during the term of the contract, unless the attorney is relieved or replaced in accordance with Article 26.04(j)(2), Code of Criminal Procedure. Attorney will be compensated for these uncompleted cases on a case-by-case basis according to the SB7 approved plan.
- (k) Attorney is prohibited from accepting any payments from a client or third party for legal services provided in a case assigned under this contract
- (l) Attorney is prohibited from releasing confidential attorney-client information or work product related to any case covered by this contract, except when authorized by the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct.

4. Conflict. In the event of a conflict of interest between Attorney and any defendant, Attorney shall present evidence to the court in which the case is pending, and if ordered by the Judge presiding, be allowed to withdraw from representation in that case. Such withdrawal shall not affect the other terms of this agreement.

5. Termination. This Contract may be terminated by the County for good cause, with the approval of the majority of the County and District Judges serving Morris County. If a reason for termination is found to exist by any of the judges or the program director, written notice will be given to Attorney, and a private meeting will be held with the Attorney and judges present to discuss the relevant issues, and, thereafter, the judges will vote on the termination of Attorney's contract.
- (a) County may terminate this agreement if Attorney closes his active office for the practice of law.
 - (b) County may terminate this agreement if Attorney fails to perform the duties required by this agreement. Such failure must be supported by judicial findings of that failure.
 - (c) Attorney may terminate this agreement if County fails to make timely payments hereunder.
 - (d) Attorney may terminate this agreement if, for reasons beyond the control of Attorney, Attorney is unable to perform the duties required hereunder.
 - (e) This agreement may be mutually terminated for any force majeure or any change in the law, which makes the agreement moot.
6. Administration. The District Judges and the Morris County Judge will provide oversight and monitoring to assure that Attorney performs as required under this Contract. Nothing herein shall be interpreted as creating a right or remedy against the County, the Morris County Judge, or the District Judges on the part of any person.
7. Disputes. Venue of any proceeding arising under or with regard to this Contract shall be in a court of competent jurisdiction in Morris County.
8. Additional Terms and Conditions.
- (a) The cases to be handled under this Agreement shall be non-capital murder cases in which the death penalty is sought. The appointments hereunder may include juvenile cases.
 - (b) Attorney will be responsible for three different categories of cases in County and District Court:
 - Level One. Felonies
 - Level Two. Misdemeanors
 - Level Three. Juveniles

- (c) A determination that Attorney has given false information in the materials submitted to the County in response to the Request for Qualifications will be grounds for immediate cancellation of this Agreement under the procedures set forth above. The Attorney is also subject to the provisions of the Morris County Indigent Defense Plan and failure to comply with those provisions may result in termination of this Contract by the County upon a finding of non-compliance by the County and District Judges serving Morris County.
- (d) Falsification of any report, invoice, billing documentation or other submission by the Attorney will be grounds for immediate cancellation of this Agreement under the procedures set forth above. In addition, such could subject the Attorney to both professional discipline and criminal prosecution. Therefore, it is very important that submissions be thorough and truthful.

ATTORNEY:



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Date: 09/16/21

COUNTY:



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Date: 9/13/2021