
TARRANT COUNTY **A**to**Z**

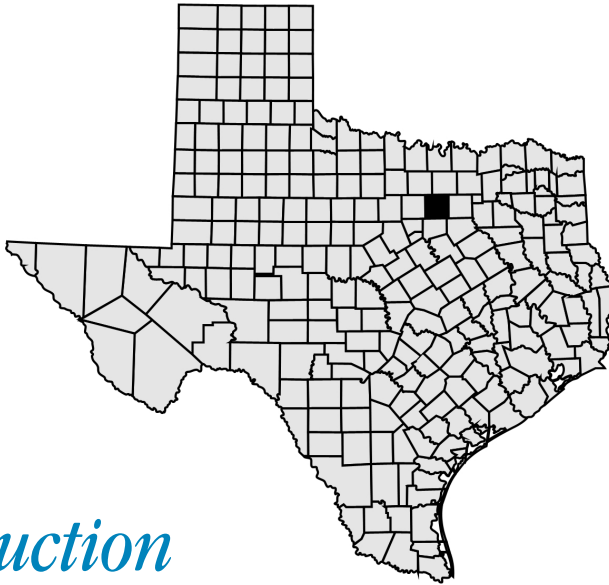


A guide to the departments and services provided by Tarrant County Government





Tarrant County, Texas



Introduction

Tarrant County is one of 254 counties in Texas originally set up by the State of Texas to serve as decentralized administrative divisions providing state services and collecting state taxes. The Texas Constitution makes a county a legal subdivision of the State; as a result, the power and duties of a county are limited to those specifically allowed by the constitution and laws of the State. As an arm of the state government, counties must provide those services that the State mandates.

Tarrant County faces the challenge of having the same basic structure (rooted in an agrarian past) and legal foundation as all of the other counties in the State, but has a population that needs and demands more services. Tarrant County is comprised of 41 incorporated areas (cities). Tarrant County Government employs approximately 4,000 employees in 39 different locations throughout the county. Additionally, Tarrant County provides certain local governmental services to the over 1.8 million people who reside within the county.

The purpose of this publication is to serve as a guidebook to departments and services provided by Tarrant County Government.



ABSENTEE VOTING See Early Voting

ADVISORY BODIES

Citizens who wish to serve on any of the County's advisory bodies should contact the Commissioners Court Secretary, at (817) 884-1234, or their Commissioner's office directly. Boards and Commissions currently appointed by the Commissioners Court are:

- Child Protective Services Board
- Tarrant County Civil Service Commission
- Emergency Services District Board
- Fort Worth Transportation Authority
- Health Facilities Development Corporation
- Housing Finance Corporation
- Human Services Advisory Committee
- Industrial Development Corporation
- Law Library Advisory Committee
- Mental Health Mental Retardation of Tarrant County Board
- North Texas Tollway Authority
- Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservative District Board
- 9-1-1 Emergency Assistance District Board
- Sheriff's Department Civil Service Commission
- Historical Commission
- Hospital District Board of Managers
- Veterans Land Board
- Workforce Development Board

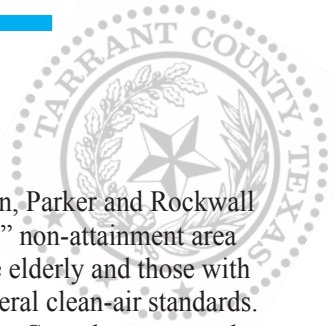
AgriLIFE EXTENSION

AgriLife Extension is an educational organization operated in cooperation with the Texas A&M University system. County Agents provide expert advice, assistance, and training for a wide range of subjects under areas of consumer sciences, agriculture and natural resources, and 4-H and youth. Some of the subjects are horticulture, nutrition, health and wellness, agriculture awareness, pesticide management, parenting, money management, sustainable agriculture, youth development, waste management, preservation of nature, and water quality. For additional information contact AgriLife Extension of Tarrant County at (817) 884-1945.



Improving Lives. In.





AIR QUALITY

Tarrant County, along with Dallas, Denton, Collin, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker and Rockwall counties, are designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as a “serious” non-attainment area for ozone, a harmful air pollutant that poses a particular danger to children, the elderly and those with chronic health problems. The area must act to reduce ozone levels to meet federal clean-air standards. In an effort to help achieve clean air and a healthy environment, Commissioners Court has approved an Air Quality Policy for government operations and actively works with the region’s leaders and the North Central Texas Council of Governments to develop, implement, and support programs to reduce air pollution and ozone.

The AirCheck Texas Repair and Replacement Assistance Program is a financial assistance program designed to get the most polluting vehicles off the road. On-road vehicles create about half the ozone and the program provides an incentive for citizens to contribute to the regional air quality solution. Vehicle owners may get assistance if their vehicles fail the mandatory emission inspection test. Qualified individuals may be eligible to receive a voucher for emission repairs up to \$600 through the AirCheck Texas Repair and Replacement Assistance Program. Brochures on the program are available at state inspection stations within the nine counties. For information about the AirCheck Texas Repair and Replacement Program please call 1-800-898-9103.

Other programs offer assistance through local, state and federal grants to help school districts get clean buses and offer incentives to get dirty diesel engines off the road. For more information about Metroplex air quality visit www.airnorthtexas.org.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE PERMITS

As an agent for the State of Texas, the County Judge approves applications for wine and beer licenses and waivers on mixed drink licenses. For additional information please contact (817) 884-1441.

AMBULANCE SERVICE See Emergency Medical Services

ANIMAL CONTROL

Contact your city’s police department or the animal control office. For issues in the unincorporated areas of Tarrant County, please contact the City of Fort Worth at (817) 392-7297 regarding dead animals or health hazards related to small pets and/or wild animals. For stray livestock, contact your local police department or the Sheriff’s Office, livestock stray enforcement program at (817) 884-1213.



The County Auditor is the Chief Financial Officer of the County. Additionally, by constitutional amendment in 1985, the Office of County Treasurer was abolished, and the duties transferred to the County Auditor. The responsibilities of the County Auditor include: financial accounting and reporting the results of operations to the Commissioners Court and District Judges of Tarrant County; developing and implementing cash management programs and investing idle funds; general audit oversight of the books and records maintained by elected and appointed officials of the County; processing vendor payments and payroll; and giving financial advice to Commissioners Court, when requested. Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

AUTO TAGS

Auto tags can be renewed at any of the eight (8) locations of the Tax Assessor/Collectors Office. These include the second floor of the County Administration building or all seven (7) sub-courthouses. In addition, over 22 area grocery stores offer renewal services. Contact the Tax Assessor/Collector for the nearest location. Telephone (817) 884-1100. Auto tags can also be renewed by mail and through the web side at www.tarrantcounty.com.



AUTO THEFT TASK FORCE

The Tarrant Regional Theft Auto Task Force is comprised of 14 separate law enforcement agencies working together to reduce motor vehicle theft crimes. A grant from the Texas Automobile Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (ABTPA), a division of TxDOT, and local support fund the task force. The County's motor vehicle theft rate has declined 67% between the creation of the authority in 1991, and the end of 2007 — the largest reduction statewide of the five most populous counties. Call (817) 560-6560 for more information or prevention tips.

B



BIRTH CERTIFICATES

Birth Certificates are kept by the County Clerk for the unincorporated areas of the county and 26 municipalities. A birth certificate may be obtained downtown at the County Clerk’s office in the Tarrant County Plaza building and sub-courthouses. In 2009, the County Clerk became the vital statistics registrar for the city of Fort Worth. For questions about obtaining a Birth Certificate, go to <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/eCountyClerk/site/default.asp>.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS See Advisory Bodies

BONDED INDEBTEDNESS

The County’s outstanding per capita debt load is \$199.00 and continues to maintain a AAA ratings from Standard and Poor’s and Moody’s.

BUDGET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The Tarrant County Budget and Risk Management Department was created in 1989 and is responsible for the development and monitoring of the County budget. The Department serves Commissioners Court by providing recommendations to facilitate operational efficiency within the various County departments. The programs of each County department are reviewed annually. Funding requests are considered and the Budget Department presents recommendations to the Tarrant County Commissioners Court for approval and adoption.

Risk management responsibilities include the oversight of the County’s self-insurance programs and the investigation of claims and claim resolutions. Risk management also coordinates loss prevention programs with various County departments, teaches defensive driving and is responsible for subrogation involving losses from auto and property claims. Tarrant County is self-insured for automobile physical damage/liability, worker’s compensation, general liability and professional liability. Traditional insurance policies are purchased to provide coverage for Tarrant County’s buildings and their contents, heavy equipment utilized by the four (4) road maintenance precincts, electronic equipment, coverage to safeguard public funds collected by various departments, and other special risk insurance as needed for county government operations outside the self-insured program.



CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Tarrant County Child Protective Services is a division of a state agency, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The County provides some funds, and appoints a 15-member Child Protective Services Board to oversee the operations and expenditure of county funds. The agency's main function is to investigate and evaluate complaints of child abuse and neglect. Telephone: (817) 255-8700.

CHILD SUPPORT

The Child Support Office is a division of the Domestic Relations Department. The mission of the Child Support Office is to enhance the quality of life for children in Tarrant County by monitoring, collecting, and disbursing child support obligations.

While working with the Tarrant County Information Technology Department, the department's goal is to provide clients with new and improved customer call center and interactive voice response systems, as well as secure internet access to child support payment information. The monitoring program is designed to monitor and enforce child support payments utilizing all means allowable by law on all custodial divorces finalized on or after October 16, 2000. These processes help ensure that payments are made from the onset of the child support obligation, relieving the burden of arrearages for both custodial and non-custodial parents. Details of changes in the Family Code that affect the interest rate on arrearages as of January of 2002, can be found in the online newsletter.

Please contact at childsupport@tarrantcounty.com with any questions about child support accounts.

LOCATION:

200 Weatherford St., 2nd Floor
Fort Worth, TX 76196

MAILING ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 961014
Fort Worth, TX 76161-0014

Telephone: (817) 884-1475

Fax Number: (817) 884-3769



CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONS

Tarrant County has two (2) Civil Service Commissions — the Tarrant County Civil Service Commission for non-Sheriff employees; and the Sheriff’s Department Civil Service Commission for Sheriff’s Department employees. Each Commission is composed of three (3) members. The Tarrant County Civil Service Commission members are appointed by the Commissioners Court of Tarrant County. The Sheriff’s Department Civil Service Commission is made up of one appointment each from the Commissioners Court, District Attorney, and Sheriff’s Department. The role of the Civil Service Commissions is to adopt, publish, and enforce rules regarding hiring practices, promotions, layoffs, dismissals, disciplinary actions, and grievance procedures. The meetings are held in the Commissioners Courtroom located in the Administration Building, at 100 E. Weatherford Street, Fort Worth, Texas, and are open to the public. However, a meeting is subject to being closed to the public at the appellant’s request. For additional information please contact (817) 884-3252.

COMMISSIONERS COURT

The Commissioners Court is the general governing body of Tarrant County. The Court is made up of four (4) County Commissioners (each elected from one of the County’s four (4) precincts), and the County Judge who is elected countywide and who presides over the full Court.



Roy C. Brooks
Comm., Precinct 1



Andy Nguyen
Comm., Precinct 2



B. Glen Whitley
County Judge



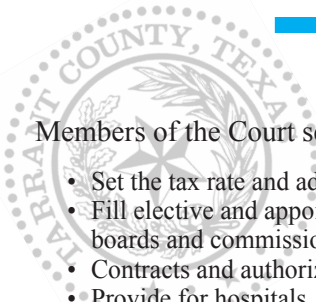
Gary Fickes
Comm., Precinct 3



J. D. Johnson
Comm., Precinct 4

Commissioners Court meets every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Courtroom on the fifth floor of the County Administration Building, 100 East Weatherford Street, Fort Worth.

All meetings are open to the public, and citizens are encouraged to attend. Meetings can be viewed live or at a later time on the county’s website - www.tarrantcounty.com. For citizens interested in viewing the proceedings on television, the sessions are broadcast on a delayed basis on community access channels in the following cities: Arlington, Bedford, Euless, Forest Hill, Fort Worth, Haltom City, Hurst, Keller, North Richland Hills and Southlake. For more information call (817) 884-1234.



Members of the Court serve four-year “staggered” terms. The major duties of the Court are to:

- Set the tax rate and adopt the County budget
- Fill elective and appointive vacancies including boards and commissions
- Contracts and authorize payment of County bills
- Provide for hospitals, public welfare and veteran’s assistance
- Provide for the information technology and archival needs of the County
- Appoint County officials and hire personnel
- Establish voting precincts, appoint precinct judges and call bond elections
- Build and maintain County roads, bridges and facilities (including jails)
- Manage all County facilities
- Serve as liaison to a particular board or agency of the County.

COMMISSIONERS COURT RECORDS

Commissioners Court Records for Tarrant County dating back to 1876 are kept in the County Clerk’s office on the fifth floor of the Administration Building. For additional information go to <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/eCountyClerk/site/default.asp>.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Community Development Division of the County Administrator’s Office, through a comprehensive approach to community planning, develops policies to promote the creation of community-based programs designed to support the social and physical infrastructure of the municipalities within Tarrant County. The Division works closely with cities to fund and implement community economic development and affordable housing programs.

The Division oversees the administration of the following federal grants: Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership, Emergency Shelter Grant, HOPWA, and Supportive Housing. Several innovative and comprehensive programs to meet the County’s housing and community development needs have been devised. On behalf of local cities, the Division operates far-reaching public works programs, which has had a significant impact on improving the infrastructure of the County’s low-income neighborhoods for over thirty-five years. In addition, parks, senior’s centers and handicapped facilities have been substantially improved across the area. The cities within Tarrant County cooperate through the Tarrant County Mayors’ Council of which the Community Development Division acts as the administrative arm.

As part of its efforts to combat homelessness, the Division supports several local emergency shelters and administers a sophisticated transitional housing program through local providers. These programs are designed to provide clean, safe and decent housing, in conjunction with supportive services, to give homeless individuals and families every opportunity to break out of the cycle of homelessness. Each year, the division publishes a Consolidated Plan, which includes demographic

and community-wide data, as well as descriptions of the County's housing and community development efforts. A copy of the Consolidated Plan is available at <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/ecomunitydev/lib/ecomunitydev/INDEX.pdf>.



COMMUNITY SUPERVISION AND CORRECTIONS

Formerly known as Adult Probation, the Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD) is responsible for the investigation and supervision of adult felony and misdemeanor probationers in accordance with conditions prescribed by the criminal courts. The Department also oversees a growing number of innovative community-based correctional programs including: electronic monitoring, literacy education, life skills training, and specialized programs for substance abusers. The telephone number is (817) 884-1600.

CONSTABLES

Constables are constitutionally authorized peace officers elected by precinct. There are eight Constables in Tarrant County. While they may perform patrol functions and make criminal investigations, the main duty of most constables is to serve as executive officer of the Justice of the Peace Courts. In that capacity, Constables serve subpoenas and other papers.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

The County Administrator is the chief administrative officer for the Commissioners Court who drafts policies aimed at solving County problems for review, revision, and approval by the Commissioners Court; and provides administrative support services to the County Judge and Commissioners on a daily basis.

The Administrator supervises and coordinates all departments reporting directly to the Commissioners Court, providing budget oversight and review, while ensuring implementation of the Court's policy directives. The Administrator's Office is responsible for the development of weekly agendas, correspondence and court orders.

In addition, the Administrator's Office monitors legislative developments during the Legislative session, and prepares analyses of issues and requests under consideration by the Court. The Office oversees many critical functions for the County, including: economic development, public information, marketing, emergency management, grants management and criminal justice coordination. The Administrator represents the County in negotiations with governmental entities, agencies, officials, and individuals conducting business with the County. Telephone: (817) 884-1267.



COUNTY CLERK

Since 1850, the County Clerk has been the “Keeper Of The Records” for Tarrant County as well as the Clerk of the Commissioners Court, and has been responsible for keeping accurate records of real property and the proceedings of the County Courts. The County Clerk is elected every four (4) years.

The duties of the County Clerk have become much more complex since the early days of Tarrant County. As the County expands each year, more instruments are presented in the County Clerk’s Office for recording. Keeping current on this work is vital because documents are recorded and filed on the date and time presented. The County Clerk is authorized by law to collect fees for services provided to the public. The monies collected by the Clerk’s Office are turned over to the County treasury. The amount of fees and fines collected make this office the second largest revenue generator for Tarrant County.

The County Clerk provides web-based access to various public records maintained by this office. Information is provided at no cost for the following areas:

- Real Property Records
 - Commissioners Court Records
 - Foreclosure Notices
 - Vital Records
 - Civil Court Case Indexes
-

COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The current Courthouse located at 100 W. Weatherford Street, Fort Worth, was completed in 1895, and is the fourth Courthouse structure to stand on the bluff above the Trinity River since Fort Worth became the county seat in 1856.

The first Courthouse was a temporary wooden structure. In 1861, construction began on a stone Courthouse, but had to be discontinued when the Civil War began. In 1871, construction resumed and was quickly completed. However, it lasted only 5 years.

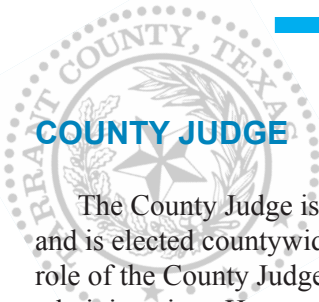
On March 29, 1876, the Courthouse burned to the ground in a spectacular fire. The County quickly rose to the challenge of rebuilding another and, by the end of 1877, an even grander Courthouse stood on the bluff. Although it was remodeled in 1880, the population needs of Tarrant County soon outstripped the two-story Courthouse. In 1883, County Commissioners envisioned and decided to build as fine a Courthouse as Texas had ever seen.

An architectural competition was held, and the Kansas City firm of Gunn and Curtiss was selected. The Courthouse was one of the first buildings constructed in the United States to use structural steel for support. To the greatest extent possible, only materials native to Texas were used – wood from East Texas and red granite from the same Hill Country quarry used on the State Capital. The final cost of construction was \$450,000.

The Courthouse was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1969, and was completely renovated in 1983. Commissioners Court designated the use of a room on the first floor of the Courthouse to be used by the Tarrant County Historical Commission as a museum of County history.

Tours of the Courthouse can be arranged by calling (817) 884-1036.





COUNTY JUDGE

The County Judge is the presiding officer and a voting member of the Commissioners Court, and is elected countywide. The County Judge is the Chief Executive Officer of the County. The role of the County Judge in Tarrant and other populous counties of Texas is almost exclusively administrative. However, the County Judge can and does perform certain judicial functions when necessary, such as conducting marriages.

A County Judge is not required to be an attorney, but the Texas Constitution stipulates that the County Judge “shall be well informed in the law of the state.”

COUNTY SEAT

From its humble beginnings as the site of an army outpost assigned to protect the settlers, Tarrant County has, and continues to be, at the leading edge of the frontier. Tarrant County’s first county seat was Birdville – today a part of Haltom City. The Birdville Courthouse was little more than a log cabin, and was in use from 1850 to 1856. Birdville was larger than Fort Worth in 1850, but Fort Worth was growing, and saw a chance to wrestle away the Courthouse from Birdville.

In 1856, Fort Worth forced an election to decide the issue. Supporters of both communities campaigned hard. In those days, voters expected a little something for going to all the trouble of getting into town to vote. The ride in was long and dusty, and something to quench the thirst was particularly appreciated. In order not to disappoint these farmers and ranchers, civic leaders of Fort Worth and Birdville each prepared and carefully hid a keg of whiskey hoping that the refreshment would attract voters from the outlying districts to their town and convince them – based on the hospitality provided – to cast their ballots for their community as county seat. The night before the election, however, a band of Fort Worth supporters stole into Birdville and siphoned off the town’s whiskey. On Election Day, Fort Worth had two kegs to dispense, Birdville had none.

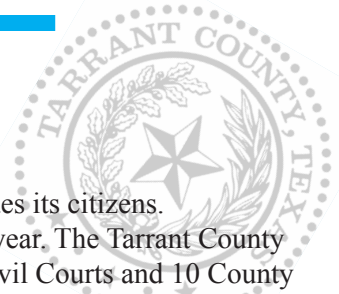
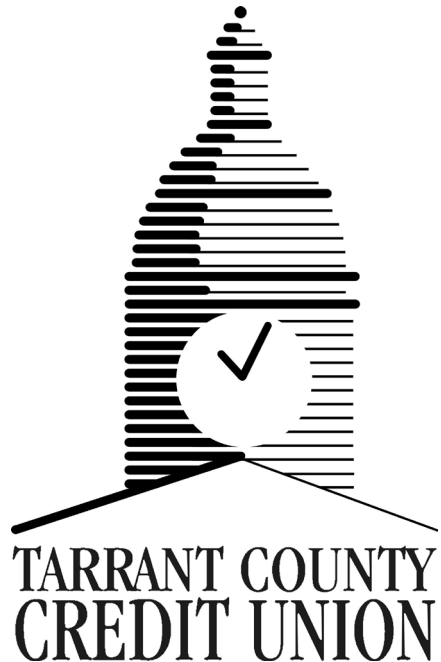
In the end, Fort Worth won by seven votes. Birdville cried foul and, four years later, another election was held. But, by then, Fort Worth’s population had moved far ahead of Birdville’s, and Fort Worth won the rematch handily. Since that time Fort Worth has been the county seat.

COURTS

The Courts are among the most important services the County provides its citizens. Collectively, Tarrant County Courts dispose of over 120,000 cases each year. The Tarrant County Court System is comprised of 8 Justice of the Peace Courts, 3 County Civil Courts and 10 County Criminal Courts, as well as 2 specialized Probate Courts. The District Courts are the general trial courts of the State and handle most major litigation - felony cases, divorce proceedings, contested elections and major civil disputes. Within the District Court System are 10 District Criminal Courts, 6 Family Law Courts, 10 other Civil Jurisdiction Courts and one Juvenile Court. The County has specialized courts including a Drug Impact Court (DIRECT Court), Veterans Court and Mental Health Court.

CREDIT UNION

Tarrant County Credit Union (TCCU) was founded in 1955 by Tarrant County employees that decided a credit union would be a great addition to the Tarrant County family. TCCU has grown into an award winning \$45M Credit Union serving over 7,770 members. Located in several County facilities, TCCU is ready to serve employees and their family members with a full line of financial products and services. Visit the TCCU website for up-to-the minute details and specials. www.tarrantcu.org.





DBA (DOING BUSINESS AS)

Assumed Name/Doing Business As Certificates can be recorded at the main Courthouse, 100 West Weatherford, Fort Worth and at the sub-courthouses. For additional information go to <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/eCountyClerk/site/default.asp> or call (817) 884-1060.

DEATH CERTIFICATES

Death Certificates are kept by the County Clerk for the unincorporated areas of the County and 26 municipalities. A death certificate may be obtained downtown in the County Clerk's Office at the Tarrant County Plaza in downtown Fort Worth. For questions about obtaining a death certificate, go to <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/eCountyClerk/site/default.asp> or call (817) 884-1550.

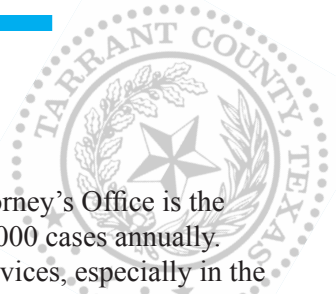
DENTAL CLINICS

John Peter Smith Hospital operates several dental clinics throughout the County that provide low-cost dental services. For information and locations call (817) 222-2377. Arlington residents who meet certain qualifications can obtain dental services at little or no cost. For more information, call Mission Arlington: (817) 277-6620.

DISEASE CONTROL See Public Health

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Dispute Resolution Services of North Texas, Inc. is a private non-profit corporation established under State law. Dispute Resolution uses mediation to help parties solve problems that might otherwise end up in a Civil Court. In some cases, the Courts refer cases to the organization. Dispute Resolution charges a fee of \$40.00 for persons who live or work in Tarrant County. For information, contact (817) 877-4554.



DISTRICT ATTORNEY

With a staff of over 300, including over 150 lawyers, the District Attorney’s Office is the largest law firm in Tarrant County. The DA’s Office disposes of over 35,000 cases annually. Besides prosecution, the DA’s Office provides extensive investigative services, especially in the area of narcotics, economic crimes, and crimes against children. The office also operates a Victim Assistance Program and a Family Violence Court. The Civil Section provides legal advice to the Commissioners Court and other County departments and officials.

DISTRICT CLERK

The District Clerk is elected for a four (4) year term, and manages most of the business operations for the 27 District Courts in Tarrant County that hear civil, family and criminal cases. The office functions with over 130 employees who maintain and manage the records and money for court fees and fines collected, over 20 million dollars in trust accounts which are invested for the benefit of many minor children on orders from the courts, bail bond forfeitures, and all delinquent tax lawsuits. The District Clerk’s Office also processes applications for United States passports at the Southwest, Arlington and Southlake subcourthouses, and the Tim Curry Criminal Justice Center. For information call (817) 884-2520. To reach the District Clerk’s Office call:

- Civil Courts (817) 884-1240
- Criminal Courts (817) 884-1342
- Family Courts..... (817) 884-1265
- Passports..... (817) 884-2520

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Family Court Services (817) 884-1616: Supports the Family District Courts with custody evaluations, mediation and visitation coordination.

Legal Enforcement (817) 884-1879: File motions to enforce final child support, medical support and visitation orders on all cases. In addition, on cases in the monitoring program, files petitions to modify child and medical support.

Community Supervision Unit (817) 884-1848: When a litigant is found in contempt of court for violating a court order and is placed on community supervision (probation), this department monitors the probationer for compliance with the terms of the court’s enforcement order.

Child Support Office (817) 884-1475: Collects and distributes child support; monitors child support cases to insure payment; provides customer service and court records.



DRUG COURT

Drug Impact Rehabilitation Enhanced Comprehensive Treatment (DIRECT) is a program that provides a forum for the adjudication of narcotics offenses, and diverts non-violent drugs users from the traditional path of streets to court to jail. The DIRECT Court Program, which began operation in October 2000, has expedited the prosecution of narcotics offenses, and resulted in offenders being taken off the streets more quickly.

The emphasis of a drug rehabilitation court is immediate and continuing treatment, therefore reducing the recidivism rate of drug related crime. An appropriate combination of incentives and sanctions increases offender motivation to participate in treatment while increasing actual retention rates, thereby reducing the number of offenders who otherwise should be processed through the drug impact court.

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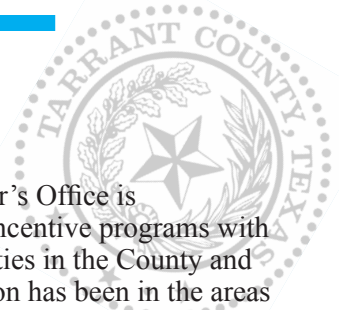
e-GOVERNMENT

Tarrant County provides many government services using the Internet. You can go to the County's website at www.tarrantcounty.com and click the link for e-Government. Some of the services include paying property taxes, vehicle registrations, assumed name searches, Commissioners Court records, court record searches, marriage records, real property searches, inmate data and mug shots, child support information, polling places for elections, jury postponements, and purchasing items.



EARLY VOTING

Early voting is available from 17 days to 4 days prior to a scheduled election. Voters may vote early by mail if they are over 65, disabled or expect to be out of the County during the early voting period and on Election Day. For information regarding early voting, contact the Elections Office at (817) 831-8683.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic development function within the County Administrator's Office is responsible for coordinating County economic development issues and incentive programs with municipalities, businesses, chambers of commerce, and other taxing entities in the County and State. Currently, the focus of the County's economic development division has been in the areas of tax abatements and tax increment financing programs that are utilized to attract and encourage growth and development in Tarrant County. Additionally, the economic development function handles a variety of tax exemption requests, including historic site tax exemption and the sale of foreclosed property for low to moderate-income housing. Telephone number: (817) 831-2643.

ELECTIONS

One of the most important functions of county government is to oversee the electoral process. The Elections Administration Department has the responsibility of conducting all federal, state, and county elections. The department also coordinates contract elections for other governmental agencies including cities, schools and special districts. Texas law permits any registered voter to vote early for any reason. The Elections Office establishes and staffs early voting locations throughout Tarrant County. Contact the Elections Office at (817) 831-8683.

EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT NO. 1: FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

In a medical emergency, anywhere in Tarrant County, dial 9-1-1. Fire and ambulance services in the unincorporated areas of the county are provided through contracts with cities and volunteer fire departments. The Emergency Service District No. 1 is managed by a Board of Commissioners who contract for services, adopt the District's budget and recommend a tax rate to the Commissioners Court.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND PREPAREDNESS

Tarrant County works with area municipalities to provide a coordinated countywide response and recovery effort in the event of an emergency or disaster. The Tarrant County Office of Emergency Management (TCOEM) serves as the coordinating entity for disaster response, damage reporting, recovery efforts, and local disaster declarations in the event of countywide disaster. TCOEM organizes the County's participation in the development of the local emergency management plan. State law allows the County Judge to declare a local state of emergency for up to seven (7) days in some cases. The TCOEM is part of the County Administrator's Office. The main telephone number: (817) 884-1473.





EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Interested in employment with Tarrant County?

The Tarrant County Human Resources Department posts position vacancies every Monday online at www.tarrantcounty.com and on the Human Resources job postings bulletin board located in the Human Resources Department on the third floor of the Tarrant County Administration Building, 100 E. Weatherford Street, Fort Worth. The office hours for the Human Resources Department are from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Tarrant County is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and complies with the American with Disabilities Act. If you require special accommodation in order to apply for a position, please contact the Human Resources Department with your request at: (817) 884-3252 or TDD (800) 735-7989.

Also see Human Resources.

F

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

The Facilities Management Department is responsible for operation and maintenance of over 4.5 million square feet of building space in over 65 County buildings. The department is responsible for building space master planning, construction of new buildings and renovation of existing buildings. The department also operates a full service graphics, print and photo shop and County mailroom. The main phone number is (817) 884-2878.

FIRE MARSHAL

The Fire Marshal investigates all fire and explosive incidents that occur in the unincorporated areas of the County and, upon request, assists state and local agencies. The Fire Marshal works with the Tarrant County Emergency Services District No. 1 to ensure that all areas of unincorporated Tarrant County have fire and ambulance coverage.



G

GRAND JURY

The Grand Jury determines whether there is probable cause to refer a felony case to District Court. Grand Juries are comprised of twelve members. If nine of the twelve grand jurors believe that there is sufficient evidence, an indictment is returned and the case is tried. Tarrant County has two Grand Juries. The District Judges appoint three to five Grand Jury Commissioners who are charged with drawing up a list of prospective grand jurors. Final appointments are made by the District Judges from the list. Each Grand Jury serves three months and considers about 1300 cases each.

H

HEALTH See Public Health

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

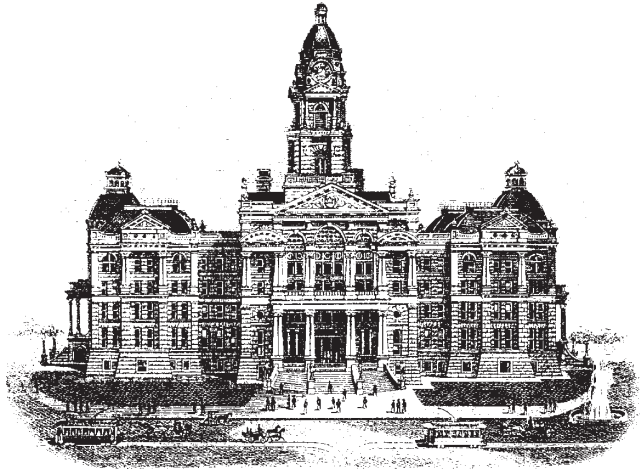
County Historical Commissions were created by the Texas Legislature to serve under the guidelines set by the Texas Historical Commission. Established in 1975, the Tarrant County Historical Commission has 38 members appointed by the Commissioners Court.

Its work includes listing historical sites within the County, aiding in marking those sites as historically significant, and fostering the preservation of the sites through education and stewardship. It is very active in the protection of cemeteries and burial grounds in Tarrant County. Among its projects are promoting heritage tourism, giving programs related to history of the County and the commission, and planning exhibits for the 1895 Room Museum in the Courthouse. The Tarrant County Historical Commission works with many other preservation organizations in the County to build a higher standard of historical awareness and preservation strategies. It maintains an office with a meeting room in the Tarrant County Plaza, 200 Taylor Street, 5th floor, Fort Worth, Texas 76102 or (817) 884-3272.



HISTORICAL ARCHIVES

The Tarrant County Archives were created in 1976 by Commissioners Court. The Historical Commission served as the principal collectors and stewards of the growing collection. Beginning in 2000, the Archives have been open daily with full-time staff. The collection contains the working records for the Tarrant County Historical Commission, some County records (including District Court cases from 1876-1910, many marriage licenses beginning in 1877, some tax and County audit records), and private collections donated related to County history. Available to the public for research, the County Archives are located at the Tarrant County Plaza, 200 Taylor Street, 5th floor, Fort Worth, Texas 76102 or (817) 884-3272.



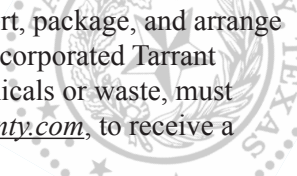

HOSPITAL DISTRICT BOARD OF MANAGERS

The Tarrant County Hospital District Board of Managers consists of members appointed by Commissioners Court to oversee the operations of the District and the John Peter Smith Health Network. While the Board of Managers makes recommendations concerning the District's annual tax rate, the Commissioners Court is ultimately responsible for setting the rate.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

The Regional Environmental Collection Center (ECC) is a joint effort by the City of Fort Worth and the cities in Tarrant County to provide citizens a safe and effective way to dispose of household hazardous chemicals and wastes. This service is free to citizens of unincorporated Tarrant County and participating cities.

The County and participating cities have set aside funds to allow citizens to drop off household hazardous chemicals and wastes at the ECC operated by the City of Fort Worth. The



ECC is staffed with professional environmental personnel who unload, sort, package, and arrange for proper disposal of the material brought to the ECC. Residents of unincorporated Tarrant County who would like to properly dispose of household hazardous chemicals or waste, must contact the County at (817) 884-2634 or by email at rberndt@tarrantcounty.com, to receive a voucher before going to the ECC.


HOUSING ASSISTANCE

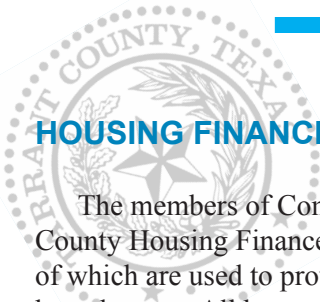
The Tarrant County Housing Assistance Office oversees the federally funded Housing Choice Voucher Program that assists extremely and very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market.

Housing assistance vouchers are provided to families or individual participants, and allows them to find their own housing including single-family homes, town homes and apartments in the private market. To be eligible for the program, interested persons may apply to be on the Tarrant County Housing Office waiting list, if applications are being accepted and the waiting list is open for new applicants.

The eligibility of an applicant is determined by the Tarrant County Housing Assistance Office based on the total annual gross income and family size and is limited to U.S. citizens and specified categories of non-citizens who have eligible immigration status. The income of the applicant may not exceed 50% of the median income for the County or metropolitan area in which the applicant chooses to live. The median income levels are determined by the federal government, and are published at least on an annual basis.

Operating jurisdiction for the Tarrant County Housing Assistance Office is within all of Tarrant County, with the exception of Arlington and Grand Prairie. Voucher assistance is provided to 32 communities within Tarrant County. The housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays 30% of their adjusted income for rent directly to the landlord. The family is also responsible for paying their security deposit and any applicable utilities. The unit chosen by the family must be affordable, and by federal law, cannot exceed 40% of the family's income. For additional information contact (817) 531-7640 and/or www.tarrantcounty.com/ehousing.





HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION

The members of Commissioner Court, or their designated appointees, make up the Tarrant County Housing Finance Corporation. The Corporation approves the sale of bonds, the proceeds of which are used to provide below-market interest rate mortgage money for low income homebuyers. All homes must be located within Tarrant County. For more information about the Housing Finance Corporation call (817) 884-1234. For information about the homebuyers programs, contact (817) 850-7940 or one of the participating lenders.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The Human Resources Department administers a comprehensive human resource program for Tarrant County which includes:

1. the recruitment and testing of potential employees;
2. new employee processing and orientation;
3. human resource development training;
4. development and administration of personnel policies and programs;
5. administration of employee wellness and safety programs;
6. administration of compensation and benefit programs;
7. administration of an employee assistance program;
8. ensuring compliance with established personnel policies;
9. maintaining compliance with federal and state rules and regulations regarding employment and administrative record-keeping;
10. coordinating the volunteer efforts and employee community campaigns; and
11. coordinating employee recognition programs.

For addition information contact (817) 884-1500.

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Human Service Advisory Council is a 13-member committee appointed by Commissioners Court to assist and advise the Court in the delivery of human services throughout Tarrant County. The Council assists the Human Services Department in developing goals to meet the needs to the community.

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Human Services Department provides basic economic assistance to individuals and/or families in Tarrant County. The goal of the Department is to facilitate the individual's or family's ability to become self-supporting or self-sustaining.

Potential clients should call staff at a local office for pre-screening. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday. The Human Services Department offices are located at:

Resource Connection – Main Office

1200 Circle Drive Suite 200 - Fort Worth, TX 76119-8112
(817) 521-5620

Northeast Human Services Complex

813 Brown Trail - Bedford, TX 76022
(817) 285-4141

Southeast Sub-Courthouse

724 East Border Street - Arlington, TX 76010
(817) 548-3920

I

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Tarrant County Information Technology Department arranges for the acquisition, installation, maintenance, programming, and operation of data processing and data communications systems and equipment. Information Technology is one of the largest departments in Tarrant County.

Information Technology coordinates the planning of information systems for Tarrant County departments, and provides data processing services for such applications as payroll, elections, motor vehicle registration, and court data.



The Tarrant County Jail System is comprised of four facilities for the detainment of more than 4,500 inmates. These facilities include maximum, medium and minimum security. For information regarding visiting hours or inmate information, call (817) 884-1187. (See Sheriff).

JPS HEALTH NETWORK

JPS Health Network is an accredited, integrated health network operated by the Tarrant County Hospital District. JPS Health Network is comprised of John Peter Smith Hospital, a 429 bed licensed hospital with a Level I Trauma Center, and the only 24-hour emergency psychiatric facility in the County. JPS also operates Trinity Springs Pavilion, an adult and adolescent inpatient psychiatric facility. JPS proudly brings community-based health centers, specialty centers for women’s health and oncology, dental services, school-based services, and home-health services for the citizens of Tarrant County. The JPS Institute for Health Career Development offers educational programs and training in health care fields such as vocational nursing and radiologic technology. Partners Together for Health is the JPS foundation, and Metro West Health Plan is a managed care subsidiary of JPS Health Network. Find out more about JPS by visiting www.jpshealthnet.org or email info@jpshealth.org.

JUDICIARY See Courts

JURY DUTY

Jury Service provides many citizens with their first exposure to county government and our court system. Over 200,000 Tarrant County residents are called for jury duty each year. If you are registered to vote in Tarrant County, and if you have applied for and received a driver’s license or identification card from a DPS office located in Tarrant, you are eligible to be summoned to serve as a juror.

Tarrant County operates a state of the art one-day and one-trial system. What this means is that jurors are assigned to a court and serve under the jurisdiction and time schedule of that court. If the juror does not receive a court assignment, he or she serves for only one day. A different jury panel appears each day of the week to serve the needs of the courts.

Every function of Jury Services is automated, from the records in the court to payment upon dismissal, which saves the taxpayers a tremendous amount of money on postage. Our jury system has won a national award and serves as a model system throughout the State of Texas. For additional information contact (817) 884-3820.

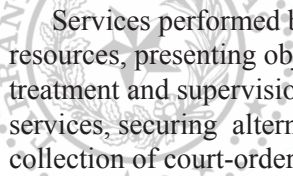
JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Justices of the Peace (JP) courts are trial courts having jurisdiction over Class C misdemeanors and violations of the State Traffic Code. JP's are elected from various precincts for four-year terms. There are 8 precincts in Tarrant County. A JP does not have to be an attorney. Justices of the Peace also act as notary public, hold inquests, administer hearings on driver's license suspensions, and perform marriages.

JUVENILE SERVICES

The mission of Tarrant County Juvenile Services is to address delinquent conduct and to provide for the care and rehabilitation of children in Tarrant County. By statute, the department is charged with responding to law violations defined either as delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision committed by juveniles. "Juvenile" means a child aged 10 through 16. Delinquent conduct includes Class A and B misdemeanors as well as felony-grade offenses. Conduct indicating a need for supervision includes Class C misdemeanors transferred from a justice or municipal court, such as public intoxication, truancy, running away, inhalant abuse, and violation of school disciplinary codes that result in expulsion.

Services are provided at the direction of the Tarrant County Juvenile Board and the Juvenile District Court. There is a presiding judge of the 323rd District Court who is assisted by three associate judges and they hear proceedings on juvenile delinquency matters. Tarrant County Juvenile Services has developed programs and operations with the goal of responding to the needs of youth to divert them at the earliest point from further involvement in the juvenile justice system. The Juvenile Court endorses this belief by striving to identify the least restrictive environment for rehabilitation of children while not endangering community safety. To this end, the department has developed the ability to offer a diverse continuum of services to youth and families.



Services performed by the department include screening and diversion of cases to community resources, presenting objective reports to the court for use at disposition, executing court-ordered treatment and supervision, administering community corrections programs, operating detention services, securing alternative placement, providing victim assistance, and administering collection of court-ordered probation fees and restitution.

Tarrant County Juvenile Services operates the Juvenile Detention Center, which is a twenty-hour secure facility for the temporary detention of juveniles for serious law violations. The goal of the center is to provide supervision, activities, and counseling that will benefit each child during their stay. Services include educational, medical, recreational, and life skills training, as well as daily written observations of each child for use by the Court.

L

LAW LIBRARY

Counties are required to maintain law libraries for use by judges, litigants, and lawyers. The County Law Library is located on the fourth floor of the 1895 Courthouse. Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Law Library is funded through a special fee imposed on court cases. For additional information contact (817) 884-1481.

M

MARRIAGE LICENSES

A marriage license may be obtained at the Tarrant County Plaza in downtown Fort Worth, or any one of the sub-courthouses including: Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest, Southlake and Mansfield. The marriage license fee for an informal/common-law is \$36.00 and a formal marriage license fee is \$71.00. Should an applicant couple complete a “free” Texas Healthy Marriage course, the cost for the marriage license is only \$11.00, see www.theparentingcenter.org for details. Credit/debit cards and cash accepted.



MAYORS' COUNCIL

The Tarrant County Mayors' Council was established in 1975. The Council acts as an advisory committee to the Commissioners Court for the distribution of Community Development Block Grant funds (see Community Development). The Mayors' Council also addresses a variety of issues that cross city boundaries. The Council is comprised of the mayors of 38 cities located wholly or partly within Tarrant County and meets every other month.

MEDICAL EXAMINER

The Medical Examiner is responsible for determining the cause of medically unattended violent or unnatural deaths. The Tarrant County Medical Examiner's District operates a full service forensic science center consisting of a comprehensive laboratory system with state of the art technology. The center serves the needs of the Medical Examiner, District Attorneys, and law enforcement agencies within Tarrant, Parker, Denton and Johnson Counties.

MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL RETARDATION

Mental Health Mental Retardation of Tarrant County (MHMRTC) provides services to persons with mental illness, mental retardation, addictive behaviors, and early childhood developmental delays. MHMRTC is an independent local entity, not a state, federal, or county agency. Its work is directed by a local board of trustees appointed by the Tarrant County Commissioners Court.

Among the many services provided by MHMRTC are crisis intervention, case management, vocational and residential services, supported employment, drug abuse inpatient and outpatient services, family support, physical therapy, and homeless outreach.

Administrative Office.....(817) 569-4300
24-hour Crisis Hotline.....(817) 335-3022

MILITARY DISCHARGES

It is extremely important for military personnel to file their DD-214 with the County Clerk where they reside. There is no charge for filing and you will receive two (2) copies at no charge. Additional copies are \$7.00 dollars per copy, up to two (2) pages. Additional pages are \$1.00 per page. For additional information go to <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/eCountyClerk/site/default.asp>.



MINORITY, WOMEN, DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS

It is the policy of Tarrant County to encourage full participation of minority and women-owned business enterprises in all phases of its procurement activities as consultants, contractors, and/or subcontractors. The Commissioners Court adopted a Historically Underutilized Business Policy to support this goal. For more information call the Tarrant County Purchasing Department at (817) 884-1948.

MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATIONsee Auto Tags

N

9-1-1 DISTRICT

In April 1985, Tarrant County voters approved the creation of the Tarrant County 9-1-1 District with service beginning in August 1987. A seven (7) member board, of which the Commissioners Court appoints one (1) member, oversees the District. The service is funded through a monthly charge on telephone bills. Administrative office: (817) 334-0911 or www.tc911.org.

O

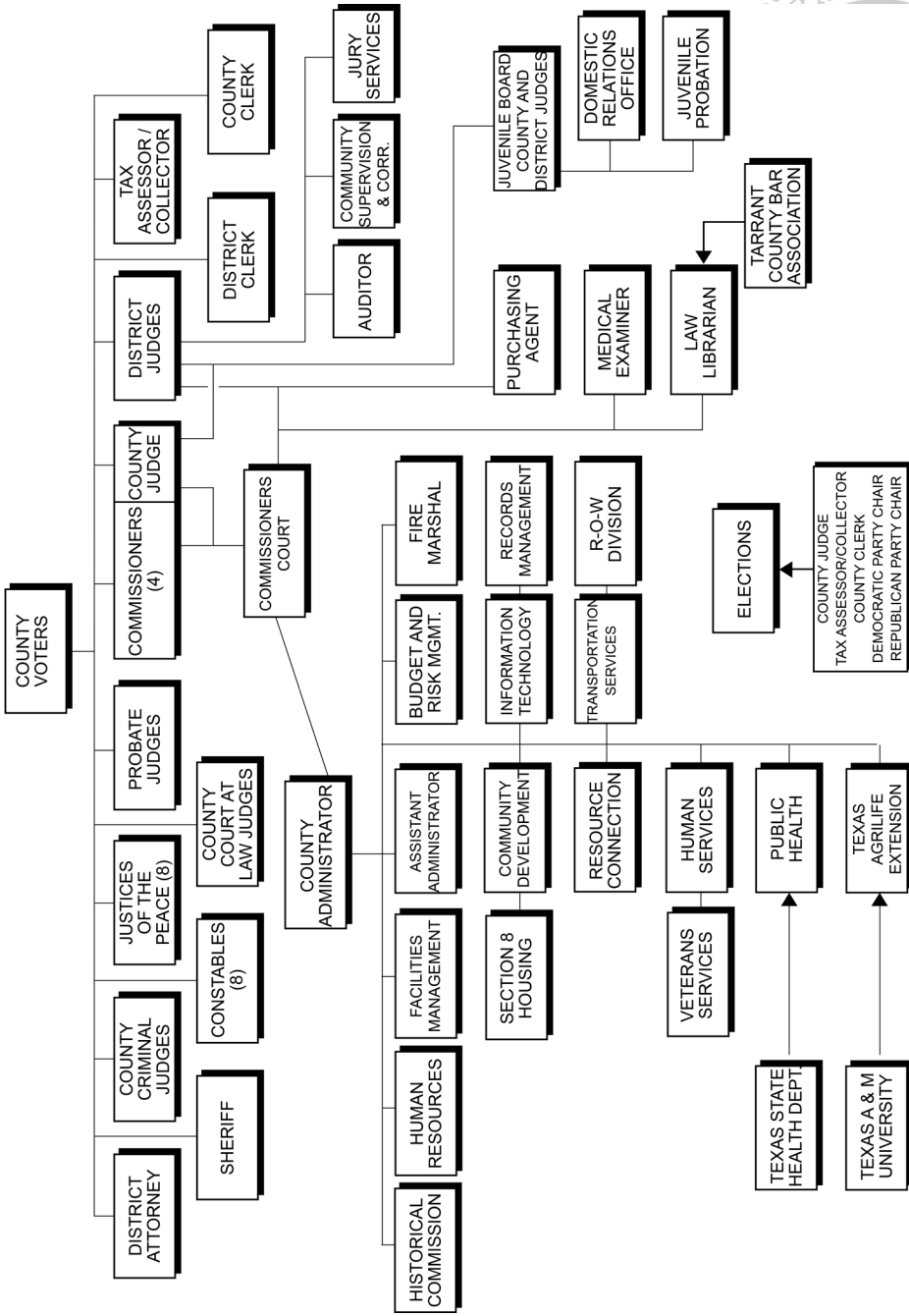
ORGANIZATION

There is no organization quite like county government. Its structure is a hybrid of state and local responsibilities. Tarrant County has two governmental roles: it serves as an administrative arm of the state, and is a local government providing certain services to its 1.8 million citizens.

Most corporations and other types of local governments, such as cities and school districts, have a pyramidal structure with a CEO or Administrator clearly in charge. Texas counties have a horizontal structure.

The unique structure of county government stems from its role as a subdivision of the state. To ensure uniformity of services and state control of county activities, the power and duties of counties were spelled out in the Texas Constitution and closely circumscribed by state statute. Tarrant County has over 66 separately elected officials whose responsibilities and duties are established by law. In addition, some department heads are appointed by the Commissioners Court, while others are appointed by the Board of District Judges.

TARRANT COUNTY ORGANIZATION





Tarrant County has not been traditionally involved in parks and recreation. The County operates one park, Echo Lake, located in south Fort Worth off of IH-35W.

PASSPORTS See District Clerk

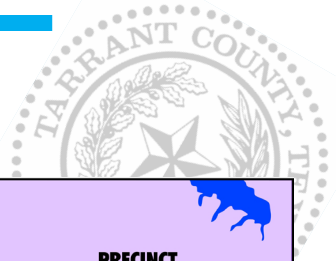
PERSONNEL See Human Resources Department

POPULATION

CURRENT POPULATION:

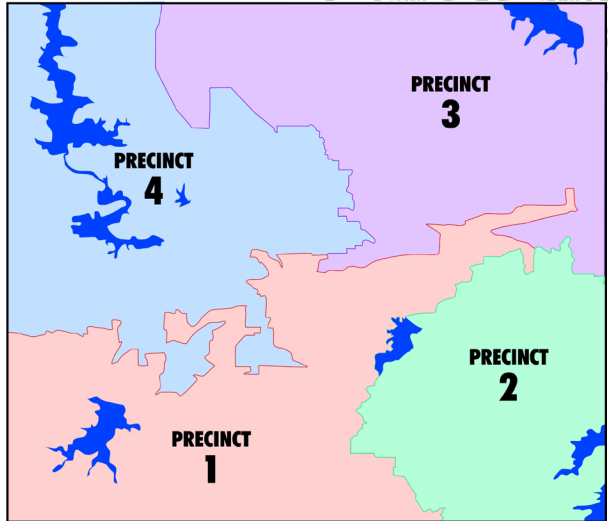
2010 Estimate.....	1,829,400
2000 Census.....	1,446,219
1990 Census.....	1,170,103
1980 Census.....	860,880
1970 Census.....	715,587
Change from 2000 to 2010	26.5%
Change from 1990 to 2000	23.6%
Change from 1980 to 1990	35.9%
Change from 1970 to 1980	20.3%
Rank Among Texas Counties.....	3
Rank Among U.S. Counties.....	16

Tarrant County is one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the nation. In 2010 Tarrant County population was approximately 1.8 million. Tarrant County is the 16th most populous county in the nation. Over one-half of the county’s population lives in its two largest cities: Fort Worth and Arlington. There are 41 cities wholly or partially in Tarrant County.



PRECINCTS (COUNTY COMMISSIONERS)

Tarrant County is divided into four precincts, each represented by a County Commissioner. The four County Commissioners have both countywide and precinct responsibilities. Each commissioner is responsible for construction and maintenance of County roads within his or her precinct. Commissioners maintain offices both at the Administration Building and within their precincts. They are responsive to the particular needs of people living within their areas of the County. In Tarrant County, each member of Commissioners Court serves as a liaison to a particular board or agency of the County such as the Hospital District.



Precinct 1	Roy C. Brooks	(817) 370-4500
Precinct 2	Andy Nguyen	(817) 548-3900
Precinct 3	Gary Fickes	(817) 581-3600
Precinct 4	J. D. Johnson	(817) 238-4400

PRETRIAL SERVICES

It is the mission of the Pretrial Services Office to provide services that encompass the needs to the courts, pretrial defendants and the community. The Office is committed to providing an efficient cost effective alternative to incarceration, protecting both individual rights and public safety, while reducing pretrial recidivism and failure to appear in court. Pretrial Services assists qualified defendants by providing them an opportunity to be released on personal bond while awaiting trial. Telephone (817) 884-1465.

PROPERTY APPRAISAL VALUE

The Tarrant Appraisal District handles property values and exemptions for all governmental taxing entities in Tarrant County. Inquires should be directed to the Tarrant Appraisal District (TAD). Telephone (817) 284-0024 or visit www.tad.org. Also see Tax Rate.



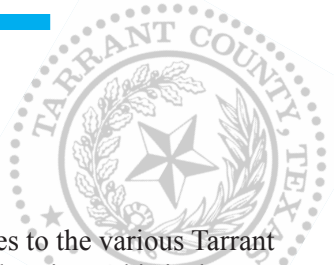
Since its inception in the 1950s, Tarrant County Public Health (TCPH) has been a valuable local resource by providing services to all Tarrant County residents aimed at promoting, achieving and maintaining a healthy standard of living. With a client base and scope of services as diverse as the county's population, a dedicated staff of more than 300 public health professionals and annual funding resources totaling approximately \$29 million, TCPH services truly touch everyone, every day, everywhere. Program areas include:

- health administration;
- consumer and environmental health;
- epidemiology;
- regional laboratory
- sexually transmitted diseases
- tuberculosis;
- health outreach;
- chronic disease control; and
- health quality and control activities.

Tarrant County Public Health's Environmental Health Division consists of a team of environmental health professionals working in partnership with the community toward a healthier environment. Environmental Health functions in a regulatory capacity regarding health issues linked to the environment and provides a variety of related services. Environmental Health also conducts food handler classes, permits food vendors, and regularly inspects public eating establishments.

Environmental Health also provides education and information about local environmental issues such as air quality and ozone; and it conducts lead poisoning investigations, permits onsite sewage facilities, inspects and permits public swimming pools, and inspects residential well water sites. One example of the Division's community partnership is the countywide mosquito surveillance project. This project is part of our measures taken to control and contain West Nile virus. For more information about Environmental Health programs and services, call (817) 321-4960.

<http://www.tarrantcounty.com/eHealth>



PURCHASING

The Purchasing Department furnishes supplies, equipment, and services to the various Tarrant County departments in the required quality and quantity at the best possible price. This is done through standardized and competitive bidding on the basis of adequate specifications. Current bid notices are posted in the Purchasing Office, and copies of the bid specifications are available there.

The Purchasing Agent is the County's property officer and disadvantaged business enterprise officer. The Purchasing Agent is charged with the responsibility of assuring fair and equitable treatment of all vendors, without regard to political pressure or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, handicap, or sex.

Tarrant County Administration Building
100 E. Weatherford, Suite 303
Fort Worth, TX 76196
Telephone: (817) 884-1414

<http://www.tarrantcounty.com/ePurchasing/site/default.asp>

R

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Records information management is a division of the Information Technology Department. Records management maintains the County's automated records management system of approximately 90,000 boxes of records which are stored in a fully modernized warehouse. The role of this department is to store, retrieve, manage, and dispose of records in accordance with state statutes and provide electronic access to the owners of the records. The Records Center was established by Commissioners Court in 1982, to centralize storage and improve the management of the County's semi-active and inactive records.

Records management also provides imaging services to many departments in Tarrant County. Documents are scanned, archived, and retained in a central repository that allows authorized users access to retrieve and view images and reports.



The Tarrant County records destruction and recycling program was established in August 1993 as a means of providing environmentally responsible destruction and recycling of old County records. The Recycling program has become a model for the region and continues to expand, due in part, to the innovative use of inmate and work release labor. The recycling center now destroys and recycles records for many County offices, cities, and school districts throughout the state, as well as processing the office paper from the County's office recycling program.

REENTRY PROGRAM

The Reentry Program implemented in the Tarrant County Administrator's Office in 2007. The Reentry Coordinator directs the research, development, planning and implementation of a comprehensive strategic plan for ex-offender reintegration in Tarrant County. The goal of the plan is to reduce crime, reduce recidivism and better prepare our community to assist formerly incarcerated persons returning to Tarrant County.

RESOURCE CONNECTION

The Resource Connection is a one-stop center that connects persons with education, employment, health and/or human service needs with available resources. Believed to be the first of its kind in the nation, the Resource Connection co-locates a wide variety of agencies and services in a campus environment. It promotes service coordination by providing a Community Resource Coordination Group for Adults (CRCGA) that facilitates customers' access to various services. Tarrant County is the lead agency in this collaboration, and provides administrative and management services for over 38 partner agencies.

The Resource Connection is totally accessible with bus service to the campus and handicap-accessible shuttle service to each building. It is located on the site of the former Fort Worth State School at IH-20 and Campus Drive. Telephone: (817) 531-7600.

S

SHERIFF

The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer for the County. The Sheriff's Department is the single largest component of the County's criminal justice budget. The Sheriff is elected to a four-year term. Operating the jail and providing support and specialized technical expertise to area municipal police agencies are the main function of a modern, urban county Sheriff's Department. About two-thirds of the Sheriff's Department annual budget goes toward operating the County's four correctional facilities that house about 4,500 inmate beds.

However, the Sheriff has a number of other responsibilities, including papers and warrants, providing court bailiffs, and maintaining communication with municipal and State law enforcement agencies. The Sheriff has countywide jurisdiction, but in practice, concentrates the departments investigative and patrol efforts in the unincorporated areas.

STRAY LIVESTOCK See Animal Control

T

TARRANT COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT See JPS Health Network

TAX ASSESSOR/COLLECTOR

The Tax Assessor/Collector is elected for a four-year term. The Tax Assessor/Collector is the constitutional office directed to assess and collect all 700,000 tax accounts as identified and valued by the Tarrant Appraisal District. The Office also collects property taxes for 58 other taxing jurisdictions for a total annual amount exceeding \$3 billion. For the State of Texas, the Office collects beer, wine, and liquor licensing fees. As an agent of the state through TXDOT, the Tax Assessor/Collector licenses and titles all vehicles in Texas. The Tax Assessor/Collector offers an automated information center at (817) 884-1100. Property tax payments may be made by mail, at any of the sub-courthouses, or by credit card at www.tarrantcounty.com/taxweb. Credit cards are also accepted at all locations. A convenience fee is charged for all credit cards.





TAX RATE

Tarrant County's property tax rate is the second lowest among the major urban counties in Texas. The tax year 2010 rate is .264 cents per \$100.00 of assessed valuation. The County grants a \$50,000 homestead exemption to those over age 65 and a \$10,000 exemption to the disabled. Disabled veterans can qualify for an additional exemption. All over 65 or disabled person's homesteads are eligible for a tax freeze. Application must be made for the over 65 or disabled exemption through the Tarrant Appraisal District. The tax freeze is then calculated by the Tax Assessor/Collector. Each year the proposed tax rate is advertised and public hearings are held to gather citizen input. The tax rate is set by the Commissioners Court in September.

TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Services Department is comprised of six sections:

- ***Engineering and Design*** - Provides engineering and surveying assistance to Precinct Maintenance Facilities, traffic studies for placement of regulatory signs, flood plain management, and subdivision regulation compliance.
 - ***Right-of-Way*** - Acquires right-of-way and easements on county roadway and state Farm-to-Market roads as well as purchases land for County projects and disposes of surplus land.
 - ***Central Garage*** - Maintains and repairs approximately 500 County-owned vehicles.
 - ***Striping Crew*** - Stripes all county roadways and parking lots, and stripes city streets as requested.
 - ***Sign Shop*** - Provides traffic signs and signage for Precinct Maintenance Facilities and departments within the County system.
 - ***Environmental Specialist*** - Monitors all state and federal environmental regulations and maintains compliance within County departments.
-

U/V



VETERANS SERVICES

The Tarrant County Veterans Service Office is an advocate agency established to assist veterans and/or their survivors obtain entitled benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the State of Texas. The office cooperates with local government and private agencies to assist their clients in obtaining needed specialized services.

The office is located on the campus of the Resource Connection of Tarrant County at 1200 Circle Drive, Suite 300, Fort Worth, TX 76119. The telephone number is (817) 531-5645. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Tarrant County Community Resources office coordinates the placement of volunteer workers from the community throughout Tarrant County government. Volunteers serve in a wide variety of areas including the court system, public health, juvenile services, general administration, and on various advisory boards. For more information contact the Community Resource office at (817) 884-1036.

VOTER REGISTRATION

To vote in Tarrant County, a person must be a United States Citizen, 18 years of age or older, and a resident of Tarrant County. In order to vote in a particular election, a person must be registered to vote at least 30 days in advance of the election.

To receive a voter registration application by mail, call (817) 831-VOTE (8683). Applications are also available at libraries and other public buildings. <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/eVote/site/default.asp>



Tarrant County, Texas
100 E. Weatherford Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76196
817.884.1111