

## The Death Penalty in Bexar County

(As of October 1, 2017)

- New death sentences in Texas have **dropped dramatically** since peaking in 1999, when juries sentenced 48 people to death. Since 2015, juries in Texas have imposed the death penalty in eight cases and **rejected it** in seven other trials. To date in 2017, juries have imposed two new death sentences (in Jefferson and Walker Counties).
- Overall, Bexar County prosecutors have secured **death sentences for 76 people** since 1974.
- While Bexar County is **Texas' third highest sentencing county overall**, it accounts for just one new death sentence since 2009. Between 2009 and 2012, death-qualified juries in Bexar County **rejected the death penalty** in four capital murder cases. The defendants were sentenced to life in prison without parole.
- There are **10 individuals** still on death row who were convicted in Bexar County; 7 are Hispanic and 3 are African American.
- Bexar County accounts for **44 executions since 1982**. This is the third highest number of executions in Texas behind Harris and Dallas Counties.
- Bexar County accounts for **two of the five** executions that have occurred in Texas to date in 2017. There is **one execution date** remaining this year for an individual convicted in Bexar County.
- Since 1973, **159 individuals** – including 13 people in Texas – have been released from death rows nationwide due to evidence of their wrongful conviction.
- 9 people in Bexar County have been **exonerated of serious crimes** since 2011; many of those exonerations were based on perjury or false accusations.
- **21 people** sentenced to death in Bexar County have been removed from death row; in most cases, their sentences were commuted.
- It is widely accepted that Ruben Cantu was **wrongfully executed** by the State of Texas on August 24, 1993. Cantu's conviction was based largely on the testimony of a single eyewitness who later changed his story. Cantu's case inspired former Bexar County District Attorney Sam Millsap to speak out in his 2010 TedxSan Antonio talk, "Advocating for Truth: Why a Former Prosecutor No Longer Supports the Death Penalty."

The TCADP San Antonio Chapter meets on the second Wednesday of every month.

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