During its first decade, the Harris County Public Defender's Office (HCPD) provided better client outcomes than other appointed or hired lawyers. That was documented in a 2013 report by Council of State Governments Justice Center, *Improving Indigent Defense: Evaluation of the Harris County Public Defender* and reaffirmed in 2020 by *Harris County Public Defender: Tenth Year Report* (research support from the Texas Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute). Those outcomes include:

- More HCPD clients who were eligible for prison avoided a criminal record than clients of other appointed or hired lawyers
- Clients of HCPD were more likely to be “no billed” by grand juries or have their cases dismissed, than clients of private appointed counsel
- Lawyers at HCPD went to trial in felonies more frequently than other appointed or hired lawyers and achieved a higher percentage of acquittals than either
- HCPD was much more successful in reversing or reforming cases in the Texas appellate courts than other lawyers
- Dismissal rates for HCPD mental health clients tripled over the last six years

The office provides services unavailable elsewhere:

- All persons arrested may be represented by HCPD at their initial bail hearings
- The American Bar Association awarded HCPD for its attorney-mentor model which was later adopted statewide
- HCPD sponsored more legal seminars than any group in recent years, except the statewide prosecutors’ organization
- A brief bank, immigration consultation, trial clothing for defendants in need, and research assistance are provided by HCPD to all appointed lawyers in the county
- Holistic practices are provided by HCPD to prevent collateral consequences and attach clients to services

For more information about the office, go to [http://harriscountypublicdefender.org/](http://harriscountypublicdefender.org/)