

## The Death Penalty in Bexar County

- While Bexar County is **Texas' third-highest sentencing county**, juries there have imposed just two new death sentences in the past decade. This summer, two capital murder cases in which prosecutors were seeking the death penalty resulted in mistrials.
- New death sentences in Texas have **dropped dramatically** since peaking in 1999, when juries sentenced 48 people to death.
- Overall, Bexar County prosecutors have secured **death sentences for 76 people** since 1974.
- Between 2009 and 2012, juries in Bexar County rejected the death penalty in four capital murder cases. The defendants were sentenced to life in prison without parole.
- Bexar County accounts for **46 of the 553 executions** carried out by the State of Texas since 1982. It falls behind only Harris and Dallas Counties in the number of executions. Two individuals convicted in Bexar County – Juan Castillo and Chris Young – were executed this year.
- There are **8 individuals** still on death row who were convicted in Bexar County. Six of these men are Hispanic and two are African American.
- Since 1973, **163 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 wrongful convictions 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. The case inspired former Bexar County District Attorney Sam Millsap to abandon his support for the death penalty.

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

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