

Facts about the Death Penalty

- New death sentences in Texas have **decreased significantly** since peaking in 1999, when juries sentenced 48 people to death. In 2020, new death sentences remained in the **single digits** for the sixth year in a row.
- Texas juries imposed **two new death sentences** in 2020. All other capital jury trials have been postponed because of the pandemic.
- Death sentences continue to be imposed disproportionately on people of color. Over the last five years, nearly **40% of death sentences** have been imposed on Black men.
- **Only three counties** in Texas (Harris, Tarrant and Walker) have imposed more than one death sentence in the last five years.
- Since 1973, **185 individuals** who spent time on death row have been exonerated. This includes 16 people convicted and sentenced to death in Texas, according to the Death Penalty Information Center.
- The State of Texas has executed **570 people** since 1982, accounting for **more than one-third** of the 1,532 executions nationwide since 1977.
- In 2020, the State of Texas **executed three people, the fewest executions since 1996**. It is one of only two states, along with the federal government, to put anyone to death during the global pandemic. There have been no executions in Texas thus far in 2021.
- **Eight execution dates were stayed or withdrawn last year**, primarily due to the public health crisis.
- Currently, **four execution dates are set for 2021**. During the first quarter of the year, three executions were stayed to review claims of intellectual disability.
- Currently, there are **204 people on death row** in Texas, including 6 women; this is the smallest death row population since the late 1980s.
- In Texas, the cost of an average death penalty case is **nearly three times higher** than imprisoning someone for life without the possibility of parole.
- **23 states** (most recently, Virginia) have abandoned the death penalty through legislation or judicial decisions. Governors in three other states have imposed moratoriums on executions.
- **142 countries** have abolished the death penalty in law or practice. In 2019, the top five executing countries were China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Egypt.

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