

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, a record-low number. Other capital trials were postponed because of the pandemic but resumed in 2021. A Bexar County jury recently imposed the first death sentence in Texas since March 2020.
- 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 **573 people** since 1982, accounting for **more than one-third** of all executions nationwide since 1977. Only Texas, Missouri, and the federal government have carried out executions during the pandemic.
- In 2020, the State of Texas **executed three people, the fewest executions since 1996**. There have been **three executions in Texas to date in 2021**, and four more are scheduled for the Fall.
- Currently, there are **199 people on death row** in Texas, including 6 women; this is the state's smallest death row population since 1985.
- 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 a moratorium on executions.
- At least **144 countries** have abolished the death penalty in law or practice. In 2020, the top five executing countries were China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Egypt.

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