

The Death Penalty in Bexar County

- New death sentences in Texas have **dropped significantly** since peaking in 1999, when juries sentenced 48 people to death. Death sentences have numbered in the **single digits since 2015**.
- In 2025, juries imposed **three new death sentences**: two in Harris County and one in Tarrant County.
- Bexar County ranks **fourth in the number of death sentences** imposed by juries since 1974 (**77 total**), behind Harris, Dallas, and Tarrant counties.
- The last person to be sentenced to death by a Bexar County jury is Otis McKane, who was convicted in 2021 of killing San Antonio Police Detective Benjamin Marconi in 2016. It was the **first new death sentence** imposed in Bexar County in more than five years.
- 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 598 executions** carried out by the State of Texas since 1982. It falls behind only Harris, Dallas, and Tarrant counties in the number of executions.
- There are **7 individuals** currently on death row who were convicted in Bexar County; five are Hispanic and two are Black.
- **More than 20 people** sentenced to death in Bexar County have been removed from death row; in most cases, their sentences were changed to a lesser penalty.
- More than **20 people** in Bexar County have been **exonerated of serious crimes** since 2011; many of those exonerations were based on perjury or false accusations. Since 1973, more than **200 individuals** who spent time on death row nationwide have been exonerated, including 18 people convicted and sentenced to death in Texas.
- There is strong evidence that Ruben Cantu was **wrongfully executed** by the State of Texas on August 24, 1993. His conviction was based largely on the testimony of a single eyewitness who later changed his account of the crime. Cantu was 17 at the time of the crime and sentenced to death by a Bexar County jury in 1985.

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