

# Children’s Commission Grant Summaries

## Fiscal Year 2026

<b>Organization:</b>	Texas Center for Child and Family Studies (TCCFS)
<b>Project:</b>	Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) Court Study
<b>Strategic Category:</b>	<b>Systems Improvement, Data</b>
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	\$ 83,364
<b>Project Description:</b>	<p>In partnership with University of Texas at Arlington, TCCFS has engaged in qualitative evaluation of the PMC court model since 2020. However, to date there has been no research or evaluation that can produce causal evidence of whether the model is an effective intervention for improving permanency and well-being outcomes for children and youth in PMC.</p> <p>TCCFS secured federal funding to conduct a three-year study measuring the effectiveness of the PMC courts compared to traditional courts, with a special focus on outcomes among children in PMC with disabilities. The outside funding covers limited year-one activities of interviews with key stakeholders to get feedback on data collection tools.</p> <p>CIP funding would expand the study by covering personnel costs to allow for the collection of data on a group of children and youth in PMC to capture baseline data and make any needed modifications to study protocols (e.g., recruitment) and data collection tools before scaling up the study. This step will be critical to ensure continuous quality improvement and feasibility of the larger study, which has the potential to impact statewide systems improvement efforts.</p>
<b>Project Activities:</b>	<p>Phase 1 (Project Installation - First 6 Months): During the first six months, the project will be set up by creating a detailed study protocol, developing evaluation tools, obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) ethics approval, recruiting a study advisory board to initiate continuous quality improvement, and refining the implementation and evaluation plan.</p> <p>Phase 2 (Pilot - Second 6 Months): In the following six months, the study will be piloted by assessing the feasibility of the protocol through recruiting and collecting data from children in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, and Travis counties, refining data collection tools, and engaging in continuous quality improvement through ongoing data collection and analysis, interviews with key stakeholders, creating a fidelity database, and holding meetings with the study advisory board.</p>
<b>Use of Funds:</b>	Personnel, Benefits, Contractual
<b>Prior Funding:</b>	2020-2023

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## Fiscal Year 2026

<b>Organization:</b>	Texas Center for the Judiciary (TCJ)
<b>Project:</b>	Child Welfare Judges Conference
<b>Strategic Category:</b>	<b>Training</b>
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	\$259,641.00
<b>Project Description:</b>	<p>TCJ will conduct the 2025 Child Welfare Judges Conference (CWJC). The three-day conference will be held on October 27-29, 2025, at the Sheraton Austin Georgetown Hotel and Conference Center. Training topics will include mental health, legislative updates, best practices for improving the timeliness of courtroom proceedings, supporting family engagement, service array, and resources for families. Typically, 85-100 judges attend the conference. Preparation includes collaboration with the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), Texas CASA, and Single Source Continuum Contractors.</p> <p>TCJ will also begin the planning process for the 2026 Child Welfare Judges Conference.</p>
<b>Project Activities:</b>	<p>TCJ will participate in periodic planning calls with the Children's Commission and OCA. TCJ will communicate with attendees about reservations, process reimbursements, work directly with speakers to facilitate travel, and develop program descriptions. Additionally, TCJ will prepare materials including conference programs, signage, and a conference app as well as apply for, track, and reconcile MCLE and family violence hours for conference participants. At the conclusion of the conference, TCJ will prepare and distribute conference evaluations, and provide results to the Children's Commission.</p>
<b>Use of Funds:</b>	Personnel, Benefits, Travel, Supplies, Contractual, Other
<b>Prior Funding:</b>	2010-2025

# Children's Commission Grant Summaries

## Fiscal Year 2026

<b>Organization:</b>	Texas Department of Family & Protective Services
<b>Project:</b>	2026 DFPS Legal Conference
<b>Strategic Category:</b>	<b>Training</b>
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	\$12,000.00
<b>Project Description:</b>	The training provides agency attorneys (and assistant district and county attorneys via video playback) with MCLE that addresses the unique training needs of attorneys who represent DFPS.
<b>Project Activities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Select conference site;</li> <li>- Meet with planning committee to brainstorm topics and speakers;</li> <li>- Finalize topics, speakers, and agenda, send out registration materials, and room reservation links to attendees;</li> <li>- Finalize details with conference site, submit for MCLE accreditation, send updated agenda to the Commission;</li> <li>- Hold event and record presentations;</li> <li>- Upload presentations to SharePoint for assistant district and county attorneys, send out post-event survey; and</li> <li>- Meet with planning committee to discuss survey results and begin process for 2027 conference, if grant is awarded.</li> </ul>
<b>Use of Funds:</b>	Travel, Contractual (Venue, Audio/Visual)
<b>Prior Funding:</b>	2016-2025

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## Fiscal Year 2026

<b>Organization:</b>	Texas Indigent Defense Commission
<b>Project:</b>	Title IV-E: Advancing Legal Advocacy for Families
<b>Strategic Category:</b>	<b>Legal Practice and Process</b>
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	\$130,962
<b>Project Description:</b>	<p>Texas has underutilized a significant amount of available federal Title IV-E funds for legal representation in child welfare cases due to the decentralized nature of its legal representation system.</p> <p>In January 2025, the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) entered into an MOU with DFPS to provide technical support to enhance the process to claim IV-E funds. However, TIDC’s family protection representation division lacks the capacity to fully address these challenges and support better utilization of federal funds.</p> <p>A dedicated staff person is critically needed to create educational materials, provide technical assistance and training to county stakeholders and DFPS staff, review reimbursement requests, encourage counties to use funds for family representation, collect data, and identify program improvements, serving as the essential link to establish a robust Title IV-E program that meets the needs of a state as large as Texas.</p>
<b>Project Activities:</b>	TIDC will collaborate with DFPS, provide outreach to counties, create informational and educational materials, provide trainings, offer technical assistance to counties and DFPS, collect data, and continuously evaluate the program to determine needed improvements.
<b>Use of Funds:</b>	Personnel, Benefits, Travel, Supplies, Equipment, Other
<b>Prior Funding:</b>	None

# Children’s Commission Grant Summaries

## Fiscal Year 2026

<b>Organization:</b>	Texas Legal Services Center (TLSC)
<b>Project:</b>	Family Helpline
<b>Strategic Category:</b>	<b>System Improvement, Data</b>
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	\$80,000
<b>Project Description:</b>	TLSC’s Family Helpline was established in 2017. The Family Helpline assists Texans who have legal questions regarding the child welfare system and child safety. When a caller dials the phone number, their call is answered by a child welfare attorney. Family Helpline attorneys are available Monday – Friday from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Central. The goal of the helpline is to improve safety and stability for children, and to empower families through education about their legal rights and court processes. The Family Helpline serves all 254 counties in Texas.
<b>Project Activities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide one-on-one legal education, information, and referrals to approx. 1,250 individuals in Texas regarding child welfare involvement or child safety. This will be tracked and measured using Legal Server case management software.</li> <li>- Present legal trainings on topics related to child welfare law a minimum of four times per fiscal year with a goal of reaching at least 10 attorneys or professionals per presentation.</li> <li>- Provide child welfare content for TexasLawHelp.org with a minimum of 2 self-help kits or articles per year.</li> <li>- Collect data regarding the child welfare system – including the caller’s role, type of case, issues discussed, trends, and areas for improvement; this data will be reported on to the Commission twice per year.</li> <li>- Distribute at least 1,000 outreach materials to entities across the state (i.e., local courts and clerk’s offices, local public libraries and law libraries, CPS offices, CASA offices, local parenting class providers, drug treatment and rehabilitation centers, child advocacy centers, medical provider offices, and law enforcement offices).</li> <li>- Create a separate Family Helpline extension for attorneys seeking legal information and procedural assistance to better represent their clients at any stage of DFPS involvement.</li> </ul>
<b>Use of Funds:</b>	Personnel & Benefits
<b>Prior Funding:</b>	2017-2025