

Prosecutor Trial Skills Course

July 12-17, 2026
Austin

27.25 hours of MCLE, including 3 hours of ethics

The host hotel: Hyatt Regency Austin
208 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, TX

Call 800/233-1234 for reservations and mention TDCAA to get the room rate of \$173 (plus tax); this rate is good until June 21 or the block is sold out, whichever comes first.

Anyone who is new to a prosecutor's office should plan to attend the Texas District and County Attorneys Association's Prosecutor Trial Skills Course this July in Austin. It's a full week of intensive training that prepares new prosecutors for their work both in the courtroom and out. Seasoned faculty advisors are assigned to small groups of attendees to answer questions and direct discussions at each table, and many aspects of criminal law are covered in the presentations. New prosecutors won't want to miss this high-quality training customized especially for them!

Registration for this conference and other information is at tdcaa.com.

This program is funded by a grant from the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals and by the Texas District and County Attorneys Association.



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505 W. 12th St., Ste. 100
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Prosecutor Trial Skills Course Agenda

Sunday, July 12 (2 hours CLE)

- 4:00 p.m. Welcome & Course Introduction**
4:15 p.m. The Ethical Prosecutor
W. Clay Abbott, TDCAA DWI Resource Prosecutor, Austin
- 6:00 p.m. Case Scenario / Group Introductions**
Faculty Directed at Each Table
- 6:15 p.m. Adjourn to Opening Reception (provided by TDCAA)**

Monday, July 13 (6.75 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. Faculty Discussion: How Does Your County Work?**
Faculty Directed at Each Table
- 9:30 a.m. Pre-Trial Preparation**
Kristin Burns, First Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Bastrop County
- 11:15 a.m. Case Scenarios**
Faculty Directed at Each Table
- Noon Lunch (provided by TDCAA)**
- 1:00 p.m. The Evidence Primer**
- 2:15 p.m. Nuts and Bolts of Jury Selection**
Frances Manzo, Asst. District Attorney, Montgomery County
- 3:45 p.m. Peremptory Strikes and Batson Challenges**
Glen Fitzmartin, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Dallas County
- 4:30 p.m. Case Scenarios**
Faculty Directed at Each Table
- 5:30 p.m. Adjourn**

Tuesday, July 14 (6.25 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. Motions to Suppress Hearings**
Tori Ford, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Tarrant County
- 10:45 a.m. DWI Caselaw Update**
Jessica Frazier, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Comal County
- Noon Lunch (provided by TDCAA)**
- 1:00 p.m. Case Scenarios**
Faculty Directed at Each Table
- 2:15 p.m. Effective Opening Statements**
Ben Kaminar, First Asst. County & District Attorney, Lamar County
- 3:30 p.m. Direct Examination**
Bryan Honeycutt, Asst. District Attorney, Harris County

- 4:15 p.m. Case Scenarios**
Faculty Directed at Each Table
- 5:00 p.m. Adjourn**

Wednesday, July 15 (3 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. DWI: Presenting the Case**
Lauren Black, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Dallas County
- 10:45 a.m. Domestic Violence: Presenting the Case**
Jessica Escue, Asst. District Attorney, Brazos County
- 12:15 p.m. Adjourn**

Thursday, July 16 (6.5 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. Punishment Evidence**
Kiera Kilday, Asst. District Attorney, Travis County
- 10:15 a.m. Predicates & Objections**
Paige Pattillo, First Asst. County Attorney, Nacogdoches County
- 11:00 a.m. Probation Revocation Hearings**
Francisco Mendoza, Asst. District Attorney, Webb County
- Noon Lunch (provided by TDCAA)**
- 1:00 p.m. Plea Negotiation & Plea Bargaining Workshop**
Justin Almand, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Rockwall County
- 3:15 p.m. Identifying & Overcoming Cognitive Bias**
Jarvis Parsons, District Attorney, Brazos County
- 4:30 p.m. Case Scenarios**
Faculty Directed at Each Table
- 5:00 p.m. Adjourn**

5:00–5:45 p.m. Optional Class C Forum

W. Clay Abbott, TDCAA DWI Resource Prosecutor, Austin

This session is an opportunity for attendees who practice in justice or municipal courts to discuss current trends and issues they face in their practice. Attendance at this session is optional and no MCLE credit will be provided.

Friday, July 17 (2.75 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. Cross-Examination and Impeachment**
- 10:30 a.m. Final Argument**
John Jordan, Asst. District Attorney, Harris County
- Noon Adjourn**

Payment options:

- \$500 Registration (\$250 Registration fee + \$250 Association fee): For CAs, DAs, CDAs, C&DAs, and their office personnel. The TDCAA fee of \$250 is each participant's share of costs over and above what the grant allows (for example, excess costs of on-site meals and association overhead). In addition, this fee enables TDCAA to lock in discounted hotel rates for participants and entitles them to attend all association functions, including Sunday's reception and lunch on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.
- \$250 "Training Only" Registration: For CAs, DAs, CDAs, C&DAs, and their office personnel. This fee does not allow an attendee to participate in receptions or lunches but entitles the attendee admittance to all training sessions.
- \$750 Registration: For everyone else.