

# Prosecutor Trial Skills Course

July 12-17, 2020 • Austin

27.25 hours of MCLE credit, including 3 hours of ethics

**The host hotel:  
Omni Southpark  
4140 Governors Row  
Austin, TX 78744  
512/383-2622**

Rooms are \$124 plus tax (good until June 22 or the block is sold out, whichever is first). Mention TDCAA to get this rate.

Anyone who is new to a prosecutor's office (less than six months on the job) or who would like a refresher should plan to attend TDCAA's Prosecutor Trial Skills Course. It's a full week of intensive training that prepares 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 two aspects of trial—jury selection and opening statement—are demonstrated by veteran prosecutors. Other elements of trial are covered, from opening statements to closing arguments, as are DWI and domestic violence prosecution (two of the most common offenses new prosecutors handle), plea bargains, probation revocation hearings, and motions to suppress. There's even an optional forum on Class C misdemeanors for those who practice in JP or municipal courts. Both new and seasoned prosecutors won't want to miss this intensive, high-quality training!

**Registration for this seminar and other information is at [tdcaa.com](http://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.*

## Prosecutor Trial Skills Course Agenda

### Sunday, July 12 (2 hours)

- 4:00 p.m. Welcome & Course Introduction  
4:15 p.m. Case Scenario & Group Introductions  
*Faculty Directed at Each Table*  
4:30 p.m. The Ethical Prosecutor  
*W. Clay Abbott, TDCAA DWI Resource Prosecutor, Austin*  
6:15 p.m. Adjourn to Opening Reception  
(provided by TDCAA)

### Monday, July 13 (6.75 hours)

- 9:00 a.m. DWI Caselaw Update  
*Jessica Frazier, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Comal County*  
10:30 a.m. Pre-Trial Issues  
11:30 a.m. Faculty Discussion: How Does Your County Work?  
*Faculty Directed at Each Table*  
Noon Lunch (provided by TDCAA)  
1:00 p.m. The Evidence Primer  
*Britt Lindsey, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Taylor County*  
2:15 p.m. Nuts & Bolts of Jury Selection  
*Marisa Dunagan, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Collin County*  
3:15 p.m. DEMO: Jury Selection  
3:45 p.m. Peremptory Strikes & 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)

- 9:00 a.m. Hearings on Motions to Suppress  
*Sheri Culberson & Brent Chappell, Asst. District Attorneys, Montgomery County*  
10:15 a.m. Hearings on Motions to Suppress (cont'd)  
*Sheri Culberson & Brent Chappell, Asst. District Attorneys, Montgomery County*  
11:15 a.m. Case Scenarios  
*Faculty Directed at Each Table*  
Noon Lunch (provided by TDCAA)  
1:00 p.m. Identifying & Overcoming Cognitive Bias  
*Jarvis Parsons, District Attorney, Brazos County, & Bill Wirsky, First Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Collin County*  
2:15 p.m. Effective Opening Statements  
*Sunni Mitchell, Asst. District Attorney, Williamson County*  
3:15 p.m. DEMO: Opening Statement  
3:45 p.m. Your VAC & You  
*Jalayne Robinson, LMSW, TDCAA Victim Services Director*  
4:15 p.m. Case Scenarios  
*Faculty Directed at Each Table*  
5:00 p.m. Adjourn

### Wednesday, July 15 (3 hours)

- 9:00 a.m. DWI: Presenting the Case  
10:45 a.m. Domestic Violence: Presenting the Case  
12:15 p.m. Adjourn

### Thursday, July 16 (6.5 hours)

- 9:00 a.m. Punishment Evidence  
*Jerry Varney, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Dallas County*  
10:15 a.m. Case Scenarios  
*Faculty Directed at Each Table*  
11:00 a.m. Probation Revocation Hearings  
*Joseph Hooker, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Bexar County*  
Noon Lunch (provided by TDCAA)  
1:00 p.m. Plea Negotiation & Plea Bargaining Workshop  
*Tiana Sanford, Asst. District Attorney, Montgomery County, & Brian Klas, TDCAA Training Director, Austin*  
3:15 p.m. Predicate 101  
*Erik Nielsen, Asst. District Attorney, Travis County*  
4:15 p.m. Case Scenarios  
*Faculty Directed at Each Table*  
5:00 p.m. Adjourn

### 5:00–5:45 p.m. Class C Forum (Optional)

*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)

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