

Texas Supreme Court Election History, 1851-2010

N.B.: this is Texas Supreme Court election history only. It is not inclusive of any justices who were appointed or promoted under constitutional amendment, but never ran for election.

Justices of the Republic of Texas, 1836–1845

The Constitution of the Republic of Texas provided for a Supreme Court to consist of a Chief Justice and Associate Justices. The Associate Justices were the Judges of the eight district courts of Texas. Chief Justices were appointed by Congress.

The District Judges, whose first session was January 13, 1840, served with the Chief Justice as Associate Justices from January 13, 1840 to December 29, 1845, when Texas was admitted into the United States.

Justices 1845–1876: Under the Constitutions of 1845 and 1861

The Governor appointed the justices from 1845-1851. Election of justices was transferred to voters in 1851.

Chief Justices

[John Hemphill](#) (March 1846–October 1858)

1846: appointed by Gov. Henderson

1851: elected (unopposed)

1856: elected (unopposed)

1858: resigned

[Royall T. Wheeler](#) (October 1858–April 1864)

August 1858: elected Chief Justice (unopposed)- assumed position in October

1864: died in office (suicide)

[Oran M. Roberts](#) (November 1864–1865)

1864: elected v. James H. Bell (to take Wheeler's place as CJ)

1865: resigned/removed from office at end of Civil War

Associate Justices

[Royall T. Wheeler](#) (March 1846–August 1858)

1846: appointed by Gov. Henderson

1851: elected (unopposed)

1856: elected (unopposed)

1858: elected Chief Justice (unopposed)- assumed position in October

[Abner S. Lipscomb](#) (March 1846–November 1856)

1846: appointed by Gov. Henderson

1851: elected (unopposed)

1856: elected (unopposed)

1856: died in office

[Oran M. Roberts](#) (1857–October 1862)

1857: elected v. Peter W. Gray, Thomas J. Jennings, John Taylor, and Benjamin C. Franklin (taking Lipscomb's place)

1862: resigned to fight in the Civil War

[James H. Bell](#) (August 1858–August 1864)

1858: elected (as Independent) v. C. W. Buckley (Democrat)- assumed position in October

1864: term expired- defeated in bid for Chief Justice

[George F. Moore](#) (October 1862–June 1866)

1862: elected v. Reuben Reeves, Medacus A. Long, Thomas J. Jennings, William W. Wallace

[Reuben A. Reeves](#) (August 1864-1865, 1876)

1864: elected v. C. W. Buckley (Democrat) and John Sayles

1865: resigned/removed from office at end of Civil War

Under the Constitution of 1866 (1866–1870)

Under the Constitution of 1866 (the first Reconstruction Constitution), the Supreme Court was increased from three judges to five, with a term of office of ten years. The chief justice was to be selected by the

five justices on the court from their own number. All justices were elected, but some ran on “tickets” and were all elected at the same time.

Chief Justice:

[George F. Moore](#) (August 1866- September 1867)

Associate Justices:

[Asa H. Willie](#) (August 1866-September 1867)

[Richard Coke](#) (August 1866-September 1867)

[George W. Smith](#) (August 1866-September 1867)

[Stockton P. Donley](#) (August 1866-September 1867)

Justices Moore, Donley, Smith, Coke, and Willie (all on the “Conservative Union Ticket” were elected in August of 1866, running against James H. Bell, Colbert Caldwell, and William Jones of the “Union Ticket”). They were removed by U.S. military authorities in September 1867, and Union sympathizers were appointed by U.S. military authorities to replace them.

Under the Constitution of 1869 (1870–1876)

Under the Constitution of 1869, the number of justices was reduced from five to three, and all judicial positions were appointed.

Justices under the Constitution of 1876 (1876–present): Justices 1876–1945

Under the Constitution of 1876, the number of justices remained at three, and the positions were once again elected with a term of six years.

Chief Justices

[Oran M. Roberts](#) (Chief Justice, April 1876– October 1878)

1876: elected (unopposed)

1878: resigned to become governor

[George F. Moore](#) (November 1878–November 1881)

1878: appointed by Gov. Hubbard to fill the place of Chief Justice Roberts

1878: elected v. James H. Bell (Republican)

Nov. 1881: resigned

[Robert S. Gould](#) (November 1881–December 1882)

1881: appointed by Gov. Roberts to fill the place of Chief Justice Moore

1882: defeated in bid for Democratic nomination

[Asa H. Willie](#) (December 1882–March 1888)

1882: elected (unopposed) on Democratic Party ticket with Stayton and West

1888: resigned

[John W. Stayton](#) (March 1888–July 1894)

March 1888: appointed by Gov. Ross to fill the place of Chief Justice Willie.

November 1888: elected (unopposed) on Democratic Party ticket with Henry and Gaines

July 1894: died in office

[Reuben R. Gaines](#) (July 1894–January 1911)

July 1894: appointed by Gov. Hogg to replace Stayton

Nov. 1894: elected v. Thomas J. Russell (People's Party), J.M. McCormick (Republican)

1900: elected v. J. M. McCormick (Republican)

1906: elected v. Frank B. Stanley (Republican), (?) Sanson

1911: resigned

[Thomas J. Brown](#) (January 1911–May 1915)

1911: appointed by Gov. Campbell to fill the place of Chief Justice Gaines

1912: elected v. Eugene Marshall (Republican), E. O. Meitzen (Socialist)

1915: died in office

[Nelson Phillips](#) (June 1915–November 1921)

1915: appointed by Gov. Colquitt to replace Brown as Chief Justice

1916: elected (unopposed)

1918: elected v. G. N. Harrison (Republican)

1921: resigned

[C. M. Cureton](#) (December 1921–April 1940)

1921: appointed by Gov. Neff to fill Phillips' place

1922: elected v. W. H. Wilson (Republican)

1924: elected v. C. O. Harris (Republican)

1930: elected v. C. K. McDowell (Republican), D. W. King (Socialist)

1936: elected v. C. W. Johnson, Jr. (Republican), George C. Edwards (Socialist)

1940: died in office

[James P. Alexander](#) (1940–1948)

1940: elected v. L. J. Benckenstein (Republican)

Associate Justices

[Micajah H. Bonner](#) (1878–1882)

1878: appointed by Governor Hubbard to fill Moore's place

1878: elected v. Leroy W. Cooper (Republican)

1882: retired

[Robert S. Gould](#) (1874–November 1881)

1874: appointed by Gov. Coke to fill Gray's place

1876: elected (unopposed)

1881: appointed by Gov. Roberts to fill the place of Chief Justice Moore

[John W. Stayton](#) (November 1881–March 1888)

1881: appointed by Gov. Roberts to fill Gould's place

1882: elected (unopposed) on Democratic Party ticket with Willie and West

1888: appointed by Gov. Ross to fill the place of Chief Justice Willie

[Charles S. West](#) (December 1882–September 1885)

1882: appointed by Gov. Roberts to fill Walker's place

1882: elected (unopposed) on Democratic Party ticket with Willie and Stayton

1885: resigned

[Reuben R. Gaines](#) (September 1886–July 1894)

1886: appointed by Gov. Ireland to fill Robertson's place

1888: elected (unopposed) on Democratic Party ticket with Henry and Stayton

1894: appointed Chief Justice by Gov. Hogg to replace Stayton

[J. L. Henry](#) (November 1888–May 1893)

1888: elected (unopposed) on Democratic Party ticket with Stayton and Gaines

1893: resigned

[Tom. J. Brown](#) (May 1893–January 1911)

1893: appointed by Gov. Hogg to fill the place of Henry

1894: elected on Democratic ticket, v. O. H. Maris or C. O. Harris (Republicans)

1911: appointed by Gov. Campbell to fill the place of Chief Justice Gaines

[Leroy G. Denman](#) (July 1894–May 1899)

1894: appointed by Gov. Hogg to fill Gaines' place

1894: elected on Democratic ticket, v. O. H. Maris or C. O. Harris (Republicans)

1899: resigned

[F. A. Williams](#) (May 1899–April 1911)

1899: appointed by Gov. Sayers to fill Denman's place

1900: elected v. George D. Green (People's Party), Frank B. Stanley (Republican)

1902: elected (unopposed)

1908: elected v. C. W. Starling (Republican)

1911: resigned

[Nelson Phillips](#) (April 1912–June 1915)

April 1912: appointed by Gov. Colquitt to succeed Ramsey

November 1912: elected v. U.S. Goen (Progressive), J. Walter Cocke (Republican)

May 1915: appointed by Gov. Ferguson to replace Brown as Chief Justice

[William E. Hawkins](#) (1913–January 1921)

1913: elected v. J. M. McCormick (Progressive), T. M. Kennedy (Republican)

1914: elected (unopposed)

1920: lost Democratic bid for re-election

[J. E. Yantis](#) (June 1915–March 1918)

1915: appointed by Gov. Ferguson to fill Phillips' place

1916: elected (unopposed)

1918: resigned

[Thomas B. Greenwood](#) (April 1918–December 1934)

1918: appointed by Gov. Hobby to fill Yantis' place

1918: elected v. C. O. Harris (Republican)

1922: elected v. J. H. McBroon (Republican)

1928: elected v. M. A. Smith (Socialist)

1934: resigned

[John H. Sharp](#) (December 1934–1952)

1934: appointed by Gov. "Ma" Ferguson to fill Greenwood's place

1940: elected v. Joe Ingraham (Republican)

1945: maintained position after constitutional amendment

[William Pierson](#) (January 1921–April 1935)

1920: elected v. C. O. Harris (Republican), H. B. Short (Black-Tan Republican), Henry Faulk (Socialist)

1926: elected v. G. N. Harrison (Republican), G. W. M. Taylor (Socialist)

1932: elected (unopposed)

1935: died in office (murdered)

[Richard Critz](#) (May 1935–January 1945)

1935: appointed by Gov. Allred to fill Pierson's place

1936: elected v. Joe Ingraham (Republican), J. R. Barrett (Socialist)

1945: defeated in bid for re-election

[Gordon Simpson](#) (January 1945–September 1945)

1944: elected v. Carl C. Stearns (Republican)

1945: maintained position after constitutional amendment

Justices since 1945

In 1945, when a constitutional amendment increased the Supreme Court from three justices to nine, the commissioners of the Supreme Court Commission of Appeals all became associate justices.

Chief Justice, Place 1

[James P. Alexander](#) (September 21, 1945 to January 1, 1948)

1945: maintained position

1946: elected v. G. C. Mann (Republican)

1948: died in office

[J. E. Hickman](#) (January 7, 1948 to January 3, 1961)

1948: appointed by Gov. Jester to Chief Justice to replace CJ Alexander

1948: elected (unopposed)

1954: elected (unopposed)

1961: retired

[Robert W. Calvert](#) (January 3, 1961 to October 4, 1972)

1960: elected (unopposed)

1966: elected (unopposed)

1972: retired

[Joe R. Greenhill](#) (October 4, 1972 to October 25, 1982)

1972: appointed by Gov. Smith to fill Calvert's place

1972: elected (unopposed)

1978: elected (unopposed)

1982: retired

[Jack Pope](#) (November 29, 1982 to January 4, 1985)

1982: appointed by Gov. Clements to replace CJ Greenhill

1985: retired

[John L. Hill Jr.](#) (January 5, 1985 to January 4, 1988)

1984: elected v. John L. Bates (Republican)

1988: resigned

[Thomas R. Phillips](#) (January 4, 1988 to September 3, 2004)

1987: appointed by Gov. Clements to fill Hill's position as CJ

1988: elected v. Ted Robertson (Democrat)

1990: elected v. Oscar Mauzy (Democrat)

1996: elected v. Andrew Jackson Kupper (Democrat), David Parker (Libertarian)

2002: elected v. R. G. Baker (Democrat), E. J. Flynn (Libertarian)

2004: resigned

[Wallace B. Jefferson](#) (September 20, 2004 to present. Term ends in 2014.)

2004: appointed by Gov. Perry to fill Phillips' vacancy

2006: elected v. Tom Oxford (Libertarian)

2008: elected v. Jim Jordan (Democrat), Tom Oxford (Libertarian)

Associate Justice, Place 2

[John H. Sharp](#) (September 21, 1945 to December 31, 1952)

1945: maintained position

1946: elected v. Howell Ward (Republican)

1952: retired

[Frank P. Culver Jr.](#) (January 1, 1953 to December 21, 1964)

1952: elected (unopposed)

1958: elected (unopposed)

1964: resigned

[Jack Pope](#) (January 4, 1965 to November 29, 1982)

1964: elected v. T. E. Kennerly (Republican)

1970: elected (unopposed)

1976: elected (unopposed)

1982: appointed to Chief Justice by Gov. Clements

[Ted Robertson](#) (December 2, 1982 to December 31, 1988)

1982: appointed by Gov. Clements to fill Pope's position

1982: elected v. John L. Bates (Republican)

1988: defeated in bid for Chief Justice position

[Lloyd Doggett](#) (January 1, 1989 to December 31, 1994)

1988: elected v. Paul Murphy (Republican)

1994: did not seek re-election

[Priscilla R. Owen](#) (January 1, 1995 to June 6, 2005)

1994: elected v. Jimmy Carroll (Democrat)

2000: elected v. Joe Alfred Izen, Jr. (Libertarian)

2005: resigned

[Don R. Willett](#) (August 24, 2005 to present. Term ends in 2012.)

2005: appointed by Gov. Perry to replace Owen

2006: elected v. William E. Moody (Democrat), Wade Wilson (Libertarian)

Associate Justice, Place 3

[Gordon Simpson](#) (September 21, 1945 to March 1, 1949)

1945: maintained position

1949: resigned

[R. H. Harvey](#) (March 1, 1949 to September 8, 1950)

1949: appointed by Gov. Jester to fill Simpson's place

1950: died in office

[Robert W. Calvert](#) (September 18, 1950 to January 3, 1961)

1950: appointed by Gov. Jester to fill Harvey's place

1956: elected v. John R. Anthony (Constitution Party)

1961: became Chief Justice

[Zollie Steakley](#) (January 3, 1961 to December 31, 1980)

1961: appointed by Gov. Daniel to fill Calvert's place

1962: elected (unopposed)

1968: elected (unopposed)

1974: elected (unopposed)

1980: retired

[James P. Wallace](#) (January 1, 1981 to September 1, 1988)

1980: elected v. Jim Brady (Republican)

1986: elected v. Wiley H. Rawlins (Republican)

1988: resigned

[Eugene A. Cook](#) (September 1, 1988 to December 31, 1992)

1988: appointed by Gov. Clements to fill Wallace's vacancy

1988: elected v. Karl Bayer (Democrat)

1992: defeated in re-election bid

[Rose Spector](#) (January 1, 1993 to December 31, 1998)

1992: elected v. Eugene Cook (Republican)

1998: defeated in re-election bid

[Harriet O'Neill](#) (January 1, 1999 to June 20, 2010)

1998: elected v. Rose Spector (Democrat)

2004: elected (unopposed)

2010: retired

[Debra Lehrmann](#) (June 21, 2010 to present. Term ends in 2016.)

2010: appointed by Gov. Perry to replace O'Neill

2010: elected v. Jim Sharp (Democrat), William Bryan Strange III (Libertarian)

Associate Justice, Place 4

[Graham B. Smedley](#) (September 21, 1945 to June 16, 1954)

1945: automatically promoted under constitutional amendment

1946: elected v. S.D. Bennett (Republican)

1952: elected (unopposed)

1954: died in office

[Ruel C. Walker](#) (October 19, 1954 to September 30, 1975)

1954: appointed by Gov. Shivers to replace Smedley

1954: elected (unopposed)

1958: elected (unopposed)

1964: elected (unopposed)

1970: elected (unopposed)

1975: retired

[Don Yarbrough](#) (January 1, 1977 to July 1977)

1976: elected v. Sam Houston (write-in) and Tom Lorange (write-in)

1977: resigned

[Charles W. Barrow](#) (July 25, 1977 to September 30, 1984)

1977: appointed by Gov. Briscoe following Yarbrough's resignation

1978: elected (unopposed)

1982: elected (unopposed)

1984: resigned

[Raul A. Gonzalez](#) (October 8, 1984 to December 31, 1998)

1984: appointed by Gov. White to take Barrow's place

1986: elected v. John L. Bates (Republican)

1988: elected v. Charles Ben Howell (Republican), Calvin W. Scholz (Libertarian)

1994: elected v. John B. Hawley (Libertarian)

1998: retired

[Alberto R. Gonzales](#) (November 12, 1998 to December 22, 2000)

1998: appointed by Gov. Bush to complete Gonzalez's term

2000: elected v. Lance Smith (Libertarian)

2000: resigned to become White House counsel to President [George W. Bush](#).

[Wallace B. Jefferson](#) (April 18, 2001 to September 20, 2004)

2001: appointed by Gov. Bush to take Gonzales' place

2002: elected v. William. E. Moody (Democrat)

2004: appointed CJ by Gov. Perry in September 2004

[David M. Medina](#) (November 10, 2004 to present. Term ends in 2012.)

2004: appointed by Gov. Perry to take Jefferson's place

2006: elected v. Jerry Adkins (Libertarian)

Associate Justice, Place 5

[Will Wilson](#) (January 2, 1951 to June 1, 1956)

1950: elected (unopposed)

1956: resigned

[James R. Norvell](#) (January 1, 1957 to October 10, 1968)

1956: elected (unopposed)

1962: elected (unopposed)

1968: resigned

[Thomas M. Reavley](#) (October 10, 1968 to October 1, 1977)

1968: appointed by Gov. Connally to take Norvell's place

1968: elected (unopposed)

1974: elected (unopposed)

1977: resigned

[T. C. Chadick](#) (October 5, 1977 to December 31, 1978)

1977: appointed by Gov. Briscoe to fill Reavley's place

1978: defeated in bid for Democratic nomination

[Robert M. Campbell](#) (December 1, 1978 to February 1, 1988)

1978: elected (unopposed)

1980: elected (unopposed)

1986: elected v. Nathan E. White, Jr. (Republican)

1988: resigned

[Barbara Culver](#) (February 1, 1988 to December 7, 1988)

1988: appointed by Gov. Clements to fill Campbell's vacancy

1988: defeated in bid for election

[Jack Hightower](#) (December 7, 1988 to January 1, 1996)

1988: elected v. Barbara Culver (Republican)

1992: elected v. John D. Montgomery (Republican)

1996: retired

[Greg Abbott](#) (January 2, 1996 to June 6, 2001)

1996: appointed by Gov. George W. Bush to fill Hightower's vacancy

1996: elected v. John B. Hawley (Libertarian)

1998: elected v. David Van Os (Democrat)

2001: resigned

[Xavier Rodriguez](#) (September 7, 2001 to November 6, 2002)

2001: appointed by Gov. Perry to fill Abbott's place

2002: defeated in primary bid for election

[Steven Wayne Smith](#) (November 20, 2002 to December 31, 2004)

2002: elected v. M. Mirabel (Democrat)

2004: defeated in primary bid for re-election

[Paul W. Green](#) (January 1, 2005 to present. Term ends in 2016.)

2004: elected (unopposed)

2010: elected v. William E. Moody (Democrat), Tom Oxford (Libertarian)

Associate Justice, Place 6

[J. E. Hickman](#) (September 21, 1945 to January 5, 1948)

1945: automatically promoted under constitutional amendment

1946: elected v. Andrew Longake (Republican)

1948: appointed by Gov. Jester to Chief Justice

[W. St. John Garwood](#) (January 14, 1948 to December 31, 1958)

1948: elected (unopposed)

1952: elected (unopposed)

1958: retired

[Robert W. Hamilton](#) (January 1, 1959 to December 31, 1970)

1958: elected v. John Q. Adams (Republican)

1964: elected (unopposed)

1970: retired

[James G. Denton](#) (January 1, 1971 to June 10, 1982)

1970: elected (unopposed)

1976: elected (unopposed)

1982: died in office

[William W. Kilgarlin](#) (January 1, 1983 to December 31, 1988)

1982: elected (unopposed)

1988: defeated in bid for re-election

[Nathan L. Hecht](#) (January 1, 1989 to present. Term ends in 2012.)

1988: elected v. William Kilgarlin (Democrat)

1994: elected v. Alice Oliver Parrott (Democrat)

2000: elected v. Mike Jacobellis (Libertarian), Ben G. Levy (Green)

2006: elected v. Todd Phillippi (Libertarian)

Associate Justice, Place 7

[James P. Hart](#) (October 1, 1947 to November 15, 1950)

1947: appointed by Gov. Jester to fill Slatton's place

1948: elected (unopposed)

1950: resigned

[Clyde E. Smith](#) (November 15, 1950 to December 31, 1970)

1950: appointed by Gov. Shivers to fill the place of Hart

1952: elected (unopposed)

1960: elected (unopposed)

1966: elected (unopposed)

[Price Daniel](#) (January 1, 1971 to December 31, 1978)

1971: appointed to take Smith's place

1972: elected (unopposed)

1978: retired

[Franklin S. Spears](#) (January 1, 1979 to December 31, 1990)

1978: elected (unopposed)

1984: elected (unopposed)

[John Cornyn](#) (January 2, 1991 to October 18, 1997)

1990: elected v. Gene Kelly (Democrat)

1996: elected v. Patricia Barron (Democrat), Thomas Stults (Libertarian)

1997: resigned to run for Attorney General

[Deborah Hankinson](#) (October 28, 1997 to December 31, 2002)

1997: appointed by Gov. George W. Bush to Cornyn's place

1998: elected v. Jerry Scarborough (Democrat)

2002: did not seek re-election

[Dale Wainwright](#) (January 1, 2003 to present. Term ends in 2014.)

2002: elected v. J. Parsons (Democrat), Brad Rockwell (Green)

2008: elected v. S. Houston (Democrat), D. G. Smith (Libertarian)

Associate Justice, Place 8

[Few Brewster](#) (September 21, 1945 to September 20, 1957)

1945: automatically promoted under constitutional amendment

1948: elected (unopposed)

1954: elected (unopposed)

1957: resigned

[Joe R. Greenhill](#) (October 1, 1957 to October 4, 1972)

1957: appointed by Gov. Daniel to fill the place of Brewster

1958: elected (unopposed)

1960: elected (unopposed)

1966: elected (unopposed)

1972: appointed Chief Justice

[Sam Johnson](#) (January 1, 1973 to October 16, 1979)

1972: elected (unopposed)

1978: elected (unopposed)

1979: resigned

[Will Garwood](#) (November 15, 1979 to December 31, 1980)

1979: appointed by Gov. Clements to fill Johnson's place

1980: defeated in bid for election

[C. L. Ray Jr.](#) (November 25, 1980 to December 31, 1990)

1980: elected v. Will Garwood (Republican)

1984: elected (unopposed)

1990: resigned

[Bob Gammage](#) (January 1, 1991 to August 31, 1995)

1990: elected v. Charles Ben Howell (Republican)

1995: retired

[James A. Baker](#) (September 1, 1995 to August 31, 2002)

1995: appointed by Gov. George W. Bush to fill Gammage's vacancy

1996: elected v. Gene Kelly (Democrat), Ellen Flume (Libertarian)

2002: retired

[Michael H. Schneider](#) (September 6, 2002 to September 20, 2004)

2002: appointed by Gov. Perry to take Baker's place

2002: elected v. L. Yanez (Democrat), Quanah Parker (Libertarian)

2004: resigned

[Phil Johnson](#) (April 11, 2005 to present. Term ends in 2014.)

2006: appointed by Gov. Perry to fill Schneider's place

2006: elected v. Jay Cookingham (Libertarian)

2008: elected v. L. Yanez (Democrat), D. Shirley (Libertarian)

Associate Justice, Place 9

[Meade F. Griffin](#) (April 1, 1949 to December 31, 1968)

1949: appointed by Gov. Jester to fill place of Folley

1950: elected (unopposed)

1956: elected (unopposed)

1962: elected (unopposed)

1968: resigned

[Sears McGee](#) (January 1, 1969 to December 31, 1986)

1968: elected (unopposed)

1974: elected (unopposed)

1980: elected (unopposed)

1986: resigned

[Oscar H. Mauzy](#) (January 3, 1987 to December 31, 1993)

1986: elected v. Charles Ben Howell (Republican)

1990: ran for Chief Justice (defeated by Phillips)

1992: defeated in re-election bid

[Craig T. Enoch](#) (January 1, 1993 to October 1, 2003)

1992: elected v. Oscar Mauzy (Democrat), Alfred Adask (Libertarian)

1998: elected v. Mike Westergren (Democrat)

2003: retired

[Scott A. Brister](#) (November 21, 2003 to September 7, 2009)

2003: appointed by Gov. Perry to fill Enoch's place

2004: elected v. David Van Os (Democrat)

2009: resigned

[Eva Guzman](#) (October 8, 2009 to present. Term ends in 2016.)

2009: appointed by Gov. Perry to fill Brister's place

2010: elected v. Blake Bailey (Democrat)