

**LINE OF SUCCESSION**  
**of**  
**SUPREME COURT of TEXAS JUSTICES**  
**from 1945**

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The Modern Court

Justices of the Texas Supreme Court under the 1945 constitutional amendment that increased the size of the Court to nine justices from three.

**CHIEF JUSTICE, PLACE 1**

**James P. Alexander** (September 21, 1945, to January 1, 1948):

Alexander was elected as chief justice in November 1940, before the 1945 amendment, and re-elected in 1946. Died in office in January 1, 1948.

**J. E. Hickman** (January 7, 1948, to January 3, 1961):

Appointed in January 1948 by Governor Beauford H. Jester to fill Alexander's vacancy. Elected in November 1948 and re-elected in November 1954. Retired in January 1961.

**Robert W. Calvert** (January 3, 1961, to October 4, 1972):

Elected in November 1960 and re-elected in November 1966. Retired in October 1972.

**Joe R. Greenhill** (October 4, 1972, to October 25, 1982):

Appointed in October 1972 by Governor Preston Smith to fill Calvert's vacancy. Elected in November 1972 and re-elected in November 1978. Retired in October 1982. Greenhill joined the Court after appointment in October 1957.

**Jack Pope** (November 29, 1982, to January 4, 1985):

Appointed in November 1982 by Governor William P. Clements to fill Greenhill's vacancy. Retired in January 1985. Pope served as a justice after election to the Court in November 1964.

**John L. Hill Jr.** (January 5, 1985, to January 4, 1988):

Elected in November 1984. Resigned in January 1988.

**Thomas R. Phillips** (January 4, 1988, to September 3, 2004):

Appointed in November 1987 by Governor William P. Clements to fill Hill's vacancy. Elected in November 1988 to fill Hill's unexpired term and re-elected in November 1990, November 1996 and November 2002. Retired in September 2004.

**Wallace B. Jefferson** (September 20, 2004, to present):

Appointed September 14, 2004, by Governor Rick Perry to fill Phillips' vacancy. Appointed to the Court in Place 4 in March 2001 by Perry to complete former Justice Al Gonzales' unexpired term. Chief Justice Jefferson was elected in 2006 to finish the remaining two years of Phillips' term, then re-elected in 2008 to a full term. (Term ends in 2014.).

## PLACE 2

**John H. Sharp** (September 21, 1945, to December 31, 1952):

Appointed justice in December 1934 by Governor Miriam A. Ferguson. Elected in November 1940 and re-elected in November 1946. Retired in January 1953. Died November 20, 1957.

**Frank P. Culver Jr.** (January 1, 1953, to January 1, 1965):

Elected in November 1952 and re-elected in November 1958. Retired in January 1965.

**Jack Pope** (January 4, 1965, to November 29, 1982):

Elected in November 1964 and re-elected in November 1970 and November 1976. Appointed chief justice in November 1982.

**Ted Robertson** (December 2, 1982, to December 31, 1988):

Appointed by Governor William P. Clements in December 1982 to Pope's unexpired term. Defeated in his bid for chief justice in November 1988.

**Lloyd Doggett** (January 1, 1989, to December 31, 1994):

Elected in November 1988. Did not seek re-election in 1994.

**Priscilla R. Owen** (January 1, 1995, to June 6, 2005):

Elected in November 1994 and re-elected November 2000. Appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in June 2005.

**Don R. Willett** (August 24, 2005, to present)

Appointed by Gov. Rick Perry to replace Justice Owen and elected in 2006. (Term ends in 2012.)

## PLACE 3

**Gordon Simpson** (September 21, 1945, to March 1, 1949):

Elected in November 1944 while in military service in Italy, defeating an incumbent justice in the primary without returning home to campaign. Resigned in March 1949 to enter private practice in Dallas.

**R. H. Harvey** (March 1, 1949, to September 8, 1950):

Appointed in March 1949 by Governor Beauford H. Jester to fill Simpson's vacancy. Died in office.

**Robert W. Calvert** (September 18, 1950, to January 3, 1961):

Appointed in September 1950 by Governor Allan Shivers to fill Harvey's vacancy. Elected in November 1950 and re-elected in November 1956. Resigned in January 1961 to become chief justice.

**Zollie Steakley** (January 3, 1961, to December 31, 1980):

Appointed in January 1961 by Governor Price Daniel to fill Calvert's vacancy. Elected in November 1962 and re-elected in November 1968 and November 1974. Retired in January 1981.

**James P. Wallace** (January 1, 1981, to September 1, 1988):

Elected in November 1980 and re-elected in November 1986. Resigned in September 1988.

**Eugene A. Cook** (September 1, 1988, to December 31, 1992):

Appointed by Governor William P. Clements to fill Wallace's vacancy. Elected in November 1988 to complete Wallace's unexpired term. Defeated in the November 1992 election.

**Rose Spector** (January 1, 1993, to December 31, 1998):

Elected in November 1992. Defeated in November 1998 election.

**Harriet O'Neill** (January 1, 1999, to June 20, 2010):

Elected in November 1998 and re-elected in 2004. Retired in 2010.

**Debra H. Lehrmann** (June 21, 2010, to present)

Appointed by Gov. Rick Perry to Justice O'Neill's unexpired term, then elected to full term in November 2010. (Term ends in 2016.)

#### **PLACE 4**

**Graham B. Smedley** (September 21, 1945, to June 16, 1954):

Supreme Court commissioner became Supreme Court justice in September 1945 by constitutional amendment. Elected in November 1946 and re-elected in November 1952. Died in office.

**Ruel C. Walker** (October 19, 1954, to September 30, 1975):

Appointed in October 1954 by Governor Allan Shivers to fill Smedley's vacancy. Elected in November 1954 and re-elected in November 1958, November 1964 and November 1970. Retired in September 1975.

**Ross E. Doughty** (October 1, 1975, to December 31, 1976):

Appointed in October 1975 by Governor Dolph Briscoe to fill Walker's vacancy. December 1976.

**Don Yarbrough** (January 1, 1977, to July 1977):

Elected in November 1976. Resigned in July 1977.

**Charles W. Barrow** (July 25, 1977, to September 30, 1984):

Appointed in July 1977 by Governor Dolph Briscoe to fill Yarbrough's vacancy. Elected in 1978 and re-elected in 1982. Resigned in September 1984 to become Baylor University School of Law dean.

**Raul A. Gonzalez** (October 8, 1984, to December 31, 1998):

Appointed in October 1984 by Governor Mark White to fill Barrow's vacancy. Elected in November 1986 and re-elected in November 1988 and November 1994. Retired in January 1999.

**Alberto R. Gonzales** (January 14, 1999, to December 22, 2000):

Appointed November 12, 1998, by Governor George W. Bush to complete Gonzalez's unexpired term. Elected November 2000. Resigned in December 2000 to become White House counsel to President George W. Bush.

**Wallace B. Jefferson** (April 18, 2001, to September 20, 2004):

Appointed March 14, 2001, by Governor Rick Perry to fill Gonzales' vacancy. Elected in November 2002 to complete Gonzales' unexpired term. Appointed chief justice by Perry in September 2004.

**David M. Medina** (November 10, 2004, to present)

Appointed by Governor Perry to fill Jefferson's vacancy when Jefferson assumed the chief justice's position. Elected in 2006. (Term ends in 2012.)

## PLACE 5

**W. M. Taylor** (September 21, 1945, to December 31, 1950):

Supreme Court commissioner became Supreme Court justice in September 1945 by constitutional amendment. Retired in January 1951.

**Will Wilson** (January 2, 1951, to June 1, 1956):

Elected in November 1950. Resigned in June 1956 to run for Texas attorney general.

**Abner V. McCall** (June 15, 1956, to December 31, 1956):

Appointed in June 1956 by Governor Allan Shivers to fill Wilson's vacancy. Did not seek election.

**James R. Norvell** (January 1, 1957, to October 10, 1968):

Elected in November 1956 and re-elected in November 1962. Retired in October 1968.

**Thomas M. Reavley** (October 10, 1968, to October 1, 1977):

Appointed in October 1968 by Governor John Connally to fill Novell's vacancy. Elected in November 1968 and re-elected in November 1974. Resigned in October 1977 to enter private practice. Subsequently appointed to U.S. Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit.

**T. C. Chadick** (October 5, 1977, to December 1, 1978):

Appointed in October 1977 by Governor Dolph Briscoe to fill Reavley's vacancy. Defeated in 1978 primary.

**Robert M. Campbell** (December 1, 1978, to February 1, 1988):

Elected in November 1978 to complete Reavley's unexpired term after defeating Chadick in primary. Re-elected in November 1980 and November 1986. Resigned in January 1988.

**Barbara Culver** (February 1, 1988, to December 7, 1988):

Appointed in January 1988 by Governor William P. Clements to fill Campbell's vacancy. Defeated in November 1988.

**Jack Hightower** (December 7, 1988, to January 1, 1996):

Elected in November 1988 to complete Campbell's unexpired term and re-elected in November 1992. Retired in January 1996.

**Greg Abbott** (January 2, 1996, to June 6, 2001):

Appointed in August 1995 by Governor George W. Bush to fill Hightower's vacancy. Elected November 1996 to complete Hightower's unexpired term and re-elected November 1998. Resigned June 6, 2001, to run for lieutenant governor, then later filed for attorney general.

**Xavier Rodriguez** (September 7, 2001, to November 6, 2002):

Appointed in August 2001 by Governor Rick Perry to fill Abbott's vacancy. Defeated in the 2002 primary.

**Steven W. Smith** (November 20, 2002, to December 31, 2004):

Elected November 5, 2002, to complete Abbott's unexpired term. Defeated in March 2004 primary.

**Paul W. Green** (January 1, 2005, to present)

Elected November 2, 2004, and re-elected in 2010. (Term ends in 2016.)

## PLACE 6

**J. E. Hickman** (September 21, 1945, to January 5, 1948):

Supreme Court commissioner became Supreme Court justice in September 1945 by constitutional amendment. Elected in November 1946. Became chief justice in January 1948.

**W. St. John Garwood** (January 14, 1948, to December 31, 1958):

Appointed in January 1948 by Governor Beauford H. Jester to fill Hickman's vacancy. Elected in November 1948 and re-elected in November 1952. Retired in January 1959.

**Robert W. Hamilton** (January 1, 1959, to December 31, 1970):

Elected in November 1958 and re-elected in November 1964. Retired in January 1971.

**James G. Denton** (January 1, 1971, to June 10, 1982):

Elected in November 1970 and re-elected in November 1976. Died in office.

**Ruby Kless Sondock** (June 25, 1982, to December 31, 1983):

Appointed in June 1982 by Governor William P. Clements to fill Denton's vacancy. Returned to Harris County district court.

**William W. Kilgarlin** (January 1, 1983, to December 31, 1988):

Defeated by Justice Denton in the primary, but placed on the November 1982 general-election ballot after Denton's death. Elected in November 1982 and defeated in November 1988.

**Nathan L. Hecht** (January 1, 1989, to present):

Elected in November 1988 and re-elected in November 1994, November 2000 and November 2006. (Term ends in 2012.)

## PLACE 7

**C. S. Slatton** (September 21, 1945, to October 1, 1947):

Supreme Court commissioner became justice in September 1945 by constitutional amendment. Resigned to become Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. general counsel.

**James P. Hart** (October 1, 1947, to November 15, 1950):

Appointed by Governor Beauford H. Jester to fill Slatton's vacancy. Elected in November 1948. Resigned to become the University of Texas System's first chancellor.

**Clyde E. Smith** (November 15, 1950, to December 31, 1970):

Appointed in November 1950 by Governor Allan Shivers to fill Hart's vacancy. Elected in November 1954 and re-elected in November 1960 and November 1966. Retired in January 1971.

**Price Daniel** (January 1, 1971, to December 31, 1978):

Appointed in January 1971 by Governor Preston Smith to fill Smith's vacancy. Elected in November 1972. Retired in January 1979.

**Franklin S. Spears** (January 1, 1979, to December 31, 1990):

Elected in November 1978 and re-elected in November 1984. Retired in January 1991.

**John Cornyn** (January 2, 1991, to October 18, 1997):

Elected in November 1990 and re-elected in November 1996. Resigned in October 1997 to run for Texas attorney general.

**Deborah Hankinson** (October 28, 1997, to December 31, 2002):

Appointed in October 1997 by Governor George W. Bush to fill Cornyn's vacancy.

Elected in November 1998 to Cornyn's unexpired term. Did not seek re-election.

**Dale Wainwright** (January 1, 2003, to present):

Elected in November 2002 and re-elected in 2008. (Term ends in 2014.)

## PLACE 8

**Few Brewster** (September 21, 1945, to September 20, 1957):

Supreme Court commissioner became justice in September 1945 by constitutional amendment. Elected in November 1948 and re-elected in November 1954. Retired in September 1957. Died October 12, 1957.

**Joe R. Greenhill** (October 1, 1957, to October 4, 1972):

Appointed in October 1957 by Governor Price Daniel to fill Brewster's vacancy.

Elected in November 1958 and re-elected in November 1960 and November 1966.

Appointed chief justice in 1972 by Governor Preston Smith. Elected chief justice in November 1972.

**Hawthorne Phillips** (October 4, 1972, to December 31, 1972):

Appointed in October 1972 by Governor Preston Smith to fill Greenhill's vacancy.

Term ended in December 1972.

**Sam Johnson** (January 1, 1973, to October 16, 1979):

Elected in November 1972 and re-elected in November 1978. Resigned in October 1979 after appointment to U.S. Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit.

**Will Garwood** (November 15, 1979, to December 31, 1980):

Appointed by Governor William P. Clements to fill Johnson's vacancy.

**C. L. Ray Jr.** (November 25, 1980, to December 31, 1990):

Elected in November 1980 to Johnson's unexpired term and re-elected in November 1984. Retired in January 1991.

**Bob Gammage** (January 1, 1991, to August 31, 1995):

Elected in November 1990. Retired in September 1995.

**James A. Baker** (September 1, 1995, to August 31, 2002):

Appointed in August 1995 by Governor George W. Bush to fill Gammage's vacancy.

Elected in November 1996. Retired in September 2002.

**Michael H. Schneider** (September 6, 2002, to September 20, 2004):

Appointed by Governor Rick Perry. Elected in November 2002. Resigned to assume U.S. District Court bench.

**Phil Johnson** (April 11, 2005, to present)

Appointed by Governor Perry and elected in 2006 to finish Justice Schneider's term and elected in 2008. (Term ends in 2014.)

## PLACE 9

**A. J. Folley** (September 21, 1945, to April 1, 1949):

Supreme Court commissioner became justice in September 1945 by constitutional amendment. Resigned in April 1949 to enter private practice in Amarillo.

**Meade F. Griffin** (April 1, 1949, to December 31, 1968):

Appointed in April 1949 by Governor Beauford H. Jester to fill Folley's vacancy. Elected in November 1950 and re-elected in November 1956 and November 1962. Retired in January 1969.

**Sears McGee** (January 1, 1969, to December 31, 1986):

Elected in November 1968 and re-elected in November 1974 and November 1980. Retired in January 1987.

**Oscar H. Mauzy** (January 3, 1987, to December 31, 1993):

Elected in November 1986. Defeated in November 1992. Died October 10, 2000.

**Craig T. Enoch** (January 1, 1993, to October 1, 2003):

Elected in November 1992 and re-elected in November 1998. Justice Enoch retired October 1, 2003.

**Scott A. Brister** (November 21, 2003, to September 7, 2009):

Appointed by Gov. Rick Perry, then elected in 2004. Resigned to enter private law practice.

**Eva Guzman** (October 8, 2009, to present)

Appointed by Gov. Perry to fill Justice Brister's unexpired term and elected in 2010. (Term ends in 2016.)

