



*For Immediate Release*

## **Harris County criminal misdemeanor courts elect leadership judges to represent and advocate for county criminal courts**

*July 10, 2025* — The Harris County Criminal Courts at Law elected two judges to serve in key judicial leadership roles representing the county's criminal misdemeanor courts.

Judges Erika Ramirez and Tonya Jones were selected to serve as presiding judge and co-presiding judge, respectively, for the 16 Harris County Criminal Courts at Law.

The presiding judge is tasked with providing judicial leadership and general administrative guidance, including convening and presiding over judicial meetings and serving as the primary representative for various county departments, officials, and projects. The co-presiding judge handles these duties when the presiding judge is not available.

Both will serve six-month terms, which began in July and will conclude at the end of December.

### **Presiding Judge**

Judge Ramirez, a Houston native, was elected by her colleagues to a second six-month term as presiding judge. She previously served two six-month terms as co-presiding judge.

She was elected to her first term on the bench of the Harris County Criminal Court at Law No. 8 in November 2022. She is the first Latina to sit on the Court 8 bench. She also previously presided over one of the county's four SOBER Courts.

Before becoming an attorney, Judge Ramirez worked as a teacher, promotions coordinator for the Houston Comets, and caseworker assistant for the Harris County District Attorney's Office, helping victims of domestic violence — the last of which spurred her interest in law school. After law school, she returned to the District Attorney's Office, where she spent seven years handling both felony and misdemeanor cases and working in the trial bureau and domestic violence, juvenile, and financial crimes divisions.

She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas and a law degree from South Texas College of Law.

### **Co-Presiding Judge**

Judge Jones is serving her first six-month term as co-presiding judge. She was elected by her colleagues to fill the position previously held by Judge Genesis Draper, who left the bench to assume the role of Harris County's Chief Public Defender.

A Houston native, Judge Jones was first elected to Harris County Criminal Court at Law No. 15 in 2018 and re-elected in 2022. While on the bench, she has served a two-year term as the local administrative judge representing the 20 Harris County Courts at Law and currently presides over one of Harris County's four S.O.B.E.R. courts.

Judge Jones began her legal career in 2011, working primarily as a criminal defense attorney in Harris and Fort Bend counties. She also worked in family and personal injury law.



She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Baylor University and a law degree from Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. When she isn't serving the citizens of Harris County, she enjoys traveling, reading, and playing pickleball with her husband, Jarvis.

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