



Seeking Misdemeanor Panel Attorneys for Operation Lone Star Cases

The State has arrested thousands of undocumented migrants near the Texas-Mexico border under Operation Lone Star, Governor Abbott's border initiative. The State has charged these individuals mostly with the misdemeanor crime of criminal trespass. The Lone Star Defenders Office (LSDO)—the indigent defense hub responsible for appointing counsel to Operation Lone Star cases—is seeking attorneys to join our misdemeanor defense panel.

Panel Attorneys are independent contractors, not LSDO employees. Attorneys on the misdemeanor panel are on a rotation system and receive new cases one week per month, usually between 10 and 20 cases during that week. Attorneys will represent individuals charged in Jim Hogg, Kinney, Zapata, Webb, and Maverick County. The counties involved are subject to change. These proceedings are currently mostly on Zoom, though occasional travel to the border for in-person court is required. Detained clients can be visited through Zoom. Most clients are undocumented migrants. Many attend their court hearings through Zoom from their home countries. Because of the unique nature of Operation Lone Star cases, they often present cutting-edge legal issues.

LSDO works closely with panel attorneys and provides them with client advocates, resource attorneys, interpreters, and investigators. LSDO's responsibilities include assignment of counsel, reviewing vouchers, providing training and resources, and monitoring quality of services rendered. For more information, visit www.olsdefense.org.

Ideal candidates are passionate about defense representation; can collaborate effectively with LSDO and other panel attorneys; and have strong organization skills to handle the large caseload. Most importantly, we are looking for people who can provide high quality, zealous representation and who care about their clients and want to do an excellent job. We expect our attorneys to conduct prompt initial visits and to maintain regular contact with their clients. We also expect attorneys to file motions and writs where appropriate.

Requirements & Expectations

- You must be licensed in Texas or apply for admission in Texas by March 1, 2024.
- You cannot have received any public disciplinary action by any licensing authority within the last 5 years.
- You must have at least two years of experience practicing law or one year of experience practicing criminal law.
- You must attend all mandatory Operation Lone Star trainings hosted by LSDO and complete 8 hours of CLE in criminal law and procedure each year.
- You must commit to accepting new cases for at least 4 months.
- You must contemporaneously record time on LSDO's case management program.

Compensation

- We pay \$120 an hour.

To apply, complete the application available at www.olsdefense.org/get-involved