

# Prosecutor Trial Skills Course

July 13-18, 2025

Austin

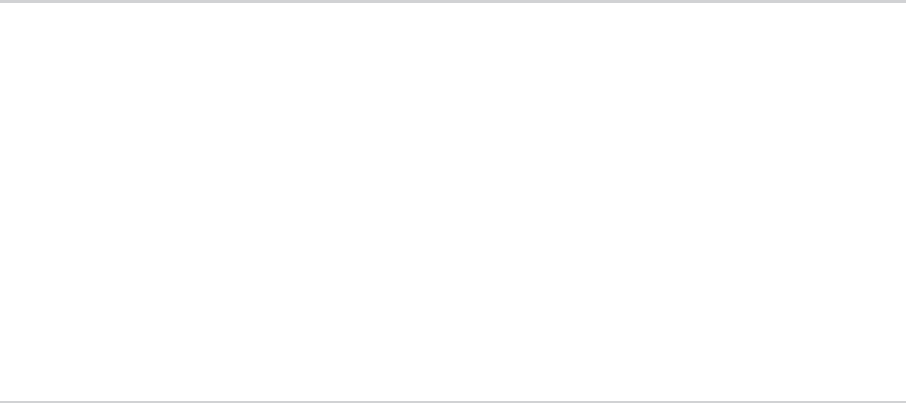
27.25 hours of MCLE, including 3 hours of ethics

**The host hotel: Austin Southpark**  
4140 Governors Row, Austin, TX 78744  
Call 512/448-2222 for reservations and mention PTSC to get the room rate of \$140 (plus tax); this rate is good until June 20 or the block is sold out, whichever comes first.

Anyone who is new to a prosecutor's office should plan to attend the Texas District and County Attorneys Association's Prosecutor Trial Skills Course this July in Austin. It's a full week of intensive training that prepares new 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. New prosecutors won't want to miss this intensive, high-quality training customized especially for them!

**Registration for this conference 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.*



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Texas District & County Attorneys Association  
505 W. 12th St., Ste. 100  
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# Prosecutor Trial Skills Course Agenda

## Sunday, July 13 (2 hours CLE)

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

## Monday, July 14 (6.75 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. **Identifying & Overcoming Cognitive Bias**  
*Tiana Sanford, Asst. District Attorney, Harris County*  
10:30 a.m. **Pre-Trial Issues**  
*Kristin Burns, TDCAA Domestic Violence Resource Prosecutor, Austin*  
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**  
*Chris Gatewood, First Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Smith County*  
2:15 p.m. **Nuts & Bolts of Jury Selection**  
*Dale Smith, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Tarrant County*  
3:45 p.m. **Peremptory Strikes and 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 15 (6.25 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. **Hearings on Motions to Suppress**  
*Katherine McDaniel, First Asst. Criminal District Attorney, & Derly Chapa, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Kendall County*  
10:45 a.m. **DWI Caselaw Update**  
*Jessica Frazier, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Comal County*  
Noon **Lunch (provided by TDCAA)**  
1:00 p.m. **Case Scenarios**  
*Faculty Directed at Each Table*  
2:15 p.m. **Effective Opening Statements**  
*Tara Avants, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, McLennan County*

## Tuesday, July 15 (cont'd)

- 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 16 (3 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. **DWI: Presenting the Case**  
*Mariel Puryear, Asst. County Attorney, Williamson County*  
10:45 a.m. **Domestic Violence: Presenting the Case**  
*Jessica Escue, Asst. District Attorney, Brazos County*  
12:15 p.m. **Adjourn**

## Thursday, July 17 (6.5 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. **Punishment Evidence**  
*Ben Kaminar, First Asst. County & District Attorney, Lamar County*  
10:15 a.m. **Case Scenarios**  
*Faculty Directed at Each Table*  
11:00 a.m. **Probation Revocation Hearings**  
*Kortney Williams, Asst. District Attorney, Ector County*  
Noon **Lunch (provided by TDCAA)**  
1:00 p.m. **Plea Negotiation & Plea Bargaining Workshop**  
*Jenni Morse, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Dallas County*  
3:15 p.m. **Predicates & Objections**  
*Chandler Raine, First Asst. District Attorney, Harris County*  
4:15 p.m. **Case Scenarios**  
*Faculty Directed at Each Table*  
5:00 p.m. **Adjourn**

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

*W. Clay Abbott, TDCAA DWI Resource Attorney, 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 18 (2.75 hours CLE)

- 9:00 a.m. **Cross-Examination and Impeachment**  
*Dalerie Moore, Asst. Criminal District Attorney, Dallas County*  
10:30 a.m. **Final Argument**  
*John Jordan, Asst. District Attorney, Harris County*  
Noon **Adjourn**

### Payment options:

- \$500 Registration** (\$250 Registration fee + \$250 Association fee): For CAs, DAs, CDAs, C&DAs, and their office personnel. The TDCAA fee of \$250 is each participant's share of costs over and above what the grant allows (for example, excess costs of on-site meals and association overhead). In addition, this fee enables TDCAA to lock in discounted hotel rates for participants and entitles them to attend all association functions, including Sunday's reception and lunch on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.
- \$250 "Training Only" Registration:** For CAs, DAs, CDAs C&DAs and their office personnel. This fee does not allow an attendee to participate in receptions or lunches but entitles the attendee admittance to all training sessions.
- \$750 Registration:** For everyone else.