

Michael Edward Denton

Judge (Retired)

Legal Experience

Associate Attorney. Sneed, Vine, Wilkerson, Selman and Perry, 2 years

- General civil litigation
- Practice at all levels of Courts – Justice of the peace, County Court-at-Law, District Courts

Assistant County Attorney, 13 years

- Trial Courts, Grand Jury, Appeals
- Director, Criminal Division.

Judge, County Court-at-Law #4, 21 years

- Created the Travis County Veterans Court, a diversion court for Veterans. Conducted after hours (volunteer)
- Established the Phoenix Court, a diversion court for survivors of sex trafficking and prostitution. Conducted over lunch hour (volunteer)

Education

United States Military Academy, West Point, NY.

- US Army Officer

University of Texas at Austin School of Law, Austin, TX.

Owen School of Management, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. Completed arbitration training. Transferred to UT School of Law after one year.

Judge 1999 – 2019

In addition to serving as Judge for County Court at Law for 20 years, established two specialty courts and then served as Judge on a volunteer basis for those courts.

- Veterans Court. Diversion court for Veterans who have been arrested, but whose offenses are related to conditions resulting from their service, most often Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and substance abuse. Veterans receive treatment for conditions such as PTSD as well as substance abuse. Vets are assisted in obtaining benefits and must complete certain conditions. Their cases can then be dismissed and expunged.
- Phoenix Court. Diversion court for survivors of sex trafficking and prostitution. Services include counseling and practical assistance such as housing, medical and job training.

Awards

- The Austin Chronicle. “Best of Austin, 1997”. Best Public Servant. “...Denton exemplifies what a good lawyer can be: compassionate, dedicated, and humane.”
- Sheriff Wayne Barton Award, Travis County Sheriff’s Office. 2003. First time ever awarded to a Judge.
- Superior Service Award, Travis County Constable Precinct 5. 2003.
- Austin Safe Place “Good Guy” award; Austin Safe Alliance (formerly SafePlace); 2014. Recognition of Judge Denton’s long advocacy for and commitment to survivors of domestic violence.



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- The Paul H. Chapman Award, The Foundation for Improvement of Justice (<https://justiceawards.com/>), 2015. Recognition of Judge Denton's leadership in the reform of Travis County's approach to domestic violence and his exemplary performance as Judge of the domestic violence court.
- Veteran Service Award. ATX Veterans. 2019. Judge Denton received this award for his service to Veterans through the Veteran's Court. That court serves to help Veterans receive the help they need and reconnects them to their communities.

Advocacy and Education

- Co-chair, Community Outreach Committee, Travis County Bar Association.
- Resource Council, Community Action Network member, Criminal Justice Council representative.
- President, Criminal Law and Procedure Section, Travis County Bar Association.
- Gender and the Law Committee, Travis County Bar Association.
- Faculty, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) or through individual consultation, Judge Denton has provided training to judges all over the United States, with training events in Washington, Montana, California, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Idaho, Georgia.
- Travis County Bail Bond Board.
- Training for Judges in Texas, through the Texas Council on Family Violence, including events in Dallas, Midland, San Antonio, Padre Island, Austin, El Paso.
- Testimony at Texas Legislature on numerous issues.
- Author, Domestic Violence chapter, Texas Judges Bench Book.
- Co-chair, Austin-Travis County Domestic Violence Task Force.

Personal

- Foster Family for Bluebonnet Equine Humane Society, working with abused and neglected horses, providing a safe place, rehabilitation and training with the goal of adoption into a forever home.

