# History of Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)

## Course
**Correctional Services**

## Unit III
**History of Crime and Corrections**

## Essential Question
**How did the present day Texas Correctional System come to be?**

## Rationale
Knowing the history of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) is important for establishing where the system began, and the struggles it has overcome to become the agency it is today.

## Objectives
The student will be able to:

1. Identify the various titles under which the Agency has operated from inception to the present.
2. Differentiate between the various periods that characterize the Agency from inception to the present.
3. List two accomplishments of the Ellis Administration.
4. List two accomplishments of the Beto Administration.
5. Discuss historical factors relating to the Carrasco Incident.
6. Summarize the impact of *Ruiz v. Estelle* on the operations and services of the Agency.

## TEKS
§130.297(c)
(1)(A)(E)

## Prior Student Learning
none

## Estimated Time
1 to 3 hours

## Key Points

### I. Agency Titles
- A. 1848-1866 Texas State Penitentiary
- B. 1866-1957 Texas Prison System
- C. 1957-1989 Texas Department of Corrections
- D. 1989-Present Texas Department of Criminal Justice

### II. Era Characterizations

#### A. The Formative Years (1836-1861)
1. Prior to 1848 – inmates housed in local/county jails
2. May 1, 1848 – 2
   nd Legislature passed creation of the Huntsville Penitentiary with 225 cells
3. October 1, 1849 – 1
   st inmate received for cattle theft, William Sansom
4. 1855 – 75 inmates
5. 1860 – 182 inmates

#### B. The Civil War Era (1861-1865)
1. Civil War Union POWs and court-marshaled soldiers held
2. Prison industries aided South by producing cloth from cotton and wool mills
3. 1865 – only one prison still standing in the Confederate states (Huntsville Penitentiary)

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Access the following true crime story online, *The Carrasco Incident*. Have the students read the article about the historical event. Discuss how the event impacted the prison system. Use the Discussion Rubric for assessment.
C. The Convict Lease Era (1866-1909)
   1. Increased number of inmates
   2. 2\textsuperscript{nd} legislature
      a) Leased inmate labor and use of facilities
      b) Outside camps established
      c) Inmates hired by railroad and plantation owners
   3. 1877–1882 – second prison built in Rusk
   4. Opened January, 1883

D. The Farm System (1910-1936)
   1. 1910–1912
      a) Legislative changes to inmate accounts
      b) Industries slowed, farming expanded
      c) Less education and other reform efforts
      d) Leases were cancelled
   2. Large agricultural ranching operations became hallmarks of the prison system.
   3. Chain Gang: inmates leased to a private owner, and “chained” together during work to prevent their escape.
   4. Building Tenders: inmates used to “control” other inmates and open/close cells.

E. The Decline (1937–1947)
   1. Troubled times for prisons
   2. Turned purchased plantations into farms
   3. Corrupt and mismanaged administration
   4. Fraud, and poor treatment of inmates
   5. “Backsliding”
      a) Large influx of inmates
      b) Brutality
      c) Self-mutilation
      d) Sexual Perversion
      e) Incompetence
      f) Petty Theft
   6. Darrington Farm
      a) 333 inmates housed in a tank designed for 250
      b) Shower every three weeks
      c) NO laundry services
   7. Retrieve Farm
      a) 475 inmates housed in a unit designed for 350
      b) 31 sleep on brick floor

F. The Reform Era (1947–1973)
   1. Emphasis on reform, teaching, and recreation
   2. New Classification system
   3. 1931 – Prison rodeo established
   4. 1947 – Penal reforms
      a) Modernized agricultural production
      b) Initiated industrial products
c) Improvements in facilities

5. 1948 – “Construction Division”
   a) Used inmate labor
   b) Prison-made bricks
   c) Prison-made concrete for new buildings

III. Ellis Administration
   A. “Ellis Plan” implemented by O.B. Ellis
   B. Texas Prison System renamed to Texas Department of Corrections
   C. Reform-minded
      1. Vocational/educational programs
      2. Housing/salary for staff
   D. Self-sufficient, Improved agricultural operations

II. Beto Administration
   A. Dr. George Beto, director of TDCJ
   B. Implemented the Windham School District
   C. National recognition for clean, orderly, and secure institutions
   D. 1964 – Cooper v. Pate
   E. 1971 – Guajardo v. Estelle
   F. 1972 – Lamar v. Coffield

III. Supreme Court Decisions
   A. Cooper v. Pate – Prisoners have the right to challenge administrative practices.
   B. Guajardo v. Estelle – TDCJ could not deny inmates the right to correspond with inmates on the same or different units regarding legal matters.
   C. Lamar v. Coffield – TDCJ prohibited from segregating offender housing or jobs based on race.

IV. Windham School District
   A. Largest School District in Texas
   B. Established in 1969
   C. Offered GED and High School Diplomas to inmates
   D. Junior- and Senior-level college courses
   E. Rehabilitation programs
   F. Vocational training
   G. Furlough and community service
   H. Helped secure work and transition after release

V. Prison-Made Goods Act
   A. 1963 – Produced materials for internal use and sale to other state agencies
   B. “Occupational training” for inmates
   C. Education, recreation, religion, physiological, and psychological
health care added

VI. Conflict and Consolidation (1973–1998) – Estelle administration:
   A. Ruiz v. Estelle
   B. The Carrasco Incident
      1. Weapons smuggled into the unit
      2. Hostages were killed
      3. Lasted eleven days
   C. The Pack/Moore Homicides
      1. An offender was acquitted for the homicides of the warden and top prison official.
      2. This caused much outrage amongst the prison staff and concerns for safety
   D. Death of Minnie Houston
      1. One of the first female correctional officers was murdered by an offender in the officer’s dining hall.
      2. This raised additional concerns for the suitability of female correctional officers in male facilities (female officers were allowed in male facilities as a result of K.K. Coble v. TDCJ)
   E. TDCJ established in 1989
      1. 1978 class action lawsuit challenged the conditions of confinement
      2. Longest running lawsuit
      3. Federal courts maintained control of TDCJ until 2002
      4. Violations alleged
         a) Due process
         b) Cruel and unusual punishment
         c) Crowding, and poor living/health and work conditions

VII. Texas Department of Criminal Justice (1972–Present)
   A. 1986 – Prison rodeo stopped due to cost of repair and operation
   B. 1989 – TDCJ & Board of Criminal Justice were created
   C. Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Institutional Division
      1. Department of Corrections
      2. Board of Pardons and Parole
      3. Texas Adult Probation Commission

VIII. Recent History (1998-Present)
   A. June 17, 2002 – Federal oversight under Ruiz was dismissed
   B. Connally Seven – “Texas 7”
      1. Amended count procedures
      2. Revised security procedures
      3. Modified the offender classification plan to include reassignment of offenders to more appropriate security levels
   C. Homicides of Daniel Nagle, Stanley Wiley, and Rhonda Osborne
      5. Murdered by inmates
6. Officer safety reviewed
7. Initiatives to include body alarms, carry-on-person chemical agents, defensive tactics training, thrust vests (stab resistant vests), and BOSS chairs (x-ray chairs that check body orifices for weapons)

D. Hurricane Rita – 9,400 inmates were moved via airplane and vehicles prior to the hurricane hitting land
E. CID reorganized to create better communication, coordination, consistency, and improve access to resources; revised into 6 regions
F. American Correctional Association (ACA) accreditation

IX. Prison Population
A. 1990s – the number of prison beds tripled
B. Community supervision implemented
C. State Jails created
D. Transfer facilities established
E. 1998 – 124,000 in TDCJ, and 6,168 in private facilities
F. Current Statistics
8. 5 SAFPFs (Substance Abuse Felony Punishment Facilities)
9. 21 State Jail Facilities
10. 82 Prisons

X. Types of Texas Institutions
A. Substance Abuse Felony Punishment Facility (SAFPF)
   1. Therapeutic Community is a term applied to a participative, group-based approach to long-term mental disorders, personality disorders, and drug addiction. The approach is usually residential, with the clients and therapists living together.
   2. Group and Individual Drug/Alcohol Counseling
   3. Beds are primarily reserved for probationers
   4. Intermediate Sanctions Facility
   5. 612-bed facilities
   6. Minimum sentence is 18 months: 6 months in unit, and at least 12 months in residential treatment.
   7. 5 SAFPFs in Texas

B. State Jail Facility (SJF)
   1. 21 SFJ Units in Texas
   2. Low-level property/drug offenders
   3. Serve as transfer facilities
   4. No good time/parole
   5. 180 days to 2 years

C. Prisons
   1. 82 Prison Units in Texas
   2. High level drug/property offenders, violent offenders
   3. Educational/vocational programs
   4. Prison industries


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5. Receive good time/parole
6. $42.54 per day to incarcerate an offender

D. Other Facilities
1. Mentally Retarded Offender Program (MROP)
2. Transfer Facility – Temporarily houses inmates that are being permanently assigned
3. Pre-Release – Educational/Vocational training, life skills transitions during last 12 months
4. Psychiatry – Mentally ill that require extensive medication and therapy
5. Medical – Disease or medical condition requiring extensive medical care

XI. Executions
A. Early History
1. Prior to 1923 – Texas counties were responsible for their own executions.
2. 1819-1923 – hanging was the means of execution
3. 1923 – executions by electric chair ordered to occur in Huntsville, TX

B. Electric Chair
1. The State of Texas executed the first offender by electrocution on 2/8/1924 (Charles Reynolds).
2. On that same date, four additional offenders, Ewell Morris, George Washington, Mack Matthews, and Melvin Johnson, were executed.
3. The State of Texas executed the last offender by electrocution on 7/30/1964 (Joseph Johnson).

C. Cruel and Unusual Punishment
1. June 29, 1972 – U.S. Supreme Court ruled the electric chair violated the 8th amendment
2. 52 inmates on death row sentences commuted to life
3. March 1973 – Death row was empty

D. Lethal Injection
1. Adopted 1977
2. The State of Texas executed the first offender by lethal injection on 12/7/1982. Charlie Brooks, of Tarrant County, was executed for the kidnap/murder of a Fort Worth auto mechanic.
3. Lethal Injection consists of:
   a) Sodium Thiopental (lethal dose – sedates person)
   b) Pancuronium Bromide (muscle relaxant – collapses diaphragm and lungs)
c) Potassium Chloride (stops heart beat)

4. The offender is usually pronounced dead approximately 7 minutes after the lethal injection begins.

5. Cost per execution for the drugs used: $86.08

E. Texas Capital Crimes
1. Murder of a public safety officer or firefighter
2. Murder during the commission of kidnapping, burglary, robbery, aggravated sexual assault, arson, or obstruction or retaliation
3. Murder for remuneration
4. Murder during a prison escape
5. Murder of a correctional employee
6. Murder by a state prison inmate who is serving a life sentence for any of five offenses (murder, capital murder, aggravated kidnapping, aggravated sexual assault, or aggravated robbery)
7. Multiple murders
8. Murder of an individual under six years of age

F. Death Row
1. Average Time on Death Row prior to Execution: 10.26 years
2. Shortest Time on Death Row prior to Execution: 248 days
3. Longest Time on Death Row prior to Execution: 8,854 days (24 years)
4. Average Age of Executed Offenders: 39
5. Youngest at Time of Execution: 24
6. Oldest at Time of Execution: 66

Activities
History of TDCJ Review Game computer-based presentation

Assessments
History of TDCJ Exam and Key Discussion Rubric Individual Work Rubric

Materials
History of TDCJ computer-based presentation Texas Institutions computer-based presentation History of TDCJ Review Game computer-based presentation Internet access

Resources

Accommodations for Learning Differences
For reinforcement, students list the different eras of the Texas Prison System, and summarize the major developments that came from them. Use the
Individual Work Rubric for assessment.

For enrichment, students research the Windham School District to find out what kind of degrees inmates can earn while in prison. Use the Individual Work Rubric for assessment.

State Education Standards
Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Career and Technical Education
§130.297. Correctional Services (One to Two Credits)
(1) The student researches the history of correctional services. The student is expected to:
   (A) examine the history of corrections in the United States and Texas;
   (E) identify ongoing academic education to develop a positive public image.

College and Career Readiness Standards
IV. Listening
   B. Listen effectively in informal and formal situations
      3. Listen actively and effectively in group discussions.
History of Texas Department of Criminal Justice Exam

Match the Agency name with the correct time period.

1. _____ Texas Department of Corrections a. 1957-1989
2. _____ Texas Prison System b. 1989-present
3. _____ Texas State Penitentiary c. 1848-1866
4. _____ Texas Department of Criminal Justice d. 1866-1957

Multiple Choice

5. _____ Which of the following eras was characterized by the creation of the Texas State Penitentiary?
   a. Civil War Era
   b. The Reform years
   c. The Formative Years
   d. Conflict and Consolidation

6. _____ Texas’ first inmate was given a prison sentence for ______________?
   a. Murder
   b. Cattle theft
   c. Assault
   d. Public intoxication

7. _____ The Decline included which two units that were overcrowded with inmates?
   a. Retrieve/Darrington
   b. Connally/Ruiz
   c. Beto/Ellis
   d. Estelle/Huntsville

8. _____ The civil war ended with 3 units still standing in the confederate states.
   a. True
   b. False

9. _____ War-time prisoners were made to manufacture clothing in the cotton and wool mills.
   a. True
   b. False

10. _____ Chain Gangs originated in the Convict Lease Era.
    a. True
    b. False

11. _____ The Farm System years included expansion of agricultural productions.
    a. True
    b. False
12. ______ Which lawsuit was not part of the Beto administration?
   a. Cooper v. Pate
   b. Lamar v. Coffield
   c. Guajardo v. Estelle
   d. Ruiz v. Estelle

13. ______ The Ellis administration was characterized by corruption.
   a. True
   b. False

14. ______ The Windham School District allows inmates to obtain their GED or High School Diploma.
   a. True
   b. False

15. ______ Inmates are not allowed to produce materials for internal use and sale to other state agencies.
   a. True
   b. False

16. ______ Which of the following was a reason for the Carrasco Incident?
   a. poor living conditions
   b. violation of due process rights
   c. weapons were smuggled into the unit
   d. overcrowding

17. ______ Which Era was plagued with events that changed the Texas Prison system dramatically?
   a. Conflict and Consolidation
   b. The Civil War Era
   c. The Reform years
   d. Present era

18. ______ Which of the following was not part of the Ruiz v. Estelle case?
   a. Overcrowding
   b. Food
   c. Due Process
   d. Cruel and Unusual punishment

19. ______ In which lawsuit did the U.S. Supreme Court say that offenders have the right to challenge administrative practices?
   a. Ruiz v. Estelle
   b. Cooper v. Pate
   c. Lamar v. Coffield
   d. Guajardo v. Estelle

20. ______ The Prison-Made Goods Act states that inmates can only sell products to private persons.
   a. True
   b. False
History of Texas Department of Criminal Justice Exam Key

1. A
2. D
3. C
4. B
5. C
6. B
7. A
8. B
9. A
10. B
11. A
12. D
13. B
14. A
15. B
16. C
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## Discussion Rubric

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<td>Shares thoughts actively while offering helpful recommendations to others</td>
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<td>Gives credit to others for their ideas</td>
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<td>Student documented information in his or her</td>
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