
JURIST IN RESIDENCE LETTERS

The Jurist in Residence (JIR) position was created to foster judicial leadership and to promote greater expertise among child protection judges. The Jurist in Residence acts as a consultant, trainer, and speaker to provide expert and seasoned judicial advice on matters affecting courts and legal system handling of child welfare cases and issues. District Judge Dean Rucker has served as the Children's Commission's Jurist in Residence and since 2014. He was joined in December 2018 by a second Jurist in Residence, Judge Rob Hofmann.

Appointed in 1998, Judge Rucker serves as the Presiding Judge for the Seventh Administrative Judicial Region of Texas. In 2014, Judge Rucker retired as judge of the 318th Judicial District in Midland County, a bench he held since 1988. Judge Rucker was a longtime member of the Supreme Court Task Force on Foster Care, created in 1994, and was a founding member of the Children's Commission before becoming a Jurist in Residence. He is a member of the Texas Academy of Family Law Specialists and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. He has served in numerous leadership capacities and also chairs the Children's Commission's Legislative Committee.

Judge Rob Hofmann currently serves as judge of the 452nd Judicial District in five western hill country counties, following many years as a Child Protection Court Judge. He has also served as the Children's Commission Chair of the Foster Care and Education Committee prior to serving as the Vice Chair of the Children's Commission.

Acting as JIRs, Judges Rucker and Hofmann are instrumental in advancing judicial education and community collaboration across the state through training events and written communications, particularly by authoring regular topical and timely Jurist in Residence letters. The JIR Letter was created to routinely update judges on special matters, training events, and best practices.

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(Available at <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/reports-and-resources/resource-letter-for-judges-attorneys/>)

