

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.S.B. 1574  
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Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The centers of excellence program is an initiative by the Texas Judicial Council (TJC) to identify, support, and highlight the excellent work done by courts across the state. The program seeks to find those courts with a commitment to excellence in serving their communities, supporting their counties, and representing the judiciary in an outstanding manner. The TJC currently has a process where courts can seek nomination and recognition as a center of excellence, and the program is centered around four key performance areas and five statutory compliance areas. In an effort to incentivize excellence and encourage high performance among judges and justices, C.S.S.B. 1574 would codify the centers of excellence program.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to Texas Judicial Council in SECTION 1 of this bill.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.S.B. 1574 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Judicial Council (TJC) to develop by rule a centers of excellence program to identify, support, and recognize justices and judges who excel in serving their communities and in representing the judiciary. The bill requires the TJC to consider the following factors in awarding a center of excellence recognition to a justice or judge:

- a justice's or judge's governance, access, fairness, case flow management, and court operations; and
- the compliance of the justice's or judge's court with statutory or procedural requirements for judicial reporting, court security, fee collection, indigent defense, and guardianship fraud and abuse prevention.

The bill establishes that a justice or judge of an appellate court, district court, statutory county court, statutory probate court, county court, justice court, or municipal court is eligible for recognition as a center of excellence and may apply for recognition on a form and in the manner prescribed by the TJC.

C.S.S.B. 1574 applies only to a justice or judge recognized under a centers of excellence program developed by the TJC on or after the bill's effective date.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2025.

## **COMPARISON OF SENATE ENGROSSED AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.S.B. 1574 may differ from the engrossed in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the engrossed and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute includes a justice or judge of a statutory probate court among the judges or justices who are eligible for recognition as a center of excellence and may apply for recognition, whereas the engrossed did not.