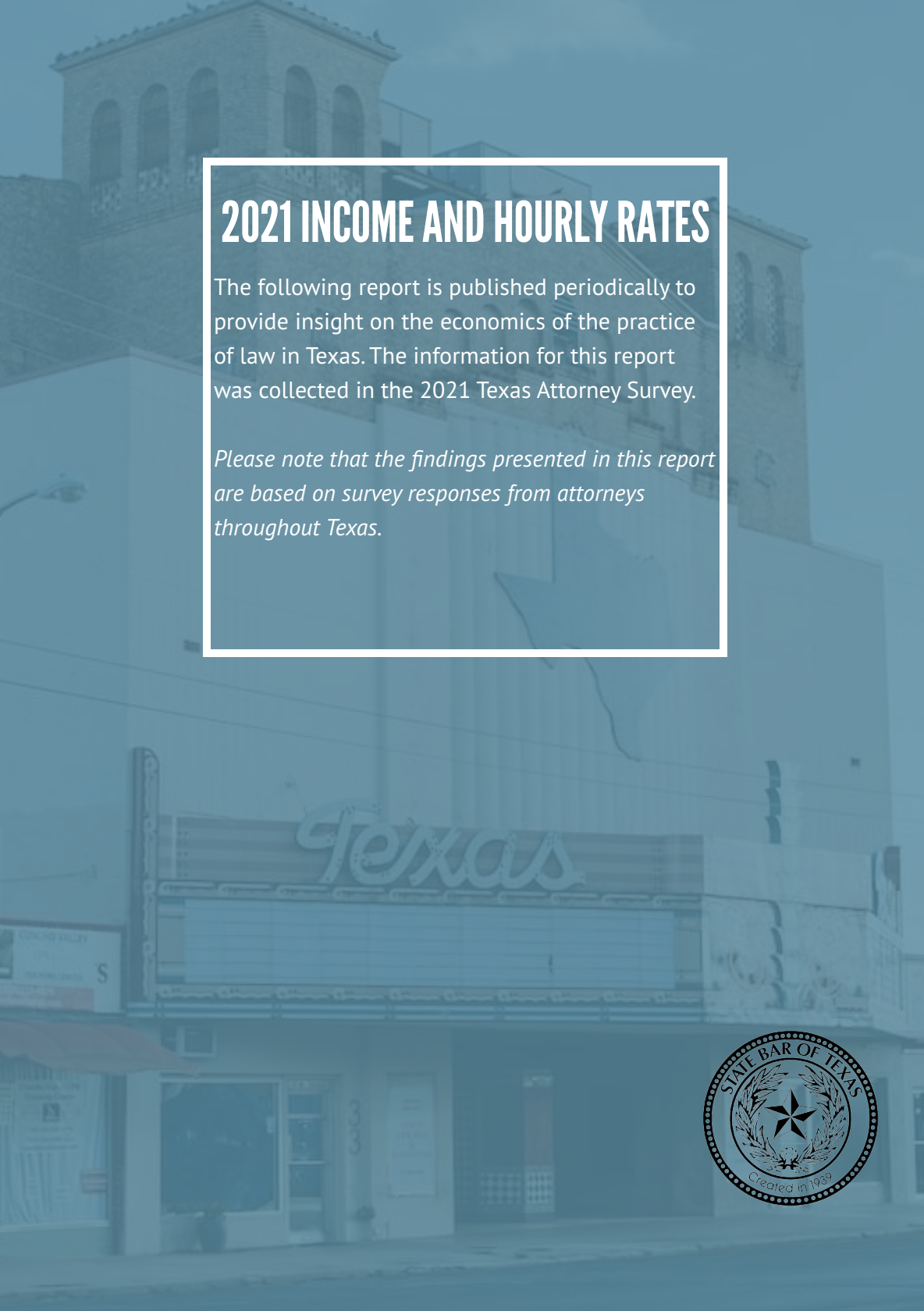
2021 INCOME AND HOURLY RATES

The following report is published periodically to provide insight on the economics of the practice of law in Texas. The information for this report was collected in the 2021 Texas Attorney Survey.

Please note that the findings presented in this report are based on survey responses from attorneys throughout Texas.



STATE BAR OF TEXAS
Created in 1939

INTRODUCTION

The Texas Attorney Survey is conducted periodically to provide insight on the economics of law practice in Texas.

The State Bar's Department of Research and Analysis conducted the Texas Attorney Survey – Status 2021 on May 24, 2022, and completed data collection on June 28, 2022.

This report presents data collected on licensed and practicing full-time attorneys who provided information for the calendar year 2021.

The report provides detailed breakdowns of incomes by sex, race, ethnicity, age, law firm size, years of experience, area of practice, and region of the state. A comparison to historical data is also provided for select demographics.

The questionnaire was emailed on May 24, 2022, to all active State Bar of Texas attorneys who have not opted out of taking surveys. A total of 83,374 received the survey. A total of 5,951 attorneys responded to the survey. This response gave the survey a margin of error of ±1.2%.

A more detailed description of the methodology and a copy of the questionnaire are included at the end of this report (see appendix).

Responses by Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

Metropolitan Statistical Area	Texas Attorney Population	Percent of Attorney Population	Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA	30,445	28%	1,221	26%
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington MSA	29,407	27%	1,291	28%
Austin-Round Rock MSA	13,248	12%	702	15%
San Antonio-New Braunfels MSA	7,415	7%	445	9%
El Paso MSA	1,299	1%	85	2%
Corpus Christi MSA	1,024	1%	76	2%
Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA	710	1%	36	1%
Central Texas MSAs	1,160	1%	69	1%
East & NE Texas MSAs	2,303	2%	125	3%
South Texas MSAs	2,042	2%	110	2%
West Texas MSAs	2,576	2%	148	3%
Non-Metro	3,567	3%	221	5%
Out-of-State/Country	13,620	13%	435	9%

SUMMARY FINDINGS

2021 Income Summary

$125,202

Median Income

INCOME

The median income for respondent full-time Texas attorneys was $125,202.

In 2021, 44% of respondent full-time Texas attorneys saw an increase in their annual income.

Texas attorney income has increased steadily since 2011, but has not reached a pre-2008 recession high of $129,322 yet.

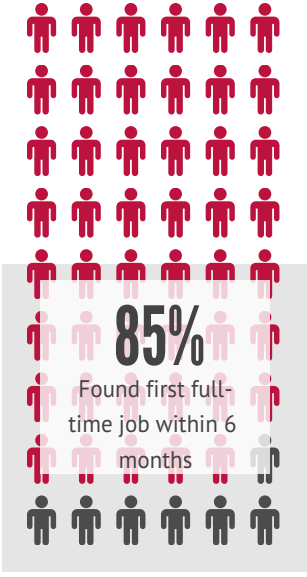
Men and white attorneys reported higher incomes than their counterparts. Men reported a median of $151,271 and white attorneys reported a median of $138,721.

Median income increases with more experience. Attorneys licensed 2 or fewer years reported a median income of $78,105 compared to a median of $174,259 for those licensed over 25 years.

The highest incomes were reported by attorneys in the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA, the median was $145,114 and in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington MSA, the median income was $141,838,.

SUMMARY FINDINGS CONTINUED

Jobs, Satisfaction, and Law School Debt Summary



Attorneys were asked how long, since they were first admitted to practice law, did it take them to obtain their first full-time job providing legal services.

Career Satisfaction

Law School Satisfaction

The level of career and law school satisfaction was measured on a 5-point scale, from extremely dissatisfied to extremely satisfied.

$93,781

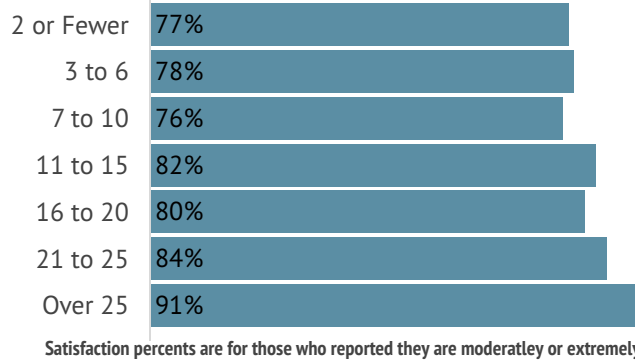
Median Law School Debt for all Full-Time Attorneys

$111,073

Median Law School Debt for Attorneys Licensed 2 or fewer Years

Additionally, attorneys were asked how much law school debt they carried at this point in their career as of 2021. The median reported was $95,781.

Career Satisfaction by Years of Experience



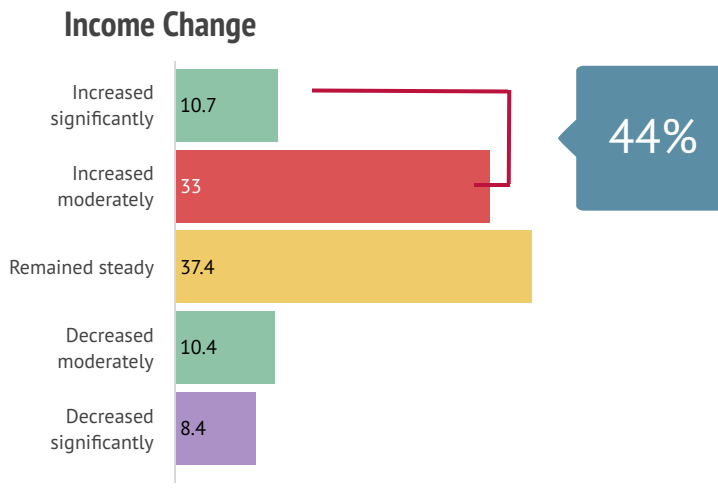
Satisfaction percents are for those who reported they are moderatley or extremely satisfied.

INCOME

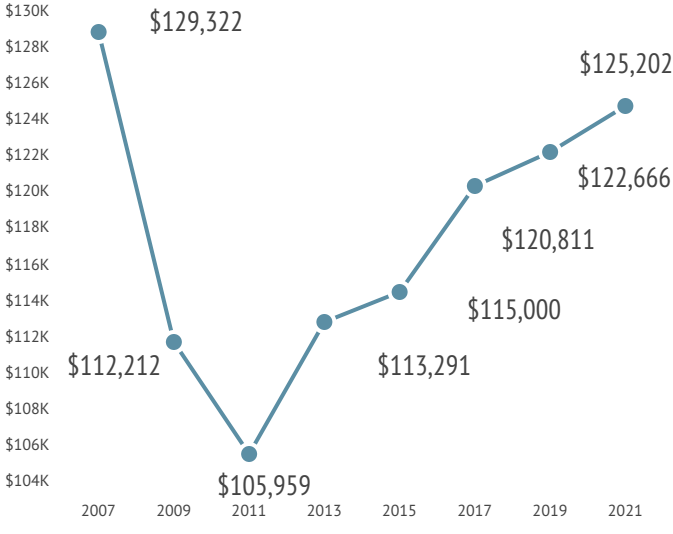
Income Change

Attorneys were asked how their income changed over the past year (2020 to 2021).

44% reported seeing an increase in their annual income in 2021 compared with 19% who reported a decrease.



Median Income by Year



The median income for respondent full-time Texas attorneys has increased steadily since 2011 but has not reached a pre-2008 recession high of $129,322.

In addition to income, some attorneys received a bonus in 2021. The median reported was $17,243.

$17,243

Median Bonus

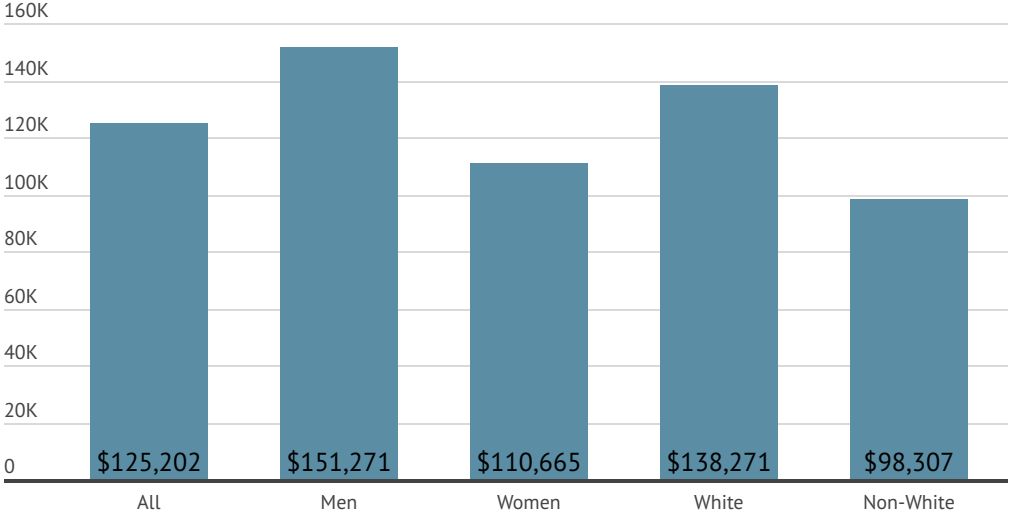
INCOME CONTINUED

Median Income by Sex and Race/Ethnicity

The median income for respondent full-time Texas attorneys was $125,202 in 2021.

Men and white attorneys reported higher incomes than their counterparts. Men reported a median income of $151,271 and white attorneys reported a median of $138,721.

The median for women was $110,665, and non-white attorneys reported a median of $98,307.



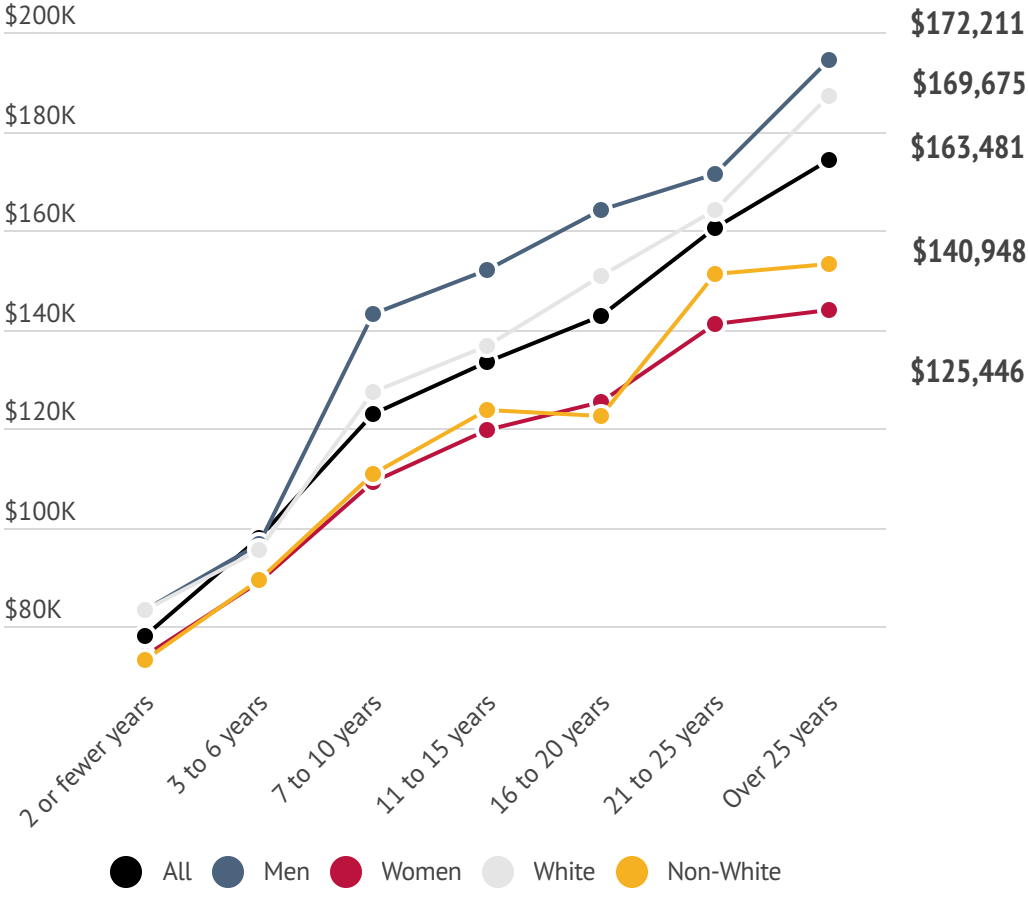
INCOME CONTINUED

Median Income by Sex and Race/Ethnicity and Years of Experience

Men and white attorneys report a higher income over the course of their careers in comparison to their counterparts.

Income reported by men licensed 2 or fewer years is 13% greater than that reported by women. For those licensed over 25 years, the difference is 35%.

White attorneys licensed 2 or fewer years reported an income 14% greater than that reported by non-white attorneys. For those licensed over 25 years, the difference is 22%.



INCOME CONTINUED

Income by Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)	Median Income
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA	$145,114
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington MSA	$141,838
Austin-Round Rock MSA	$123,341
San Antonio-New Braunfels MSA	$116,105
El Paso MSA	$117,105
Corpus Christi MSA	$118,749
Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA	$124,999
Central Texas MSAs	$114,772
East & NE Texas MSAs	$114,285
South Texas MSAs	$106,250
West Texas MSAs	$124,999
Non-Metropolitan Counties	$131,579

In general, the larger the MSA the larger the median income reported.

For example, the Houston-The Woodland-Sugar Land MSA had a median income of $145,114. This compares to the lowest median income of $106,250 in South Texas MSAs.

APPENDIX

Methodology

Method

Data Collection
Attorney economic information was collected in the Texas Attorney Survey – Status 2019. The questionnaire was emailed on October 13, 2020, to 83,140 active attorneys licensed by the State Bar of Texas, maintaining active membership in the State Bar of Texas, and who did not opt out of receiving survey mailings.

The survey's results are presented in part by geographic region, which is broken down into 13 economic areas. The metropolitan areas (Metropolitan Statistical Areas or MSAs) were defined by the Federal Office of Management and Budget. There were 1,630 responding attorneys from the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land and 1,738 from the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington MSAs, 889 attorneys from the Austin-Round Rock MSA, 524 attorneys from the San Antonio-New Braunfels MSA, and 1,144 attorneys from the remaining regions.

Response Rate
The survey ended November 3, 2020. As of the deadline there were 6,690 completed responses. This response gave the survey a margin of error of ±1.1%.

This means that if 40% of the respondents answered "yes" to a question, we can be 95% confident that the actual proportion of the population who would answer "yes" to the same question is 2 percentage points lower or higher than 40% (39 to 41%).

APPENDIX CONTINUED

Metropolitan Statistical Area

Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA
Austin
Brazoria
Chambers
Fort Bend
Galveston
Harris
Liberty
Montgomery
Waller

Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington MSA
Collin
Dallas
Denton
Ellis
Hood
Hunt
Johnson
Kaufman
Parker
Rockwall
Somervell
Tarrant
Wise

Austin-Round Rock MSA
Bastrop
Caldwell
Hays
Travis
Williamson

San Antonio-New Braunfels MSA
Atascosa
Bandera
Bexar
Comal
Guadalupe
Kendall
Medina
Wilson

El Paso MSA
El Paso
Hudspeth

Corpus Christi MSA
Aransas
Nueces
San Patricio

Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA
Hardin
Jefferson
Newton
Orange

Central Texas MSAs
Waco MSA
McLennan
Falls
Killeen-Temple MSA
Bell
Coryell
Lampasas

East & NE Texas MSAs
College Station-Bryan MSA
Brazos
Burleson
Robertson
Longview MSA
Gregg
Rusk
Upshur
Sherman-Denison MSA
Grayson
Texarkana MSA
Bowie
Tyler MSA
Smith
Victoria MSA
Goliad
Victoria
Wichita Falls MSA
Archer
Clay
Wichita

South Texas MSAs
Brownsville-Harlingen MSA
Cameron
Laredo MSA
Webb
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission MSA
Hidalgo

West Texas MSAs
Abilene MSA
Callahan
Jones
Taylor
Amarillo MSA
Armstrong
Carson
Oldham
Potter
Randall
Lubbock MSA
Crosby
Lubbock
Lynn
Midland MSA
Martin
Midland
Odessa MSA
Ector
San Angelo MSA
Irion
Tom Green

APPENDIX CONTINUED

Non-Metropolitan Counties

Anderson
Andrews
Angelina
Bailey
Baylor
Bee
Blanco
Borden
Bosque
Brewster
Briscoe
Brooks
Brown
Burnet
Calhoun
Camp
Cass
Castro
Cherokee
Childress
Cochran
Coke
Coleman
Collingsworth
Colorado
Comanche
Concho
Cooke
Cottle
Crane
Crockett
Culberson
Dallam
Dawson
Deaf Smith
Delta
De Witt
Dickens
Dimmit
Donley
Duval
Eastland
Edwards
Erath
Fannin
Fayette
Fisher
Floyd
Foard
Franklin
Freestone
Frio
Gaines
Garza
Gillespie
Glasscock
Gonzales
Gray
Grimes
Hale
Hall
Hamilton
Hansford
Hardeman
Harrison
Hartley
Haskell
Hemphill
Henderson
Hill
Hockley
Hopkins
Houston
Howard
Hutchinson
Jack
Jackson
Jasper
Jeff Davis
Jim Hogg
Jim Wells
Karnes
Kenedy
Kent
Kerr
Kimble
King
Kinney
Kleberg
Knox
Lamar
Lamb
La Salle
Lavaca
Lee
Leon
Limestone
Lipscomb
Live Oak
Llano
Loving
Madison
Marion
Mason
Matagorda
Maverick
McCulloch
McMullen
Menard
Milam
Mills
Mitchell
Montague
Moore
Morris
Motley
Nacogdoches
Navarro
Nolan
Ochiltree
Palo Pinto
Panola
Parmer
Pecos
Polk
Presidio
Rains
Reagan
Real
Red River
Reeves
Refugio
Roberts
Runnels
Sabine
San Augustine
San Jacinto
San Saba
Schleicher
Scurry
Shackelford
Shelby
Sherman
Starr
Stephens
Sterling