

# Lawyer Discipline, BY THE NUMBERS

How much do you know about the attorney grievance system in Texas? The State Bar of Texas recently posted the Annual Report of the Commission for Lawyer Discipline on its website. The report contains a wealth of information about the grievance process as well as statistics from the prior bar year, which ran from June 1, 2023, to May 31, 2024. The following questions and answers are based on data from that report.

1. How many grievances were filed against Texas attorneys during the 2023-2024 bar year?
  - A. 5,489
  - B. 7,985
  - C. 9,516
  - D. 12,208
2. When a grievance fails to allege, on its face, any professional misconduct, it is categorized as an “inquiry” and dismissed. What percentage of grievances were dismissed as inquiries last year?
  - A. 28%
  - B. 37%
  - C. 54%
  - D. 67%
3. If the Chief Disciplinary Counsel (CDC) determines there is just cause that professional misconduct occurred, the respondent attorney may choose to have the case heard before either an evidentiary panel of the grievance committee or by a state district court. Which of these proceedings is confidential?
  - A. Evidentiary panel.
  - B. District court.
  - C. Both.
  - D. Neither.
4. What percentage of disciplinary proceedings are heard by an evidentiary panel?
  - A. 54%
  - B. 78%
  - C. 87%
  - D. 95%
5. Of the total disciplinary sanctions issued, what percentage were issued against male attorneys?
  - A. 55%
  - B. 62%
  - C. 74%
  - D. 81%
6. How many Texas lawyers were disbarred last year?
  - A. 18
  - B. 37
  - C. 54
  - D. 72
7. How many Texas lawyers were suspended?
  - A. 60
  - B. 74
  - C. 128
  - D. 157
8. The State Bar’s Client Security Fund provides compensation to eligible victims of attorney theft or an attorney’s failure to refund unearned funds. How much did the Client Security Fund distribute last year to victims of lawyer misconduct?
  - A. \$275,619
  - B. \$422,334
  - C. \$670,709
  - D. \$889,140
9. The CDC operates a toll-free Attorney Ethics Helpline (800-532-3947) that provides guidance to Texas attorneys on relevant ethics rules, opinions, and caselaw (though it cannot provide legal advice). Approximately how many calls did the Attorney Ethics Helpline respond to last year?
  - A. 2,500
  - B. 3,700
  - C. 4,600
  - D. 5,200
10. What percentage of calls to the Attorney Ethics Helpline were returned within 24 hours?
  - A. 62%
  - B. 72%
  - C. 85%
  - D. 93%
11. Ethics Opinions issued pursuant to Tex. Gov’t. Code §81.091- 81.095 are drafted and issued by what entity?
  - A. The Texas Center for Legal Ethics.
  - B. The Professional Ethics Committee for the State Bar of Texas, whose members are appointed by the Supreme Court of Texas.
  - C. The Texas Ethics Opinion Committee, whose members are appointed by the State Bar Board of Directors.
  - D. The State Bar of Texas Professionalism Committee.



#### ABOUT THE CENTER

The Texas Center for Legal Ethics was created by three former chief justices of the Supreme Court of Texas to educate lawyers about ethics and professionalism. Lawyers can access the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, the Texas Lawyer’s Creed, and a variety of other online ethics resources by computer or smart device at [legalethicstexas.com](http://legalethicstexas.com).

#### DISCLAIMER

The information contained in Ethics Question of the Month is intended to illustrate an ethics issue of general interest in the Texas legal community; it is not intended to provide ethics advice that applies regardless of particular facts. For specific legal ethics advice, readers are urged to consult the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct (including the official comments) and other authorities and/or a qualified legal ethics adviser.



**ANSWER:** Correct responses: 1(B), 2(D), 3(A), 4(C), 5(C), 6(A), 7(B), 8(D), 9(C), 10(D), 11(B). To view the full 22-page Annual Report of the Commission for Lawyer Discipline, go to [texabar.com/annualreports](http://texabar.com/annualreports). For further information, go to [legalethicstexas.com/ethics-question-of-the-month](http://legalethicstexas.com/ethics-question-of-the-month).