

TEXAS' BORDER COUNTIES

The name of the State of Texas is derived from the Hasinai Native American phrase “Tejas,” meaning friend.¹ Paleo-Indians, which hunted great mammoths and buffalo, were the first inhabitants of the state in 10,000 B.C. The State of Texas has a very rich history that involved the exchange of governmental power a total of eight times, although the state has been ruled under six flags. In 1528 Cabeza de Vaca landed in what is now Galveston and began the famed story of the “Seven Cities of Gold.” Texas came under the Kingdom of France in 1685 when La Salle founded Fort St. Louis along Matagorda Bay. The stronghold switched hands in 1690, when the Mission San Francisco de Los Tejas was created in East Texas. The Mission San Antonio de Valero, which is currently known as the Alamo, was established in 1718.²

During the same time that Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821, Mexico authorized Stephen F. Austin to begin a colony of 300 families in southeast Texas, which was later called the “Old Three Hundred.” The Battle of the Alamo began in 1836 and became the battle cry for Texans. On March 2, 1836, the Texas Declaration of Independence was ratified, and the Republic of Texas was born. On December 29, 1845, the State of Texas became the 28th state, through annexation into the United States.³ Texas became part of the Confederate States on January 28, 1861, and on March 30, 1870, after the Reconstruction Period, Texas formally became part of the United States.⁴

At the beginning of the 20th century the population of the State of Texas was about three million. According to the Census Bureau, the 1999 population figure reached over 20 million, about 7 percent of the U.S. total. Texas is ranked first out of the 10 fastest growing states in terms of population. The latest census figures place Texas as the second most populous state. The population increased 18 percent between 1900 and 1999, nearly half that of the U.S.⁵

Immigration from state borders and particularly the southern border contributed to the growth of Texas. Immigrants from Mexico and Germany comprised the majority of the influx into the state, with the addition of 179,357 foreign born persons into the population. Eighty-two percent of the population in 1900, worked in rural regions of the state. African Americans and Hispanic Americans comprised the two largest minority groups in Texas. From the period of 1880 through 1900, the African American population increased from 393,384 to 620,722. This increase can be misleading for the reason that while the African American population was increasing, their population figures decreased, due to the fact that other ethnic populations were growing at much faster rates. Hispanic Americans experienced a greater increase than their counterparts through immigration and birth rates. The 1880 birthrate for Hispanic Americans was 43,161, which grew to 71,062 by 1900. Mexican Americans created a stronghold South of San Antonio and along the Rio Grande, where they held some political clout. Their culture flourished because they were able to preserve their language through Spanish newspapers, churches and through the celebration of Mexican holidays.⁶

Texas' Border Environment

Fourteen of Texas' 254 counties form a 1,092-mile international boundary between the U.S. and Mexico. Population, degree of urbanization, physical topography and degree of impact by undocumented persons on their law enforcement and administration of justice as well as healthcare systems varies tremendously. Table T1 presents summary characteristics of these border counties. Jeff Davis and Culberson Counties, although not directly on the U.S.-Mexico border, are included in this study because their proximity creates similar challenges experienced by other border counties. The 15 border counties included in this study represent 9.7 percent of Texas' total population. The most populous is El Paso County with 36 percent of the border residents. Hidalgo and Cameron Counties, in the lower Rio Grande Valley, are the next largest border counties. Webb County, with Laredo as the county seat, is the largest county in the middle Rio Grande region. The other counties are small, rural counties with less than 5 percent each of the total border population.

Table T1: Texas Border County Statistics

County	Population	Square miles	Border Length	Ports- of- Entry	INS Border Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions
Cameron	329,131 16.8%	2,345 2.5%	66 6.0%	3	22,808,120 12.1%	84,789 22.2%
Hidalgo	534,907 27.4%	4,064 4.4%	68 6.2%	4	31,389,565 16.6%	33,261 8.7%
Starr	56,577 2.8%	3,168 3.4%	59 5.4%	3	8,223,707 4.3%	8,170 2.1%
Zapata	11,436 0.6%	2,582 2.8%	73 6.6%	0	0	582 0.2%
Webb	193,180 9.9%	8,695 9.4%	104 9.5%	3	47,748,336 25.3%	78,234 20.4%
Maverick	48,639 2.4%	3,316 3.6%	87 7.9%	1	8,722,754 4.6%	62,100 16.2%
Kinney	3,465 0.2%	5,532 6.0%	13 1.1%	0	0	18,778 4.9%
Val Verde	44,188 2.2%	3,232 3.5%	98 8.9%	2	5,959,546 3.1%	32,708 8.5%
Terrell	1,202 0.6%	2,385 2.6%	48 4.3%	0	0	953 0.2%
Brewster	8,793 0.5%	16,040 17.5%	164 15.0%	0	0	1,035 0.3%
Presidio	8,954 0.5%	9,987 10.9%	158 14.4%	1	1,976,222 1.0%	1,586 0.4%
Jeff Davis	2,415 0.1%	5,865 6.4%	0	0	0	0
Culberson	3,018 0.2%	9,875 10.7%	0	0	0	1,378 0.4%
Hudspeth	3,238 0.2%	11,840 12.9%	94 8.6%	1	598,193 0.3%	4,708 1.2%
El Paso	701,908 36.0%	2,624 2.8%	60 5.4%	4	60,748,808 32.2%	53,613 14.0%
TOTAL	1,951,051	91,550	1,092	22	188,175,251	381,895

There are 22 ports-of-entry in Texas. According to the INS, 188 million people crossed from Mexico into the U.S. through the State of Texas in 1999. An average of 515,549 persons enter per day through Texas counties. The U.S. Border Patrol apprehended 381,895 alleged undocumented persons during 1999, or an average of 1,046 persons per day.

Characteristics of Texas County Government

Texas county governments are subordinate units of state government with limited local authority. As general-law units of local government, they are limited to the powers and structures established by state law. Unlike other states, Texas counties may not adopt a home rule charter. This parameter on their operations means that many of their responses to local problems must receive state legislative authorization before action can be taken. Texas counties, therefore, serve a dual function. Within their jurisdiction counties have the responsibility for implementing state policies as well as providing services to their local citizens.

The commissioners' court governs each county. It consists of four commissioners and a county judge. Each is elected to staggered, four-year terms on a partisan basis. Elected from single-member districts, the commissioners represent specific districts, or precincts. The county judge is elected at-large and serves as head commissioner and a voting member of the court. Texas county judges do have judicial responsibilities. They may be called upon to preside in the constitutional county court. Larger urban counties delegate this authority to the county courts at law. The county judge also serves as the chief financial-budget officer in smaller rural counties with fewer than 225,000 residents.⁷

Because of the statutory limits on Texas counties, the commissioners court may set the property tax rate. However, the Texas constitution imposes a maximum permissible rate. According to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, "Under the Texas constitution, a county may levy as many as three individual tax rates for funds dedicated to specific purposes: Farm-to-Market Roads and Flood Control, General Fund and a Special Road and Bridge Fund." All 254 Texas counties impose a property tax for the general fund. Land is appraised by a Central Appraisal District, which also handles appraisal for cities and special districts within a county. Counties have the local option of granting local homestead exemptions. The state also makes available exemptions for disabled persons and disabled veterans. Total county property taxes collected in Texas in 1999 were \$3.2 billion, a 5 percent increase from the previous tax year. County taxable property values reached \$876 billion.⁸

Texas counties have the additional revenue option of imposing a sales and use tax. The Texas sales tax rate is 6.25 percent. Local sales and use taxes, which include city, county, transit authorities and special use districts, cannot exceed an additional 2 percent. One-hundred nineteen of Texas' 254 counties impose a ½percent county sales and use tax.⁹ Intergovernmental grants-in-aid from the state and federal government compose the remainder of the revenue sources for Texas counties. Texas counties received \$43.6 billion from the state, of which \$14.3 billion was attributable to intergovernmental payments. The remainder of the funds included labor costs, public assistance, highway construction and maintenance funds, operating expenses and capital outlays.¹⁰

County healthcare, while a part of the county general fund, often includes service provision through a special taxing district. Various counties have special districts, with their own boards and taxing authorities, to fund hospitals, health services and emergency services. Other county services such as water, rural fire and police, municipal utilities and community colleges are sometimes funded via special districts. Rural Texas counties often work together for service provision. Adult probation and detention and community supervision of juveniles is often handled in this fashion. Participating counties underwrite the cost of service based on their population as a proportion of the total service area.

Texas County Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice System

The principal law enforcement officer at the county level in Texas is the sheriff. The sheriff's department is responsible for the following: the operation of county jails, criminal investigations, arrest of criminal offenders, giving warrants and civil papers, providing bailiffs for all state courts and law enforcement protection.

The District Attorney (DA) is the main prosecutor that upholds the state penal code. The DA represents the State of Texas in felony criminal actions and misdemeanor criminal actions in the County Court at Law and the Justice of the Peace Courts. One district attorney may provide services for several counties with smaller communities, although the regular jurisdiction for DAs is based on county lines.¹¹ The County Attorney provides legal council to the Commissioners Court. This office handles civil cases filed against the county. In addition, the County Attorney handles misdemeanor cases up to felony.

Texas District Courts have original jurisdiction in all felony criminal cases, divorce cases, cases involving title to land, election contest actions and civil matters in which the controversy is over \$200. Texas County Courts at Law hear both criminal and civil cases. The courts criminal responsibility includes Class "A" and "B" misdemeanors with the highest fine being \$500. The civil cases heard by the County Courts at Law involve controversies between \$500 and \$5,000. The lowest county court is the Justice of the Peace Court. Justice of the Peace courts have original jurisdiction in Class "C" misdemeanor criminal cases with fines up to \$500. Civil cases with controversies under \$5,000 are heard in the J.P. court. Constables are the peace officers of the justice court.

Texas Emergency Medical Services and Indigent Health Care

Emergency medical services for residents of Texas counties are provided through multiple funding and delivery systems. Special hospital districts have been created in many of the border counties as a way to manage indigent healthcare. These special districts have their own boards of directors and independent taxing authority.

Some counties solely own EMS and ambulance services, while others choose to contract out this service. In still other counties, special hospital districts operate emergency ambulance service. In at least one instance, a local military base whose mission includes the training of flight nurses and surgeons offers medical airlifts.

In those counties with a public health department, the department services the critical role of overseeing indigent healthcare. Counties are mandated by the State of Texas to provide emergency healthcare to undocumented persons through the Type 30 Medicaid program. The federal government enacted a pilot program through the Federal Balanced Budget Act of 1997 that would provide \$3.9 million per year as a special allotment of federal funds to provide healthcare to TP30 clients in the State of Texas. The monies were available for a five-year period from 1998 through 2001. The Medicaid program draws reimbursement for claims paid for the Program Type 30 clients until monies are exhausted each year. Once the \$3.9 million is exhausted, then state funds are used in conjunction with federal dollars to provide service to the patients. Either the county health department, or in some cases a local office of the Texas Department of Health (TDH), make the eligibility determinations for reimbursement under the Program Type 30, Medicaid. According to TDH, the majority of the TP30 funds in Texas are being used for childbirth or the complications of childbirth.

Medical personnel do not inquire whether a person has legal residency status in the U.S. when presented with an individual needing acute care. Intake workers at hospitals and community-based clinics will ask for a social security number and place of birth. Determining the total number of unique patients seen in a given year who are undocumented therefore becomes a daunting task. Interviews with hospital and community-based clinic personnel were used to estimate percentages of patients seen who were presumed to lack legal residency status in the U.S. In some cases, lack of a social security number was used as an indicator.

Determining the nativity and residency status of the deceased presents further challenges. Manner of death, location and circumstances under which the body is found all enter into the assessment of the coroner, medical examiner or Justice of the Peace. In several of the counties, autopsies were not routinely performed if the individual's remains were skeletonized. For the purposes of this research, reported statistics from the local officials were used to determine the fiscal impact of persons who may have lacked legal residency status in the U.S. at the time of death.

Costs to Texas Border Counties

The total cost to Texas' border counties for the provision of law enforcement, criminal justice and emergency medical service to undocumented persons was estimated to be \$23,289,011, as shown in table T2. This figure includes the general government indirect costs. The impact on the general fund of border counties varies from zero in Terrell County to almost one-third of the total Culberson County budget. On an average, Texans living in border counties spend 9.2 percent of their county's general fund expenditures for the incarceration, prosecution and community supervision of criminal undocumented persons and the provision of emergency healthcare for individuals without legal residency status in the U.S.

The cost estimates for emergency healthcare included all persons without legal residency status, whether they had committed felony criminal acts or not. Table T2 summarizes the data for the Texas border counties. El Paso County shoulders the largest portion of costs associated with criminal undocumented persons, 39.5 percent. Cameron, Hidalgo and Webb Counties, the other

counties with large urban population centers, account for 15.7, 10.9 and 13.7 percent of the total costs, respectively. The average cost per capita in Texas border counties was \$11.94.

Table T2: Estimated Fiscal Impact of Undocumented Persons by County

County	Estimated Fiscal Impact	Percentage of Total Estimated Fiscal Impact	General Fund	Estimated Fiscal Impact as Percentage of General Fund	Per Capita Impact
Cameron	\$ 3,663,064	15.7%	\$ 31,790,196	11.5%	\$11.13
Hidalgo	\$ 2,531,488	10.9%	\$ 50,441,047	5.0%	\$4.73
Starr	\$ 1,440,443	6.2%	\$ 8,300,000	17.4%	\$25.46
Zapata	\$ 432,430	1.9%	\$ 5,564,928	7.8%	\$37.81
Webb	\$ 3,191,064	13.7%	\$ 36,700,000	8.7%	\$16.52
Maverick	NA	NA	\$ 4,900,000	NA	NA
Kinney	\$ 16,026	0.1%	\$ 1,241,160	1.3%	\$4.63
Val Verde	\$ 1,527,737	6.6%	\$ 7,985,767	19.1%	\$34.57
Terrell	\$ 0	0%	\$ 1,043,637	0%	\$0.00
Brewster	\$ 56,401	0.2%	\$ 2,336,115	2.4%	\$6.41
Presidio	\$ 465,356	2.0%	\$ 1,702,496	27.3%	\$51.97
Jeff Davis	\$ 44,478	0.2%	\$ 492,483	9.0%	\$18.42
Culberson	\$ 610,104	2.6%	\$ 1,937,814	31.5%	\$202.16
Hudspeth	\$ 120,524	0.5%	\$ 1,814,407	6.6%	\$37.22
El Paso	\$ 9,189,896	39.5%	\$97,744,000	9.4%	\$13.09
Total State Cost	\$ 23,289,011	100.0%	\$253,994,050	9.2%	\$11.94*

*Average per capita impact cost for counties experiencing fiscal impact. Maverick and Terrell Counties excluded.

Costs to Texas Border County Departments

By estimating the percentage of total workload associated with processing criminal undocumented persons, researchers in consultation with the local counties determined the cost to the general fund for each department. Using a percentage of the total departmental effort ensured that overhead costs are also included. These figures also incorporate an estimate of the cost of general governmental services for each department, such as human resources, auditor, finance and budgeting. The costs for emergency medical care are county general fund expenditures including

ambulance, county eligibility determination and acute medical care. The results of these calculations are shown in table T3. Sections on each county will discuss the departmental costs in detail.

Table T3A: Costs to Texas Border Counties by County and Department

Cameron \$3,663,064	Hidalgo \$2,531,488	Starr \$1,440,44	Zapata \$432,430	Webb \$3,191,064
Sheriff \$2,293,818	Sheriff \$1,618,794	Sheriff \$865,912	Sheriff \$124,436	Sheriff \$1,709,495
District Court \$90,618	District Court \$65,529	District Court \$152,191	District Court \$3,480	District Court \$97,976
District Attorney \$227,679	District Attorney \$183,788	District Attorney \$93,065	District Attorney \$5,031	District Attorney \$440,122
District Clerk \$64,239	District Clerk \$28,247	District Clerk \$67,157	District Clerk \$3,081	District Clerk \$58,244
County Court at Law \$327,783	County Court at Law \$42,724	County Court at Law \$56,098	County Court at Law None	County Court at Law \$62,187
County Attorney None	County Attorney None	County Attorney \$74,509	County Attorney \$25,900	County Attorney \$28,658
County Clerk \$375,484	County Clerk \$31,725	County Clerk \$73,653	County Clerk \$23,841	County Clerk \$43,980
Justice of the Peace & Constable \$11,052	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$63,164	Justice of the Peace & Constable N/A	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$96,396	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$47,660
Indigent Defense \$109,406	Indigent Defense \$135,469	Indigent Defense \$27,391	Indigent Defense \$4,659	Public Defender \$373,821
Juvenile Probation \$0	Juvenile Probation \$0	Juvenile Probation \$20,756	Juvenile Probation \$51,919	Juvenile Probation \$259,458
Adult Probation \$0	Adult Probation \$0	Adult Probation \$9,701	Adult Probation \$2,376	Adult Probation \$0
Emergency Medical \$67,657	Emergency Medical \$320,779	Emergency Medical N/A	Emergency Medical \$86,856	Emergency Medical \$69,463
Autopsy & Burial \$95,328	Autopsy & Burial \$41,269	Autopsy & Burial N/A	Autopsy & Burial \$4,455	Autopsy & Burial N/A

Table T3B: Costs to Texas Border Counties by County and Department

Maverick N/A	Kinney \$16,026	Val Verde \$1,527,737	Terrell \$0	Brewster \$56,401
Sheriff NA	Sheriff \$7,310	Sheriff \$919,368	Sheriff \$0	Sheriff \$3,588
District Court NA	District Court NA	District Court (includes District Attorney) \$71,449	District Court \$0	District Court \$700
District Attorney NA	District Attorney NA		District Attorney \$0	District Attorney \$161
District Clerk NA	District Clerk NA	District Clerk \$68,118	County-District Clerk \$0	District Clerk \$969
County Clerk NA	County Clerk NA	County Clerk \$13,479	—	County Clerk \$0
County Court at Law NA	County Court at Law NA	County Court at Law \$14,291	County Court at Law None	County Court at Law \$0
County Attorney NA	County Attorney NA	County Attorney \$11,111	County Attorney None	County Attorney \$0
Justice of the Peace & Constable NA	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$8,716	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$157,728	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$0	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$0
Juvenile Probation NA	Juvenile Probation NA	Juvenile Probation \$13,292	Juvenile Probation \$0	Juvenile Probation \$1,295
Indigent Defense NA	Indigent Defense NA	Indigent Defense \$89,768	Indigent Defense \$0	Indigent Defense \$12,250
Emergency Medical NA	Emergency Medical NA	Emergency Medical \$10,704	Emergency Medical \$0	Emergency Medical \$16,277
Autopsy & Burial NA	Autopsy & Burial NA	Autopsy & Burial \$36,721	Autopsy & Burial \$0	Autopsy & Burial \$16,245
Detention NA	Detention NA	Detention \$135,000	Detention \$0	Detention \$4,916

Table T3C: Costs to Texas Border Counties by County and Department

Presidio \$465,356	Jeff Davis \$44,478	Culberson \$610,104	Hudspeth \$120,524	El Paso \$9,189,896
Sheriff \$189,151	Sheriff \$20,320	Sheriff \$371,425	Sheriff \$64,884	Sheriff \$4,525,131
District Court \$41,631	District Court \$3,934	District Court \$24,649	District Court \$2,336	District Court \$343,363
Administrative Judicial Court NA	Administrative Judicial Court NA	Administrative Judicial Court NA	Administrative Judicial Court NA	Administrative Judicial Court \$4,025
District Attorney \$14,219	District Attorney \$834	District Attorney \$57,988	District Attorney \$392	District Attorney \$643,435
County-District Clerk \$83,926	County-District Clerk \$7,409	County-District Clerk \$61,272	County-District Clerk \$10,973	District Clerk \$162,701
County Court at Law NA	County Court at Law NA	County Court at Law NA	County Court at Law NA	County Court at Law \$1,159,678
County Attorney \$32,836	County Attorney \$0	County Attorney \$13,494	County Attorney \$0	County Attorney \$89,069
County Clerk (combined with District Clerk)	County Clerk (combined with District Clerk)	County Clerk (combined with District Clerk)	County Clerk (combined with District Clerk)	County Clerk \$141,004
Justice of the Peace & Constable \$52,512	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$0	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$79,430	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$38,945	Justice of the Peace & Constable \$63,647
Criminal Law Magistrate NA	Criminal Law Magistrate NA	Criminal Law Magistrate NA	Criminal Law Magistrate NA	Criminal law Magistrate \$40,359
Indigent Defense \$18,661	Indigent Defense \$0	Indigent Defense	Indigent Defense \$1,496	Public Defender \$519,205
Adult & Juvenile Probation \$9,344	Adult Probation \$0	Adult Probation \$1,846	Adult & Juvenile Probation \$1,498	Adult Probation \$16,385
	Juvenile Probation \$0	Juvenile Probation \$0		Juvenile Probation \$475,224
Emergency Medical \$12,026	Emergency Medical \$3,677	Emergency Medical \$0	Emergency Medical \$0	Emergency Medical \$962,923
Autopsy & Burial \$11,050	Autopsy & Burial \$1,598	Autopsy & Burial \$0	Autopsy & Burial \$0	Autopsy & Burial \$43,748
Detention (Not in general fund)	Detention \$6,706	Detention (included with Sheriff)	Detention (Not in general fund)	Detention (Included with Sheriff)

CAMERON COUNTY, TEXAS

Cameron County lies the very tip of the State of Texas. The county covers 2,345 square miles. The county seat is located in the southernmost city of the state, Brownsville, Texas. Brownsville is largest city in the lower Rio Grande Valley, with a local economy that is based on electronics, textiles, metal fabrication, food processing and petrochemical industries. Brownsville has a skilled labor force that experiences low employee turnover while at the same time maintaining minimal production costs.¹² The 17-mile ship channel of the Port of Brownsville, which includes 14 deep sea docks and six barge berths, railway and trucking facilities, is considered to be one of the leading Foreign Trade Zones in the United States.¹³

The other major cities in Cameron County include Harlingen (population 48,735), San Benito (population 20,125) plus the coastal gateway city of Port Isabel (population 4,467) and the island resort community of South Padre Island (population 1,677). Other smaller communities include La Feria (4,360), Santa Rosa (2,223), Combes (2,024), Rio Hondo (1,793), Rangerville (280), Rancho Viejo (885), Los Fresnos (2,473), Laguna Vista (1,166) and Bayview (291). U.S. Highway 77/83 provides connections from Brownsville along a northwestern route through San Benito and Harlingen.

Within the sub delta of the Rio Grande in the southeastern portion of county is the Boca Chica State Park. Located east of the city of Brownsville, Texas, the 1054.92-acre park includes the Mesa de Gavilan. Boca Chica provides a natural habitat for numerous rare bird species that winter at the park. It is also a sanctuary for many fauna and geological sites that are preserved in their natural environment. The Port Isabel Lighthouse State Historical Park is located in the City of Port Isabel along the lower Laguna Madre. It is the only lighthouse, out of a total of 16 in the entire State of Texas, that is available for public tours. The light from the lighthouse was disabled in 1905 following a decrease in the commercial shipping due to a rail line that linked Corpus Christi to Mexico.

The 1999 population estimate for Cameron County was 321,738, which is a 23.7 percent increase from the 1990 Census Bureau figure of 260,120. Seventy percent of the population in Cameron County is located within six miles of the Mexican border. The racial/ethnic composition of the county is comprised of an 85.2 percent Hispanic population and less than 1 percent African American population, with the remainder of the population as non-Hispanic white. The median family income for the county was \$21,928 in 1995, with a poverty rate of 39.7 percent in 1990. The average unemployment rate in 1999 was 10 percent, with 50 percent of the populace having obtained a high school diploma and only 11.9 having attended four or more years of higher education. Cameron County has a total of 10 school districts, with a student population of 82,139. Brownsville Independent School District (ISD) has the largest enrollment figure, 40,262, while the smallest school in the district, Santa Maria ISD, has a total of 504 students. The vast majority of the entire student population of the county, 79.57 percent, is considered economically disadvantaged.

Higher educational resources are provided by the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) and Texas South most College (TSC), which provide degrees, certificate programs and continuing education courses to 10,000 students. The Texas State Technical College (TSTC), located in Harlingen, offers technical and specialized preparation to approximately 2,900 students and is the second largest TSTC campus in Texas.¹⁴

The metropolitan area of Brownsville, Harlingen and San Benito has led the employment growth among other urban regions in the State of Texas. In 1993 this region experienced a 5.6 percent total employment growth, which was concentrated in the manufacturing, construction and the service sectors of the economy. In the period from April 1993 through April 1994, the employment rate maintained a figure of 5.1 percent. Following the devaluation of the Mexican *peso* the figures plummeted to a rate of 2.2 percent from April 1994 to April of the following year. The employment growth did not convalesce until 1997, when the figure rose to 1.8 percent from 1.1 percent in the previous year. The service sector, which includes health services, business services and social services, leads in employment along the border.¹⁵

The county tax rate for FY 1999 consisted of 0.32593, with a total levy of \$22,818,698 that is based on the total assessed county valuation of \$7,702,341,983. Cameron County ranks 18th out of 254 counties in total assessed valuation, which indicates that there are sufficient economic resources accessible for county services. The 1999 total general fund expenditures for Cameron County were \$31,790,196.

Cameron County's Border Environment

There are 66 miles of international boundary in Cameron County. Cameron County has three international ports-of-entry into the United States. The Free Trade Bridge is located at Los Indios and the two international bridges, Gateway International and Brownsville and Matamoros International, are located in Brownsville. Matamoros, the Mexican municipality that borders Cameron County, has a population estimate of 416,428. Seventy-five million dollars worth of goods pass through the border of Brownsville on a weekly basis. Brownsville has also obtained a presidential permit for the erection of the Los Tomates International Bridge and is seeking permits for a \$21 million commercial bridge that would connect the industrial area of Matamoros with the Texas port.

Through the *maquiladora* industry and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the sister cities of Brownsville and Matamoros have “grown to become one of the largest employment centers within the *maquiladora* program.”¹⁶ The 118 *maquiladoras* in Matamoros, Mexico employed an annual average of 59,095 persons in 1999. A unique interchange and interdependence between the border cities emerges with the manufacturing of automotive and electronic components and apparel in Brownsville while the assembly of these products into “semi-finished goods” is continued in the *maquiladoras* of Mexico.

The INS reported 22,808,120 legal border crossings during 1999. During that same time 84,789 persons were apprehended by the Border Patrol.

Table T4: Cameron County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
321,738	2,345	66 miles	22,808,120	84,789	3

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

During FY99 Cameron County's provision of law enforcement, criminal justice administration and emergency medical services for undocumented persons totaled \$3,661,052. The cost of general governmental services included in that total was \$798,583. Two site visits were conducted in March and July 2000 to collect data and interview local appointed and elected officials. Detailed cost analysis evaluated services and time spent on various legal and medical tasks. Included in the review were the Cameron County Sheriff, District Attorney, District Clerk, County Court-at-Large, County Attorney, County Clerk, Justice of the Peace and Constables. Emergency medical cost evaluation included both ambulance and hospital services. The subsequent discussion provides details of the estimated costs by departments.

**Table T5: Cameron County Costs by Department
County Totals \$3,663,064**

Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	District Clerk	Court at Law	County Clerk	Justice of the Peace	Indigent Defense	Adult Probation	Juvenile Services	Emerg. Med.
\$2,293,818	\$227,679	\$90,618	\$64,239	\$327,783	\$375,484	\$11,052	\$109,406	\$0	\$0	\$162,985

Cameron County Sheriff

The Sheriff's Department general fund expenditure was \$9,930,000. The largest portion of the Sheriff's budget, \$6,168,873, supports the operation of a 738-inmate prison and infirmary. The total number of inmate days in 1999 was 269,370. Currently there is one undocumented person on death row in Cameron County.

The Sheriff's Office reported that there were many outstanding warrants for undocumented persons, including two for murder. The illegal crossers are "kind of like ghosts, [they] cross back and forth undetected. There's a good network of families. The amnesty in 1986 made it easier". One thousand three hundred twenty-five of the prison inmates were persons in the U.S. without legal residency status.

The patrol operations account for 38 percent of the patrol/administration portion of the budget, or \$1,429,228. Traffic stops in Cameron County result in the arrest of 1-2 undocumented persons a month of the "100 many illegal immigrants in the district." Law enforcement heavily patrols the area, as frequent fights are common especially with intoxicated persons at local convenience stores. The Sheriff's Office cites as the most common reasons for arrest was disorderly conduct, driving under the influence (DUI), assault and public intoxication. Law enforcement administrative support is allocated 54 percent of the funds, \$2,047,196, and investigation has a budget of \$300,890 (8 percent.) The Sheriff reports that 7 percent of the patrol, 3 percent of investigation and 5 percent of the administrative support is dedicated to law enforcement efforts involving undocumented persons, which can be seen in table T6.

Table T6: Cameron County Sheriff Impact

Division	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Jail	\$6,168,873	29.0%	\$1,788,973	\$262,310	\$2,051,283
Patrol	\$1,429,228	7.0%	\$100,046	\$14,671	\$114,717
Investigation	\$300,890	3.0%	\$9,027	\$1,467	\$10,494
Administration	\$2,047,196	5.0%	\$102,360	\$14,964	\$117,324
TOTAL	\$9,930,000	Varies	\$2,000,406	\$293,412	\$2,293,818

Cameron County received \$825,080 in payment through SCAAP. The 1,325 undocumented prisoners were jailed for an average of 58 days each for the equivalent of 76,850 inmate days. This represents 29 percent of the total number of inmate days.

Cameron County District Court

Cameron County has five District Courts with a combined general fund budget of \$1,622,511. This figure does not include the judges' salaries, which are included as a state line item, nor the court-appointed attorney budget. One of the Districts judges estimated the court's workload at between 25percent and 50 percent of criminal cases and 5 percent to 10 percent of the non-criminal cases involving undocumented persons. The District Courts estimated fiscal impact of these cases was \$90,618, as shown in table T7.

Table T7: Cameron County District Court Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,622,511	\$730,130	10%	\$73,013	\$17,605	\$90,618

District Attorney

Cameron County has a combined office for District and County Attorney. In this capacity the District Attorney prosecutes criminal and civil cases as well as acting as legal counsel to the County Commissioners. The general fund budget was \$1,807,325.

The District Attorney prosecuted 13,405 cases in 1999. The cases committed by illegal immigrants include murder, terrorist threats, burglary (vehicular and home), assault, indecency with a child and tampering with government records to lesser crimes of perjury, public lewdness, reckless driving and fictitious license plates. According to officials, "Mental commitments are civil in nature, but criminal illegal immigrants are also in this category. Juveniles are considered civil in nature, but they are charged with criminal conduct. Protective orders are civil in nature, but result from criminal conduct. These are technically civil cases, but they all involve criminal conduct on the part of illegal immigrants and impact our workload." Four hundred-sixty of the FY99 cases involved persons in the U.S. without legal residency status, and when juveniles are included it brings the impact to 10

percent. As shown in table T8, The fiscal impact of prosecution of criminal undocumented cases in Cameron County was \$227,679.

Table T8: Cameron County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,807,325	10%	\$180,733	\$46,946	\$227,679

Cameron County District Clerk

The District Clerk has administrative responsibility for the criminal and civil cases heard in District Court. The general fund expenditures were \$1,028,022. Of the 7,002 new cases that were filed in FY99, 3,357 were criminal (48 percent). The District Clerk reported that criminal cases take longer to file because of the forms and reporting required. She estimated 50 percent of the indicted criminal cases had undocumented defendants. As indicated in table T9, the District Clerk estimated costs associated with service provision for persons without legal residency status at \$64,239, or 10 percent of the total budget.

Table T9: Cameron County District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,028,022	\$514,011	10%	\$51,401	\$12,838	\$64,239

Cameron County Court at Law

Both criminal and civil cases are heard in the County Court at Law. Class “A” and “B” misdemeanors, where the highest fine cannot exceed \$500, compose the criminal caseload. When financial disputes between parties range from \$500 to \$5,000 the County Court at Law hears those civil cases. During FY99 the general fund budget for the County Court at Law was \$822,601.

According to court officials, “There were 8,600 criminal cases in '99; about 40 percent were illegal immigrants. One out of 5 is actually illegal, and 15 percent are border crossers, for a total workload impact of 40 percent.” Table T10 shows the total estimated cost of criminal undocumented persons in the County Court at Law of \$327,783.

Table T10: Cameron County Court at Law Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$822,601	\$658,081	40%	\$263,232	\$64,551	\$327,783

Cameron County Clerk

The County Clerk’s office handles the filing of civil and misdemeanor felony cases heard in the County Court at Law. The general fund budget for FY99 was \$934,994. Based on the caseload of the County Court at Law, the filing and processing of fees were estimated at 40 percent of the total

workload, or \$299,198. With the addition of the general government costs, the total estimated impact was \$375,484, which is depicted in table T11.

Table T11: Cameron County Clerk Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$934,994	\$747,995	40%	\$299,198	\$76,287	\$375,484

Cameron County Justice of the Peace and Constables

The seven Justice of the Peace precincts had a combined general fund budget of \$870,453 in FY99. Their courts adjudicated Class “C” misdemeanors with fines up to \$500 and civil cases with disputes under \$5,000. In interviews with the local justices, they indicated that Precincts 2 and 5 had the highest impact of cases with undocumented persons. The Justice of the Peace conducts arraignments, sets bonds but does not process undocumented persons. “We just read ‘em their rights and set bond is all, (Local JP.)” The minimal impact of undocumented persons on the total Justice of the Peace workload was estimated at 1 percent. The total estimated impact of undocumented persons, indicated in table T12, on the Justice of the Peace Courts and Constables was \$11,052.

Table T12: Cameron County Justice of the Peace and Constable Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$870,453	1%	\$8,705	\$2,347	\$11,052

Cameron County Indigent Defense

Cameron County allocated \$338,702 for indigent defense in FY99. This includes \$140,211 from the County Court at Law budget and the District Court budget of \$298,491. The courts use contract, or court-appointed, attorneys for most of the adult indigent cases. Two staff attorneys handle the juvenile cases. Using the caseload percentages from the District Courts and the County Court at Law, table T13 depicts the impact of cases involving undocumented persons was \$107,395, which includes \$21,462 in indirect general government costs.

Table T13: Cameron County Indigent Defense Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
District Court	\$298,849	10%	\$29,849	\$8,145	\$37,994
County Court at Law	\$140,211	40%	\$56,084	\$15,328	\$71,412
Total	\$439,060	20%	\$85,933	\$23,473	\$109,406

Cameron County Adult Probation

Cameron County officials reported that “during calendar year 1999, our department prepared 1,347 pre-sentence investigations, of which 134 were for illegal aliens. Please keep in mind that these are felony cases only, and the misdemeanor courts may or may not have the same ratio.” Officials agreed that 10 percent of the total caseload for undocumented persons would be consistent with the District Court and District Clerk, more or less. The department is funded by state grants, and this cost impact would accrue to the State of Texas. There is no general fund allocation for adult probation in the Cameron County Budget.

Cameron County Juvenile Court Center

The Cameron County Juvenile Jail has had 32 beds since 1995. Under agreements of the Texas Border Project, juvenile probation officers are hired to work with juvenile undocumented persons and the Mexican consulate. “As long as the Border Project continues to be funded by the state, we will not have an impact on our general fund. Kids are mostly *coyotes* and drug smugglers. No probation, PSI, etc. is conducted on juveniles.” Costs associated with illegal immigrants are by the State of Texas. There is no general fund allocation for adult probation in the Cameron County Budget.

Cameron County Emergency Medical

Emergency medical costs associated with undocumented persons consist of the eligibility determination function of the county health department. According to the director, eligibility workers reviewed 1,349 cases of which 244 (18 percent) were denied. Of the denials, 25 percent were illegal immigrants, but many cases were also illegal residents of Cameron County. The general fund budget for eligibility determination was \$310,734, of the total health department budget of \$1.3 million. Using the denial rates as an impact percentage, table T14 depicts the total estimated fiscal impact of undocumented persons on emergency medical costs were estimated at \$67,657.

Table T14: Cameron County Emergency Medical Impact

General Fund	Eligibility Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,298,922	\$310,734	18%	\$55,921	\$11,736	\$67,657

Cameron County Autopsies and Burials

The general fund budget for autopsies in FY99 was \$226,755. Cameron County officials estimate 30 percent of the autopsies were conducted on undocumented persons. Burial expenses include the cost of transporting the body, body bag charges and physical burial. The general fund budget was \$48,480, of which officials estimate 20 percent of the burials, were conducted for persons without legal residency status when they died. The total estimated fiscal impact of autopsies and burials for Cameron County was \$97,136, as indicated in table T15.

Table T15: Cameron County Autopsies and Burial Impact

Department	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov	Total Cost
Autopsy	\$226,755	30%	\$68,027	\$17,605	\$85,632
Burial	\$48,480	20%	\$9,696	\$0	\$9,696
Total	\$275,235	28%	\$77,723	\$17,605	\$95,328

HIDALGO COUNTY, TEXAS

Hidalgo County, which encompasses 4,064 square miles, is situated along the lower Rio Grande bordering Mexico. The county seat is Edinburg. The largest city in the lower Rio Grande Valley, McAllen, has an economy that depends on tourism, citrus and vegetable crops, oil, gas, and trade with Mexico.¹⁷ Many “snow birds” flock to the lower Rio Grande area in the winter months from the Midwestern U.S., which benefits tourism in the region.¹⁸ Hidalgo County is also the primary producer of the majority of fruit and vegetables in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.¹⁹

The level of elevation of Hidalgo County rises from east to west from 40 feet above sea level in the eastern section, to 375 feet above sea level in the western section of the county.²⁰ Five miles outside of Mission, Texas and alongside the Rio Grande, is the Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park. The 587.7-acre park offers wildlife viewing of a multitude of animals and fauna, and is considered one of the top places in the United States for observing subtropical bird and botanical species.²¹ The Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge is a 2,088-acre park located just South of Alamo, Texas. The park features a unique amalgamation of subtropical, gulf coast, Great Plains and Chihuahuan desert environments.²²

The 1999 total population figure for Hidalgo County consists of 535,539 persons, which represents a 39.6 percent increase from the 1990 U.S. Census Bureau estimate of 383,545. Located within six miles of the Mexican border, is a mere 19 percent of the population in the county. Ninety-nine percent of the population is white, with less than 1 percent African American; Hispanics account for 88.1 percent of the total population. Hidalgo County had a median family income of roughly \$19,957 in 1995 that included a poverty rate of 41.9 percent in 1990. The 1999 average unemployment rate for the county was 14 percent. Educational levels include with a total of 46.6 percent of the county having graduated from high school, and only 11.5 having furthered their education by acquiring a Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree from a university.

According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), there are a total of 15 school districts and a student population of 135,639 in Hidalgo County. The largest district in the county is McAllen Independent School District (ISD), with an enrollment figure of 40,262. Monte Alto ISD is the smallest district, with a student population of 439. Eighty-four percent of the student population of Hidalgo County is considered economically disadvantaged. The county also has two charter schools, Technology Education Charter High and One-Stop Multiservice Charter, that together have a student population of 366 students. Sixty-seven percent of the charter student population of the county is regarded as economically disadvantaged.

There are two institutions for higher learning in Hidalgo County: the University of Texas Pan-American (UTPA), located in Edinburg and South Texas Community College (STCC), located in McAllen, which was created by the State of Texas to provide educational services for Hidalgo and Starr Counties.²³

McAllen, Edinburg and Mission are an important metropolitan region for Hidalgo County. This metropolitan area experienced an employment growth rate of 6.7 percent, which was quadruple the national rate in 1993. In the following year the region’s employment rate slowed to 3.8 percent, due to the impact of the *peso* devaluation in Mexico. Hidalgo County followed the state with the decrease in unemployment figures in 1993 to 1994 from 16.1 percent to 15.9 percent, while the state

rate decreased from 6.5 percent to 6 percent. During the period April 1996 through April 1997, the service sector experienced the most gains in employment with the addition of 2,000 more positions. This sector accounted for approximately 50 percent of the metropolitan area's employment growth.²⁴

The FY 1999 county tax rate for Hidalgo County was 0.44670 and a total levy of \$49,361,702, which is derived from the total assessed county valuation of \$12,446,777,806. Hidalgo County placed 14th out of the 254 counties in Texas, in total assessed valuation. This suggests that there are sufficient economic resources available for county services. Hidalgo County's total general fund expenditures in 1999 were \$50,441,047.

Hidalgo County Border Environment

Sixty-eight of the total 2,345 square miles of Hidalgo County, lie on the border between the State of Texas and Mexico. The county has four international ports of entry into the United States. The Pharr International Bridge, which was erected in January 1995, links United States Highway 281 with the Mexican superhighway called the *Autopista*. The four-lane highway covers Monterrey to Reynosa, Mexico. The Mexican municipalities that border Hidalgo County are *Rio Bravo* and *Hermosa*. The 2000 population estimate for the two cities is 162,193 persons.

Future growth of the metropolitan region is expected due to the student population and through the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). NAFTA reduced the tariffs that were placed on goods that crossed over international lines, which allowed for greater exportation across the border. The emergence of NAFTA acted as a catalyst for international trade and a buffer during the *peso* devaluation in Mexico.²⁵

There are over 800 *colonias*, or unplanned settlements, in Hidalgo County. Many of the people who cross into the U.S. without legal residency status find shelter and establish homes in the local *colonias*. Lack of physical infrastructure, including running water, paved roads and wastewater removal, present public health challenges to the county government. Seventy-five percent of the total population of Hidalgo County lives below the federal poverty level.

The INS reported 31,389,565 legal border crossings during 1999 and during that same time 33,261 persons were apprehended by the Border Patrol.

Table T16: Hidalgo County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
535,539	4,064	68 miles	31,389,565	33,261	4

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice and Emergency Medical Services

Hidalgo County's estimated costs for providing law enforcement, criminal justice and emergency medical care for undocumented people, as seen in table T17, totaled \$2,531,488 in general fund expenditures. The cost includes \$333,105 general government costs. In March and July 2000 numerous county officials were interviewed. While no data existed regarding emergency medical care estimates for undocumented persons, 18 people drowned, were autopsied and buried in Hidalgo County. The narrative description that follows will discuss each department in detail.

**Table T17: Hidalgo County Costs by Department
County Totals \$2,531,488**

Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	District Clerk	Court at Law	County Clerk	Justice of the Peace	Indigent Defense	Adult Probation	Juvenile Services	Emerg. Med.
\$ 1,618,794	\$183,788	\$65,529	\$28,247	\$42,724	\$31,725	\$63,164	\$135,469	\$0	\$0	\$362,048

Hidalgo County Sheriff

Hidalgo County Sheriff's budget for FY99 was \$14,696,039; more than 55 percent (\$8,223,167) was apportioned to the jail budget. The total jail bookings for FY99 were 16,592 inmates, from which 6,822 (41percent) were undocumented persons. The jail daily inmate average population was 592, making an annual total of 216,080 inmate days. The estimated jail cost impact was \$501,559, or 5.3 percent of the total jail budget, indicated in table T18.

In the areas of patrol, investigation and administration, county officials estimated the impact of undocumented persons to be 5 percent for patrol, 15 percent for investigation and 25 percent for administration. Taken together these three areas of law enforcement had an average impact of 15 percent. Burglaries and acts of family violence were the primary criminal offenses reported for undocumented persons. Each of these investigations required police reports and notification of the Mexican consul plus interviews with victims of the crimes. In addition, local officials reported that in the 100 miles of the Rio Grande in Hidalgo County, 18 persons drowned while attempting to cross into the U.S. without legal entry papers. The fiscal impact on patrol, investigation and administration of criminal undocumented persons was \$1,117,235.

The total cost to Hidalgo County for incarceration as well as law enforcement involving persons without legal residency status was \$1,618,794, as depicted in table T18.

Hidalgo County Sheriff's Department applied for a federal grant of \$346,200 through SCAAP and was awarded \$122,000. Eighty-five inmates without legal residency status were incarcerated with an average length of stay of 135 days. This represents 11,390 inmate days, or 5.3 percent of total inmate days. A county official stated however, " Prior to 1999 there was no identifying method in

our booking computers to retrieve the necessary information regarding illegal aliens. The count used for the SCAAP grant was done manually and therefore the results were very low.”

Table T18: Hidalgo County Sheriff's Department Impact

Division	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Jail	\$8,223,167	5.3%	\$435,828	\$65,731	\$501,559
Patrol, Investigation & Administration	\$6,472,872	15%	\$970,931	\$146,304	\$1,117,235
Total	\$14,696,039		\$1,406,759	\$212,035	\$1,618,794

Hidalgo County District Court

Hidalgo County general fund budget for the District Court was \$2,676,295. This budget includes expenditures for nine courts as well as an impact court, visiting court, and two master courts. Each of the courts has jurisdiction over criminal and civil cases. Forty percent of the District Court budget is devoted to criminal cases. In interviews with district court officials they declined to estimate the impact of undocumented persons on the caseload. For the purposes of this report, the 5.3 percent impact of the District Clerk's office was used for the District Courts, resulting in a \$65,529 impact of undocumented cases, as shown in table T19.

Table T19: Hidalgo County District Court Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$2,676,295	\$1,070,518	5.3%	\$56,737	\$ 8,792	\$65,529

Hidalgo County District Attorney

Hidalgo County's District Attorney is combined with the County Attorney. He represents the state's interests in felony criminal actions as well as civil cases. During 1999, the District Attorney's office handled 3,394 felonies and 12,000 misdemeanor cases. The general fund for this department was \$3,002,480. The District Attorney's office declined to estimate the percentage of cases for persons without legal residency status handled by its staff. Therefore, it was assumed that 100 percent of the cases related to undocumented persons were criminal, and the jail incarceration rate of 5.3 percent of undocumented inmates was a valid impact for criminal prosecution. Table T20 depicts the total fiscal impact of criminal undocumented cases on the office of District Attorney of \$183,788.

Table T20: Hidalgo County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$3,002,480	5.3%	\$159,131	\$24,657	\$183,788

Hidalgo County District Clerk

The District Clerk’s office provides administrative support for the nine District Courts, impact court, visiting court, and two master courts. This includes filing all court pleadings, maintaining court dockets, issuing writs, citations and executions. Fees that are assessed in District Court cases are also processed in this office. Hidalgo County District Clerk’s general fund budget was \$1,153,615. The criminal budget, representing 40 percent of the total, was \$461,446. One of the county officials reported that out of 12,550 cases, there were 5,020 criminal cases, “But they are more complex, more time consuming.” Since the District Clerk’s office was unable to estimate the impact of criminal undocumented cases, the 5.3 percent jail incarceration rate was used to calculate the fiscal impact of persons without legal residency status. The estimated impact, as depicted in table T21, on the District Clerk’s budget was \$28,247.

Table T21: Hidalgo County District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,153,615	\$461,446	5.3%	\$24,457	\$3,790	\$28,247

Hidalgo County Court at Law

There are four courts in Hidalgo County. Class “A” and “B” misdemeanors in which the fine assessed cannot exceed \$500 and civil cases in which the amount of controversy is between \$500 and \$5,000 are heard in these courts. The general fund for the Hidalgo County Courts at Law was \$1,163,262. Twenty-one percent of that is attributable to the criminal budget for a sub-total of \$246,612.

The County Courts at Law were not able to offer an estimated impact percentage for the criminal undocumented caseload. Using the estimated workload from the County Clerk’s office of 15 percent, the total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons on the Hidalgo County Courts at Law was \$42,724, as seen in table T22.

Table T22: Hidalgo County Courts at Law Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,163,262	\$246,612	15%	\$36,992	\$5,732	\$42,724

Hidalgo County Clerk

The County Clerk’s office handles the filing of legal documents related to the civil and criminal cases that come before the County Courts at Law. Hidalgo County Clerk’s general fund was \$863,809. The County Clerk’s office reported that 21 percent, or \$183,128, was allocated for criminal cases. One of the county officials commented that, “We file between 1,000 to 1,200 cases per month, 14,400 per year; of those about 10 percent to 20 percent are illegal, usually car thefts. With juveniles,

the most common case is DWI, driving while intoxicated, bad checks, assaults, drugs and appeals.” Therefore an average of 15 percent caseload was assumed and the estimated impact of criminal cases involving persons without legal residency status was \$27,469, as shown in table T23. With the inclusion of the general government costs, the total estimated fiscal impact was \$31,725.

Table T23: Hidalgo County Clerk Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$863,809	\$183,128	15%	\$27,469	\$4,256	\$31,725

Hidalgo County Justice of the Peace

Class “C” criminal misdemeanors, with fines up to \$500, are under the jurisdiction of the Justice of the Peace courts. The JP civil caseload includes cases where the amount in controversy is under \$5,000. Additionally, Justices of the Peace conduct preliminary hearings, issue search and arrest warrants and performs civil marriages. In Hidalgo County there are five Justice of the peace precincts. The general fund for the courts was \$1,031,893. Justices of the Peace indicated they were unable to estimate the impact of criminal undocumented persons on their caseload; therefore the percentage impact assumed was that of the jail, 5.3percent. This resulted in an estimated impact of \$63,164, which includes \$4,256 for general government costs, as depicted in table T24.

Table T24: Hidalgo County Justice of the Peace Court Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,031,893	5.3%	\$54,690	\$4,256	\$63,164

Hidalgo County Emergency Medical

The general fund budget for emergency medical assistance in Hidalgo County was \$793,552. Commenting on the impact of undocumented persons on the county’s emergency health care costs, one official stated, “The floaters and other dead with John Doe names are assumed to be illegal, though our computer doesn’t identify alienage. Rough estimate is 35 percent in past few years, both for eligibility determination and direct medical service provision. A lot of 'undocs' prove residency, so they qualify for indigent health care.” The total estimated fiscal impact on emergency health care costs was \$277,743, and with the inclusion of the general government costs of \$43,036, made a total impact of \$320,779, which can be seen in table T25.

Table T25: Hidalgo County Emergency Medical Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Cost
\$793,552	35%	\$277,743	\$43,036	\$320,779

Hidalgo County Autopsies and Burials

The general fund assigned for autopsies was \$300,000. In light of the lack of detailed data from the county, it was assumed that the 18 undocumented people who drowned were autopsied and buried. The average cost for an autopsy is \$1,500 and for burials is \$500. The estimated cost the autopsy and burial costs in Hidalgo County were \$41,269, which includes \$5,269 in general government costs and is indicated in table T26.

Table T26: Hidalgo County Autopsies and Burial Impact

General Fund	Cost per individual	Number performed	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Autopsies	\$1,500	18	\$27,000	\$3,719	\$30,719
Burials	\$500	18	\$9,000	\$1,550	\$10,550
Total	\$2,000	18	\$36,000	\$5,269	\$41,269

Hidalgo County Indigent Defense

Hidalgo County does not have a public defender; all the attorneys handling indigent defense cases are contract attorneys. The general fund allocation for indigent defense was \$ 1,973,415. A county official expressed that, “There is a major problem in RV parks. Juvenile border crossers steal bicycles and other things. Now, park residents patrol their own park, make apprehensions, and then call the sheriff.” In order to determine the impact of persons without legal residency status, a six-month sample of cases was obtained from January through July 2000. During that period, 36 of the 649 indigent defense cases were for undocumented persons, or 6 percent of the caseload. Using this rate, the estimated fiscal impact of \$118,405, which when added to the general government cost of \$17,064, gives a total fiscal impact of \$135,469 on the Hidalgo County indigent defense budget, as depicted in table T27.

Table T27: Hidalgo County Indigent Defense Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,973,415	6%	\$118,405	\$17,064	\$135,469

Hidalgo County Adult Probation

Hidalgo County’s general fund for this department was \$30,762. The county did not provide additional information; therefore the cost impact is reported as \$0.

Hidalgo County Juvenile Court Center

Hidalgo County’s Juvenile Court Center general fund was \$1,972,943 for FY99; the percentage spent on undocumented juveniles was reported as zero. One of the county officials reported that “

UDAs are always deported and do not impact this department. We get maybe one or two a year, no more. We hold some in the detention center and work with the consulate and with Mexican juvenile authorities. We also have the Border Project. Once about three years ago, a group of juveniles terrorized McAllen. When juveniles commit a minor infraction, they are handled by JP and municipal courts, and not reported to us.”

STARR COUNTY, TEXAS

Starr County is situated in the Rio Grande Plain, comprising a total of 3,168 square miles. The county was named after James Harper Starr on October 26, 1848, and the county seat, Rio Grande City, was once named Rancho Davis, with a population of 8,887. The altitude of Starr County, which is primarily a plains region, ranges from 200 to 400 feet above sea level. The natural flora that can be found in the county include low grasses, shrubs, mesquite, cacti and oak trees. The main crops that are grown in this subtropical region are sorghum and hay. The county is also the second largest producer of onions, cantaloupes, lettuce, bell peppers, and honeydew melons in the State of Texas. The natural resources that have been discovered in the county are caliche, clay, gravel, oil and gas.²⁶ Spanning across both Starr and Zapata Counties and along the Falcon Reservoir is the Falcon State Park. The 572.6 land acre park's altitude crests at 325 feet above sea level, and is home to birds, fish and tropical species.

The 1999 population estimate for the county consists of 52,618 persons, which demonstrates a 29.9 percent increase in population from the 1990 Census Bureau figure of 40,518. Half of the population in the county is located within six miles of the Mexican border. While 99.7 percent of the population is white, 97.9 percent are of Hispanic origin. Less than 1 percent of Starr County is African-American. The median family income estimate for Starr County was \$16,727 in 1995, with a 60 percent poverty rate in 1990. The average 1999 unemployment rate was 24.4 percent, with 31.6 percent of the population having graduated from high school. Only 6.7 percent of Starr County's adult population have completed four or more years of higher education.

Starr County has three school districts, with a student population of 14,429, according to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Rio Grande City Independent School District (ISD) is the largest district in the county, with a student enrollment of 8,117. The smallest district in Starr County is San Isidro, which has a 267-student body. A total of 88.6 percent of the county's student population is considered economically disadvantaged.

The county tax rate for fiscal year 1999 was 0.65200, with a total levy of \$6,075,285, which is derived from the total assessed county valuation of \$1,263,245,610. Starr County ranks 101 out of 254 counties in total assessed valuation. During 1999 Starr County's total general fund expenditures were \$8,300,000.

Starr County's Border Environment

Fifty-nine miles out of the county's 3,168 square miles, converge with the border between the United States and Mexico. Starr County has three international ports-of-entry into the United States. South of the International Falcon Reservoir, in the westernmost section of the county, is a port-of-entry that connects Falcon Heights via a farm road to U.S. Highway 83. U.S. 83 connects to the north with Laredo and U.S. Interstate 35, a major NAFTA transportation corridor. South on U.S. 83, which parallels the Rio Grande, are the other two ports of entry in Roma and Rio Grande City. This route continues through the other major cities in the lower Rio Grande Valley and provides access to international airports and eventually the Port of Brownsville.

The Mexican municipalities that border Starr County are Camargo and Reynosa, which have a combined 2000 population of 436,544 persons. INEGI, the Mexican census bureau, reports that

during 1999 there were an average of 111 *maquiladoras* active in Reynosa, and those firms employed 61,387 persons. According to the INS, 8,223,707 persons crossed into Starr County from Mexico from the period of 1998 through 1999. The Border Patrol apprehended 8,170 undocumented aliens.

Table T28: Starr County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
52,618	3,168	59 miles	8,223,707	8,170	3

Costs of Illegal Immigration for Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice and Emergency Medical Services

The total estimated costs to Starr County for criminal justice administration, law enforcement and emergency medical services for undocumented persons was \$1,440,433, which includes a general governmental cost of \$183,787. During the months of March and July, two site visits were conducted and county officials were interviewed. Among the departments contacted were, Starr County Sheriff, County Attorney, District Attorney, Justice of the Peace, County Clerk, District Clerk, County Court-at-Law, District Court, and Emergency medical Service. The following discussion provides more detailed information from these departments.

**Table T29: Starr County Costs by Department
County Totals \$1,440,443**

	District Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	District Clerk	Court at Law	County Attorney	County Clerk	Justice of the Peace	Indigent Defense	Adult Probation	Juvenile Court	Emerg Med.
	\$865,912	\$93,065	\$152,191	\$67,157	\$56,098	\$74,509	\$73,653	NA	\$27,391	9,701	\$20,756	NA

Starr County Sheriff

The general fund budget for the Starr County Sheriff's Department was \$3,500,000. The budget was divided into patrol (\$200,000), investigation (\$600,000) and administration (\$200,000) as well as jail operations (\$2.5 million.) Officials estimate 20 percent of patrol, 10 percent of investigation and 15 percent of administrative time are spent handling cases involving persons in the U.S. without legal residency status.

County officials reported that the average daily jail population was 260 inmates of which 75 percent were federal prisoners, and 25 percent were state prisoners. The Sheriff's department estimated that over half of the state prisoners were non-citizens. One local law enforcement official commented:

All are undocumented aliens or border crossers; they swim and walk over (depending on river level). Smuggling is shifting west into Starr and Zapata Counties, a lot of

Haitians and Cubans. They are not able to make bond, so they pay the fine in jail time. [The] feds are not interested in taking mules anymore, so we get them. If they reenter after deportation, then the feds will take them. We get a lot of repeat business.

Table T30: Starr County Sheriff Impact

Division	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Jail	\$2,500,000	25%	\$625,000	\$91,836	\$716,836
Patrol	\$200,000	20%	\$40,000	\$5,878	\$45,878
Investigation	\$600,000	10%	\$60,000	\$8,762	\$68,762
Administration	\$200,000	15%	\$30,000	\$4,436	\$34,436
Total	\$3,500,000		\$755,000	\$110,912	\$865,912

The total cost estimated from the Starr County Sheriff’s department to arrest and incarcerate undocumented persons was \$865,912, as shown in table T30. County law enforcement officials were not aware of the SCAAP and had not filed for federal funds under provisions of the act.

Starr County District Court

There are two District Courts in Starr County. They are responsible for both civil and criminal cases. The District Court Judge estimated that 35 percent of the court’s caseload involved criminal cases in which the defendant was an undocumented person. Table T31 indicates the total estimated court cost for persons in the U.S. without legal residency status was \$152,191.

Table T31: Starr County District Court Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$381,000	35%	\$133,350	\$18,841	\$152,191

Starr County District Attorney

The District Attorney’s office is responsible for all criminal prosecutions in District Court. They also handle all misdemeanor criminal actions in the County Courts at Law and Justice of the Peace Courts. The general fund budget for the District Attorney’s office was \$233,000. The primary cases with undocumented persons involve charges of narcotics and drug trafficking. Burglaries and driving under the influence are the other major charges brought against persons without legal U.S. residency status. The District Attorney’s office estimates there are approximately 60 cases per year. Using the impact rate from the District Court (35 percent), the total estimated cost of prosecution for criminal undocumented persons was \$93,065, as shown in table T32.

Table T32: Starr County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Govt	Total Cost
\$233,000	35%	\$81,550	\$11,515	\$93,065

Starr County District Clerk

The District Clerk's office provides administrative support for the two District Courts. This office maintains all the official court records, court pleadings, as well as notifying and empaneling juries, maintaining court dockets and issuing writs, citations, and executions. All court mandated fees are also payable through the District Clerk's office. The general fund budget was \$168,123. Assuming the same impact rate as the District Court, table T33 shows the total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons was \$67,157.

Table T33: Starr County District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$168,123	35%	\$58,843	\$8,314	\$67,157

Starr County Court at Law

The County Court at Law hears criminal cases, Class "A" and "B" misdemeanors, and civil cases. Fifty percent of the County Court at Law's docket involves criminal cases, which have fine limits of \$500. Court officials estimate that 60-70 percent of this caseload involves persons without legal residency status in the U.S. The total estimated cost of administration of justice in the County Court at Law for undocumented persons was \$56,098, as indicated in table T34.

Table T34: Starr County Court at Law Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$151,240	\$75,620	65%	\$49,153	\$6,945	\$56,098

Starr County Attorney

Starr County Attorney's general fund budget was \$201,000. Approximately half of the budget was allocated for criminal prosecution. Officials estimated that 65 percent of their criminal budget was spent on assisting non-citizens, including juveniles, illegal residents and resident aliens who get deported immediately after conviction. The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons, shown in table T35, on the County Attorney's office was \$74,509.

Table T35: Starr County Attorney Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$201,000	\$100,500	65%	\$65,325	\$9,184	\$74,509

Starr County Clerk

The County Clerk serves as the official repository for documents from the various county departments. Fees assessed by the County Court at Law are processed through this office. The County Clerk's office estimated that of the 1,000 misdemeanor convictions per year, between 60 percent and 70 percent involve undocumented persons, who are mostly juveniles. The total estimated cost impact of persons without legal residency status was \$73,653, as depicted in table T36.

Table T36: Starr County Clerk Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$198,568	\$99,284	65%	\$64,535	\$9,118	\$73,653

Starr County Justice of the Peace

There are seven Justice of the Peace Courts in Starr County. No data were available on the impact of undocumented persons on these courts.

Starr County Indigent Defense

There is no Public defender in Starr County; all defense counsel are appointed and contracted by the court. The general fund was \$40,000 plus and additional \$10,000 allocated in the County Court at Law budget. The impact of undocumented persons estimated by District Court judges and County Court at Law judges was 40 percent and 80 percent, respectively.

A county official commented, "UDAs keep returning after serving jail time and get re-prosecuted. Then they get welfare. These include resident aliens. We lose from 30 percent to 40 percent of our jurors because they are non-citizens." The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented indigent defense in Starr County, shown in table T37, was \$27,391.

Table T37: Starr County Indigent Defense Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$40,000	40%	\$16,000	\$2,261	\$18,261
\$10,000	80%	\$8,000	\$1,130	\$9,130
\$50,000		\$24,000	\$3,391	\$27,391

Starr County Adult Probation

The general fund budget for adult probation is \$10,000, which is a supplement for the clerks. County officials stated, “We provided some supervision in the past, but not now. Our costs are all in the PSI reports.” They estimate 85 percent to 90 percent of adult probationers involve illegal aliens, border crossers and resident aliens, who are quickly deported if they commit a felony. The total estimated impact of undocumented persons on Starr County’s adult probation budget was \$9,701, which can be seen in table T38.

Table T38: Starr County Adult Probation Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$10,000	85%	\$8,500	\$1,201	\$9,701

Starr County Juvenile Court Center

Starr County contributes \$222,000 from its general fund budget for juvenile probation and detention. Of that sum \$166,000 is allocated for detention and the remaining \$56,000 for juvenile probation and community supervision. The federal Border Project covers all the detention costs. County officials report that “at least 30 percent of our caseload in probation and PSI work is juvenile. They are waiting for resident status.” Table T39 shows the estimated impact of criminal undocumented juveniles is \$20,756.

Table T39: Starr County Juvenile Court Center Impact

Division	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Detention	\$166,000	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Probation	\$56,000	30%	\$16,800	\$3,956	\$20,756
Total	\$222,000		\$16,800	\$3,956	\$20,756

Starr County Emergency Medical, Autopsies and Burial

Starr County allocates \$6,000 in its general fund for emergency medical costs. The amount budgeted for autopsies were \$30,000 and \$1,500 for burials. There were no data available regarding the impact of undocumented persons on the emergency medical, autopsy or burial costs of Starr County.

ZAPATA COUNTY, TEXAS

Zapata County comprises a total of 2,582 square miles. The county was named after Antonio Zapata, a local rancher in the county. The county seat is Zapata, population 7,797. Zapata City, located on the border highway, U.S. 83, also provides northern transit via State Highway 16 to the port at Corpus Christi. San Ygnacio with 1,200 residents is located in the northwestern portion of the county at the intersection of U.S. 83 and farm-to-market 3169. Lopeno, Bustamante, Ramireno, Chicuahua Farm and Esocbas are the other small rural communities in Zapata County. There is a small county airport located north of Zapata City.

The altitude of Zapata County ranges from 200 to 700 feet above sea level, with loamy soils on top of rust sub-soils. Limestone can be uncovered 40 inches from the surface, in the strata below. The vegetation of the area includes shrubs, grasses, mesquite bushes and cacti. The natural resources that can be found in the county are caliche, clay, lignite coal, sand gravel, oil and gas.²⁷ Located within both Starr and Zapata Counties and along the Falcon Reservoir, is the Falcon State Park. The 572.6 land acre park's altitude peaks at 325 feet above sea level, and is home to birds, fish and tropical species. The scenic beauty of the parklands and access to the Falcon Reservoir make Zapata County a popular location for winter Texans.

The 1999 population estimate for the Zapata County was 10,755 persons, a 15.9 percent increase in population from the 1990 U.S. Census. Over half of the population is located within six miles of the Mexican border. Racially, 99.7 percent of Zapata County is white with 85.4 percent of the population having Hispanic origins. The 1995 median family income for Zapata County was \$20,696, with a 41 percent poverty rate in 1990. The average 1999 unemployment rate was 13.3 percent. Half of the adult population age 25 and over have obtained a high school diploma and only 6.9 percent have completed four or more years of higher education. Zapata County has one school district, with an enrollment figure of 2,925, according to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Eighty-two percent of the student population of Zapata County Independent School District (ISD) is considered economically disadvantaged.

The county tax rate for fiscal year 1999 was 0.86381, with a total levy of \$7,483,514, which is derived from the total assessed county valuation of \$1,071,911,821. Zapata County ranks 117 out of 254 counties in total assessed valuation. Zapata County's total general fund expenditures in 1999 were \$5,564,928.

Zapata County's Border Environment

Forty-eight miles out of the county's 2,582 square miles meet at the border between the United States and Mexico. South of the small rural community of Ramireno, the majority of the international boundary traverses the International Falcon Reservoir to the dam in neighboring Starr County. Within the limits of the reservoir the international boundary follows the bed of the Rio Grande, as established under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, and is demarcated by 14 fixed lighted towers and 36 buoys. Describes one official,

The Falcon Dam in Starr County is the main crossing point in our area. Falcon Lake is 800,000 acres when it is full. Now, in March, we call it Falcon Pond. Most who

cross at the dam go either to Roma or Laredo. The river runs north-south in Zapata, so Mexico is to our west. There are 20 *colonias* in Zapata County and they have water and sewer. The county is also home to snowbirds from the Midwest

Zapata County does not have an international port-of-entry into the United States. The nearest port-of-entry is located just south of the Falcon Reservoir in neighboring Starr County. Three Mexican municipalities, Guerrero, Mier, and Miguel Anaman, border Zapata County. The Mexican population of the three communities is 36,783, according to INEGI (Mexican census bureau) 2000 figures.

The INS reported no legal border crossings in Zapata County; however the Border Patrol apprehended 582 persons in 1999.

Table T40: Zapata County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
10,755	2,582	48 miles	0	582	0

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

Zapata County's provision of criminal justice, law enforcement and emergency medical services for undocumented persons was \$432,430, which includes \$68,430 of general government services. During the months of March and July 2000 site visits were conducted to interview key county officials from the Sheriff Department, County Attorney, District Attorney, Justices of the Peace, County Clerk, District Clerk offices. Zapata County's Health Department was also contacted to gather emergency medical cost estimates. The discussion that follows enumerates the estimated costs by department.

**Table T41: Zapata County Costs by Department
County Totals \$432,430**

Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	District Clerk	County Attorney	County Clerk	Justice of the Peace	Indigent Defense	Adult Probation	Juvenile Court	Emerg. Med.
\$124,436	\$5,031	\$3,480	\$3,081	\$25,900	\$23,841	\$96,396	\$4,659	\$2,376	\$51,919	\$91,311

Zapata County Sheriff

The general fund budget for the Sheriff's office was \$1,193,613. The departmental costs are divided between jail operations (\$313,000), patrol and investigation (\$640,613) and administration (\$240,000.)

The jail capacity is 48 beds; and 50 percent of the inmates were reported to be “local.” Law enforcement officials estimate 13 percent were criminal undocumented persons who have an average prison stay of 10 days. If they are arrested on a weekend the average length of incarceration is from 12 to 19 days. Explains one deputy,

Illegal fishing is one of the biggest incidents. UDAs see the JP, receive a fine, can’t pay it, and so go to jail at our expense. The medical budget for UDAs in the Sheriff’s budget is about \$5,000 and insufficient. For example, in 1998 one UDA received a heart pacemaker which cost the department \$10,000. Also a lot of dental work for UDAs adds up.

The total impact of criminal undocumented persons on the Zapata County Sheriff’s budget was \$124,436 depicted in table T42. The Zapata’s Sheriff office did not apply for SCAAP funding.

Table T42: Zapata County Sheriff Impact

Division	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Jail	\$313,000	13%	\$40,690	\$7,647	\$48,337
Patrol	\$640,613	10%	\$64,061	\$12,038	\$76,100
Administration	\$240,000	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,193,613		\$104,751	\$19,685	\$124,436

Zapata County District Court

The 49th District Court, located in Laredo, handles the criminal and civil cases from Zapata County. District judges do not visit Zapata County. The county pays for travel and other costs associated with hearing cases in Laredo. Webb County officials were unable to provide the fiscal impact of Zapata County on the total 49th District Court’s costs. For the purposes of this research, it is assumed that the Webb County impact rate of 4 percent is applicable in Zapata County also. Therefore, the total estimated fiscal impact on Zapata County’s District Court costs was \$3,480, indicated in table T43.

Table T43: Zapata County District Court Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$73,225	4%	\$2,929	\$551	\$3,480

Zapata County District Attorney

Zapata County does not have its own District Attorney, but uses visiting judges and attorneys from Webb County. Zapata County contributed \$15,686 to Webb County to underwrite the cost of prosecution by the Webb County District Attorney. Additional data from Zapata County were not available to estimate the impact on caseload, thus the absence of better data. Webb County’s District Attorney impact rate of 27 percent was applied in. Table T44 shows the total estimated

impact of criminal undocumented caseload on the District Attorney costs for Zapata County was \$5,031.

Table T44: Zapata County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$15,686	27%	\$4,235	\$796	\$5,031

Zapata County District Clerk

The general fund budget for the Zapata County District Clerk’s office totaled \$86,466. Approximately 25 percent of the budget covers the costs associated with filings, fees and other legal processing of criminal cases. The local county official said they “just can’t estimate” the impact of undocumented persons on the office. It was assumed that half of the criminal cases, 12 percent, was a reasonable estimation of impact. Table T45 gives the total estimated impact of \$3,081.

Table T45: Zapata County District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$86,466	\$21,617	12%	\$2,594	\$487	\$3,081

Zapata County Court at Law

Zapata County does not have a County Court at Law.

Zapata County Attorney

Zapata County Attorney’s general fund budget was \$173,697. Seventy percent of the County Attorney’s budget was apportioned to criminal budget. Local officials estimated that 29 percent of their caseload involved juveniles and 70 percent adults. Those cases in which the defendant was an individual in the U.S. without legal residency status accounted for 30 percent of the total juvenile cases and 13 percent of the total adult cases. The total estimated fiscal impact on the County Attorney’s office was \$25,900, shown in table T46.

Table T46: Zapata County Attorney Impact

Division	Budget	Caseload Impact	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Juvenile	\$50,372	29%	\$35,260	30%	\$10,578	\$1,989	\$12,567
Adult	\$123,325	70%	\$86,327	13%	\$11,223	\$2,110	\$13,333
Total	\$173,697		\$121,588		\$21,801	\$4,099	\$25,900

Zapata County Clerk

Zapata County Clerk’s general fund budget was \$154,372. The County Clerk’s office estimated that the criminal budget represented 100 percent of its workload. Thirteen percent was the estimation for the impact of cases involving undocumented persons. Depicted in table T47, the total estimated fiscal impact on the County Clerk’s office was \$23,841.

Table T47: Zapata County Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$154,372	13%	\$20,068	\$3,773	\$23,841

Zapata County Justice of the Peace

Zapata County Justice of the Peace's general fund allocation was \$200,343. Several justices estimated that 90 percent of their cases were criminal, and the remaining 10 percent civil. Comments one justice,

At least 25 percent of the cases are felonies and about 25 percent are misdemeanors, though we can not ask about legal status. A good part of my time is spent in nonresident aliens for DWI, possession of MJ, commercial fishing, and many other crimes. The constables and the state game warden bring in most of them.

For the purposes of calculating fiscal impact of undocumented criminal cases on the Justice of the Peace Courts, the impact rate of 45 percent was used. Table T48 shows the total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons, \$96,396.

Table T48: Zapata County Justice of the Peace Court Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$200,343	\$180,309	45%	\$81,139	\$15,257	\$96,396

Zapata County Indigent Defense

Since Zapata County does not have a Public Defender, it contracts indigent defense out to two local attorneys. The general fund budget was \$15,686. One of the attorneys interviewed for this study indicated his indigent defense caseload was 126 cases for Zapata and Brooks Counties, (which has a Border Patrol checkpoint.) He indicated approximately 25 percent of his contract work with Zapata County’s indigent defendants are persons in the U.S. without legal residency status. He continues,

There are mules going around the checkpoint, and they get caught. About 25 percent of my caseload is undocumented aliens. INS is deporting everybody, no matter how long they’ve been in this country, even 20 years. For their third DWI, they get deported, no matter how many children they have. They can’t make bond, so they stay in jail at the county’s expense. Smuggling and assault are also frequent charges.

The total estimated fiscal impact of undocumented persons on the indigent defense budget of Zapata County was \$4,659, as depicted in table T49.

Table 49: Zapata County Indigent Defense Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$15,686	25%	\$3,922	\$737	\$4,659

Zapata County Adult Probation

There is a minimal general fund budget for Zapata County Adult Probation. The only expenses covered are for travel and hearings in Laredo. The State of Texas reimburses Webb County for services provided to Zapata County’s clients, but, say officials Webb County does not then reimburse Zapata County. The caseload reported by county officials was from 300 to 350 cases per year, of which 25 to 50 percent involved undocumented persons. Table T50 gives an estimated fiscal impact of \$2,376, assuming a nominal cost of adult probation of \$2,000.

Table T50: Zapata County Adult Probation Impact

Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$2,000 (assumed)	\$376	\$2,376

Zapata County Juvenile Probation

Zapata County’s Juvenile Probation general fund budget totaled \$145,672. The caseload reported was about 112 per year, of which about 30 percent (34 cases) were identified as undocumented persons by the county official interviewed. She explained,

We often do not know if our cases are illegal. They are protected by the Family Code, a state code that requires parental consent, which is impossible if parents are in Mexico. The number of undocumented aliens is climbing. Proximity to Falcon Lake, especially when it is low and juveniles can wade across, especially during harvest time of MJ. They are trying to get rich quick in the MJ trade. We conduct pre-sentence investigation reports, which includes time and travel, psychological and drug testing, car maintenance, and staff training. Webb County gets reimbursed, not us.

The total estimated impact of undocumented juveniles was \$51,919, shown in table T51.

Table T51: Zapata County Juvenile Probation Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$145,672	30%	\$43,702	\$8,217	\$51,919

Zapata County Autopsies and Burials

The general fund for Zapata County autopsies during fiscal year 1999 was \$10,000. The cost impact was not available. Zapata County's general fund allocation for burials totaled \$15,000. The total annual number of burials for 1999 was between 12 and 15, from which about three to five were "alien." Thus, it was estimated that 25 percent was the total impact rate, resulting in a total estimated fiscal impact of \$4,455, shown in table T52.

Table T52: Zapata County Burial Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$15,000	25%	\$3,750	\$705	\$4,455

Zapata County Emergency Medical Services

Zapata County Emergency Medical Services was not financed through the general fund. Its own special hospital-taxing district finances Mercy Hospital. The director of the County Health department makes the eligibility determinations to receive health care. According to him, about 20 percent of his time is spent denying eligibility because of a lack of social security number.

We have an agreement with the hospital for \$344,000 a year, which goes toward indigent health care. It will increase to \$400,000 in 2000. At least 50 percent of recipients are illegal. The county owns the building and pays maintenance on it. We also pay the transportation to other cities of illegal patients.

The total estimated fiscal impact of undocumented persons for indigent health care in Zapata County was \$86,856, depicted in table T53.

Table T53: Zapata County Emergency Medical Impact

Budget Items	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Indigent Health Care	\$344,000	20%	\$68,800	\$12,937	\$81,737
County Health Director	\$21,546	20%	\$4,309	\$810	\$5,119
Total	\$356,546		\$73,109	\$13,747	\$86,856

WEBB COUNTY, TEXAS

Along the border of the State of Texas and Mexico is Webb County, which encompasses 8,695 square miles, in the middle Rio Grande region. The county was named after James Webb, who was the Secretary of the Treasury for the Republic of Texas in 1848.²⁸ Webb County is the sixth largest county out of a total of 254 counties in the State of Texas. The county seat of is Laredo which is the principal inland port in the United States. Laredo is the largest city in the county and the only border city in the state that shares its border with two Mexican states: The State of Tamaulipas at Nuevo Laredo and the State of Nuevo Leon at Columbia.²⁹ Interstate-35, a major NAFTA transportation corridor, connects Laredo with San Antonio, Austin, and the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. U.S. 59, which cuts diagonally through the county from Laredo, provides connectivity with the port city of Corpus Christi. Other smaller settlements in Webb County include El Cenizo (population 1,775), Rio Bravo (4,131), Bruni (581), Mirando City (707) and Olton (585.) The Lake Casa Blanca International State Park is located east of Laredo on United States Highway 59. The 371-land acre and 1650 lake acre park is rich in wildlife such as deer and javelina.

The 1999 total population estimate for Webb County was 196,815 persons compared to the 1990 Census Bureau figure of 133,239. This represents an increase of 47.7 percent in roughly a decade. Thirty-two percent of the population in the county is located within six miles of the Mexican border. Racially 99.1 percent of the county is white, with 95.2 percent are of Hispanic origin. Webb County's 1995 median family income estimate was \$24,288, with a poverty rate of 38.2 percent in 1990. The average unemployment rate for the county in 1999 was 8.5 percent. The number of individuals that have obtained a high school diploma was 47.8 percent, and higher educational attainment of four or more years of college has been obtained by 11.1 percent of Webb County's adult population.

In Webb County there are a total of four school districts, with a student population of 47,239, according to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The largest district in the county, United Independent School District (ISD), has an enrollment figure of 24,194. Mirando City ISD is the smallest district in the county, with a student population of 61 students. The student population in Webb County that is considered economically disadvantaged is 81 percent.

Texas A and M International University (TAMIU) was recently selected to be a four-year university by the Texas Legislature, and is currently building a new campus. The Laredo Community College (LCC) is another educational resource for higher learning. TAMIU and LCC are working together to start various courses and studies that better utilize the unique location of the institutions and their proximity to the Mexican border.

Webb County's fiscal year 1999 county tax rate was a total rate of 0.42995 with a total levy of \$22,892,526 and an assessed county valuation of \$6,343,514,591. The county was ranked 23rd out of the 254 Texas counties in total assessed valuation. During 1999 Webb County's total general fund expenditures were \$36,700,000.

The Laredo metropolitan area saw positive employment growth in 1994; 4,500 new jobs representing an 8.5 percent growth rate were added. At the close of 1994, the devaluation of the Mexican *peso*, along with growing interest rates, took a toll on Laredo's economy. In 1995 the employment rates began to increase by 2.0 percent, and the unemployment rate rose from 10

percent to 13.2 percent. State unemployment figures decreased during the same year, from 7.2 percent to 5.6 percent. The greatest number in Laredo is employed in the wholesale and retail trade industry, which comprises 29 percent of the employment in the city. The government employs 23 percent of Laredo’s workforce, and approximately 17 percent work in the service sector.

Webb County's Border Environment

A small portion of Webb County, 32 miles out, is on the border between the United States and Mexico. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) opened a gateway of traffic of over 15,000,000 vehicles in a single day. Much of the traffic and the economy of the City of Laredo are based on the trucking industry. Trade is made possible by three modes of transportation: truck, air and railroad. The Union Pacific Railroad and the Tex-Mex Railroad make railway transportation available.

Laredo is currently known as “The City Under Seven Flags” and has grown to become the main port-of-entry into Mexico.³⁰ The city is not only the largest city in Webb County, but also the second fastest growing city in the United States. Laredo also functions under very unique conditions, due to the fact that it is the only city that has international bridges that border two Mexican states. There are two border crossings along the State of Tamaulipas located at Nuevo Laredo, and one that borders the Mexican State of Nuevo Leon in Colombia. Nuevo Laredo had 53 *maquiladoras* in 1999, which employed an annual average of 22,019 persons. The largest concentration of *maquiladoras* is located in Nuevo Leon, where the 131 firms employed an annual average of 54,585 during the same time period. Many of the *maquiladora* workers live in Laredo and commute daily to work in Mexico.³¹ Webb County has three international bridges into the United States: the International Bridge, Juarez-Lincoln and the Solidarity/Laredo/Colombia Bridge.³² The Texas Turnpike Authority has also approved the erection of a new bridge, the Laredo Northwest International Bridge. The fourth international port-of-entry would link Laredo to Tamaulipas, Mexico. The eight-lane bridge is supposed to offer services solely for commercial and pedestrian traffic.³³

Over 47.7 million persons crossed legally into the U.S. through Webb County’s 3 ports of entry. The Border patrol apprehended 78,234 persons in Webb County during 1999.

Table T54: Webb County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
196,815	8,695	32 miles	47,748,336	78,234	3

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

The total estimated costs to Webb County for providing law enforcement, criminal justice and emergency medical services was \$3,191,064. In addition to direct service provision, this figure includes \$555,000 in general governmental costs. Two site visits were conducted during March and

July 2000. During that time numerous county officials were interviewed. Data was also collected from the Sheriff's department, District Court, District Attorney, District Clerk's office, County Court at Law, County Attorney's office, County Clerk, as well as public health officials. The following discussion provides detailed insight into the costs by department.

**Table T55: Webb County Costs by Department
County Totals: \$3,191,064**

Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	District Clerk	County Court at law	County Attorney	County Clerk	Justice of the Peace	Indigent Defense	Juvenile Court	Emerg. Med.
\$1,709,495	\$440,122	\$97,976	\$58,244	\$62,187	\$28,658	\$43,980	\$47,660	\$373,821	\$259,458	\$69,463

Webb County Sheriff

The Sheriff offices' general fund budget was \$11,232,533. These funds are divided into several main areas of concentration. Administration, patrol and investigation account for \$3,179,581, while the bulk of the budget, \$8,052,952, is needed for detention. The Sheriff's department maintains a sub-station in Mirando for the residents of Mirando, Oilton and Bruni in southeastern Webb County. There are many undocumented persons with outstanding warrants. Local law enforcement officials refer to them as "UTL," or unable to locate. " We go to the bridges to see if INS and Border Patrol can find them because the Border Patrol has enough agents spaced along the river bank, every 100 yards."

In describing the fiscal impact on Webb County, representatives from the Sheriff's department noted:

Here are some of our costs that are always unreimbursed: transportation to hospitals when illegal immigrants are injured, and officers must remain at their bedside for at least six hours. Accidental deaths at Bruni, which are frequent, always require a lot of work. Drowning or dead in the brush from dehydration, we pay all costs. We send bodies to San Antonio for autopsies; in that case, Laredo pays for transportation, and Webb pays for autopsies. Homicides take a lot of work. The last five involved aliens into narcotics. Out of the 1,082 deaths in 1999, 67 were homicides. We also have Canadians, Hondurans, and Cubans whose detention is not reimbursed by SCAAP.

The Webb County Jail has an average daily inmate population of 483 prisoners. Based on the total male adults incarcerated in 1999 there were a total of 176,295 inmate days. The total estimated financial impact of undocumented persons on the Webb County Sheriff's department was \$1,709,495, shown in table T56.

Table T56: Webb County Sheriff Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Patrol	\$397,448	35%	\$139,107	\$28,283	\$167,390
Investigation and Administration	\$2,782,133	25%	\$695,533	\$141,414	\$836,947
Detention	\$8,052,952	7.28%	\$586,255	\$118,903	\$705,158
Total	\$11,232,533		\$1,420,895	\$288,600	\$1,709,495

Webb County received \$114,000 from SCAAP. This figure was based on 101 undocumented persons who had an average jail stay of 127.1 days, which represented 7.28 percent of the total inmate days for the Webb County Jail.

Webb County District Court

Three District Courts hear the criminal, civil, tax and domestic relations cases in Webb County. The 49th District Court has additional responsibility for legal proceedings in Zapata County. The District Judges are also members of the Auditor's, Juvenile and Purchasing Boards and the Community Supervision and Corrections Department of Webb County. Two of the courts have minor impacts by criminal undocumented persons. The 49th District Court reported approximately 4 percent of their caseload and the 341st District Court indicated 7 percent of their cases involved persons without legal residency status. The largest impact was felt by the 111th District Court, which estimates 22 percent of their criminal cases have undocumented persons as defendants. The total estimated financial impact to the 3 District Courts was \$97,976 depicted in table T57.

Table T57: Webb County District Court Impact

Court	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
49th District Ct	\$257,907	4%	\$10,316	\$2,115	\$12,431
111th District Ct	\$237,741	22%	\$52,303	\$10,706	\$63,009
341st District Ct	\$267,247	7%	\$18,707	\$3,829	\$22,536
Total	\$762,895		\$81,326	\$16,650	\$97,976

Webb County District Attorney

The Webb County District Attorney represents the state's interests in felony criminal actions. In addition to Webb County, it provides prosecution services to neighboring Zapata County. The District Attorney's office also handles all misdemeanor criminal actions in the County Court at Law and the Justice of the Peace Court. This office of 26 screens cases representing the State of Texas before Grand Juries and handles asset forfeitures related to criminal activities and bond forfeiture proceedings.

The 1999 caseload for the District Attorney’s office was 5,316. Local officials estimate undocumented persons commit 30 shoplifting and 10 “harder” crimes per month. The resident aliens show up in the County Attorney’s office, too. Aliens started two to three ago with drug offenses, and now “We see them on family violence and DUI (driving under the influence) charges. If you add resident aliens another 80 a month,” explains one attorney. Given the fact that resident aliens are deported quickly after trial, the two case estimates are consistent. This results in approximately 1,440 cases involving persons without legal residency status, or 27 percent of the total workload in the District Attorney’s office. The total estimated financial impact of undocumented persons on the Webb County District Attorney’s budget was \$440,122, depicted in table T58.

Table T58: Webb County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,342,304	27%	\$362,422	\$77,700	\$440,122

Webb County District Clerk

The District Clerk’s office provides administrative support for the three District Courts and the County Courts at Law. All court pleadings and official papers are filed through the District Clerk. In addition, this office notifies and empanels juries, maintains court dockets, issues writs, citations and executions for the court. The District Clerk’s office, which employs 23, is also responsible for receiving and sending all court support payments. An additional four employees are in charge of the jury selection process for Webb County. The Central Jury determines the number of potential jurors needed for the pool, sends summons, assigns panels and acts as liaison between the jurors and the courts. The total general fund budget for the Central Jury was \$210,762.

The general fund budget for the District Clerk’s office was \$718,707, of which approximately 25 percent is devoted to criminal cases. Half of the central jury budget of \$210,762 is used to empanel jurors for criminal cases. During the months of April through June 2000, the District Clerk followed the undocumented cases. Of the 173 cases handled during that time span, 21 cases involved persons without legal residency status. This 12 percent impact rate was used to calculate the total estimated impact of undocumented persons of \$58,244 from the District Clerk’s office, with the calculations shown in table T59.

Table T59: Webb County District Clerk Impact

	General Fund	Criminal Budget	Criminal Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Clerk	\$718,707	25%	\$287,483	12%	\$34,498	\$8,125	\$42,623
Central Jury	\$210,762	50%	\$105,381	12%	\$12,646	\$2,975	\$15,621
Total	\$929,469		\$392,864	12%	\$47,144	\$11,100	\$58,244

Webb County Court at Law

The two Webb County Courts at Law adjudicate probate, juvenile, mental condemnations, family law civil and criminal misdemeanor cases. The criminal cases must carry a fine that is above \$500 but below \$5,000 to be heard in this court. The general fund allocation for the County Courts at law was \$757,974.

Judges estimate that 20 percent of their caseload involved persons in the U.S. without legal residency status. The majority of the crimes committed by undocumented persons were driving under the influence (DUI), shoplifting and misdemeanor offenses. Table T60 lists the total estimated financial impact of undocumented cases on the County Courts at Law budget was \$62,187.

Table T60: Webb County Court at Law Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$757,974	\$252,658	20%	\$50,532	\$11,655	\$62,187

Webb County Attorney

The Webb County Attorney provides legal counsel to the Commissioner’s Court. This office, which employs 20, provides legal assistance in tort claims, delinquent taxes, title searches, and condemnations. The County Attorney also prosecutes all juvenile, child welfare and mental health cases. The total general fund allocation was \$904,419.

The criminal caseload represents approximately 35 percent of the total budget expenses in the County Attorney’s office. Of the 820 juvenile cases prosecuted by this office in 1999, 60 of the youths were in the U.S. without legal residency status. The County Attorney commented, “Many juveniles tell us that they are citizens, but a lot are not, so our numbers are low.” The total estimated impact of undocumented criminal cases on the County Attorney’s office was \$28,658, shown in table T61.

Table T61: Webb County Attorney

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$904,419	\$316,547	7.3%	\$23,108	\$5,550	\$28,658

Webb County Clerk

Serving as the official repository of documents for the Commissioners Court, County Court and County Court at Law, the Webb County Clerk’s office employs 17 people. All fees collected for records management are processed through this office, as well as the filing of business names, cattle brands, notices of foreclosure and veteran’s discharge records. The general fund budget for the Webb County Clerk was \$540,232.

County official estimate one third of their workload involves criminal cases. This caseload includes juveniles in the county and district courts. Approximately 20 percent of the juvenile criminal cases

are undocumented persons. The County Clerk uses lack of social security number as one indicator of lack of legal residency status; however that fact was not always entered in the computer, so officials think the 20 percent impact is probably a low estimate. The total estimated financial impact on the County Clerk's budget was \$43,980, depicted in table T62.

Table T62: Clark County Clerk Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$540,232	\$178,277	20%	\$35,655	\$8,325	\$43,980

Webb County Justice of the Peace

Webb County has four Justice of the Peace Courts with a total general fund budget of \$596,609. These courts have jurisdiction in Class "C" misdemeanor cases and civil cases when the fine does not exceed \$5,000. Justices of the Peace also process citations issued by the Sheriff's Department, Department of Public Safety, Game Warden, Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission and Constables Office. Additionally they handle truancy cases, inquests, search and arrest warrants. Local officials estimate half of their work is associated with criminal cases. The Justices of the Peace magistrate about 450 cases a month, or 5,400 a year. Out of these, the JPs estimated that approximately 60 cases a month involve persons without legal residency status. Using the 13 percent impact rate, Table T63 shows the total estimated financial impact of criminal undocumented persons was \$47,660.

Table T63: Webb County Justice of the Peace Impact

General Fund	Crim Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$596,609	\$298,305	13%	\$38,780	\$8,880	\$47,660

Webb County Public Defender and Indigent Defense

The Public Defender's office is charged with the responsibility of representing indigent defendants with felony and misdemeanor cases pending in the Webb County Courts. Serving at the discretion of the Commissioners Court, the Public Defenders conduct pre-trial motion hearings, jail visits, and records checks as well as entering plea bargains and defending the indigent at both jury and bench trials. The Public Defender's general fund allocation was \$668,696.

The Webb County Public Defender's office handles about 600 cases a year. According to local officials:

At least one third is illegal, 200-300 cases. Usually a court-appointed attorney handles them. The period between their first appointment with a defender and their first court appearance is between 30 and 45 days for a misdemeanor and 4-6 months for a felony. Then, when we finish a case, they are released or sent to prison. The misdemeanor process for a defense attorney includes a jail visit, preparing the

defense, several pre-trials where the attorney is present, or the agreement of plea bargain. If they go to trial, the attorney is with the client for 3 days.

If it is a felony case, sometimes we go on bond reduction 6 times. In a felony, illegals consume more time. Also, many residents are illegal. Let me give you an example. Say we have a man from Hidalgo, Mexico. He's arrested 2-16-00. We seek bond reduction on 2-24. Still ongoing 3-16. They have an INS hold, so nothing will happen. They will just stay in jail. We try to reduce the bond to protect ourselves, but only a few bond out.

The Public Defender's budget represents only a portion of the indigent defense expenditures for Webb County. Contract attorneys received \$204,680 and an additional \$150,693 is in the judicial general fund. The total general fund budgets for indigent defense in Webb County was \$1,024,069. With a 30 percent impact rate, Table T64 depicts the total estimated cost of indigent defense for persons without legal residency status in the U.S. were \$373,821.

Table T64: Webb County Indigent Defense Impact

Division	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Public Defender	\$668,696	30%	\$200,609	\$43,490	\$244,099
Contract Attorneys	\$204,680	30%	\$61,404	\$13,320	\$74,724
General Judicial	\$150,693	30%	\$45,208	\$9,790	\$54,998
Total	\$1,024,069		\$307,221	\$66,600	\$373,821

Webb County Juvenile Court Center

The Webb County Juvenile Probation department provides community supervision for youths who are involved in the juvenile justice system. Employing a staff of 35, the general fund allocation for juvenile probation was \$1,092,764.

Local officials receive an average of 700 juvenile referrals per month; of which they estimate 40 percent are undocumented youth. Says one official:

In Webb County, our terrain, geography and demography make probation services harder with illegals. It is drudgery work. But the political aspect, dealing with another culture and a different bureaucracy, really makes it difficult. We spend a lot of administrative time finessing, using diplomacy. We are successful, but it is time consuming. We always notify the Mexican consul, he spends time with each client in jail, which slows things down. The consul has to verify information. Often, juveniles will lie about their age and we send them to the wrong jail, then we have to

get them transferred, which impedes a speedy process. In one case, we had to return a kid to Puerto Rico and we had to pay his transportation.

The detention general fund for juvenile prisoners was \$710,297. Of the 1,500 youth housed in the Juvenile Detention Center, probation officials stated 109 inmates lacked legal U.S. residency status. The average length of stay for undocumented juveniles was eight days. The Webb County per diem charge for juvenile detention is \$68, making the fiscal impact of undocumented youth \$72,458. When juvenile detention and probation supervision are considered together in table T65, the total estimated fiscal impact of undocumented youth was \$259,458.

Table T65: Webb County Juvenile Court Center

Division	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Probation	\$1,092,764	40.0%	\$152,987	\$34,013	\$187,000
Detention	\$710,297	8.3%	\$59,296	\$13,162	\$72,458
Total	\$1,803,061		\$212,283	\$47,175	\$259,458

Webb County Emergency Medical

The Central Welfare Office of Webb County provides emergency financial assistance to disabled persons and families who cannot work and lack other sources of income. The director, who is appointed by the Commissioners Court, makes the eligibility determinations. The general fund budget for Central Welfare was \$515,433.

County officials estimate 11 percent of their workload in eligibility determination involves persons who are in the U.S. without legal residency status. The total estimated impact of undocumented persons on the Central Welfare budget was \$69,463, shown in table T66.

Table T66: Webb County Emergency Medical Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$515,433	11%	\$56,698	\$12,765	\$69,463

Webb County Autopsies and Burials

Webb County general fund allocations for autopsies were \$124,400 and an additional \$19,950 was allocated for indigent burials. County officials were unable to provide any data regarding the cases involving undocumented persons.

Webb County Adult Probation

In March 2000 during the site visit to Webb County, 635 unsupervised adult probationers were residents of the county. Local officials estimates at least 30 to 50 of these cases were undocumented persons. Unsupervised probation means that at sentencing, the judge tells the defendant that he is “illegal,” not a resident, and he is told not to return to the U.S. The probation department still maintains the defendant’s file. When the client comes back into the U.S. and gets into trouble, probation still handles the paperwork. “There is always work to do. We’re always going to court,” adds one officer. Indirect probation occurs when people reside or work in the county or when the probation department has not had face-to-face contact with the probationer for over 90 days. According to local officials, the state does not pay the probation department for these cases: “This is a good deal of work. Indirect cases are Mexican as well as from other states.” Probation fees are also an issue in Webb County, because the county is so poor and fees are uncollectible. Webb County does not benefit from probation fees. There is no county general fund allocation for adult probation.

MAVERICK COUNTY, TEXAS

Maverick County, located in the Middle Rio Grande Valley, covers 3,316 square miles. The county seat is Eagle Pass, with a population of 20,651. Laughlin Air Force Base maintains an auxiliary field north of Eagle Pass on State Highway 277, and South of Eagle Pass the Kickapoo Tribe has its reservation.

The 1999 population estimate for Maverick County consists is 47,315, which represents a 30.1 percent increase in population from the 1990 U.S. Census. Fifty-three percent of the population is located within six miles of the Mexican border. Ninety-five percent of the population has Hispanic origins. Racially 97.8 percent are white. The median family income for Maverick County was \$17,150 in 1995, with a 50.4 percent poverty rate in 1990. The average unemployment rate in 1999 was 21.6 percent. Of the adult labor force 25 years and older, only 35.6 percent of the populace obtained a high school diploma and 7.3 percent achieved four or more years of higher education.

Maverick County has one school district, Eagle Pass, that has a student population of 12,207, according to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Eagle Pass Independent School District (ISD) has a total of 89.1 percent of its student body that are considered economically disadvantaged. Higher institutions for learning in the Middle Rio Grande Region are provided by Southwest Texas Junior College and Sul Ross State University, with campuses located in Uvalde, Del Rio and Eagle Pass.³⁴

The county tax rate for fiscal year 1999 was of 0.24000, with a total levy of \$2,079,860, which is based on the total assessed county valuation of \$1,054,444,655. Maverick County ranks 120th out of 254 counties in total assessed valuation. Maverick County's total general fund expenditures in 1999 were \$4,900,000.

Maverick County's Border Environment

Fifty-three miles of Maverick County are alongside the border between the United States and Mexico. The county has one port-of-entry is located at Eagle Pass. Five percent of the total United States-Mexico trade passes through this port-of-entry.³⁵ Trade goods are transported via U.S. Highway 277 to Del Rio and then north to Interstate-10 for western transit. U.S. 57 provides an eastern route to Interstate-35, one of the major trade corridors, and thus San Antonio and northward. The southern route from Eagle Pass, U.S. 277, provides access to Laredo and Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. Additionally, the Union Pacific Railroad offers northern transit of goods from the *maquiladora* industries. Persons seeking entry into the interior of the U.S. who lack legal entry documents use these various transportation routes.

Piedras Negras, the Mexican municipality that borders Maverick County, has a 2000 population estimate of 131,387 persons. Wholesale and retail trade were greatly affected by the devaluation of the *peso* in 1994. Sixteen retail stores were forced out of business in Eagle Pass during that year.

Through the *maquiladora* industry and the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Farah U.S.A. was able to open a finishing facility in Piedras Negras, Mexico, and a twin plant in Eagle Pass, Texas. The multimillion-dollar plant has employed a total of 1,600 individuals in

Maverick County.³⁶ The 44 plants in Piedras Negras employed a total of 14,965 persons in 1999. Tourism for Maverick County lies across the Rio Grande in the Mexican municipalities of Piedras Negras and Acuna, which provide silver jewelry, leather and woven goods and pottery items. The entertainment industry of Mexico also provides bullfights, restaurants and discotheques that enhance the tourism attraction for the county.³⁷

Table T67: Maverick County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
48,639	3,316	53 miles	47,748,336	8,722,754	1

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

The total general fund of Maverick County was \$4.9 million.

Maverick County officials were visited and interviewed in March 2000, but they chose not to collect or provide any data. During the site visit county officials reported, “Problems with shoplifting, drugs, burglary and illegal transporting of people. Most shoplifters go to the JP, pay a fine and then leave.” After repeated attempts to contact county officials through mailings, telephone calls and faxes were unsuccessful, all efforts to include Maverick County in this study ceased.

KINNEY COUNTY, TEXAS

Kinney County has a landmass of 5,532 square miles. The county was named after Henry Lawrence Kinney, an early settler to the area. The county seat and the largest city in the county is Brackettville, named after Oscar B. Brackett who owned the first dry goods store along the stage line running from San Antonio to El Paso. The other small settlements in this rural county are Fort Clark Springs (population 1,070) and Spofford (population 66).

Kinney County has two state highways, 90 and 131, along with farm roads and the Southern Pacific Railroad. The Edwards Plateau and the plains along the Rio Grande define the southwestern region of the county. The northern section of the county runs along the Balcones Escarpment, and the Anacacho Mountain is located in the southeastern region. The elevation of Kinney County extends from 1,000 to 2,000 feet. The primary industry of the county is based on livestock of sheep and goats, with less than 1 percent of the county used as farmland.³⁸

Kickapoo Cavern State Park is located just 22 miles north of Brackettville on the county line of Kinney and Edwards Counties. Named for the Native American Indian tribe, the 6,368.4-acre park rests upon the Edwards Plateau, with the elevation varying from 1,580 feet to 2002 feet. The park features the Kickapoo Cavern, which is roughly a quarter mile in length, the Green Cave, and 15 other caves. The park has numerous rare species of birds, reptiles and amphibians, including public viewings of the migratory Brazilian Free Tail Bat.

The total 1999 population estimate for Kinney County was 3,516, which is a 12.7 percent increase from the 1990 Census Bureau figure of 3,119. Seventeen percent of the population of the county is located within six miles of the Mexican border. Fifty-five percent of Kinney County's population has Hispanic origins. The white population comprises 96 percent of the total population and 2.4 percent are African-American. The median family income for Kinney County was \$19,768 in 1995, with a poverty rate figure of 41.9 percent in 1990. The average unemployment rate for 1999 was 14 percent. Fifty-six percent of county residents completed high school, and 11 percent have gone on to higher education. According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), there is one district in Kinney County, Brackett Independent School District (ISD), with a student population of 648. Seventy percent of the student population is considered economically disadvantaged. Higher educational resources for the Middle Rio Grande Region are provided by Southwest Texas Junior College and Sul Ross State University, with campuses located in Uvalde, Del Rio and Eagle Pass.³⁹

Kinney County's fiscal year 1999 county tax rate was 0.72110 and a total levy of \$755,146; the assessed county valuation was \$303,505,961. Kinney County ranked 33rd out of a total of 254 Texas counties, the total assessed valuation. During 1999 the total general fund expenditures in Kinney County were \$1,241,160.

Kinney County's Border Environment

A small portion of Kinney County, only 54 miles, rests directly on the border. The Mexican municipality that borders Kinney County is Jimenez, Mexico, which has a 2000 population of 706 persons. The county does not have a port-of-entry. Although no international bridge links Kinney County to Mexico, the county does experience problems with illegal immigration. State Highway 131

connects Bracketville to the international crossing at Eagle Pass in neighboring Maverick County. International trade passes through Bracketville to the west via U.S. Highway 90, which eventually links to Interstate-10 through Del Rio and San Antonio to the east. Additional commercial traffic uses Federal Highway 277, which links Eagle Pass and Del Rio, and runs parallel to the Rio Grande in the southwestern portion of the county. Human smugglers also use these main transportation routes.

Without a legal port of entry, there were no sanctioned border crossings in Kinney County; however 18,778 individuals were apprehended by the Border Patrol in 1999.

Table T68: Kinney County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
3,516	5,532	54 miles	0	18,778	0

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

Kinney County’s provision of law enforcement, criminal justice administration and emergency medical services to assist undocumented persons totals \$16,026. This includes a general government cost of \$2,450. During spring 2000, a site visit was conducted to interview county officials from the Sheriff Department, Justice of the Peace, District Attorney, County Clerk, District Court, and County Attorney. The following discussion provides additional information from these departments.

**Table T69: Kinney County Costs by Department
County Totals \$16,026**

Sheriff	Justice of the Peace	District Attorney	District Court	County Clerk	Indigent Defense	Adult Probation	Juvenile Probation	Emergency Med.
\$7,310	\$8,716	\$0	NA	NA	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA

Kinney County Sheriff Department

The general fund budget for the Sheriff’s Department totaled \$480,200. Local law enforcement officials report approximately 30 percent of the funds was expended on patrol and investigation while the remaining 70 percent was used for detention. According to the sheriff’s department, “Maybe about 2 percent are illegal in any given year.” The total estimated fiscal impact to the sheriff department was \$7,310, depicted in table T70. Kinney County did not apply for SCAAP funds.

Table T70: Kinney County Sheriff Impact

Division	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Jail	\$336,140	2%	\$6,000	\$1,310	\$7,310
Patrol	\$144,060	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$480,200		\$6,000	\$1,310	\$7,310

Kinney County Justice Of The Peace

Kinney County's Justice of the Peace general fund budget was \$104,500. "About 5 percent to 10 percent of the workload is devoted to undocumented aliens," according to officials. The estimated fiscal impact of undocumented persons was \$8,716, as shown in table T71.

Table T71: Kinney County Justice of the Peace Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$104,500	7.25%	\$7,576	\$1,140	\$8,716

Other Departments

The District Attorney reported that the presence of undocumented persons did not have an impact on the Kinney County prosecutions. Data from the District Court and the County Clerk's office were not available. There is no County Court at Law in Kinney County. Neither indigent defense, nor adult probation nor juvenile probation reported any impact by persons in the U.S. without legal residency status. There were no data available on emergency medical, autopsy nor burial costs.

VAL VERDE COUNTY, TEXAS

The Rio Grande forms the southwestern border of Val Verde County's 3,232 square miles.⁴⁰ From the Terrell County border to just below the small community of Comstock, population 375, steep escarpments rise from the river's banks on both sides of the international boundary. In 1969, Lake Amistad was created at the confluence of the Rio Grande, Pecos and Devils Rivers. The international reservoir and recreation area covers close to 58,000 acres, which are primarily underwater. The American shoreline with its high bluffs runs for 540 miles. After leaving Lake Amistad, the floodplains of the Rio Grande flatten out as the river approaches Del Rio and neighboring Kinney County.

Federal Highway 90 parallels the Rio Grande connecting Del Rio, through the Davis Mountains to Van Horn and El Paso to the west and San Antonio to the east. The primary north-south transportation corridor is Federal Highway 277, which allows access to Interstate-10 at Sonora. A secondary northern route to Interstate-10, State Highway 163, begins at Comstock through Juno in Val Verde County and connects to the interstate at Ozona, approximately 50 miles west of Sonora. The county judge is working toward highway lane expansion with the vision of a four lane corridor from Del Rio to Colorado. The Southern Pacific Railroad line parallels FH90 providing rail transit for *maquiladora* products from *Ciudad Acuna*, Del Rio's sister city in Mexico. *Ciudad Acuna* connects Del Rio with direct highway access all the way to Monterrey, Mexico.

The county seat of Del Rio, population 34,167, is an international port-of-entry. The city is home to a wide variety of government services, including Laughlin Air Force Base, which is home to the 47th Flying Training Wing. The economic sector also encompasses tourism. "Snowbirds" from the mid-west winter in Del Rio and many retired military choose to make Del Rio their home. International trade with Mexico is the other major employment sector. *Ciudad Acuna*, located in the northern Mexican State of *Coahuila*, with approximately 120,000 persons, is home to 57 *maquiladora* industries employing 33,100.⁴¹ The other towns in the county include Comstock, Langtry (home of Judge Roy Bean), Loma Alta, Pandale, and Juno.

The 1999 county population estimate was 44,188, a 13.2 percent increase since the 1990 Census. While 96.6 percent of the population is white, 75 percent of the population is Hispanic. African-Americans compose only 2 percent of the local population. The median family income in 1995 was \$22,135. As with many border counties, Val Verde County has a high unemployment rate, 8.3 percent. The county workforce suffers from low levels of educational attainment. Only 56.1 percent of adults 25 years or older hold high school diplomas, and 13 percent have completed four years of college or more.

There are two independent school districts in Val Verde County. San Felipe-Del Rio Consolidated has a student population of 10,034, of whom 73.1 percent are economically disadvantaged. The smaller rural district of Comstock has only 137 students. Just over half of those students are from families that are economically at risk.⁴² Thirty-six percent of the population in Val Verde County lives on income below the federal poverty level.

The total assessed valuation of Val Verde County was \$1,050,912,556. The county tax rate of 0.38200 resulted in a levy of \$3,207,859 for the provision of services to local citizens. The 1999 total general fund expenditures in Val Verde County were \$7,985,767.

Val Verde County's Border Environment

Val Verde County has approximately 100 miles of international border with Mexico. The forbidding terrain characterized by towering, rocky embankments to the Rio Grande make up the majority of the boundary. These geophysical features serve as a strong deterrent to illegal entry into the United States. South of the Amistad dam the Rio Grande's rich alluvial flood plains provide a broad, flat topography. It is in this area that the local sheriff indicates most of the illegal entry occurs. The beautiful area adjacent to the river has been very popular with non-native retirees, and their lack of understanding of the border environment has resulted in tensions with the Mexican nationals who enter there.

Border Patrol enforcement in this region has become very high-tech with the use of motion detectors located in the ground in waves spaced 100 feet apart. Remote observation can detect not only border penetration, but also the rate at which the successive line sensors are "tripped" can indicate whether it is an animal (i.e. cattle) or a human, traveling alone or in groups.

One of the reasons for use of this sophisticated tracking was to decrease the number of agents needed along the border and increase their capacity to provide fuller monitoring over wider areas. A local problem that has arisen in relation to this method is the tendency towards vigilantism on the part of individuals owning property adjacent to the river; they are suffering from repeated break-ins, presumably by persons in the U.S. without papers. According to local law enforcement officials, their homes are located so close to the river that the Border Patrol monitoring zone may not pick up on the movement of alleged illegal immigrants until after a crime has occurred. As one official described,

This isn't a problem with people who've lived here all their lives. These people move in from out-of-state, retirees. They buy land close to the river because it's beautiful. Locals won't build there. They get broken into 4, 5, 6 times, the 7th time they shoot them. It's just their frustration from all the prior break-ins.

Two cases involving shooting incidents by residents defending their property are currently pending in local courts.

Following the tracks of crossers gives law enforcement officials a clue as to the nature of the crossing. Two-way traffic generally is seen as indicating either narcotics trade, or *banditos*, young juveniles from Acuna who are stealing items like VCRs and televisions. One-way tracks tend to be from individuals who are heading north via the highway or to jump the freight trains, presumably looking for work. Another official notes,

Sometimes I'll catch an illegal crosser with nothing more than one jug of water. I take them back to the bridge and tell them when you come back tomorrow, bring two jugs, two jugs each or you'll never make it. They come across to jump the freights and head north.

The changing economy in the U.S. has also impacted the number and circumstances of some border crossings. According to local officials, federal subsidies for wool and mohair have also affected the traditional venues used for illegal entry. Explains one,

Illegals would cross to a windmill, climb and look for the next one. They could criss-cross the desert from one windmill to another. Problem is a lot of windmills are dry now. I expect we're going to see a lot more deaths this summer when they can't find water.

But, as ranchers sold off their stock, many of the windmills were abandoned, removing this traditional source of water for the illegal crosser.

Lake Amistad, the bi-national reservoir, creates additional boundary enforcement challenges. Speedboats patrol the many coves of the lake and airplanes are used for surveillance. River drowning is another problem encountered both in Val Verde and the other border counties. While the Border Patrol established lifeguard stations along the river stocked with water rescue equipment during the summer of 2000, local law enforcement remains skeptical of their impact. Describes one officer,

I just came back from a bi-national meeting at which the US consulate wants to put lifeguards on the river. God-damn lifeguards. Those people in Washington don't have a clue as to what's really going on down here.

Narcotics trafficking in Del Rio had increased in the last three to four years. Stepped up border enforcement activities in Laredo and Eagle Pass has pushed illegal trade to the Del Rio area. Local officials have seen a direct linkage to the increased drug traffic and increased illegal entry. The rapid population growth in Ciudad Acuna is also placing additional pressure on the border.

The 2 ports of entry in Val Verde County saw nearly 6 million persons cross legally into the U.S. During 1999, the Border Patrol apprehended 32,708 individuals who committed crimes and crossed without appropriate legal documents.

Table T72: Val Verde County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
44,188	3,232	100 miles	5,959,564	32,708	2

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

The total estimated costs to Val Verde County for providing services to criminal undocumented persons and providing medical care to undocumented persons was \$1,527,737. This includes general government costs of \$439,310. An additional \$570,928 cost which is NOT included in the county's general fund was expended on adult probation and emergency ambulance services for persons without legal residency status. A site visit was conducted in July 2000 during which time interviews were conducted with key officials in the county. Fiscal cost analysis reviewed the county

departments of sheriff, district court, district clerk, county court-at-large, county attorney, county clerk, justice of the peace and constables. Costs were estimated for emergency medical provision, including both ambulance and hospital services. The following discussion provides a breakdown of the estimated costs by department.

**Table T73: Val Verde County Costs by Department
County Totals \$1,527,737**

Sheriff	District Court	District Clerk	County Attorney	County Clerk	County Court at Law	Justice of the Peace	Indigent Defense	Juvenile Probation	Detention	Emerg. Med.
\$919,368	\$71,449	\$68,118	\$11,111	\$13,479	\$14,291	\$157,728	\$89,768	\$13,292	\$135,000	\$47,425

Val Verde County Sheriff

The sheriff's general fund expenditures for FY99 were \$2,431,925. Jail operation costs form a large portion of the sheriff's budget. Jail expense and food during FY99 were \$350,000, and prisoner medical expenses were \$48,058. Some of the services for jail operation are contracted out. (County officials reported the operation of the entire jail would be privatized during FY 2000.)

The jail's capacity is 187 prisoners. At any given time, between 60 and 70 of the inmates are state prisoners, and the remainder are federal (Border Patrol, INS and U.S. Marshals. Val Verde County seldom has prisoners from other counties, local officials report that is they do they prefer to switch prisoners, rather than "trade off money." The payment from SCAAP was \$66,000 in 1998.

Describes one deputy,

I went through every inmate booked in 1997 to determine the numbers. Almost 25 percent of my time was spent on that project, working after hours. Looking for felonies and 2 plus misdemeanors and foreign place-of-birth. But it was worth it; we went from \$4,000 to \$66,000 in federal reimbursements. We bought 2 squad cars for the county with that money.

The total estimated costs of criminal undocumented persons on the Sheriff's office, indicated in table T74, was \$919,368.

Table T74: Val Verde County Sheriff Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$2,431,925	26.4%	\$642,028	\$277,340	\$919,368

Val Verde County District Court

Val Verde County is in the 63rd judicial district, which serves a four county area. The court as well as the district attorney who prosecutes the cases is headquartered in Del Rio. Felony criminal actions in Val Verde, Kinney, Edwards and Terrell County are all heard in this court. The finances needed to support the district attorney are apportioned based on the population of the counties. Val Verde County pays 83.6 percent of the cost, \$76,650.

The total general funds allocated for the 63rd District Court (including district attorney) was \$191,905. Local officials estimate approximately 26 percent of the caseload involves persons in the U.S. without legal residency status. The total County taxpayer cost for prosecuting undocumented persons was estimated at \$71,449, indicated in table T75.

Table T75: Val Verde County District Court Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$191,905	26%	\$49,895	\$21,554	\$71,449

Val Verde County District Clerk

The administrative responsibility associated with the criminal and civil cases heard in District Court are handled by the clerk's office. The general fund expenditures for FY 1999 were \$182,960. (Although the district clerk was unable to estimate the workload relative to cases involving undocumented persons, for the purpose of this study the same percentage effort for the district court has been applied.) The estimated costs associated with service provision for undocumented persons, approximately 26 percent of the workload, were \$68,118, shown in table T76.

Table T76: Val Verde County District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$182,960	26%	\$47,569	\$20,549	\$68,118

Val Verde County Attorney

As legal counsel to the County Commissioners, the County Attorney handles any civil cases files against the county. The majority of prosecutions handled by the County Attorney are for misdemeanors. The County Attorney indicated that the top three reasons she sees undocumented persons in the County Court-at-Law are for driving while intoxicated, criminal trespass and assault. When individuals are arrested for these crimes they are usually held until the case comes to trial, because they lack the financial resources to pay their bond. They aggressively pursue voluntary release or deportation to Mexico for undocumented persons with two or more misdemeanors. The general fund budget for the County Attorney's office was \$155,179. The County Attorney estimates that 5 percent of their total work effort is devoted to cases involving persons in the U.S. without legal residency status, for a total estimated impact of \$11,111 which can be seen in table T77.

Table T77: Val Verde County Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$155,179	5%	\$7,758	\$3,352	\$11,111

Val Verde County Clerk

The filing of legal documents related to civil and the County Clerk handles misdemeanor felony cases. The general fund expenditure in FY 1999 was \$188,252. Based on the County Attorney's caseload, the resultant filing and processing of fees in the county clerk's office is also estimated at 5 percent, or \$13,479, depicted in table T78.

Table T78: Val Verde County Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$188,252	5%	\$9,412	\$4,066	\$13,479

Val Verde County Court at Law

The County Court at Law hears both civil and criminal cases. The criminal cases include Class "A" and "B" misdemeanors in which the highest fine that may be imposed is \$500. The County Court at Law also hears civil cases in which the amount in controversy is between \$500 and \$5,000. The general fund budget for FY99 was \$199,596. According to the County Attorney approximately 5 percent of the cases that come before this court involve persons without legal residency status. Table T79 shows the estimated financial impact of those cases is \$14,291.

Table T79: Val Verde County Court at Law Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$199,596	5%	\$9,979	\$4,311	\$14,291

Val Verde County Justice of the Peace and Constables

Justices of the Peace have original jurisdiction over Class "C" misdemeanors, cases with fines up to \$500. They adjudicate civil cases in which the amount in controversy is under \$5,000. Additionally, they marry people, conduct preliminary hearings and issue search and arrest warrants. There are four JP courts in Val Verde County. They rotate their magisterial duties at the jail, so each JP serves once a month. Describes one justice,

They cross illegally. They cross at a point where it is railroad property and most of them are charged with interference with railroad property. There would be more cases if we could find all the people that have citations but usually we can't find them. Most of the citations are for improper cars; they exceed the gross weight permitted. We spend thousands of dollars on certified letters to Mexico, but they

probably just throw them in the trash. We have a whole drawer full of cases on Mexican trucks, but we can't do anything about it unless we place a warrant. Then they might be caught when they cross over again, but it is very unusual that they will be caught. I'm sure this is the case for the other judges, tons of cases "just sitting there."

The caseload associated with undocumented persons varies from 25 percent to 35 percent based on the Justice of the Peace Court, with the precincts bordering the Rio Grande having the largest impact. Each precinct also has a constable, who serves as the peace officer of the justice court. In that capacity he executes criminal and civil processes and acts to preserve the peace within his precinct. The constables report that if they encounter a problem with someone in the U.S. without legal residency status, they normally turn the individual over to the Border Patrol.

The general fund budget for the Justice of the Peace Courts includes Constables salaries (\$68,599) plus auto expenses for patrol (\$4,700) for a total of \$367,157. The estimated impact of undocumented persons on the court and constables is 30 percent, or \$157,728 depicted in table T80.

Table T80: Val Verde County Justice of the Peace and Constable Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$367,157	30%	\$110,147	\$47,581	\$157,728

Val Verde County Autopsies and Burials

During the interviews conducted this summer in Val Verde County there had been 5 deaths of undocumented persons in a 2-month period of time. A county autopsy averages \$1,000 and interment for the deceased is approximately \$800. Describes one law official,

A lot of them don't get autopsied. Sometimes they're skeletonized when we find them, with Mexican money and Mexican phone cards in their pockets. We know they're Mexicans, but we have no way of identifying them. Usually when they're skeletonized like that they die of a leg injury or snakebite. The judge says he knows we'll never figure out the crime and just has us bury them.

The general fund allocation for autopsies was \$24,632 and \$9,560 for burials. County officials estimate 75 percent of the autopsy cases and burials involve persons who died in the U.S. without legal residency status. Table T81 shows the county impact was \$36,721.

Table T81: Val Verde County Autopsies and Burials Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$34,192	75%	\$25,644	\$11,077	\$36,721

Val Verde County Indigent Defense

Val Verde County allocated \$83,584 to indigent defense. Of that total approximately 75 percent of the cases have defendants who lack legal residency status. The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons, shown in table T82, was \$89,768.

Table T82: Val Verde County Indigent Defense Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$83,584	75%	\$62,688	\$27,080	\$89,768

Val Verde County Indigent Medical

During FY99 Val Verde County budgeted \$9,967 for indigent medical care. County officials estimate that approximately 75 percent of the money expended was for persons without legal residency status. The impact of undocumented persons on these line items was \$10,704, depicted in table T83.

Table T83: Val Verde County Indigent Medical Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$9,967	75%	\$7,475	\$3,229	\$10,704

Val Verde County Detention Center

Val Verde County operates a detention center for adult probationers from a four-county region which include Terrell, Kinney and Edwards Counties. The total cost of operating the detention center was \$213,551, of which Val Verde contributes 64 percent of the cost, or \$135,000.

Val Verde County Adult Probation

The same four county consortiums that operate the detention center manage community supervision of probationers and paroles. The total cost for adult probation was \$203,132. Each county contributes to the cost based on its proportion of the total population of the four-county region. As the largest county in the consortium, Val Verde County contributed \$169,981. Any impact of illegal immigration would be borne by other funds.

TERRELL COUNTY, TEXAS

Terrell County's 2,385 square miles are semi-mountainous. The Trans-Pecos region is rocky with limestone soils and includes many canyons along the tributaries to the Rio Grande. Terrell's county seat is Sanderson (population 876), and is unincorporated. The only other settlement in the county is Dryden, which has a population of 13. With a county population of 1,202, Terrell County is largely agricultural, with some tourism via its hunting leases. Ninety-nine percent of the residents are white and 59.4 percent have Hispanic origins.

The economy of Terrell County was robust from the 1950s through the 1980s with the ranching of sheep and goats. In 1996, when the federal government ended the wool and mohair subsidy, local officials noted that it "broke the back of the ranchers." The county lost \$2.8 million as a result of that action. The Union Pacific Railroad maintained a home terminal in Sanderson until 1995. With the closure of that facility, 55 families were forced to move to either El Paso or Del Rio. The net payroll loss to Terrell County was \$5.5 million.⁴³ Terrell County lost 12.7 percent of its population between 1990 and 1999. Government---local, state and federal--- is the largest employment sector in Terrell County. The 1999 unemployment rate was 4.2 percent. The median family income in 1995 was \$22,815. In 1990, 27.4 percent of the county lived below the federal poverty level. Two-thirds of the county's adult population age 25 and over have obtained a high school diploma, and 12 percent have four or more years of college. There is one countywide school district with 230 students. Fifty-nine percent of the pupils come from economically disadvantaged households.

The total assessed valuation of Terrell County was \$328,897,902. The county tax rate of .54600 resulted in a levy of \$1,359,602 for provision of local services, including operation of the countywide school district. Terrell County's total general fund expenditures were \$1,043,637, which includes the operation of a countywide school district.

Terrell County's Border Environment

Terrell County's terrain is harsh and foreboding. The Rio Grande cuts through 48 miles of the county. All the land on the border is privately held. Seventy percent has no access from Mexico because of the steep escarpments along deep river canyons. County officials stated that there are only two places in the whole county that are possible river crossings. High cliffs, sparsely populated ranch lands and little water result in few illegal border crossings. The U.S. Border Patrol has a station in Rodriguez where five agents are stationed. They pick up approximately 100 undocumented persons per month.

Table T84: Terrell County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
1,202	2,385	48 miles	0	953	0

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

There is no fiscal impact of undocumented persons on the general fund of Terrell County. County officials stated that there have been no problems with undocumented criminals in the past five years. The last incident occurred in 1996, when four undocumented persons “came across Highway 90, stole a pickup, had it 57 minutes before they were picked up,” recounted one sheriff’s deputy.

Although the county has a seven-person jail, it is rarely used. According to a local official, “We don’t mess with the ‘wets’. We give ‘em to the feds. We’ve got seven beds, and we like to keep it empty. About the only people ever in there are people doing community service.”

An official with Emergency Medical Services stated, “The impact (of undocumented persons) is zero percent. If there ever is an undocumented person that needs help, they get it at Marfa or they are transported to Fort Stockton, 65 miles north.”

BREWSTER COUNTY, TEXAS

Brewster County is the largest county in Texas. The 16,040 square miles include the northern terminus of the Chihuahuan desert, the largest desert in North America; the towering Davis Mountains with altitudes to 8,000 feet; and the Chisos and Bofecillos Mountains.⁴⁴ Government employment, primarily state and local, and retail trade are the primary economic sectors. Alpine, the county seat with a population of 6,187 is located in the northern portion of the county in the heart of the Davis Mountains. The City of Alpine serves as the service center for the Big Bend area, providing both a regional hospital and state university for the neighboring counties. Sul Ross State University, with a student population of 2,500, emphasizes teacher education and biology, geology and ranch management studies, capitalizing on the natural laboratory setting adjacent to the Chihuahuan desert region. Small galleries, restaurants and over 400 motel rooms provide opportunities for tourists to enjoy this picturesque community. Amtrak provides passenger service from Alpine to Houston three times a week.

Marathon, a ranching center with a population of 850, is the other town in the northern portion of the county. Fort Pena Colorado Park can be accessed through the town. U.S. Highways 67 and 90 provide east-west access through the northern part of the county. State Highway 118 extends south from Alpine past the Elephant Mountain Wildlife Management Area to the towns of Terlingua (population 35), home of the famous chili cook-off, and Study Butte (population 160), which serves as an entryway to Big Bend National Park. From SH118, State Highway 170 travels westward from State Highway 118 to the Mexican border at the small (population 50) resort community of Lajitas. The other access to the southern portion of the county is via State Highway 385 from Marathon. It ends at the national park and then State Highway 2627 turns eastward through the Black Gap Wildlife Management Area to a Border patrol point of entry just south of Rio Grande Village (population 9).

The 1999 county population estimate was 8,793, a 5.1 percent increase from the 1990 census. During the winter months the county population swells with the in-migration of over 1,500 retirees from many northern and midwestern U.S. states. Forty-eight percent of the county residents are Hispanic, one percent African-American and 51 percent are Anglo. The median family income in 1995 was \$23,248. Like neighboring Jeff Davis County, Brewster County enjoyed a low unemployment rate of 2.5 percent in 1999. The county's workforce is better educated than many of the border counties, with 73.2 percent holding high school diplomas and 27.9 percent having graduated from college.

There are four independent school districts in Brewster County. The largest is Alpine ISD with 1,257 students, of whom 46.8 percent are economically disadvantaged. The other had much smaller enrollments. Seventy-six percent of Marathon ISD's 110 students and 83.5 percent of Terlingua's 182 students were economically disadvantaged in 1999. San Vincente ISD had the smallest enrollment with 23 students.⁴⁵ Twenty-nine percent of the children in Brewster County live in poverty.

The total assessed valuation of Brewster County for FY 1999 was \$489,861,274. The county tax rate of 0.31430 resulted in a levy of \$972,774 for provision of local services. During 1999 Brewster County's total general fund expenditures were \$2,336,115.

Brewster County's Border Environment

Brewster County has approximately 164 miles of international border with Mexico. Over three-quarters of the border is adjacent to Big Bend National Park and Black Gap Wildlife Management Area. Big Bend covers 801,000 acres, which includes 118 miles along the Rio Grande. The national park administers 234 miles of the wild and scenic Rio Grande for recreational use, primarily float and canoe trips. One hundred ninety-one miles of the river form the park boundary.

The northern third of the Chihuahuan Desert is located in Big Bend National Park. Mountains that block the desert on three sides block the rains and the fourth side opens to the vast semiarid plains of northern Mexico. Weather is the most foreboding aspect of the desert environment. In the summer temperatures can reach 180 degrees and in the winter northern storms bring freezing temperatures. Each year campers and backpackers lose their life because they were ill-prepared for the intensity of the weather conditions. Undocumented persons crossing through Big Bend National Park often die from lack of water or exposure to the elements. According to the county sheriff, often their bodies are not found until their remains have skeletonized. The Chisos Mountains rise from the desert to an elevation of 4,500 feet. Designated an international biosphere reserve in 1976, there are some plant and bird species found only in this mountainous area, the Chisos Oak and the Colima Warbler. Big Bend attracts many naturalists as well as traditional campers and backpackers. Within the park there are five visitor centers and one lodge.⁴⁶ Some agricultural development is found in the river's floodplain. Cotton and food crops are still grown around Castolon and Rio Grande Village. Lajitas, located on the Rio Grande in the southwestern corner of the county, is home to a resort community complete with a golf course and airstrip for small private planes.

There is a port-of-entry at the terminus of State Highway 2627, which runs through the Black Gap Wildlife Management Area. U.S. Customs also maintains a site near Rio Grande Village in Big Bend National Park. The Brewster County sheriff indicates that many county residents cross from Coyote, Castolon, Rio Grande Village and Lajitas into Mexico for dinner or shopping without going through a border checkpoint. According to one county official, "If you want to go eat in Mexico, you just go. There are checkpoints at Boquillas and San Alianas, but people cross all the time."

In FY 1999, there were 1,035 border patrol apprehensions in Brewster County. South of Marathon where the road dips before the border checkpoint, undocumented persons have ridden their bikes across from Mexico, abandoned them and then struck out into the desert to avoid detection. One local rancher had a barn full of abandoned bicycles. Vehicular theft was a common reason for undocumented crossing in Lajitas. Most crossings by undocumented persons occurred on foot, although occasionally a railroad car was discovered with 40 to 50 undocumented individuals. Arrests of large numbers of persons from trains involved the *coyotes* that smuggled humans with the promise of employment in the interior of the U.S.

Brewster County is part of the HDIA and narcotics interdictions involved both backpackers in the national park as well as larger loads driven along the state and park roads. Narcotics abuse is not a major problem in the county. Most of the illegal substances are passing through the county for distribution elsewhere.

Although Brewster County lacks a port of entry, the Border Patrol apprehended 1,035 persons in 1999.

Table T85: Brewster County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
8,793	16,040	164 miles	0	1,035	0

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

The total estimated costs to Brewster County for providing services to criminal undocumented persons and providing medical care to undocumented persons for FY 1999 was \$56,401. This includes general government costs of \$11,128. Brewster County residents through the special hospital-taxing district that is NOT included in the county's general fund also incurred an additional \$59,703 impact. A site visit was conducted in July 2000, during which time interviews were conducted with key county officials. Fiscal cost analysis reviewed the county departments of Sheriff, County and District Attorneys, District Court, County-District Clerk, Justice of the Peace and Constables. Costs were estimated for emergency medical care provision including both ambulance and hospital services. The following discussion provides a breakdown of the estimated costs by department.

**Table T86: Brewster County Costs by Department
County Totals \$56,401**

Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	Indigent Defense	District Clerk	County Attorney	County Clerk	County Court at Law	Justice of the Peace	Detention	Juvenile Court Services	Emerg. Med.
\$3,588	\$161	\$700	\$12,250	\$969	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,916	\$1,295	\$32,522

Brewster County Sheriff

The sheriff's office general fund expenditures for FY 1999 were \$287,136. As the largest county in Texas, 16,040 square miles, patrolling requires substantial vehicular expenses. The sheriff's budget also includes training for deputies and staff and communications.

The typical criminal problems in the county include juvenile auto theft (joyriding) and rural burglaries. For example, one county official commented, "I've had people break into my house. Get something to eat when I'm not home. Wash the dishes and leave them by the sink with a few pesos." Another said she kept her bunkhouse stocked with food. "If people come needing food, I've told my foreman to give it to them." The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons, indicated in table T87, was \$3,588.

Table T87: Brewster County Sheriff Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$287,136	1%	\$2,871	\$717	\$3,588

Brewster County District Attorney

The District Attorney's Office for the 83rd Judicial District prosecutes state cases in a five-county region that includes Brewster County. Located in Fort Stockton, the District Attorney travels to Brewster County to provide services. The D.A. represents the State of Texas in felony criminal actions and misdemeanor criminal actions in the County Court of Law and Justice of the Peace Courts. The county budget pays a portion of the district attorney's cost. Based on the county's population, Brewster County's general fund expenditures were \$12,905. The total county taxpayer cost for prosecuting undocumented persons was estimated at \$161, shown in table T88.

Table T88: Brewster County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$12,905	1%	\$129	\$32	\$161

Brewster County District Court and Indigent Defense

The 394th District Court serves a four-county area includes Brewster County. The District Court's original jurisdiction covers all felony criminal cases, divorce cases, cases involving title to land, election contest cases and civil matters in which the amount in controversy is over \$200. The court routinely sets hearings for pleas, arraignments, summary judgments, default judgments, pre-trial hearings and motions.

The 394th District Court Judge is located in Alpine. Travel time to the other counties leaves the judge with limited time for Brewster County cases. Conversations with the District judge revealed that the average cost for a 4-day trial was \$5,000. He spends three weeks in jury trials, adjudicating the cases of undocumented persons first to ensure their right to a speedy trial, and the remaining week for pleas, hearings and other issues.

Brewster County allocated \$73,801 from the general fund for District Court expenses. This figure includes \$18,500 for indigent defense. Approximately 50 percent of the indigent defense expenses were attributable to undocumented persons. Of the remaining \$55,301 only one percent of those expenses are related to cases involving the undocumented. The total fiscal impact of undocumented persons on the Brewster County District Court expenditures was \$12,250, depicted in table T89.

Table T89: Brewster County District Court and Indigent Defense Impact

Department	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total
District Court	\$55,301	1%	\$553	\$147	\$700
Indigent Defense	\$18,500	50%	\$9,250	\$2,300	\$11,550
Total	\$73,801		\$9,803	\$2,447	\$12,250

Brewster County District Clerk

This office handles all the administrative responsibility associated with criminal and civil cases heard in district court. In addition, the district clerk files all legal documents, titles and other legal matters. The District Clerk's general fund expenditures for FY 1999 were \$ 77,510. The estimated costs associated with service provision for undocumented persons were \$969 depicted in table T90.

Table T90: Brewster County District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$77,510	1%	\$775	\$194	\$969

Brewster County Attorney

The County Attorney provides legal counsel to the County Commissioners, handles civil cases filed against the county, and handles misdemeanor cases up to felony. The county attorney indicated that although the U.S. Attorney has a high threshold for narcotics cases it is willing to prosecute, he has been successful in getting the U.S. Attorney to take many of the smaller cases as well. The County Attorney's general fund expenditures for FY 1999 were \$66,437; however the office did not handle any cases related to undocumented persons. There is no cost impact for the County Attorney.

Brewster County Clerk

This office provides the support for the County Attorney in the filing of legal documents related to civil and misdemeanor felony cases. The general fund expenditures of \$116,687 did not include any expenses related to the undocumented.

Brewster County Court at Law

The County Court at Law hears both civil and criminal cases. The court's criminal responsibility includes Class "A" and "B" misdemeanors where the highest fine imposed is \$500. In civil cases, the County Court at Law hears cases in which the amount of controversy is between \$500 and \$5,000. The general fund budget for FY 1999 was \$18,050. This court was not impacted by cases involving undocumented persons.

Brewster County Justice of the Peace and Constables

Justice of the Peace Courts have original jurisdiction in Class “C” misdemeanor criminal cases with fines up to \$500. Civil cases in which the amount in controversy is under \$5,000 are heard in Justice of the Peace Courts. The J.P. also marries people, conducts preliminary hearings and issues search and arrest warrants. Brewster County has three Justice of the Peace Courts for general fund expenditures totaling \$93,306 in FY 1999.

Each of the three precincts also has a constable. As the peace officer of the justice court, the constable executes criminal and civil processes. He is further tasked with the protection of the peace within the precinct and may make arrests and engage in other criminal deterrence activities. The total general fund budgets for constables in FY 1999 were \$42,588.

Neither the Justice of the Peace Court nor the constables indicated any impact from undocumented persons.

Brewster County Detention

The County Jail is responsible for the supervision, care, safety and custody of all inmates incarcerated in the facility. The Brewster County Jail holds both county prisoners and City of Alpine prisoners. In a unique funding arrangement, the county assumes the full cost for city inmates and the city assumes the cost of providing volunteer fire service in the unincorporated northern portions of the county.

The jail is a 54-bed detention facility. The majority of the prisoners are federal, and approximately 18 percent are state prisoners. The county sheriff has a policy that he will not accept any injured or ill federal prisoners without their first receiving medical attention from a physician. “I don’t need any federal prisoners dying in my jail,” he explains.

The general fund expenditures for the jail were \$393,403. While he remembered a case involving the theft of a saddle in South Texas, the county jail administrator indicated very few undocumented persons are held in the county facility. The impact of criminal undocumented persons for was estimated at a normal one percent or \$4,916, shown in table T91.

Table T91: Brewster County Detention Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$393,403	1%	\$3,934	\$982	\$4,916

Brewster County Juvenile Court Services

There is no federal legislation covering juvenile law. In the event that an undocumented juvenile commits a crime, the federal government simply remits the youth to Mexico. In Brewster County, the county has agreed to take any juvenile cases in order to send a strong message to youths who would commit crimes in the county. This has usually involved detaining and keeping juveniles who

have been used as *mules* in the transportation of narcotics. Once Brewster County began prosecuting the juvenile cases, the use of youths for the drug smuggling in the county decreased.

The challenge to the county has been what to do with the youths after the detention hearing. Because the parents or custodians of the undocumented juveniles live in Mexico, the county bears the cost of detention, which was \$60 per day. The juvenile detention facilities are located in Fort Stockton and if that site is full, the youths must be transported to Midland. The county's portion of the cost to operate the Fort Stockton juvenile center was \$10,358. The county transportation cost can be substantial. If the juvenile is a female, then the law requires two law enforcement officers accompany the young woman. Furthermore, if the county has to use sheriff's vehicles that lack cages, then again, two officers must accompany the juvenile. In FY 1999 Brewster County had two undocumented juvenile detainees for an impact cost of \$1,295, shown in table T92.

Table T92: Brewster County Juvenile Court Services Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$10,358	10%	\$1,035	\$259	\$1,295

Brewster County Emergency Medical Services

General fund expenditures for emergency medical care includes contracts with three separate ambulance services. Terlingua medics estimate 5 percent of their runs involve the undocumented. West Texas Ambulance, which made 400 calls in FY 1999, estimates that treating undocumented persons represents 22.5 percent of their calls. Their average call rate is \$250. The majority of their transportation is undocumented who are removed from trains or long distance transfers from Mexico. The Marathon Ambulance reports all of their calls were for treatment and transportation of injured undocumented persons. The total county general fund budget for emergency medical services was \$52,500. The impact of undocumented medical care on the general fund budget was \$16,277, as indicated in table T93.

Table T93: Brewster County Emergency Medical Services Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	Cost	General Govt.	Total Cost
West Texas Ambulance	\$16,000	22.5%	\$3,600	\$899	\$4,499
Terlingua Medics	\$28,500	5%	\$1,425	\$355	\$1,780
Marathon Ambulance	\$8,000	100%	\$8,000	\$1998	\$9,998
Total	\$52,500		\$13,025	\$3,252	\$16,277

Brewster County Autopsies and Burials

The sheriff indicated that there are a lot of deaths that occur as a result of illegal crossings in the three parks in the county. Another factor is individuals who drown in crossing. Bodies that end up

on the American side of the border become the responsibility of the local county for autopsy and burial. The average autopsy cost is \$1,500 and burials of indigents cost the county \$800 per interment. In FY99 100 percent of the cost of burial and autopsy were attributed to undocumented persons for a general fund impact of \$5,500 and \$7,500 respectively. All of these costs, \$16,245, were attributable to undocumented persons, as shown in table T94.

Table T94: Brewster County Autopsies and Burials Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$13,000	100%	\$13,000	\$3,245	\$16,245

Brewster County Medical

Additionally, the county operates the 40-bed Big Bend Regional Medical Hospital in Alpine. Completed in September 1999, this \$15 million state-of-the-art medical center serves Brewster, Presidio and Jeff Davis Counties. The hospital is not a part of the general fund budget; however, the county taxpayers in a separate assessment pay for the operation of the hospital. Brewster County's expenditures for the hospital in FY1999 were \$650,000. Hospital administrators estimate 25 percent to 30 percent of their patients are undocumented persons. One hospital official commented:

Our major assistance funds go to live births and deliveries; many cross the border in an ambulance and basically all they need to qualify is a paper from the doctor saying it was an emergency and they get automatic financial aid. I get between 50-60 people in the program per month. When we try to get a billing address, we usually get a P.O. box.

Of the undocumented persons the hospital offers emergency care to, one-third are from Brewster County and two thirds are from Presidio County. The total impact of undocumented persons on emergency medical care for Brewster County at the regional hospital was \$59,703, as depicted in table T95.

Table T95: Brewster County Hospital Impact

Special Hospital District	Impact	Cost
\$650,000	27.5%	\$59,703

PRESIDIO COUNTY, TEXAS

Presidio County extends over 9,987 square miles in the upper Rio Grande region. The rugged mountainous terrain contains some of Texas' highest peaks. Capote Falls, the highest waterfall in Texas is located in the Sierra Vieja Mountains. Intermountain washes serve as natural drainage areas flowing into the Rio Grande when the infrequent rains occur. The Big Bend Ranch, a state natural area, is located in the southeastern portion of the county. Los Palmos Wildlife Management Area is located west of Presidio on State Highway 170. East of Presidio is Fort Leaton State Park. Farm-to-Market Road 170 runs parallel to the border from Candelaria to Big Bend National Park and crosses the historic El Camino del Rio, the trail used by Spanish explorers over 300 years ago.⁴⁷

Marfa, the county seat, is located in the high desert plateau. The Border Patrol maintains its sector headquarters in Marfa. Ranching and hunting leases for tourism employ many of the city's 2,639 population. Tourists also come to Marfa to catch a glimpse of the mysterious ghost lights which can be viewed a night on the outskirts of town and to see the historic El Paisano Hotel. Artists, writers and architects have relocated to Marfa in recent years, creating an interesting art community. Chinati Hot Springs are open year-round for healing baths.

The City of Presidio, population 3,794, in the southern portion of the county is the largest community in the county. Laying at the confluence of the Rio Concho and Rio Grande, Presidio has the oldest continuously-cultivated farmland in the United States. It serves as the closest point of entry to the interior of Mexico. Ojinaga, Mexico offers shopping, social and cultural opportunities and is the gateway to the state capital of Chihuahua City and eventually the west coast of seaport of Topolobampo. Located on U.S. Highway 67 between Presidio and Marfa is the ghost town of Shafter. The current population of 26 ranches and offers tours of the famous silver mines.

Agriculture and local government are the dominant economic sectors. Hydroponic tomatoes are grown in climate-controlled greenhouses in the northern portion of the county, near Marfa. Onions, cantaloupes and honeydew melons are the primary crops in the southern part around the City of Presidio. Presidio County is also a major crossing port for Mexican cattle. (County unemployment averaged 27.8 percent in FY 1999.)

The county population estimate for 1999 was 8,954. This figure includes an equal number of net international migrations from Mexico and domestic migrations. Eighty-one percent of the county's population is Hispanic, 18 percent Anglo and less than one percent African American, Asian and Native Americans. The median family income in 1995 was \$16,877. The low level of educational attainment is borne out by the fact that only 43.9 percent of the adult population has completed high school and 11.8 percent hold college degrees. Forty-one percent of the county lives in poverty, and nearly 50 percent of the county's children are in poverty.

The data for the two school districts demonstrate that the poverty is not equally distributed throughout the county. While 68 percent of the students in the Marfa Independent School District, student population 497, are economically disadvantaged, 93 percent of Presidio ISD's 1,372 pupils are economically disadvantaged.⁴⁸

The total assessed valuation of property in Presidio County was \$288,340,742. The county tax rate of 0.54950 netted a levy of \$903,661 for provision of county services. The 1999 total general fund expenditures for Presidio County were \$1,702,496.

Presidio County's Border Environment

The 158-mile border Presidio County shares with Mexico includes the international toll bridge at Presidio and the other smaller border communities of Ruidosa, Candelaria, Adobes, Indio, Spencer, Ochoa and Redford each with populations under 100. "Class B" ports-of-entry exist in Redford, Ruidosa, Candelaria and Ochoa. State Highway 170 parallels the river from Candelaria to the Brewster County line in extreme southeastern Presidio County. Private roads reach northeasterly from Ruidosa to meet Farm-to-Market Road 2810, which leads to Marfa.

The City of Presidio is a largely agrarian community. Nearly 5,500 acres are under irrigation providing water for the onion and melon crops. When the crops are ready to be picked a large number of individuals cross over from Ojinaga, Mexico to help with the harvest. Many of these workers will join the seasonal migrant stream of workers who will harvest crops from Texas northward over the harvest season. The new hydroponic tomato hothouses outside Marfa have attracted many of the U.S. and resident alien farm workers living in Presidio. Despite the 60-mile trip, the higher wages have been an incentive to the workers. During the 1999 onion and melon harvest there was a severe shortage of workers in Presidio because so many individuals were employed in the northern portion of the county. The net result was an increased demand for Mexican farm labor with less attention to the official documentation of the workers. Presidio County also has a large resident alien population who received amnesty in 1986 under the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act.⁴⁹

Neighboring Ojinaga was host to 8 *maquiladoras* in 1999. The combined twin plants employed 1,224.⁵⁰ The South Orient Railroad provides piggyback services three days a week from Presidio northward towards Alomito swinging east of Marfa and into Alpine. This rail route provides the gateway to Mexico's west coast. *Coyotes* frequently use empty boxcars to transport larger groups (30 to 60 persons per car) of undocumented workers into the United States. The South Orient line joins the Southern Pacific's tracks in the northeastern portion of the county, providing additional east-west access for illegal transit.

Big Bend Ranch State Park encompasses 437 square miles in the southeastern portion of the county. This includes approximately 25 miles of river frontage on the Rio Grande.⁵¹ From the floodplain the parkland rises into the Bofecillos Mountains, popular with campers and backpackers, and includes Solitario, a nine-mile eroded crater formed by a volcanic explosion. *Mules* hiking with packs carrying narcotics sometimes choose to enter through the remote ranchland. Although there is a lodge and bunkhouse in the park, most of the area is preserved as a state natural area. Fort Leaton State Park, which includes the preserved historic fort grounds, is four miles west of Presidio.

A Mexican man found shot in the head on the Presidio levee Friday morning died on Saturday...According to the Chihuahuan State Judicial Police, the shooting likely took place on the Mexican side of the river. *(They)* were accosted at around 5 a.m. and forcibly taken to the river's edge near the railroad bridge by three armed men in a station wagon...Following

an argument, during which the 2 captive men were told they would be killed, they leapt into the river in an effort to escape...Speculation that his superiors in the (drug) smuggling trade found his performance unsatisfactory and perpetrated the murder is still unconfirmed. (*Big Bend Sentinel*)

Through the Presidio port of entry 1,976,222 persons crossed legally into the U.S. in 1999. The Border Patrol apprehended 1,586 individuals during the same time period.

Table T96: Presidio County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
8,954	9,987	158 miles	1,976,222	1,586	1

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

The total estimated costs to Presidio County for providing services to criminal undocumented persons and providing medical care to undocumented persons for FY 1999 was \$465,356. The Presidio County Jail, which is not a part of the general fund budget, has an additional \$117,739 impact. Finally, the county incurs costs of \$118,950 in the hospital located in Brewster County. This impact is also not included in the Presidio County general fund. Key county officials were interviewed during a site visit in July 2000. Further financial analysis of the budgets of the Sheriff, County and District Attorneys, District Court, County-District Clerk, Justices of the Peace and Constables were also conducted. Emergency health cares costs for ambulance service were also determined. The subsequent discussion details the estimated costs by department.

**Table T97: Presidio County Costs by Department
County Totals \$465,356**

Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	District and County Clerk	County Attorney	Justice of the Peace	Probation	Indigent Defense	Emerg. Med.
\$189,151	\$14,219	\$41,631	\$83,926	\$32,836	\$52,512	\$9,344	\$18,661	\$23,076

Presidio County Sheriff

The general fund expenditures for the sheriff's office were \$232,790. In addition to the personnel costs, this budget included \$13,600 for capital equipment purchases as well as communication, transportation and vehicular repair. The majority of the crime associated with undocumented

persons occurs in the City of Presidio. These cases, in order of frequency, include driving while intoxicated, operating a vehicle with a suspended license, domestic violence and marijuana possession. The total estimated cost of criminal undocumented persons on the Presidio County Sheriff's department was \$189,151, shown in table T98.

Table T98: Presidio County Sheriff Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$232,790	50%	\$116,395	\$72,756	\$189,151

Presidio County District Attorney

Presidio County falls under the 83rd Judicial District's jurisdiction. The District Attorney's office is located in Ft. Stockton, and it serves a five-county region. The county's portion of the District Attorney's cost is pro-rated based on population. In FY 1999, Presidio County paid \$17,500 for the D.A.'s services. Approximately 50 percent of the caseload is directly attributable to criminal felonies involving undocumented persons. The total county taxpayer cost for prosecuting undocumented persons was estimated at \$14,219, depicted in table T99.

Table T99: Presidio County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$17,500	50%	\$8,750	\$5,469	\$14,219

Presidio County District Court

Presidio along with Brewster, Jeff Davis and Culberson Counties, is served by the 394th District Court. The District Court Judge's main office is in Alpine (Brewster County.) This court is responsible for all felony cases as well as contested elections, divorces, land title disputes and civil controversies in excess of \$200.

The District Court Judge indicated that approximately three weeks of his time per month is allocated to jury trials in the various counties. Additionally, he has set aside the fourth week of the month to process summary and default judgments, pleas, arraignments, pre-trial hearings and motions. Because of the backlog of jury cases, the civil cases that come before his court are often delayed up to three or four years. While local counties have the option of hiring a visiting judge to oversee cases, this poses an additional financial burden on the county.

Presidio County's general fund expenditures for the District Court, which include the cost of the court reporters and interpreters, were \$51,236. Fifty percent of those expenditures were attributable to the criminal felony cases involving undocumented persons. Table T100 shows the total fiscal impact of criminal undocumented persons on Presidio County's District Court expenditures was \$41,631.

Table T100: Presidio County District Court Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$51,236	50%	\$25,618	\$16,013	\$41,631

Presidio County District-County Clerk

The responsibilities of the County and District Clerk are combined into one office in Presidio County. This office files all the legal documents, titles and other matters associated with the criminal and civil cases heard in district court. During FY 1999 \$103,288 from the Presidio County general fund was necessary to support the activities of this office. The estimated costs associated with service provision for undocumented persons were \$83,926, depicted in table T101.

Table T101: Presidio County-District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$103,288	50%	\$51,644	\$32,282	\$83,926

Presidio County Attorney

Responsible for the legal council to the County Commissioners, the County Attorney also handles misdemeanor cases. The Presidio County Attorney is serving as a member of the state bar committee that is exploring options available to counties for reimbursement for state legal cases. Texas is one of only five states that do not provide assistance to counties for the legal costs associated with trials. The only exception is emergency funding that can be accessed if the county has to prosecute a capital murder trial. "A capital murder case could potentially bankrupt a small rural county," according to the Presidio County Attorney.

Of major concern to the Presidio County Attorney is the legal implication of misdemeanor charges on the immigration status of resident aliens. Officials fear court-appointed attorneys often don't understand the intricacies of immigration law and the fact that two misdemeanor convictions can result in the deportation of resident aliens. "Unless they are 'snocked up' or beating their wives, these are not crimes against humanity; however, local attorneys don't always know enough to advise people. We are trying to get more training but it is not always forthcoming," one added.

The majority of the cases handled by the county attorney involve motor vehicle violations in which individuals were driving while intoxicated or driving under the influence or operating a vehicle with a suspended license. The office also sees a large number of domestic violence cases particularly from the City of Presidio. A minor in possession of a controlled substance (marijuana) is the fourth most frequent case type handled by the county attorney.

The prosecution of juveniles is particularly problematic in Presidio County. Unless the youths live in Presidio County, due to the increased flight risk juveniles are kept in detention until their cases are adjudicated. Following disposition of the juvenile cases many of the youth are placed on probation. Non-residents and undocumented youth who violate probation are sent to the Texas Youth Corrections facility in Canadian, Texas, which is 625 miles north on the Oklahoma border.

The county attorney indicated one of the biggest challenges is the lack of federal legislation covering juvenile crime. She has had numerous cases where federal officials failed to follow the Texas juvenile code by giving appropriate warnings before interrogating juveniles. This most often occurs when the youths have been used in the transport of narcotics and the customs or immigration officers conducting the investigation are trying to “lean on” the youths in order to gain access to information about the more significant drug traffickers who have engaged the juveniles' services. When the case eventually comes to the county attorney’s office, it is often not prosecutable because of lack of compliance with the state juvenile code. This results in increased resentment from people who live along the river who cannot understand why the juveniles aren’t prosecuted and has lead to a public outcry for tougher penalties for crimes.

The Presidio County Attorney offices general fund expenditures for FY 1999 were \$62,172. Approximately one-third of the total expenses were for investigation and prosecution of cases involving undocumented persons for a budgetary impact of \$32,836 depicted in table T102.

Table T102: Presidio County Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$62,172	32.5%	\$20,206	\$12,630	\$32,836

Presidio County Justice of the Peace and Constables

The two Justice of the Peace Courts are responsible for civil cases with a controversy of less than \$5,000 and criminal cases with fines up to \$500. Marriages, preliminary court hearings and the issuance of search and arrest warrants also fall under the courts' purview. The general fund expenditures for the two courts in FY 1999 were \$82,503.

Cases involving the mentally ill have been particularly troubling for the Justice of the Peace Courts. Many individuals have relatives living in *Ojinaga* and in the City of Presidio as resident aliens. If an undocumented person suffering from mental illness, who has never received appropriate mental health interventions, makes threats against resident alien family members, the court tries to intervene to obtain mental health services. If a mental health hearing indicates the need for in-patient psychiatric care, the patient has to be transported 300 miles to the state psychiatric hospital in Big Springs. All the costs, from transportation to in-patient care, then become the responsibility of the local county.

In one very high profile case, a mentally ill Mexican national without documentation crossed repeatedly from *Ojinaga* into Presidio. Legal authorities kept repatriating the man, but he would return, often walking into people’s homes, eating their food and making himself at home; however, despite numerous incarcerations he never presented a physical threat to the local citizens. In frustration local vigilantes shot at him, and a stray bullet ended up lodged in the wall immediately over the head of the wife of a local community leader who was sleeping at the time. The local J.P. indicated that although the Midland-Odessa Mental Health-Mental Retardation maintains an office in the City of Presidio, the services are not available for undocumented Mexican nationals in the U.S. unless they have committed a crime. The Justice of the Peace indicated he sees 12 to 15 cases of crimes committed by undocumented persons per year. “I think everybody’s working hard and doing the best they can to be as humane as possible while upholding the law,” he says.

The J.P. court also handles a high number of DWI cases. Cutbacks on substance abuse prevention services coupled with higher rates of alcoholism have lead to an increased caseload. Burglaries and stolen vehicles are the other crimes that most frequently come to the J.P. Court. Many of the vehicles that have been recovered are from the Midland-Odessa area. Possession of marijuana and speeding tickets are also common. Concerns over child safety have lead to ticketing for unrestrained children in motor vehicles. With high bonds and little financial capacity to make bond, most undocumented persons stay in jail while they are waiting their court date.

The Justices of the Peace report fully half of the caseload in the southern precinct, which includes the City of Presidio, and in the northern county precinct, which includes the county seat of Marfa, approximately one-quarter of the cases involves undocumented persons.

Supporting the Justice of the Peace Courts, the constables are most often involved in apprehension of undocumented persons who are motor vehicular theft suspects. Because Presidio County is located in HIDTA, the constables also serve warrants and arrest undocumented persons, primarily for possession of marijuana with the intent to distribute. Table T103 indicates the total estimated financial impact of undocumented persons on the J.P. Courts is \$48,206 and an additional \$4,269 impact on the Constable’s budgets.

Table T103: Presidio County Justice of the Peace and Constable Impact

Department	General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total
Justice of the Peace	\$82,503	3.6%	\$29,701	\$18,542	\$48,243
Constables	\$21,013	12.5%	\$2,627	\$1,642	\$4,269
Total	\$103,516		\$32,328	\$20,184	\$52,512

Presidio County Juvenile and Adult Probation

Presidio County contracts for probation service for both juveniles and adults through the Fort Stockton Community Supervision Program. During FY 1999 the general fund expenditures were \$11,500 for supervision of probationers. A local representative of this community supervision program supervises adult probationers. [See the section on County Attorney for more detailed discussion of juveniles.] Transportation costs for detention of juveniles is currently being covered by a federal grant. Approximately 50 percent of the probation budget is for community supervision of undocumented persons, costing the county \$9,344, shown in table T104.

Table T104: Presidio County Adult and Juvenile Probation Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$11,500	50%	\$5,750	\$3,594	\$9,344

Presidio County Autopsies and Burials

The Ojinaga-Presidio Border Liaison Mechanism has been working to increase public awareness in Mexico of the dangers of crossing desert areas in the heat of the summer. Posters and brochures highlighting the tragic results of hiring *coyotes* (human smugglers) have been distributed. The harsh terrain, limited road networks, sparsely populated towns and extreme drought conditions of the past two years dramatically increase the possibility of dying during crossing. In addition, the potential for drowning always exists. Local officials cited an incident where a Mexican national, a victim of the narcotics smuggling gone awry, was killed while fleeing Mexico. His body was discovered on the American levee, so the autopsy and burial became a Presidio County responsibility.

During FY 1999 the general fund expenditures for autopsies were \$5,000 and \$1,800 for burials. All of these expenses were for the investigation and burial of undocumented persons. Table T105 shows the total estimated impact of \$11,050.

Table T105: Presidio County Autopsies and Burials Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$6,800	100%	\$6,800	\$4,250	\$11,050

Presidio County Indigent Defense

The County Attorney estimated that 75 percent of the indigent defense budget, which was \$15,311, was for criminal undocumented persons. Nine local attorneys handled 41 indigent defense cases in FY 1999. One attorney was responsible for 50 percent of the cases, two attorneys handled an additional 20 percent, each and the remaining lawyers saw only one to two cases each. The impact on Presidio County for prosecution of criminal undocumented persons was \$18,661, shown in table T106.

Table T106: Presidio County Indigent Defense Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$15,311	75%	\$11,483	\$7,178	\$18,661

Presidio County Indigent Health Care

Two ambulance services operate in Presidio County. The Presidio (city) ambulance makes 20 to 30 runs per month, of which they estimate four to five runs provide emergency medical transport to undocumented persons. If there is a major trauma treatment the Presidio EMS transports the

patient 90 miles to Big Bend Regional Hospital in Alpine. The county's budgeted portion of the Presidio ambulance service was \$31,000.

In the northern portion of the county, Marfa EMS provides emergency treatment and transport. Presidio County contributed \$12,000 from the general fund to the operating expenses of the ambulance service. Marfa EMS averages one call per day and estimates ten percent of their services are to undocumented persons.

The total impact of emergency medical services on the Presidio County general fund was \$12,026, depicted in table T107.

Table T107: Presidio County Indigent Health Care Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Marfa EMS	\$12,000	10%	\$1,200	\$740	\$1,940
Presidio EMS	\$31,000	20%	\$6,200	\$3,886	\$10,086
Total	\$43,000		\$7,400	\$4,626	\$12,026

Presidio County Indigent Health Care

Indigents from Presidio County receive medical care at Big Bend Regional Medical Hospital in Alpine (Brewster County.) The major assistance to undocumented persons is for live births and deliveries. (For more detailed discussion see: Brewster County.) Two-thirds of the costs associated with medical care for undocumented persons at Big Bend Regional Medical Hospital are from Presidio County. The total impact of undocumented persons from Presidio County on emergency medical care costs for the hospital was \$118,950.

Presidio County Jail

Expenditures for the Presidio County Jail are not part of the county's general fund budget. The total special jail account expenditures were \$1,286,763 for FY 1999. One-third of that amount went for debt service reduction for a recent jail expansion.

The capacity of the facility is 96 prisoners. In FY 1999 a total of 1,283 persons were incarcerated in the Presidio County Jail, of which 1,019 were federal prisoners and 235 were state prisoners from Presidio County. The remaining 29 incarcerations were for Brewster County state inmates. The jail administrator estimated 50 percent of the state prisoners were undocumented persons, or 9.2 percent of the total jail population, for a special fund fiscal impact of \$117,739 for Presidio County state inmates as shown in table T108.

Table T108: Presidio County Jail Impact

Special Jail Fund	Impact	Cost
\$1,286,763	9.2%	\$117,739

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

Jeff Davis County is located in the high desert region of the Chihuahuan Desert. In the heart of the rugged Davis Mountains, the county covers 5,865 square miles. The economy of the area is dependent on tourism and service industries as the major employers. Davis Mountain State Park occupies 2,700 acres and is adjacent to the University of Texas' McDonald Observatory. The Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute engages in scientific research as well as makes available educational programs on its 507-acre site. The Fort Davis National Historic Site is one of the best preserved 19th century frontier forts, which was the home of the "Buffalo Soldiers" (African-American troops.)⁵²

Fort Davis, the county seat (population 1000), is an unincorporated town with numerous bed and breakfast inns, restaurants and small shops. Valentine, an agricultural community with 200 inhabitants, is the only other town in the county. The Texas state demographer estimates the 1999 total county population is 2,415, which represents a projected 17.1 percent increase from 1990. The median family income in 1995 was \$25,035. Atypical of many border counties, Jeff Davis County's average unemployment rate in 1999 was only 2.4 percent.

Educationally, 69.5 percent of the adult population (persons 25 years and over) holds high school diplomas and 25.1 percent are college graduates. The two public school districts, Ft. Davis and Valentine Independent School Districts, had enrollments of 363 and 53, respectively. Twelve percent of the Ft. Davis ISD students and 75.5 percent of the Valentine ISD students are economically disadvantaged.⁵³ The U.S. Census Bureau (1996) estimates 15.5 percent of all persons in Jeff Davis County live in poverty; however, 23.3 percent of children ages 18 and younger are in poverty.

The total assessed valuation in Jeff Davis County in FY 1999 was \$293,509,877. The county tax rate of 0.53000 resulted in a levy of \$728,927 for provision of local services. Jeff Davis' total general fund expenditures during that time were \$492,483.

Jeff Davis Border Environment

Although Hudspeth, Presidio and Jeff Davis Counties meet at the Rio Grande, Jeff Davis County does not share an international boundary with Mexico. The county's rugged mountain terrain is a deterrent to undocumented crossings from Mexico. Most of the illegal entry into Jeff Davis County is via the adjacent county of Presidio along US Highway 90 or Texas State highway 17. The Southern Pacific Railroad angles through the western portion of the county serving as another unauthorized transportation venue for undocumented persons. There were no Border Patrol apprehensions in Jeff Davis County in 1999.

Table T109: Jeff Davis County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
2,415	5,865	0 miles	0	0	0

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

Estimated total costs to Jeff Davis County for providing services to criminal undocumented persons and providing emergency medical care to undocumented persons is \$44,478. This includes \$11,077 in general government services. Cost analyses were conducted on the county departments of sheriff, county attorney, district attorney, Justice of the Peace and Constable. Costs were also estimated for medical emergency care. Information on burials and autopsies, indigent defense and indigent health care were also obtained. A site visit was conducted in July 2000, resulting in interviews with key county officials. Follow-up was made via phone calls, email and fax. The following section provides a breakdown and explanation of estimated costs by department.

**Table T110: Jeff Davis County Costs by Department
County Totals \$44,478**

Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	District and County Clerk	County Attorney	Justice of the Peace	Detention	Adult Probation	Juvenile Probation	Indigent Defense	Emerg. Med.
\$20,320	\$834	\$3,934	\$7,409	\$0	\$0	\$6,706	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,275

Jeff Davis County Sheriff

The general fund expenditures were \$76,297. The sheriff's budget includes the personnel and operating funds necessary to provide law enforcement administration in Jeff Davis County. This includes capital equipment outlays, maintenance and operation costs for patrol vehicles, and training of employees. The personnel budget was \$43,965 and \$32,331 for operations. The total county taxpayers cost of investigating and apprehending undocumented persons was estimated to be \$20,320, shown in table T111.

According to the Jeff Davis County Sheriff, most of the arrests of undocumented persons are made by the Drug Interdiction Task Force, which covers multiple border counties. He estimates 80 percent of the task force arrests are narcotics cases involving backpackers.

Table T111: Jeff Davis County Sheriff Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$76,297	20%	\$15,259	\$5,061	\$20,320

Jeff Davis County District Attorney

The District Attorney's Office for the 83rd Judicial District is primarily responsible for prosecuting state cases in Jeff Davis, Brewster, Upton, Reagan and Pecos Counties. The D.A. represents the State of Texas in all felony criminal actions files in the State District Courts, in all misdemeanor criminal actions files in the County Court at Law and Justice of the Peace Courts. Jeff Davis County contributes to the cost of the 83rd Judicial District Attorney based on the size of its population. The District Attorney is located in Fort Stockton and travels to Jeff Davis County to provide services. In FY 1999 the general fund allocation was \$3,133. Table T112 indicates the total County taxpayer cost for prosecuting undocumented persons was estimated at \$834.

Table T112: Jeff Davis County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$3,133	20%	\$626	\$208	\$834

Jeff Davis County District Court

The 394th District Court serves Jeff Davis, Brewster, Culberson and Hudspeth Counties. The court has original jurisdiction over all felony criminal cases, divorce cases, cases involving title to land, election contest cases, and civil matters in which the amount in controversy is \$200 or more. In this regard, the District Court sets hearings for pleas, arraignments, summary judgments, default judgments, pre-trial hearings and motions.

The judge for the 394th District Court is located in Alpine, so Jeff Davis County incurs the travel costs of bringing in the district judge, as well as court reporters and interpreters. The district court judge estimates a four-day trial results in a local county cost of \$5,000. The 394th District Court's five-county workload involves three weeks for jury trials, one week for pleas and other issues. The cases involving non-citizens are tried first in order to ensure the right to a speedy trial for the incarcerated. The average jail stay is 120 days or less for those under the jurisdiction of this court. Ninety percent of the cases involving non-citizens are drug cases. This often means local civil cases will be backlogged for three to four years waiting for a jury trial. While visiting (usually retired) judges are available to hear cases, this places an additional financial burden on the local county. Impact of criminal undocumented persons in the Jeff Davis County district court general fund expenditures was \$3,934, depicted in table T113.

Table T113: Jeff Davis County District Court Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$5,908	50%	\$2,954	\$980	\$3,934

Jeff Davis County County-District Clerk (Combined)

This combined office handles all the administrative responsibility associated with criminal and civil cases heard in the district court as well as filing legal documents, titles and other legal matters. The portion of the general fund allocated for County and District Clerk was \$27,818, of which \$7,409

was the direct impact of providing services to criminal undocumented persons, indicated in table T114.

Table T114: Jeff Davis County District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$27,818	20%	\$5,564	\$1,845	\$7,409

Jeff Davis County Attorney

The Jeff Davis County Attorney is responsible for the civil cases filed against the county, and provides legal advice to the County Commissioners Court. The general fund allocation for the County Attorney is \$18,323. The County Attorney’s office did not handle any cases involving undocumented persons in FY 1999.

Jeff Davis County Justice of the Peace and Constable

Justice of the Peace Courts have original jurisdiction in Class “C” misdemeanor criminal cases for which the fine does not exceed \$500. They also have jurisdiction over minor civil matters and function as small claims courts. Controversies in civil cases may not exceed \$5,000. In their official capacity, the justice of the peace may issue search and arrest warrants, conduct preliminary hearings and perform marriages. Jeff Davis County has only one Justice of the Peace Court with an operating budget of \$27,633.

The constable, as peace officer, is the chief processor of the justice court. In that capacity, the constable has statewide jurisdiction to execute criminal processes and countywide jurisdiction to execute civil process. The Constable acts to maintain the peace within the county precinct, makes arrests of individuals violating the state penal code, and works to prevent and deter crime within the precinct. The sole constable supporting the JP court operated in FY99 with a budget of \$15,419. They report no impact from illegal immigrants.

Jeff Davis County Jail

Prisoners from Jeff Davis County are housed in the Presidio County Jail. During FY 1999 the county’s general fund jail expenditures were \$25,179. During that time period a total of 29 prisoners (average two per month) from Jeff Davis County were held in the Presidio County Jail. Table T115 shows the cost to the county of criminal undocumented persons was \$6,706 for transportation and incarceration.

Table T115: Jeff Davis County Jail Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$25,179	20%	\$5,036	\$1,670	\$6,706

Jeff Davis County Juvenile Probation

Although Jeff Davis County is experiencing an increase in juvenile crime, primarily vandalism, none of the problems has been associated with undocumented persons. Juvenile probation serves a tri-county area including Jeff Davis, Brewster and Presidio Counties. Community supervision fees in the FY 1999 budget were \$1,395.

Jeff Davis County Adult Probation

The county participates in the Tri-County Community Supervision Program that serves Presidio, Brewster and Jeff Davis County. Contributions from the various counties are pro-rated based on the county population. Jeff Davis contributed \$3,600 during FY 1999 and reported no impact from illegal immigrants.

Jeff Davis County Indigent Defense

During FY 1999 Jeff Davis County spent \$6,390 on attorney fees for indigent defense. None of these monies was used in cases defending criminal undocumented persons.

Jeff Davis County Indigent Health Care

The majority of the indigent health care budget in Jeff Davis County is spent on the elderly. In some fiscal years the county does not even use all the money allocated for indigent health care. \$13,806 was spent on indigent health care and an estimated \$3,677 was to provide services for undocumented persons, shown in table T116.

There is no county-funded hospital in Jeff Davis County. Patients needing medical attention are seen at Big Bend Medical Center in Alpine. Located in neighboring Brewster County, this is a small 34-bed hospital.

Table T116: Jeff Davis County Indigent Health Care Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$13,806	20%	\$2,761	\$916	\$3,677

Jeff Davis County Autopsies and Burials

No autopsies were conducted in Jeff Davis County in FY 1999. The two indigent burials of undocumented persons including general government costs was \$1,598, indicated in table T117.

Table T117: Jeff Davis County Autopsies and Burial Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,200	100%	\$1,200	\$398	\$1,598

CULBERSON COUNTY, TEXAS

The county's 9,875 square miles encompasses numerous mountain ranges. The county seat of Van Horn is situated in a valley in the midst of the mountains. North and northwest of Van Horn are the Baylor and Beach Mountains. In the northeastern sector of the county lay the Delaware Mountains. To the south and southwest are the Carrizo and Eagle Mountains, while the southeastern part of the county is home to the Van Horn and Wylie Mountains. The mountains slope to the east towards the Pecos Valley and the western ranges drain into the Diablo Basin. A narrow strip of the Sierra Diablo Wildlife Management Area is located at the midpoint of the Culberson-Hudspeth County line. The southern section of the 86,416-acre Guadalupe Mountains National Park is in the northwest Culberson County. The twin peaks of Guadalupe and El Capitan, both over 8,000 feet, are popular hiking and camping destinations. The mountains rise abruptly from the Chihuahuan desert floor so that the rugged terrain creates a stark desert beauty.⁵⁴

Although Culberson County does not share an international boundary with Mexico, the southern tip of the county is less than 10 miles from border. Situated between Hudspeth and Jeff Davis Counties, Culberson County has major north-south and east-west transportation routes traversing the county. Interstate-10 bisects southern Culberson County. Van Horn, the county seat with a population of 2,834, is located on Interstate-10, as is the smaller community of Kent, population 60. Van Horn's numerous motels and RV parks provide a rest stop for interstate travelers and tourists. Van Horn also has a small 25-bed county hospital.

U.S. Highway 90 connects Van Horn to the south with Jeff Davis County, passing through the rural town of Lobo. Traveling due north from Van Horn, State Highway 54 intersects U.S. 180/62, which give access to the Guadalupe Mountains and Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico through the small rural towns of Pine Springs and Nickel Creek. The Union Pacific Railroad lines run parallel to IH10. In Van Horn rail switching services are available. The Southern Pacific line passes through Lobo on the route through the Davis Mountains as it heads to Houston.

Culberson County's population in 1999 was 3,018 persons, a slight decrease in population since the 1990 census. Seventy-five percent of the population is Hispanic with the remainder of the population non-Hispanic white. The median family income was \$18,267 in 1995, with most of the workforce engaged in service, motels and restaurants, and retail trade, primarily gas stations, automotive dealers and convenience stores. The 1999 average unemployment rate was 7.8 percent. Just over half of the population (53.3 percent) holds high school diplomas, while only 12.1 percent are college graduates.

There is one countywide school district, Culberson County-Allamoore ISD, with a student population of 795. Seventy-seven percent of the pupils live in economically disadvantaged circumstances.⁵⁵

The FY 1999 county tax rate of 0.83864 raised a levy of \$1,365,911 based on the total assessed county valuation of \$240,398,250. Culberson County ranks 234th out of 254 Texas counties in total assessed valuation, indicating the limited financial resources available for county services. The total general fund expenditures for Culberson County in 1999 were \$1,937,814.

Culberson County's Border Environment

Culberson County does not share an international boundary with Mexico; however, the southwestern sector of the county forms an acute angle between Hudspeth and Jeff Davis Counties. The rugged mountainous terrain in the vicinity of the border serves as major obstacles for human smuggling operations, but, the narco-traffickers frequently hire *mules* to backpack small loads (under 100 pounds of marijuana) into the area. *Coyotes* engaged in human smuggling operations are more likely to use the rail lines. Prying open empty boxcars and cramming 40 to 50 people in each for transport, the smugglers leave undocumented persons in inhumane conditions often without adequate food and water.

Interstate-10, traversing east to west through the county, offers an additional point of transit for undocumented persons. Culberson County functions as a transition point to locations further in the interior of the U.S., rather than as a destination point. According to the county sheriff, "Illegals cross over our county, headed elsewhere." The Border Patrol apprehended 1,378 persons in 1999, a number equivalent to nearly half the population of the county.

Table T118: Culberson County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
3,018	9,875	0 miles	0	1,378	0

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justices, and Emergency Medical Services

The total estimated costs to Culberson County for providing services to criminal undocumented persons and providing emergency medical care to undocumented persons for FY 1999 was \$610,104. This figure reflects a general government cost of \$270,361 plus the direct impact of \$332,765. The residents of Culberson County have an additional impact of \$9,500 through the special hospital district, which is NOT a part of the county's general fund. A site visit in August 2000 resulted in interviews with key county officials. Follow-up clarification for the analysis of the fiscal impact by budgetary department was conducted through phone calls and email. Each of the impacted departmental areas will be enumerated in the discussion below.

**Table T119: Culberson County Costs by Department
County Totals \$610,104**

Sheriff	District Court	District Court	District and County Clerk	County Attorney	Justice of the Peace	Adult Probation
\$371,425	\$57,988	\$24,649	\$61,272	\$13,494	\$79,430	\$1,846

Culberson County Sheriff

During FY 1999 the total general fund expenditures for the Culberson County Sheriff's Office were \$487,079. Seventy-three percent of the budgeted expenses were for personnel. The Sheriff oversees the operation of the 17-prisoner jail, so the budget includes \$20,000 for indigent prisoner medical care as well as \$15,000 for jail supplies.

Enforcement of the border is a huge burden to the county, according to the sheriff. The Border Patrol apprehends most of the state prisoners who are charged with drug-related crimes; however, since the quantity of illegal narcotics being transported is under the federal threshold for prosecution those individuals become the state's responsibility. Suicide attempts by prisoners are especially costly for the county. When this occurs the inmates must be transported to mental health facilities in El Paso and off-duty deputies have to stay and guard the prisoner during his stay. The Sheriff reports outstanding medical bills totaled \$15,000 for two illegal prisoners who attempted suicide. The total impact of criminal undocumented persons was \$371,425.

Table T120: Culberson County Sheriff Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Indigent Medical	\$20,000	100%	\$20,000	\$15,966	\$31,966
Jail Supplies	\$15,000	40%	\$6,000	\$4,773	\$10,773
Remainder Sheriff Budget	\$452,079	40%	\$180,832	\$143,854	\$324,686
Total	\$487,079		\$206,832	\$164,593	\$371,425

Culberson County District Attorney

The 34th Judicial District is served by the District Attorney's Office located in El Paso. The D.A. is responsible for prosecuting state felony criminal cases in El Paso, Culberson and Hudspeth Counties.

The Culberson County general fund expenditures for Jury totaled \$40,588 in FY99. This budget item includes \$22,000 for court costs, juries and judicial district expenses. The bulk of the personnel budget pays for indigent defense (\$13,000), while the remainder for bailiffs (\$665), court reporter (\$2,000) and administrator (\$700), and the district attorney (\$1,593.) During FY99 approximately 70 percent of the general jury fund and 100 percent of the court appointed attorneys costs were for administration of justice on cases involving undocumented persons. The total impact of prosecution of criminal undocumented persons in Culberson County was \$57,988 in FY99.

Table T121: Culberson County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Court Appointed Attorneys	\$13,000	100%	\$13,000	\$10,279	\$23,279
Jury Expenditures	\$27,558	70%	\$19,291	\$15,418	\$34,709
Total	\$40,558		\$32,291	\$25,697	\$57,988

Culberson County District Court

Both the 205th and the 394th District Courts serve Culberson County. The judge of the 394th District Court has his home courtroom in Alpine, and the 205th District Court Judge has her primary courtroom in El Paso. Travel costs are therefore incurred whenever either of the judges hears cases in Culberson County. In addition, the 205th District Court Judge brings her own bailiff, court reporter and court interpreter with her. The 394th District Court Judge brings a court reporter and interpreter; however, she uses local law enforcement as a bailiff. The annual cost to Culberson County for these courts is a proportion of the total cost based on the size of the county's population.

The general fund expenditures were \$19,609 for the 394th District Court. The District Judge indicated that the number of criminal cases in his circuit meant that civil cases often wait several years before coming to trial. Culberson County used the services of visiting judges to hear some of the cases during FY 1999, as the 394th District Court docket was so full. Approximately 70 percent of the District Court costs are for criminal cases with undocumented defendants. The total fiscal impact for Culberson County of undocumented persons was \$24,649 depicted in table T122.

Table T122: Culberson County District Court Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$19,609	70%	\$13,726	\$10,923	\$24,649

Culberson County-District Clerk

The combined office of County-District Clerk is responsible for the administrative record keeping associated with both criminal and civil cases heard in district court. Other duties include filing of legal documents, titles and proceedings, and disposition and collection of money and fees related. The County-District Clerk's general fund expenditures for FY 1999 were \$85,300. The estimated costs associated with processing and filings for criminal undocumented persons were \$61,272 indicated in table T123.

Table T123: Culberson County-District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$85,300	40%	\$34,120	\$27,152	\$61,272

Culberson County Attorney

The County Attorney serves as legal advisor to the Commissioner's Court. Handling misdemeanor cases up to but not including criminal felonies, the County Attorney's general fund expenditures for FY 1999 were \$75,143. Table T124 shows the fiscal impact of criminal undocumented persons on the County Attorney's office was \$13,494.

Table T124: Culberson County Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$75,143	10%	\$7,514	\$5,980	\$13,494

Culberson County Justice Of The Peace and Constables

The Justice of the Peace Courts are charged with the responsibility for all civil cases with less than \$5,000 in controversy and "Class C" criminal misdemeanor cases less than \$500. They also have the authority to issue search and arrest warrants, conduct preliminary hearings and marry individuals. The Justice of the Peace Courts see a large number of driving under the influence, driving while intoxicated, suspended license and uninsured motorist cases because of the presence of the interstate. Many of the motorists charged under these violations are undocumented.

Constables act as the peace officer of the justice court. They execute the criminal and civil processes, make arrests, and maintain the peace in the precinct.

Culberson County's general fund expenditures for judicial law also include autopsy expenses (\$2,500) and prisoner's food and board (\$25,000.) The total general fund expenditures were \$164,426. The impact of criminal undocumented persons on the judicial law budget was \$79,431, as shown in table T125.

Table T125: Culberson County Justice of the Peace and Constable Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Autopsies	\$2,500	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Prisoner Food & Board	\$25,000	40%	\$10,000	\$7,955	\$17,955
JP, Constable, Judicial Law	\$136,926	25%	\$34,232	\$27,244	\$61,476
Total	\$164,426		\$44,232	\$35,199	\$79,431

Culberson County Jail

Culberson County maintains a 17-prisoner jail. Eight of the beds are reserved for federal prisoners. Expenditures for the county jail are accounted for in the Sheriff's Office and Judicial Law budgets. The Sheriff's budget includes personnel expenses for the jail administrator and other supervisory

personnel, as well as indigent prisoner medical costs. The Judicial Law budget incorporates the costs for prisoner room and board.

Culberson County Adult Probation

El Paso County oversees community supervision for adult probationers. Approximately half of the adult caseload involves persons illegally in the United States. The total general fund expenditures in FY 1999 were \$2,056. The fiscal impact of criminal undocumented persons was \$1,846, depicted in table T126.

Table T126: Culberson County Adult Probation Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$2,056	50%	\$1,028	\$818	\$1,846

Culberson County Autopsies and Burials

The budget expenditures for autopsies are included in the judicial law budget. For discussion see Justice of the Peace. There were no burials in Culberson County in FY 1999.

Culberson County Emergency Medical Care

Indigent prisoner medical care is included in the Sheriff's Office budget. The average prisoner medical cost is \$109 (see discussion above). Culberson County has a small hospital in Van Horn. The hospital's budget is \$95,000, which is funded separately through a special taxing district levied on county taxpayers. The hospital administrator said it renders emergency medical care to approximately 50 undocumented persons per year, which represents 10 percent of the total budget. Major trauma cases are transferred to Thomason Hospital in El Paso County. Military helicopters from Ft. Bliss, as part of its Military Air Transport Service, often provide transport for critical cases. A separate assessment for the Culberson County Hospital District determines the tax burden on the local citizen. The impact of emergency medical care for undocumented persons on the county hospital budget was \$9,500.

Table T127: Culberson County Emergency Medical Care Impact

Special Hospital District Fund	Impact	Cost
\$95,000	10%	\$9,500

HUDSPETH COUNTY, TEXAS

Hudspeth County's 11,840 square miles include a rich mixture of verdant agricultural valleys, plateaus, mountainous terrain and salt lakes. The Quitman Mountains are parallel to the Rio Grande in the central portion of the county's international boundary. Sierra Diablo Mountains are northeast of Sierra Blanca, the county seat. The Sierra Diablo Wildlife Management Area forms part of the central eastern border with neighboring Culberson County. In the northeastern corner of the county a small portion of the Guadalupe Mountains National Park extends into the Hudspeth County.⁵⁵ To the west of the national parkland is Linda Lake. When considered with the smaller lakes northeast of Linda Lake, they form a large salt basin.

Sierra Blanca (population 700) is a ranching center. Located on Interstate-10, which cuts laterally on an east to west route through the southern portion of the county, the city also offers a fuel and food stop for travelers. The federal government has considered locating a radioactive waste dump near Sierra Blanca because of the remoteness of the area; however, legal challenges have thus far prevented the site's development. Farm-to-Market Road 1111, the only north to south transportation route in the county, connects Sierra Blanca with State Highway 62/180, the east west connector in the northern sector of Hudspeth County. Dell City (population 780) situated on the northern county line, serves as an agricultural center with cattle feedlots and vegetable packing operations. Unlike most of the West Texas desert region, Dell City has some of the largest water wells in the state. Fort Hancock (population 400) is positioned in the rich alluvial floodplain of the Rio Grande. The U.S. Border Patrol maintains a port-of-entry in Fort Hancock. Other small agrarian communities farming the banks of the Rio Grande are Acala, McNary, Esperanza and Quitman.

The Texas demographer estimated Hudspeth County's population at 3,238 in 1999. This represents a 13.5 percent increase from the decennial census. Three of every four new county residents are international migrants, primarily from Mexico. Seventy-one percent of the residents are Hispanic, 27 percent are Anglo and less than one percent African-American. The estimated median household income was \$17,275. Hudspeth enjoyed a low unemployment rate of 3.5 percent. Forty-eight percent of the adult population are high school graduates, and 8 percent have college degrees.

The county has three independent school districts. Of the 495 students enrolled in Ft. Hancock ISD, 88.7 percent are economically disadvantaged. One of every four students in Ft. Hancock ISD drops out of school before graduation. Sierra Blanca ISD is the smallest district, with 130 pupils. Sixty-two percent of the children live in poverty and one of every 10 students drops out of school before completing graduation. Dell City ISD enrolled 190 students in 1999, of whom 64.2 percent were economically disadvantaged. Countywide, 40 percent of the youth less than 18 years of age live in poverty, while 32.7 percent of the total population are in households with income below the federal poverty level.⁵⁶

The total assessed valuation for Hudspeth County for FY 1999 was \$321,300,728. The county tax rate of 0.54500 net a tax levy of \$1,205,258. Hudspeth County's total general fund expenditures for 1999 were \$1,814,407.

Hudspeth County's Border Environment

Hudspeth County shares approximately 94 miles of international border with Mexico. From the El Paso County line in the west to about the midpoint of the boundary, irrigation of the alluvial floodplain yields a strong farming economy. State Highway 20 runs parallel to the Rio Grande from the county line to McNary from there Farm-to-Ranch 192 continues eastward past Quitman. There is a rural U.S. border port of entry at Fort Hancock. Historic ruins of prior river fortifications can be seen in Fort Hancock and Fort Quitman. The broad, flat floodplain provides ample venues for undocumented persons seeking to gain entrance to Hudspeth County.

Between Quitman and Indian Hot Springs the land rises steeply from the Rio Grande into the Quitman Mountains. This serves as a natural geophysical barrier from illegal entrance to the U.S.

The U.S. Border Patrol operates a checkpoint on Interstate-10 just west of Sierra Blanca as a deterrent to narcotics smuggling and illegal entrance of undocumented persons. The Southern Pacific Railroad transverses the southern county paralleling Interstate-10 to Sierra Blanca and then heading southeasterly towards Presidio. From Sierra Blanca the Union Pacific line runs along the interstate eastward towards Houston. Both routes have been used for human smuggling. In 1999 while 598,193 legally crossed into the U.S., Border Patrol agents apprehended 4,708 persons in Hudspeth County.

Table T128: Hudspeth County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
3,238	11,840	94 miles	598,193	4,708	1

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

Estimated total costs to Hudspeth County for providing services to criminal undocumented persons and providing emergency medical care to undocumented persons was \$120,524, depicted in table T129. Hudspeth County has several special funds in their budget, which are NOT included in the general fund budget. Additional county impact costs were estimated at \$3,938 for emergency medical care, \$98,322 in the jail enterprise fund and \$800 in the jury fund. During a site visit in August, conversations with the county judge and sheriff provided insight into the challenges undocumented persons present to Hudspeth County. Further financial analysis of the budgets of the Sheriff, County and District Attorneys, District Court, County-District Clerk, Justices of the Peace and Constables was done. The following discussion details the estimated costs for individual departments.

**Table T129: Hudspeth County Costs by Department
County Totals \$120,524**

Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	District and County Clerk	County Attorney	Justice of the Peace	Adult and Juvenile Probation	Indigent Defense
\$64,884	\$392	\$2,336	\$10,973	\$0	\$38,945	\$1,498	\$1,496

Hudspeth County Sheriff

The total general fund expenditures during FY 1999 for the sheriff's office were \$401,079. The sheriff's budget includes personnel costs, liability insurance, gas, oil and car repairs for patrol and transport. The sheriff reports that the U.S. Marshals bring in most of the undocumented persons. The major criminal problems the sheriff's department handles are misdemeanors, DWIs (driving while intoxicated), and disposition of dead bodies.

During FY 1999 the sheriff's department discovered the bodies of three male juveniles. "Near as we figure," relates a deputy, "the boys were trying to jump on the train. Three boys died. We took the bodies to a funeral home in El Paso and notified the Mexican consulate in Juarez. Next thing we know, the family and the governor of Chihuahua were wanting to sue the county so we'd pay to transport the bodies home to the interior of Chihuahua. We figured we got them to the consulate, and they were the Mexican government's problem after that." This situation indicates some of the unexpected financial challenges that can confront border counties. The total estimated impact of undocumented persons on the Sheriff's Department was \$64,884 as shown in table T130.

Table T130: Hudspeth County Sheriff Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$401,079	13%	\$52,140	\$12,744	\$64,884

Hudspeth County District Attorney

The District Attorney serving the 34th Judicial District is responsible for prosecution of cases in Hudspeth, Culberson and El Paso Counties. With their primary offices located in El Paso County, staff attorneys from the D.A.'s office travel to Sierra Blanca to try cases. Hudspeth County reimburses El Paso County \$114.35 per month for these services. The total estimated impact of cases involving criminal undocumented persons for the District Attorney budget was \$392, depicted in table T131.

Table T131: Hudspeth County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,258	25%	\$315	\$77	\$392

Hudspeth County District Court

Hudspeth County is served by the 394th District Court. The judge schedules himself in Hudspeth County once a month in order to try cases. Coming from Alpine (Brewster County), travel costs borne by Hudspeth County in FY 1999 were \$2,170. In addition, a court reporter from Alpine and a translator from El Paso are also present during District Court cases involving undocumented persons. The average annual cost for court interpreters is \$3,000, and approximately \$4,500 is spent on the services of the court recorder.

The total general fund allocations for the 394th District Court were \$14,441. Estimated costs associated with the court cases involving undocumented persons were \$2,336, shown in table T132.

Table T132: Hudspeth County District Court Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$14,441	13%	\$1,877	\$459	\$2,336

Hudspeth County-District Clerk

The combined office of the County-District Clerk handles the administrative record keeping associated with criminal and civil cases heard in District Court. The County-District Clerk also processes the collection of fees and monies fined by the court. Legal documents and titles are also filed through this office. The total general fund expenditure for FY 1999 was \$67,833. Using the same impact rate as the District Court, the fiscal impact of criminal undocumented persons on the office of the County-District Clerk was \$10,973, which is shown in table T133.

Table T133: Hudspeth County-District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$67,833	13%	\$8,818	\$2,155	\$10, 973

Hudspeth County Attorney

Misdemeanor cases make up the majority of the County Attorney's legal responsibilities. He also serves as legal advisor to the County Commissioner's Court. The general fund expenditures in FY 1999 were \$10,389. There was no impact from cases involving undocumented persons during the same time period.

Hudspeth County Justice of the Peace and Constable

There are four Justices of the Peace in Hudspeth County. These Judicial Law Courts are responsible for civil cases if the controversy is less than \$5,000 and Class "C" criminal cases if the fine is less than \$500. Other duties performed by Justices of the Peace include conducting preliminary hearings, issuing search and warrant arrests and marrying citizens. Supporting the efforts of the

Judicial Law Courts are the peace officers, or constables. These law enforcement officials execute the criminal and civil processes as well as make arrests and uphold the peace within the precincts.

Hudspeth County's total general fund budget for Justices of the Peace includes personnel costs for constables and inquest expenditures. The total allocated in FY 1999 was \$167,022. The estimated impact of undocumented persons was \$38,945, which is depicted in table T134.

Table T134: Hudspeth County Justices of the Peace and Constables Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Constables	\$23,465	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Autopsies	\$3,231	100%	\$3,231	\$765	\$3,996
Justice of the Peace	\$140,326	20%	\$28,065	\$6,884	\$34,949
Total	\$167,022		\$31,296	\$7,649	\$38,945

Hudspeth County Adult and Juvenile Probation

The West Texas Community Supervision and Corrections Department (WTCSCD) is responsible for oversight of probation and parole for Hudspeth, Culberson and El Paso Counties. In addition to traditional community supervision, WTCSCD also operates a diversion program for first-time offenders and three supervised community corrections residential living centers in El Paso County. Under current federal legislation, undocumented adults receiving probated sentences may have as a condition of their probation a provision that forbids re-entry into the United States for a given number of years. Lack of compliance with this provision of probation can lead to revocation of probation and incarceration. The WTCSCD supervised 2,200 foreign national adults in the three-county region during FY 1999. The total Hudspeth County general fund expenditure for adult probation was \$9,628.

Because the federal government has no legislation covering community supervision of juveniles, most of the undocumented youths picked up by the U.S. Border Patrol in Hudspeth County are repatriated back to Mexico. Two hundred-six Mexican national juveniles were supervised in FY 1999 in El Paso, Hudspeth and Culberson counties. The total estimated cost of adult and juvenile probation for Hudspeth County, shown in table T135, was \$1,498.

Table T135: Hudspeth County Adult and Juvenile Probation Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$9,628	12.5%	\$1,204	\$294	\$1,498

Hudspeth County Autopsies and Burials

Inquests are the responsibility of the Justice of the Peace. There were no indigent burials of undocumented persons in FY 1999. See above section for further discussion.

Hudspeth County Indigent Defense

The total general fund expenditures for indigent defense were \$18,491. Of that total, approximately 6.5 percent of the cases involve representation for undocumented persons for an impact of \$1,496, shown in table T136.

Table T136: Hudspeth County Indigent Defense Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$18,491	6.5%	\$1,202	\$294	\$1,496

Emergency Medical Care

Prisoner medical care is included in the jail enterprise account. During FY1999 Hudspeth County spent \$52,673 on medical care and \$629 for first aid at the jail. A local physician treats minor problems, but any serious health care problems must be treated outside the county. Most of the medical problems are sent to the 25-bed hospital in Culberson County; however, major medical illnesses or trauma requiring tertiary care specialists are shipped to Thomason Hospital in El Paso County. The costs for prisoner medical care are included in the jail enterprise fund.

The Indigent Health Care Fund is used to provide financial support for health care in Hudspeth County. While the majority of patients receiving financial assistance are elderly, approximately 10 percent of the recipients are undocumented persons. Expenditures during FY1999 covered hospital care expenses (\$31,822), physician services (\$6,815) and medication (\$494). Emergency care for undocumented persons represents approximately 10 percent of this fund, approximately \$3,938.

Jail Enterprise Fund

Hudspeth County operates a 120-bed jail. The average inmate population is composed of approximately 80 U.S. Marshal prisoners and federal holds, 20-25 inmates from the U.S. Bureau of Prisons, who are felons with sentences under one year, and the remaining 15 are state prisoners. The majority of the state prisoners are being held for narcotics, robbery and illegal entry into the U.S.

Administration of the jail requires a staff of 21. The personnel expenditure portion of the fund in FY99 was \$534,484. The total jail expenditures were \$1,512,641. Approximately half of the state prisoners held in the Hudspeth County Jail are undocumented persons. The impact of criminal undocumented on the jail enterprise fund was \$98,322.

Jury Fund

The Jury Fund includes payments for jurors serving both grand and regular jury duty. The cost of court reporters (\$5,524), court-appointed attorneys (\$9,927) and bailiffs (\$6,500) are also included in the Jury Fund expenditures. Jury Fund total expenditures in FY1999 were \$23,212. Of that amount, \$15,000 flows out via transfer (e.g., court appointed attorney costs are transferred to the non-departmental general fund budget). Of the remaining expenditures, \$8,211, or less than 10 percent of the expenditures, are for services to criminal undocumented persons. The total impact of criminal undocumented persons on the Jury Fund was \$800.

EL PASO COUNTY, TEXAS

El Paso County is located in the far-western tip of Texas. Covering 2,624 square miles, the county includes the 7,000-foot Franklin Mountains, which bisect the City of El Paso, and the verdant agricultural valley irrigated by the Rio Grande. El Paso is the northern boundary of the arid high Chihuahuan desert region with limited water resources. Popular with hikers and mountain bikers, the Franklin Mountains State Park protects 24,248 acres of the natural stark desert beauty of the mountains in the U.S.' largest urban park. The foothills of the Rocky Mountains, the Franklin Mountains overlook the Rio Grande and form the northern boundary of the Paso del Norte (Pass of the North) region. Thirty-two miles east of El Paso, similar beauty can be found in the solitude of the Hueco Mountains. Heuco Tanks State Park derives its name from the natural rock basins, or *huecos*, that hold precious desert rainwater. The 860-acre park preserves early Native American cave pictographs.⁵⁷

El Paso is the largest Texas city on the Mexican border. The fourth largest county in Texas with a population of 696,179 (1999), El Paso is uniquely located in a bi-national, tri-state area. The area has seen tremendous growth (17.7 percent) since the 1990 census. *Ciudad Juarez*, El Paso's Mexican sister city, is also experiencing major growth pains with a current population of approximately 1.3 million. The region's economy incorporates both the U.S. and Mexico, primarily through the *maquiladora* industries, and includes southwestern New Mexico (Las Cruces), Texas and the northern Mexican frontier state of Chihuahua. In 1999 there were 271 *maquiladoras*, which employed 218,456 persons.⁵⁸ Transportation and distribution play an important role in moving the goods produced on both sides of the border. Interstate-10 provides east to west connections and serves as the major transportation corridor with connection to Interstate-25 and Mexico's Pan American Highway. Highway 54 connects El Paso on a north to south corridor that eventually links with Kansas City. The Burlington Northern/Santa Fe and Southern Pacific Railroads offer rail transit for delivery of goods produced locally and in Mexico. The Airports Council International reports that El Paso has one of the fastest growing air cargo markets in the U.S. The new \$23 million cargo center moves approximately 100,000 tons of cargo per year.⁵⁹

The region is a center for U.S. governmental operations. Army Fort Bliss, which includes the headquarters of the U.S. Army Air Defense Command, covers over 700,000 acres, including much of the northeastern section of the county. There are 13,000 troops stationed at the post. They maintain a large regional hospital, William Beaumont General Hospital that provides care both to active duty and the many retired veterans in the El Paso area. La Tuna Correctional Institution is a federal prison located in El Paso. Due to the large border area, the FBI, INS and Customs also maintain substantial offices in El Paso County. State and local government and independent school districts (ISD) also are prominent employers. Trade and manufacturing keep the U.S. and Mexican economies intertwined through *maquiladora*, or twin plant, production. Electronics, auto equipment and plastics are the primary products of this bi-national enterprise. Clothing manufacturing has diminished in importance in the El Paso area in recent years with the closure of major U.S. plants; however, the garment industry is functioning through the twin plant system. The other dominant economic sector is service, with El Paso providing many of the back office functions for the *maquiladora* industries. In the past two to three years El Paso has also become a major location for call centers, which utilize entry level technical and computer skills, and have the advantage of offering bi-lingual services.

Both east and west of the City of El Paso, smaller agricultural communities raise peppers, pecans, onions and cotton in irrigated fields. Anthony (population 3,731), Vinton (807), and Canutillo (5,134) are located northeast of El Paso on State Highway 20, which connects with New Mexico. Southeast of El Paso in an area known as the Lower Valley, Socorro, population 29,131, is barely able to keep up with the infrastructure and educational demands of its rapidly expanding population. Socorro, Ysleta (now part of El Paso) and San Elizario (4,770) are major tourist attractions because of the historic Catholic missions located in each of the communities. Horizon City (population 3,234), a retirement center east of Socorro, is also facing a major population boom. Further east along Interstate-10, Clint (1,138), Fabens (5,934) and Tornillo (241) are agricultural communities.

The 1999 county population estimate was 701,908, an 18.6 percent increase since the decennial census. The county's population is predominantly Hispanic, 74.5 percent. Twenty percent are Anglo and 3.5 percent are African-American. Additionally, the 1,250 member Tigua Indians maintain a presence in the Lower Valley with a casino as well as gas and convenience stores. El Paso County's median family income was \$25,384. The U.S. Census Bureau estimated 30.9 percent of the families lived at or below the federal poverty level in 1996. After a near decade of double-digit unemployment, in 1999 El Paso County's rate dropped to 9.4 percent. The low educational attainment of the adult labor force, 63.7 percent with high school diplomas and 15.2 percent with four or more years of college, present workforce development challenges.

There are three major urban and six rural school districts in El Paso County plus one charter school. El Paso, Ysleta and Socorro ISDs' have student populations of 62,945, 47,238 and 23,566 respectively. Sixty-seven percent of both El Paso and Socorro ISDs' pupils are economically disadvantaged, and Ysleta is challenged by 72 percent of its students living in poverty. The other ISDs' include Tornillo, Canutillo, Anthony, San Elizario, Fabens and Clint. These rural districts ranging in size from 7,000 (Clint) to 803 (Anthony) have student bodies experiencing economic hardship from 80 percent to 97 percent of the total enrollment.⁵⁹ El Paso Community College, with a student enrollment 18,850, and The University of Texas at El Paso with 14,695 students, provide higher educational opportunities for the county. Additionally, 23 business and vocational schools offer specialized technical certifications and training in skilled trades.

The total assessed valuation in El Paso County for FY 1999 was \$19.6 billion. The county tax rate of 0.36143 resulted in a net levy of 60.9 million to operate services for local residents. Total general fund expenditures during 1999 were \$97,744,000.

El Paso County Border Environment

The international boundary between El Paso County and Mexico is approximately 60 miles in length. Flat alluvial floodplains form both sides of the border. During Lyndon Baines Johnson's presidency, the disputed river boundary was settled with the establishment of the Chamizal National Park. Much of the Rio Grande was diverted into concrete channels with steeply angled sides that create turbulent waters, making river crossings dangerous. Some of the irrigation canals, which average 8 feet to 12 feet in depth, have concrete covers making river rescues difficult. Drowning is the primary cause of death in illegal crossings. In 1999 there were 11 drownings and 44 water-related rescues in El Paso County. During the summer of 2000, the Border Patrol installed four

unmanned water rescue stations stocked with floatation devices, safety vests, blankets and first aid kits to assist with river rescues.⁶⁰

There are four ports-of-entry in El Paso County, where the INS reported 60.7 million border crossings. The Stanton Street Bridge in downtown El Paso is a southbound toll bridge with a dedicated commuter lane. Purchasing the necessary vehicular identification technology (approximately \$400 per year) and passing a rigorous security background check allows for reduced bridge wait times for frequent crossers. The northbound bridge also offers pedestrian access for many Mexican nationals who shop in El Paso's downtown area. Crossing fees are 25 cents for pedestrians and \$1.25 for automobiles. During FY 1999, 4.8 million pedestrians and 4.1 million cars crossed the international boundary at the Paso del Norte Bridge.

The Bridge of the Americas, just east of downtown El Paso, offers free passage to Mexico. As a result bridge wait times for persons entering the U.S. often run between 20 minutes to an hour or more. Further east in the Lower Valley, the Zaragosa Bridge, another toll bridge, serves as a major transit point for goods produced in Mexico. Daily workers and freight carriers travel between the U.S. and Mexico. The downside to the increased traffic has been longer crossing times for both commuter and commercial traffic and substantial increases in air pollution. Commercial vehicles are assessed \$2.30 per axle for entry into the U.S. Both the Bridge of the Americas and the Zaragosa Bridge have substantially fewer pedestrian crossings than the downtown bridge.

In the rural easternmost portion of the county the international crossing point is a small two-lane bridge connecting agricultural Fabens with Caseta, Mexico. During FY 1999, 5.6 million pedestrians and 16 million passenger vehicles entered the U.S. legally through these four ports-of-entry. Additionally 671,745 freight carriers brought in Mexican products.

There are also two railroad crossings linking the City of El Paso with *Ciudad Juarez*. Located in their respective central business districts, the international rail facilities are proving to be increasingly incompatible with surrounding urban development. El Paso is the fifth major Mexican rail import city in the U.S. The Southern Pacific/Union Pacific main rail lines parallel Interstate-10, forming an east to west corridor. From northwest El Paso County, the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad's lines provide access to Denver and Chicago. Illegal crossing activity is frequently found in the rail yards with undocumented persons hoping to jump a northbound freight. *Coyotes* smuggling larger numbers of people try to access empty freight cars.

El Paso, with its low wages and high unemployment, functions as a thoroughfare, or transit point, for undocumented persons looking for work in other parts of the U.S. More recently, *coyotes* have employed the strategy of renting large passenger vans and U-Hauls to transport human cargo. Accidents that occur when law enforcement officials are in hot pursuit of smugglers sometimes lead to deadly results. In FY 1999 INS reported seizing 738 vehicles and 969 individuals who had been illegally smuggled into West Texas and New Mexico.

Furthermore, of the 5,374 aircraft flights made from the El Paso International Airport, the INS report making 11,954 alien inspections. Alien inspections accounted for 43.1 percent of all individuals examined at the airport. Interviews with Border Patrol agents revealed that *coyotes* are currently paying \$1,500 for private air flights to smuggle individuals to the Dallas-Fort Worth airport.

The sale of fraudulent documents is another method of helping undocumented persons gain entry into the U.S. Alien registration cards, border crossing cards, visas and passports represent opportunities to cross under the guise of legality. The El Paso INS District (West Texas and New Mexico) intercepted 11,659 fraudulent documents in FY 1999. In other investigations for the U.S. Bureau of Census conducted during summer 2000, researchers discovered that even with some immigrants gain entry through Border Crossing Cards, their subsequent expiration results in loss of legal residency status. Confusion over legal processes results in many of these expired border crossers believing they have “papers.”⁶¹

Drug smugglers and importers of other illegal contraband use both rail and commercial vehicles to transport their goods. U.S. Customs and the INS work in joint cooperation under the Border Coordination Initiative to increase the apprehensions of narcotics and illegal substances, persons attempting to cross without legal entry papers, and seizure of other contraband. Begun in September 1998, these coordinated initiatives have resulted in an increase seizure of illegal drugs. Cocaine seizures increased by 27 percent, marijuana was up by 23 percent and heroin by 33 percent along the entire southwestern border. Cooperation in port management, investigations and intelligence, technology, and communications as well as air surveillance are all aimed at stemming drug trafficking operations. The INS in West Texas and New Mexico in FY 1999 intercepted \$87 million worth of narcotics.

El Paso County is one of the major points of entry for illegal drugs into the United States. With an average of 300 to 500 cases per year, the District Attorney’s office estimated that El Paso County taxpayers absorb the \$8 million cost of prosecution for smaller federal drug cases (under 200 pounds of marijuana.) In a June 2000 brokered settlement with the federal government, the U.S. Congress made a \$12 million emergency appropriation to the four U.S.-Mexico border states handling these drug cases. Shared equally among the 4 states, El Paso County anticipates receiving approximately \$1 million to cover pre-trial incarceration costs of local prosecutors, indigent defense counsel, and court costs. The District Attorney “characterized the emergency appropriation as a first step in getting the federal government to acknowledge its responsibility to ‘reimburse the counties that are on the forefront on the war against drugs.’”⁶²

The El Paso INS District is comprised of 15 West Texas counties, including El Paso County, and the State of New Mexico. Thirty INS special agents pursue criminal aliens and status violators who are released from county jails and La Tuna Federal Correctional Facility. During FY 1999 3,891 criminal alien investigations resulted in arrests, of which 92.7 percent were Mexican nationals. Additional apprehensions occur at the official ports of entry. Of the 17,348 alien removals in the El Paso INS District in FY 1999, 4,301 (24.7 percent) were criminal removals.

Table T137: El Paso County Border Statistics

Population	Square mi	Border Length	INS Crossings	Border Patrol Apprehensions	Ports of Entry
701,908	2,624	Miles	60,748,808	53,613	5

Costs of Illegal Immigration on Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Medical Services

The total estimated costs to El Paso County for providing services to criminal and medical emergency services to illegal immigrants for FY 1999 was \$9,189,896, as shown in table T138. This includes a general government cost of \$1,462,188. Several key county officials have been interviewed either by phone or by person since Spring 2000. Financial analysis of the El Paso County budget included the budgets of the Sheriff, County and District Attorneys, District Court, County Clerk, District Clerk, Justices of the Peace and Constables, Family Courts, Public Defender, County Court at Law. In addition, emergency health care costs were also determined through extensive interviews with Thomason County Hospital officials and the Texas Department of Human Resources. The following discussion provides a breakdown of the estimated costs by department.

**Table T138: El Paso County Costs by Department
County Total: \$9,189,896**

Sheriff	District Court	District Attorney	District Clerk	County Court at Law	County Attorney	County Clerk	Judicial Court, Court of Appeals & Magistrate	Indigent Defense	Adult Probation	Juvenile Probation	Justice of the Peace	Emerg. Med.
\$4,525,131	\$343,363	\$643,435	\$162,701	\$1,159,678	\$89,069	\$141,004	\$44,384	\$519,205	\$16,385	\$475,225	\$63,647	\$1,006,671

El Paso County Sheriff

The general fund expenditures for the sheriff's office were \$38,542,034. This budget included personnel costs, detention, jail annex, law enforcement, and courthouse security. The 882-inmate capacity facility incarcerates federal, state and local prisoners. Prisoners have a relatively short length of stay in detention following their initial booking, before being transferred to another facility for long-term incarceration. Detention Center officials report that state prisoners compose an average of one-third of all inmates at the facility. During FY 1999 detention facility had 79,500 prisoner days of detention; 38,500 of those were attributable to state and county prisoners, 8,000 were from federal agencies, and 33,000 were City of El Paso detainees. The jail magistrate indicated that 15 percent of the state prisoners were in the U.S. without legal residency status. He noted that the crimes mostly associated with undocumented persons in El Paso County, in order of frequency, include repeated illegal entry, misdemeanor cases, and drug smuggling. The general fund budget for the county detention facility was \$14,083,599 of which the direct impact of undocumented persons is estimated at \$676,013. A payment from SCAAP amounted to \$1,041,175.

The jail annex was opened in 1998. Designed to house 1,440 inmates, during FY 1999 jail capacity was 1,100. Jail administrators' report that 87 percent (960) of the prisoners in the jail annex are state inmates; the remainder are federal prisoners (140). The general fund budget for the jail annex was \$11,591,752 of which the direct impact of undocumented persons is estimated at \$1,518,520.

Two hundred fifty-three county law enforcement employees are responsible for patrol, dispatch, crime prevention, drug education, motorcycle and motor patrol as well as warrants, arrests and bookings. The general fund budget for the law enforcement portion of the sheriff's responsibility was \$12,387,240 for FY99. Local officials estimate that 13 percent of their workload involves undocumented persons, for a direct fiscal impact of \$1,610,341.

The total fiscal impact of services involving criminal undocumented persons for the sheriff's is estimated at \$4,525,131 as depicted in table T139.

Table T139: El Paso County Sheriff Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Detention	\$14,083,599	4.8%	\$676,013	\$128,206	\$804,219
Jail annex	\$11,591,752	13.1%	\$1,518,520	\$287,383	\$1,805,903
Law enforcement	\$12,387,240	13%	\$1,610,341	\$304,669	\$1,915,010
Total	\$35,542,034		\$3,804,874	\$720,258	\$4,525,131

El Paso County District Court

El Paso County District Court's budget for FY 1999 was \$3,799,812. The total budget figures include 13 district courts, Council of Judges administration costs, juvenile court referee and judges' salary supplement. Each of the district courts has jurisdiction over criminal and civil cases. During FY 1999 40,260 cases were on the civil docket (68.8 percent of the total caseload) and 15,898 on the criminal docket (27.2 percent). Additionally 2,348 juvenile cases (4 percent of the total caseload) were seen by the district courts. The general fund allocation for the 13 district courts was \$1,971,719. This amount is augmented by \$138,883 in salary and benefits supplements for the district court judges.

The Council of Judges Administration handles the scheduling of jury trials and pre-trial hearings, the appointing of indigent defense attorneys, and the provision of interpretation services for non-English speaking defendants. This office also schedules psychiatric evaluations for defendants. Cases are remanded from the grand juries and transferred to the receiving court through the Council of Judges Administration. Fifty-four percent of the cases on the dockets that are handled through the Council of Judges administration offices are district court cases. The general fund budget for this office was \$2,643,852 in FY 1999. Based on the caseload distribution, approximately \$1,425,036 was spent on services to the district courts.

The Commissioner's Court, moving it out from under the jurisdiction of the 327th District Court, established the Juvenile Court Referee in 1997. Appointed by the Council of Judges, the referee presides over juvenile cases. During FY 1999 this court disposed of 2,235 cases on the juvenile docket. The general fund budget was \$264,174. Approximately 46 percent of the juvenile caseload involves youths without legal residency status.

The total impact of undocumented persons on the El Paso County District Court was \$343,363, as seen in table T140.

Table T140: El Paso County District Court Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
District Courts	\$1,971,719	4.7%	\$92,671	\$17,615	\$110,286
Council of Judges Administration	\$1,425,036	4.7%	\$66,977	\$12,731	\$79,708
Juvenile Court Referee	\$264,174	46.3%	\$122,313	\$23,267	\$145,580
Judges Salary Supplement	\$138,883	4.7%	\$6,528	\$1,261	\$7,789
Total	\$3,799,812		\$288,489	\$54,874	\$343,363

El Paso County District Attorney

The District Attorney's primary responsibility is to represent the state's interests in felony criminal actions. In addition to El Paso County, the District Attorney's jurisdiction for the 34th Judicial District includes Hudspeth and Culberson Counties. The smaller neighboring counties pay a portion of the District Attorney's cost prorated on the basis of population. The District Attorney also handles all misdemeanor criminal actions in the County Courts at Law and Justice of the Peace Court, with the exception of juvenile offender prosecution. The DA also co-administers the hot check collection program and is sole administrator of the county's victim assistance program. There are 95 employees in the District Attorney's office. The FY 1999 budget was \$4,158,509.

"It costs El Paso taxpayers about \$8 million a year for the 300 to 500 federal cases handled by El Paso prosecutors, said Esparza, head of the Southwest Border Prosecutors, a coalition of border prosecutors from Brownsville to San Diego. (*El Paso Times*)" Local officials estimate 13 percent of the workload is spent on cases for persons without legal residency status. The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented cases on the District Attorney's office, as shown in table T141, was \$643,435.

Table T141: El Paso County District Attorney Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$4,158,509	13%	\$540,606	\$102,829	\$643,435

El Paso County District Clerk

The District Clerk provides administrative support for the 13 district courts, the impact court and the seven county court (civil issues), as well as the court masters and the jail magistrate. All court pleadings, this office maintains papers and official records. In addition, this office notifies and empanels juries, maintains court dockets, issues writs, citations, and executions. The various fees mandated by the courts are processed through the District Clerk's office. A separate division is responsible for the collection and distribution of child support payments. The El Paso County District Clerk operated with a budget of \$1,981,145. Approximately 7 percent of the workload was

attributable to cases involving undocumented persons, resulting in a total estimated impact of \$162,701, which can be seen in table T142.

Table T142: El Paso County District Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,981,145	6.9%	\$136,699	\$26,002	\$162,701

County Courts at Law

Both civil and criminal cases are heard in the County Court at Law. During FY 1999 there were 43,889 cases on the docket for Class “A” and “B” criminal misdemeanors with fine limits of \$500. The civil caseload, 3,052 cases on the docket, involves cases in which the controversy is between \$500 and \$5,000. The budget was \$3,504,403, and it included seven courts, judges and administration expenses. The courts estimate 10 percent of their cases involves persons without legal residency status. Although court administrators' report that they do not ask for citizenship, caseworkers, which have more personal knowledge of the defendants, estimated that 60 percent of the administrative caseload involves persons in the U.S. without legal residency status. The council of Judges Administration estimates 46.1 percent of their workload involves criminal undocumented persons. The estimated fiscal impact of undocumented persons is \$1,159,678 as shown in table T143.

Table T143: El Paso County Court at Law Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Courts at Law	\$1,008,866	10%	\$100,887	\$19,089	\$119,976
Council of Judges administration	\$1,218,816	46.1%	\$561,874	\$106,935	\$668,809
Court at Law administration	\$367,828	60%	\$220,697	\$42,071	\$262,768
Judges salaries & benefits	\$908,893	10%	\$90,889	\$17,236	\$108,125
Total	\$3,504,403		\$974,347	\$185,331	\$1,159,678

El Paso County Attorney

In addition to providing general counsel to the County Commissioners, the El Paso County Attorney's office handles civil litigation including defense litigation, plaintiff litigation, subdivision regulations and certificates of compliance. They also process deceptive business complaints, environmental crimes (e.g. illegal dumping), and co-administer the hot check collections. Family Protective Services focuses on juvenile prosecution, while domestic services handles child protective services, family violence protective orders and cases involving mental illness and chemical dependency. The general fund budget was \$1,844,911.

The County Attorney's office reported the primary impact of undocumented persons was in the Juvenile Prosecution Unit. During FY 1999 15.9 percent of the felony cases, 12.2 percent of the misdemeanors and 12.4 percent probation violations were attributable to undocumented residents. The estimated total impact of undocumented resident cases in the Juvenile Prosecution Unit was \$59,011.

The County Attorney is also responsible for obtaining final judgments on forfeitures, both surety and personal recognizance, and collecting on all judgments. During FY 1999 the County Attorney's staff collected \$1 million. Funded as a separate line item, this division had a budget of \$141,954. The County Attorney's office estimates 10 percent of the bond forfeitures are attributable to undocumented immigrant resident cases, for a financial impact of \$15,881.

Legal services for the county hospital, Thomasson, are also provided by the County Attorney's office. In this capacity they review contracts, review and monitor lawsuits, process EEOC claims and employee grievances, and handle both plaintiff and defense legal claims. This division had a budget of \$239,598.

The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons, as shown in table T144, was \$89,069.

Table T144: El Paso County Attorney Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Juvenile Prosecution	\$441,701	13.4%	\$59,011	\$11,171	\$70,182
Bond Forfeiture	\$158,806	10%	\$15,881	\$3,006	\$18,887
Thomason Legal	\$239,598	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$1,386,358	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$2,226,463		\$74,892	\$14,177	\$89,069

Although one of the officials interviewed from the Family Violence Protective Orders Unit estimated that 40 percent of the cases are to assist undocumented persons, the County Attorney's office declined to include that subdivisions costs in the fiscal impact reported for this study. An average of 120 applications is filed seeking protective orders each month. According to the local officials, "there are many cases that go unreported for fear of deportation."

El Paso County Clerk

As the official repository of documents, the County Clerk is responsible for filing, retrieving, transcribing and safeguarding information used by the various county departments. The general fund expenditures for FY99 were \$1,184,698. Approximately 10 percent of the workload is attributable to documents related to undocumented persons, which results in a total estimated impact of \$141,004 shown in table T145.

Table T145: El Paso County Clerk Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$1,184,698	10%	\$118,470	\$22,534	\$141,004

Criminal Law Magistrate

The Criminal Law Magistrate, established by the Commissioners Court in 1986, presides over all the arraignments of prisoners prior to booking in the El Paso County Detention Facility. The Council of judges appoints the magistrate. He is empowered to accept uncontested pleas, conduct special hearings from the District courts and conduct trials. The general fund budget for the Criminal Law Magistrate was \$226,235. Using the same impact rate as the detention, the total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons was \$40,359, as shown in table T146.

Table T146: El Paso County Criminal Law Magistrate Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Govt.	Total Cost
\$226,235	15%	\$33,935	\$6,424	\$40,359

El Paso County 6th Administrative Judicial Court and 8th Court of Appeals

Created to ensure efficient case management, there are nine judicial regions in the State of Texas. The 6th Administrative District includes 23 counties, 17 district courts and 32 county courts. The 34th District Judge, located in El Paso County, is responsible for assigning visiting judges within the region. El Paso County contributes to the 6th Administrative District based on its total population. During FY 1999 that contribution was \$47,430. Approximately 5 percent of the administrative work of the judicial district can be attributed to cases involving undocumented persons.

An intermediate appellate court, the 8th Court of Appeals, has jurisdiction over criminal and civil appeals for a 22-county area. This Court includes a Chief Justice, three Justices, plus a legal staff of eight. The primary funding for the office is provided by the state, however El Paso County supplements the costs from the general fund. During FY99 the amount allocated for the 8th Court of Appeals was \$20,196. Approximately 5 percent of the cases heard by the Court of Appeals comprise cases with persons without legal residency status. The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons was \$4,025, as shown in table T147.

Table T147: El Paso County Judicial District and Court of Appeals Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$67,626	5%	\$3,382	\$643	\$4,025

El Paso County Public Defender

Indigent defense is provided for defendants from the District Courts, County Courts at Law, and other county courts through the Public Defender's office. Of the 5,443 indigent adult cases handled in FY 1999, 41.5 percent were felony appointments, 57.8 percent were misdemeanors, 4.5 percent appeals and writs.

The majority of the 2,172 juvenile cases were hearings. Fifty-one percent of total cases were review hearings and 30.1 percent detention hearings. Of the actual cases heard in court, 10.4 percent of the juvenile cases were felonies and 8.5 percent were misdemeanors. The Public Defender's office estimates that one-quarter of the adult cases and one-half of the juvenile cases were for persons without legal residency status. The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons, presented in table T148, was \$519,205.

Table T148: El Paso County Public Defender Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Adult	\$932,719	25%	\$310,595	\$59,078	\$369,673
Juvenile	\$377,280	50%	\$125,635	\$23,897	\$149,532
total	\$1,309,999		\$436,230	\$82,975	\$519,205

El Paso County Adult Probation

The West Texas Community Supervision and Corrections is responsible for probation and community supervision for El Paso, Hudspeth and Culberson Counties. The District Courts, County Courts at Law, the Jail Magistrate and County Courts Masters assign probationers and paroles to community supervision. During FY 1999 they supervised 8,842 direct and 7,040 indirect cases. The high risk, specialized cases, of which there were 639, include undocumented persons. This represents approximately 3 percent of the total caseload. The El Paso County general fund budget in FY 1999 was \$458,894. The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons was \$16,385, shown in table T149.

Table T149: El Paso County Adult Probation Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$458,894	3%	\$13,767	\$2,619	\$16,385

El Paso County Juvenile Probation

The El Paso Juvenile Probation Board is responsible for ensuring due process for youthful offenders while still holding them responsible for the crimes they have committed. Clients detained include Mexican nationals who have crossed illegally into the U.S., Texas Youth Commission parolees and juveniles who have violated federal crimes. The most common juvenile felony offenses, in order of frequency, are aggravated assault (30.4 percent), burglary (19.3 percent), drug offenses (9.4 percent),

robbery (7.6 percent), theft and motor vehicle theft (5.9 percent each), sexual assault (4.9 percent), weapons violations (4.1 percent) and homicide (1.4 percent). During FY 1999 administrators report that 108 Mexican national juveniles without documentation were under supervision for a total of 3,719 detention days. The general fund budget was \$5,871,731 for FY99. Table T150 shows the total estimated impact of \$475,225.

Table T150: El Paso County Juvenile Probation Impact

General Fund	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
\$5,871,731	6.8%	\$399,278	\$75,947	\$475,225

El Paso County Justice of the Peace and Constables

The El Paso Justices of the Peace and Constables budget for FY 1999 totaled \$1,289,479. All seven Justices of the Peace agreed that, “JP’s estimate on what percentage of case loads are attributable to undocumented persons would be difficult to calculate. Since the 1990s there is a federal law that calls only for volunteer labels, so we can’t ask them for citizenship.” After interviewing all seven justices, their estimates of impact ranged from 0 percent to 10 percent. “It is probably higher, but that federal law camouflages the numbers,” noted one. El Paso County Constables, on the other hand, unanimously reported no impact from persons in the U.S. without legal residency status. The total estimated impact of criminal undocumented persons, shown in table T151, was \$63,647.

Table T151: El Paso County Justice of the Peace and Constable Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Justice of the Peace	\$1,069,511	5%	\$53,476	\$10,172	\$63,647
Constables	\$219,968	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,289,479		\$53,476	\$10,172	\$63,647

El Paso County Emergency Medical Care

The El Paso County general fund covers a variety of emergency medical expenses including public health, county child welfare, ambulance service, mental health/mental retardation services and a shelter for battered women.

The Shelter for Battered Women is a United Way Agency and the only comprehensive, emergency shelter for domestic violence in El Paso County. They provide counseling to both abusers and women who are victims of domestic violence. In addition to providing 24-hour emergency shelter to women and their children, the shelter assists women in finding more permanent housing, job search assistance and help in applying for food stamps and other social services. Shelter administrators estimate 70 percent of the women who seek their services are in the U.S. without legal residency status. During FY99 26,500 shelter days were provided, 6,156 hotline calls were responded to and 1,800 nonresidents were counseled. Nine hundred batterers participated in a 20-

session intervention and prevention program. The El Paso County general fund budget for FY99 was \$35,000.

Life Management Center offers the mental health/mental retardation services for El Paso County. It also maintains a 24-hour crisis hotline. The State of Texas and El Paso County jointly fund the facility. The funds from the county are used to provide psychological evaluation of jail inmates, and juvenile probationers. During FY 1999 the county budgeted \$174,000 for Life Management Center services. Center administrators indicate 13 percent of their clients are undocumented, primarily juveniles.

Life Ambulance Services transport and provide emergency care for injured persons prior to hospitalization. Sixteen ambulances located in five bases throughout the city made approximately 5,200 runs in FY99. The average cost per call was \$67. The ambulance service indicated 20 percent of their runs involve care for persons without legal residency status, primarily women in labor or with complications of childbirth. The general fund budget was \$353,280.

El Paso County Child Welfare operates under contract to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. The county gives staff support for the Child Welfare Board, which is responsible for caring for the needs of abused or neglected children. Caseworkers estimate 40 percent of the children served by the Board are undocumented. The general fund contribution was \$312,090.

The City-County Health Unit is responsible for "preventative medicine and regulatory community health" for over 690,000 county residents and the interaction with New Mexico and Ciudad Juarez. In performing their duties they cooperate with the Center for Disease Control and the Texas Department of Health. Administrators estimate one-third of their services are rendered to undocumented persons. During FY99 the general fund budget was \$1,700,973.

The total estimated impact of undocumented persons on emergency medical costs, shown in table T152, was \$962,923.

Table T152: El Paso County Emergency Medical Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Shelter for Battered Women	\$35,000	70%	\$24,500	\$4,617	\$29,117
Life Management (MH/MR)	\$174,000	13%	\$22,620	\$4,309	\$26,929
Life Ambulance Services	\$353,280	20%	\$70,656	\$13,388	\$84,044
County Child Welfare	\$312,090	40%	\$124,836	\$23,699	\$148,535
Public Health	\$1,700,973	33.4%	\$566,424	\$107,874	\$674,298
Total	\$2,575,343		\$809,036	\$153,887	\$962,923

El Paso County Autopsies and Burials

The El Paso County Medical Examiner’s office performs the autopsies when there is a sudden, violent, unexpected or suspicious death. During FY99 2,123 cases were investigated and 307 autopsies were conducted. The medical director reports that drowning was the primary reason for death among undocumented persons, with motor vehicle accidents the second most common cause. “They come from really small towns. They have a hard time estimating the speed of crossing on Interstate-10.” There was also one death by electrocution in FY 1999.

Officials estimate that 15 to 20 of the autopsies were performed on persons in the U.S. without legal residency status. With the average cost of an autopsy at \$1,050, El Paso County spent approximately \$21,000 determining the cause of death of undocumented persons, or 2.7 percent of the Medical Examiner’s budget. The general fund budget for the Medical Examiners office was \$775,103.

The Charities fund is used for paupers’ burials as well as emergency financial assistance for individuals needing food and clothing. One hundred ten pauper burials were conducted in FY 1999. Each pauper burial costs the county approximately \$800. Twenty-two percent of El Paso County’s pauper burials were for undocumented persons. The general fund allocation for charities was \$71,950. The total impact of autopsy and burial costs for undocumented persons was \$43,748, as shown in table T153.

Table T153: El Paso County Autopsies and Burials Impact

General Fund	Budget	Impact	Cost	General Gov.	Total Cost
Medical examiner	\$775,103	2.7%	\$20,928	\$3,981	\$24,908
Burials	\$71,950	22%	\$15,829	\$3,011	\$18,840
Total	\$847,053		\$36,757	\$6,992	\$43,748

Emergency Medical Expenditures Fund

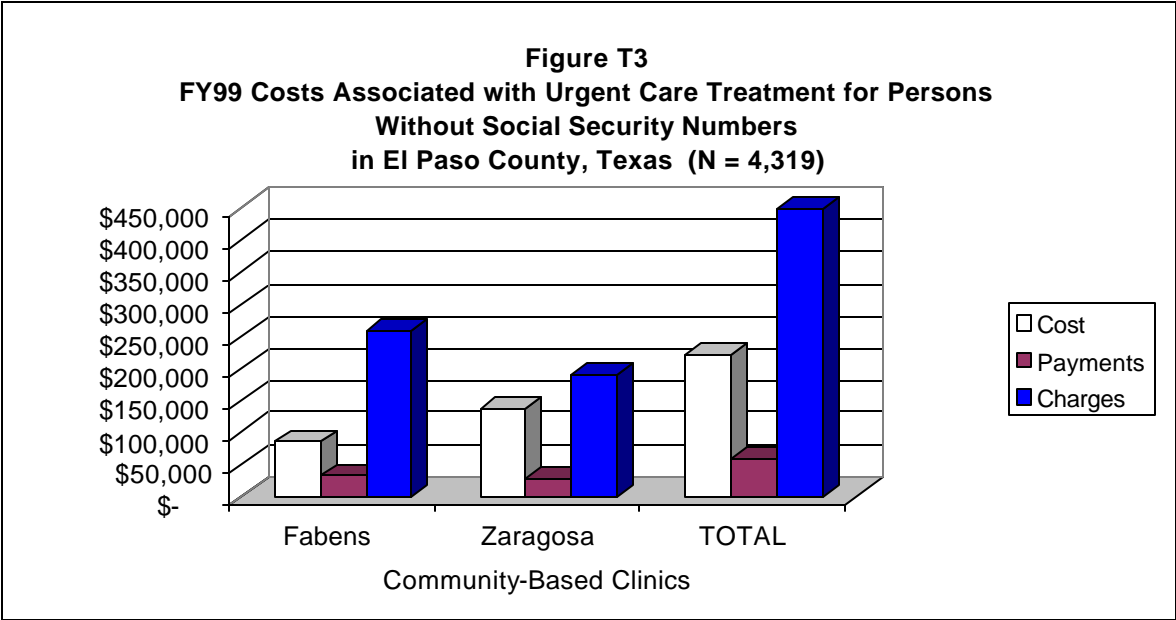
The El Paso County Hospital District is a separate taxing entity charged with the responsibility of providing medical care to indigent residents. The hospital district operates 2 community-based clinics in the rural portions of the county. Clinic administrator’s report 19.6 percent of the patients is undocumented, as depicted in table T154.

Table T154: FY 99 Patient Load at Community-Based Health Clinics in El Paso

Clinic	Unique Patients	Undocumented Patients	Percentage Undocumented
Fabens	8,493	2,135	25.1%
Zaragosa	13,484	2,184	16.2%
Total	21,977	4,319	19.6%

Source: El Paso County Community Clinics

The total cost to the county for these medical services in FY1999 was \$449,684, as shown in Figure T3.



Emergency Medicaid reimbursement is available under the federal "TP 30" program. The Texas Department of Health reports an average of 200 applications are approved for undocumented persons in El Paso County per month. The TDH unit at Thomasson Hospital indicates 75 percent of the applications are approved. The Thomasson Trauma department sees the critical medical cases brought in by various law enforcement agencies. One hundred percent of the Border Patrol (67 patients), INS (50), U.S. Marshall (69) and International Sanction Facility (54) patients are in the U.S. without legal residency status; the majority of the patients from the Sheriff's department (140) are also. During FY1999 Thomasson Trauma costs associated with treatment of undocumented persons amounted to \$398,573. When overhead and administration costs are included, the total costs were \$686,957. Federal law enforcement agencies bear the financial burden for patients that are in their custody. The El Paso County Sheriff's patients who do not qualify for TP30 Medicaid are the financial responsibility of the county. (Note: To qualify for TP30 funds a patient must meet the normal Medicaid qualifications. This usually results in approval for women and children, but not for men.)

Texas Border County Summary

Texas's 15 counties along the U.S.-Mexico Border spent a total of \$23.6 Million in FY 1999 on services for illegal immigrants in the areas of law enforcement, criminal justice, and emergency medical care. The cost per county ranged from \$0 to \$9.3 million. With a combined population of 2 million, every man, woman and child residing in these 15 counties paid an average of \$12 in local taxes to fund these services. The impact on a per capita basis ranged from 33 cents to \$100. The highest per capita cost of any county on the border. Table T155 further shows the aggregate costs by department.

T155: Texas County Costs by Department

County	Sheriff	District Attorney	District Court	District Clerk	County Attorney	Court at Law	County Clerk	Justice of the Peace	Indigent Defense	Adult Probation	Juvenile Services	Emerg. Medical	Total by County
Cameron	2,293,818	227,679	90,618	64,239	—	327,783	375,484	11,052	109,406	0	0	162,985	3,663,064
Hidalgo	1,618,794	183,788	65,529	28,247	—	42,724	31,725	63,164	135,469	0	0	362,048	2,531,488
Starr	865,912	93,065	152,191	67,157	74,509	56,098	73,653	NA	27,391	9,701	20,756	NA	1,440,443
Zapata	124,436	5,031	3,480	3,081	25,900	—	23,841	96,396	4,659	2,376	51,919	91,311	432,430
Webb	1,709,495	440,122	97,976	58,244	28,658	62,187	43,980	47,660	373,821	0	259,458	69,463	3,191,064
Maverick	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
Kinney	7,310	NA	NA	NA	NA	—	NA	8,716	NA	0	NA	NA	16,026
Val Verde	1,054,368	—	71,449	68,118	11,111	14,291	13,479	157,728	89,768	0	0	47,425	1,527,737
Terrell	0	0	0	0	—	—	—	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brewster	8,504	161	700	969	0	0	0	0	12,250	0	1,295	32,522	56,401
Presidio	189,151	14,219	41,631	83,926	32,836	—	—	52,512	18,661	9,344		23,076	465,356
Jeff Davis	27,026	834	3,934	7,409	0	—	—	0	0	0	0	5,275	44,478
Culberson	371,425	57,988	24,649	61,272	13,494	—	—	79,430		1,846	—	0	610,104
Hudspeth	64,884	392	2,336	10,973	0	—	—	38,945	1,496	1,498	—	0	120,524
El Paso	4,525,131	643,435	343,363	162,701	129,428	1,163,703	141,004	63,647	519,205	16,385	475,224	1006670	9,189,896
Total by Dept.	12,860,254	1,666,714	897,856	616,336	315,936	1,666,786	703,166	619,250	1,292,126	41,150	808,652	1,800,775	23,289,011

Texas sheriffs bore the greatest brunt with nearly \$13 million, over half the total burden. Criminal prosecution took the second highest hit, at \$11.7 million. The federal government, through SCAAP, paid these counties a total of \$2.2 million in FY 1999. The federal government's participation in this aspect of illegal immigration amounted to only 9 percent of the total impact.

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