

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1314  
By: Barrientos  
Jurisprudence  
3-21-97  
As Filed

### **DIGEST**

Currently, Travis County has four county courts for criminal cases. In 1996, 3,859 family violence cases were prosecuted in county court. The Austin Police Department reported a 550 percent increase in family violence arrests from 1991-1994. A court devoted solely to family violence cases will make the handling of such cases a more efficient and sensitive process. The court could also facilitate coordination between various support services in the community and reduce the time between the incident and the disposition of the case. This bill will create County Court at Law Number 4 of Travis County.

### **PURPOSE**

As proposed, S.B. 1314 creates County Court at Law Number 4 of Travis County.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Section 25.2291(a), Government Code, to add County Court at Law Number 4 of Travis County to the statutory Travis County Courts. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 25.2292, Government Code, by adding Subsection (c), to require the County Court at Law Number 4 of Travis County to give preference to cases in which family violence is alleged, including cases under Chapter 71, Family Code.

SECTION 3. Provides that, notwithstanding Section 25.2291(a)(4), Government Code, as amended by this Act, the County Court at Law Number 4 of Travis County is created January 1, 1999.

SECTION 4. Requires, notwithstanding Section 25.0009, Government Code, the initial vacancy in the office of judge on creation of the County Court at Law Number 4 of Travis County to be filled by election. Provides that the office of judge of the County Court at Law Number 4 of Travis County exists for purposes of the primary and general election in 1998. Provides that a vacancy after the initial vacancy is filled as provided by Section 25.0009, Government Code.

SECTION 5. Emergency clause.  
Effective date: 90 days after adjournment.