

Jo Anne Bernal Bio

Jo Anne Bernal was born and raised in El Paso, and has been a practicing attorney for over 30 years. On January 1, 2011, she became the first woman elected County Attorney in El Paso's history.

Jo Anne manages an office with an annual budget of 7.5 million and supervises approximately 100 employees including 44 attorneys who practice both civil and criminal law.

Her office provides legal advice to various governmental entities including the County of El Paso, the University Medical Center, the local Mental Health Authority, the Juvenile Probation Department and numerous individual elected officials and employees.

Ms. Bernal's duties include the representation of cases involving abuse and neglect of the children and the elderly. Her office also prosecutes all juvenile crime in El Paso County, and misdemeanor deceptive business and environmental cases. Two years ago Ms. Bernal initiated El Paso's first Nuisance Abatement Team which focuses its efforts on quality of life issues including the proliferation of massage parlors.

Additionally, her office helps victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to obtain protective orders and handles involuntary commitments for persons with mental illness who are a danger to themselves or others. Ms. Bernal has demonstrated her commitment to ensuring that all victims of crime – including undocumented victims – are treated with dignity and respect and protected with the full force of law.

Ms. Bernal has received numerous awards for her work in the community and her professional achievements. Included in those awards are: 2009 Outstanding Lawyer of the year by the Mexican-American Bar Association; 2012 “La mujer Obrera Award”; 2015 “Trailblazer Award” from the Women's Bar Association; 2015 McDonald's “Hispanos Triunfadores Award; in 2017 she received the “Albert Armendariz Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award” from the Mexican-American Bar Association, and in October she received the 2017 Women of Distinction Award by the Texas Association of Mexican-American Chambers of Commerce (TAMACC).

She is married to Eddie Castillo and has two daughters, Cassandra and Alexis.