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Randy Leavitt leaving county attorney's office

By [Steven Kreytak](#) | Tuesday, December 9, 2008, 04:37 PM

First Assistant Travis County Attorney Randy Leavitt said he plans to leave his job next month to go back to private law practice, ending a five-year stretch of running the day-to-day operations of the office that prosecutes misdemeanor crimes, advises the Commissioners Court on legal matters and represents county officials in court.

Leavitt, 54, said he wants to make more money, with his oldest child heading to college next year and two more children in middle school.

County Attorney David Escamilla said Leavitt makes about \$160,000 as his top deputy. Escamilla said that salary tops his own, which is about \$150,000.

"He's done a fantastic job in every possible way," Escamilla said.

Escamilla would not speculate on who he will choose to succeed Leavitt, but said he has received inquiries from a highly qualified group of lawyers from both inside and outside of his office.

Escamilla, a former first assistant himself, has been rumored to be in the running for U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas. Some time after taking office, President-elect Barack Obama is expected to appoint a replacement to U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton, a Bush appointee.

There is still no word who Travis County District Attorney-elect Rosemary Lehmberg will hire as her first assistant. Lehmberg has been District Attorney Ronnie Earle's first assistant for the last decade.

Leavitt had considered a run for district attorney but decided against it late last year. Before joining the county attorney's office, he was a successful criminal defense lawyer with the Minton Burton law firm for 20 years.

This time he'll strike out on his own with an office at 1301 Rio Grande Street, concentrating on criminal defense and some civil work, he said.