

THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS
THE TEXAS COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH

November 20, 2024
Meeting Notebook





**November 20, 2024
Meeting Notebook**

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Tab 1



November 20, 2024
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1:00	Welcome	Hon. Jane Bland Hon. Barbara Hervey
1:10	Executive Director Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget and Grants Report• JCMH JIRs and Projects	Kristi Taylor Patrick Passmore Hon. John Specia, Jr. Hon. Brent Carr JCMH Staff
2:10	Break	Hon. Barbara Hervey
2:25	Innovations Map	Andy Perkins Jennifer Toon
2:40	Commissioner Updates	Hon. Jane Bland
3:45	OCA Specialty Courts	Erin Morgan
3:50	Announcements (Please submit)	Hon. Jane Bland
4:00	Adjourn	Hon. Barbara Hervey

Tab 2

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH

Executive Committee & Commissioners

Executive Committee

Hon. Jane Bland, Co-Chair

Justice

Supreme Court of Texas

Hon. Barbara Hervey, Co-Chair

Judge

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals

Hon. Bill Boyce, Vice-Chair

Justice (Fmr.)

Fourteenth Court of Appeals

Alexander, Dubose & Jefferson, LLP

Hon. Brent Carr

Judge (Ret.)

Tarrant County, Texas

Hon. John J. Specia, Jr.

Judge (Ret.)

Mimari Anderson Clifone & Watkins, PLLC

Megan LaVoie, J.D.

Administrative Director

Office of Court Administration

High Court Liaisons

Hon. Rebeca Huddle

Justice

Supreme Court of Texas

Hon. Jesse F. McClure, III

Judge

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals

Commissioners

Magdalena Morales-Aina, L.P.C.-S.

Director

El Paso County Community Supervision and Corrections Department

M. Connie Almeida, Ph.D.

Director of Behavioral Health

Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services

Hon. Devon Anderson

President and CEO

Justice Forward

Hon. Renee Rodriguez-Betancourt

Judge

Hidalgo County, 449th District Court

Jason Bramow, J.D.

Assistant General Counsel

Office of the Governor

Hon. Nelda Cacciotti

Chief of the Mental Health Division

Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office

Shandra Carter, L.C.S.W.-S.

Executive Director

Texas Juvenile Justice Department

Hon. Camile DuBose

Judge

Real and Uvalde Counties, 38th Judicial District

Alyse Ferguson, J.D.

Of Counsel

Rosenthal Kalabus & Therrian

Hon. Cynthia Porter Gore

Judge

City of Allen Municipal Court

Hon. Matt Hand

Judge

Potter County Court at Law No. 2

Blake Harris, Ph.D.

Director of Veterans Mental Health Department

Texas Veterans Commission

Courtney Harvey, Ph.D.

State Mental Health Coordinator & Associate Commissioner

Office of Mental Health Coordination, Texas Health and Human Services Commission

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH
Executive Committee & Commissioners

Hon. Bonnie Hellums, M.Ed.

Judge (Ret.)
Harris County, Texas

Hon. Joan Huffman

Senator, District 17
Texas Senate

Trina Ita, M.A., L.P.C.

*Deputy Executive Commissioner for Behavioral
Health Services*
Texas Health and Human Services

Hon. Dave Jahn

Judge
Denton County Probate Court No. 1

Hon. Oscar Kazen

Judge
Bexar County Probate Court No. 1

Andrew Keller, Ph.D.

President and CEO
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Adrienne Kennedy, M.A.

Past President
National Alliance on Mental Illness

Hon. M. Sue Kurita

Judge
El Paso County Court at Law No. 6

Beth Lawson, M.B.A.

Chief Executive Officer
StarCare Specialty Health System

Chief Mike Lee, M.A.

Chief Deputy Sheriff
Harris County Sheriff's Office

Hon. Elizabeth Byer Leonard

Judge
Midland County, 238th District Court

Hon. Pam Liston

City Attorney
City of Decatur
Associate Judge
Town of Fairview

Octavio Martinez, Jr., M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.

Executive Director
Hogg Foundation for Mental Health

Hon. Stacey Mathews

Judge
Williamson County, 277th District Court

Hon. Tyra Jones McCollum

Judge
Fort Bend County Court at Law No. 2

Beth Mitchell, J.D.

Litigation Coordinator
Disability Rights Texas

Hon. Joe Moody, J.D.

Representative, District 78
Texas House of Representatives

Hon. Brandy Mueller

Judge
Travis County, 403rd Criminal District Court

Hon. Roxanne Nelson

Justice of the Peace
Burnet County, Precinct 1

Denise Oncken, J.D., M.B.A.

Bureau Chief
Harris County District Attorney's Office

Hon. Larry Phillips

Judge
Grayson County, 59th District Court

Lee Pierson, J.D.

Chief Mental Health Prosecutor
Dallas County District Attorney's Office

Vickie Rice, J.D.

Mental Health & Specialty Court Supervisor
Dallas County Public Defender's Office

Andrea Richardson

Chief Executive Officer
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH
Executive Committee & Commissioners

Scott Schalchlin, M.Ed., J.D.

*Deputy Executive Commissioner for the HHSC
Health and Specialty Care System
Texas Health and Human Services
Commission*

Prof. Brian Shannon, J.D.

*Paul Whitfield Horn Professor
Texas Tech University School of Law*

Eric Smith, M.S., M.S.W.

*Consultant
Eric W. T. Smith Consulting*

Matt Smith, L.P.C.-S.

*Assistant Executive Director
Williamson County Juvenile Services*

Hon. Selena Solis

*Judge
El Paso County, 243rd District Court*

Chief Stan Standridge, M.P.A.

*Chief of Police
San Marcos Police Department*

Hon. Charles Stephens

*Judge
Comal County Court at Law No. 2*

Hon. Victor Villarreal

*Judge
Webb County Court at Law No. 2*

Julie Wayman, M.S.W.

*Director, Mental and Behavioral Health
Texas Education Agency*

Hon. Cynthia Wheless

*Judge
Collin County, 417th District Court*

Steve Wohleb, J.D.

*General Counsel
Texas Hospital Association*

Brandon Wood

*Executive Director
Texas Commission on Jail Standards*

Hon. J.R. Woolley

*Justice of the Peace
Waller County Precinct 2*

Wayne Young, M.B.A., L.P.C., F.A.C.H.E.

*Chief Executive Office
The Harris Center*

April Zamora, M.Ed., L.C.D.C.

*Director
Reentry and Integration Division, Texas
Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical
or Mental Impairments, Texas Department of
Criminal Justice*

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH
Collaborative Council

Collaborative Council

Hon. Laura Barker

Judge
Williamson County Court at Law No. 2

Hon. Sheila Garcia-Bence

Judge
Cameron County Criminal Court #4

Kelsey Bernstein

Chief of Government Relations
Texas Council of Community Centers

Hon. Elizabeth Berry

First Assistant Public Defender
Concho Valley Public Defender's Office

Catherine Bialick, M.P.Aff.

Director of Behavioral Health and Justice Initiatives
Texas Health and Human Services Commission

Alison Mohr Boleware, L.M.S.W.

Director of Policy
Hogg Foundation for Mental Health

Tim Bray, J.D.

Vice President for Justice and Health Policy
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Hon. Clifford A. Brown

Judge
Travis County, 147th District Court

Virginia Brown, Ph.D., M.A.

Research Scholar in Social Justice and Population Health
The Hastings Center

Hon. Sarah Bruchmiller

Judge
Williamson County, 368th District Court

Sonja Burns

Mental Health Advocate

Angel Carroll

Director of Community Engagement & Partnerships
MEASURE

Hon. Jennifer Cates

Judge
Canyon Municipal Court

Daniela Chisolm, J.D.

Senior Trial Attorney
El Paso County Attorney's Office

Hon. Brad Clark

Judge
Tarrant County Criminal Court #5

Armando Colombo

President and Chief Executive Officer
The Menninger Clinic

Hon. Marla Cuellar

Judge
Hidalgo County, 275th District Court

Leah Davies, L.M.S.W.

Cause Programs Manager
CLEAN Cause Foundation

Colleen Davis, J.D.

Assistant County Attorney
Burnet County Attorney's Office

Hon. Karen Diaz

Justice of the Peace
San Patricio County Precinct #4

Dep. Shawn Edwards

Training Coordinator, Crisis Intervention Unit #920
Burleson County Sheriff's Office

Hon. Drue Farmer

Board Chair
StarCare Lubbock

Lesli Fitzpatrick, J.D.

Director of Special Litigation
Texas Department of Criminal Justice

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH
Collaborative Council

Hon. Neal Franklin

County Judge
Smith County

Eric Fox

Law Enforcement Liaison
Central Counties Services

Gilbert Gonzales, L.P.C.

Director
Bexar County Department of
Behavioral and Mental Health

Krishnaveni Gundu

Co-Founder & Executive Director
Texas Jail Project

Rachel Hampton, L.M.S.W.

Chief Mission Officer
Lone Star Justice Alliance

Greg Hansch, M.S.W.

Executive Director
NAMI Texas

Hon. James C. Henderson

Judge
Grayson County
Court at Law #1

Angelita Hunter

Victim Advocate
Grayson Crisis Center

Hon. Echo Hutson

Judge
Montgomery County Court at Law #4

Hon. Sandra Jackson

Judge
Dallas County, 302nd Judicial District
Court

Lee Johnson, M.P.A.

Chief Executive Officer
Texas Council of Community Centers,
Inc.

Windy Johnson

Program Manager, IGR
Texas Conference of Urban Counties

Hon. Rocky Jones

Judge
Dallas County, 203rd District Court

Louise Joy, J.D.

Attorney/Partner
Joy & Young, LLP

Hon. Evelyn Keyes

Justice (Ret.)
First Court of Appeals

Sgt. Michael Krogmann

Crisis Intervention Team Sergeant
Round Rock Police Department

Hon. Kirsten Legore

Judge
Guadalupe County Court at Law #2

Scott LePor, D.O.

Medical Director
Texas Juvenile Justice Department

Katrina LeVert, J.D.

Assistant County Attorney
Fort Bend County Attorney's Office

Yolanda Lewis, M.P.A.

*Executive Vice President for Justice and
Health*
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Hon. Lora J. Livingston

Interim Executive Director
Texas Access to Justice Commission

Chris Lopez, J.D.

Assistant General Counsel, State Hospital
Texas Health and Human
Services Commission

Charles Mathias, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
University of Texas Health Science
Center San Antonio

Hon. Lela Mays

District Judge
Dallas County, 283rd Judicial District
Court

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH
Collaborative Council

Rosie Medina, J.M.

Chief Juvenile Probation Officer
El Paso County Juvenile Probation
Department

Kristin Meeks, J.D.

Senior Policy Analyst
Texas Indigent Defense Commission

Joanna Mendez, M.S.S.W., L.C.S.W.

Assistant Adjunct Professor
Steve Hicks School of Social Work,
University of Texas at Austin

Trooper Bianca Morales

Highway Patrol
Texas Department of Public Safety

Officer Brittany Moreno, M.A.

Mental Health Officer
Sugar Land Police Department

Jennifer Mudge, M.S.W.

Public Policy Coordinator
Texas Council on Family Violence

Hon. Kirk Noaker, Sr.

Consultant
National Task Group on Intellectual
Disabilities and Dementia Practices

Hon. Rita Noel

Student Support Services
Denison Independent School District

Evan Norton, Psy.D.

*Director of Integrated Treatment and
Support*
Texas Juvenile Justice Department

Lemuel Odom, L.P.C.-S.

*Clinical Supervisor-Psychological &
Social Services*
Harris County Juvenile Probation
Department

John Petrila, J.D.

*Senior Executive Vice President
of Policy*
Meadows Mental Health Policy
Institute

Hon. Daphne Previti Austin

Attorney
The Law Office of Shawn C. Brown,
P.C.

Officer Terry Qualls

Crisis Intervention Coordinator
McKinney Police Department

Janis Reinken, J.D.

Chief Clerk (Former)
House Committee on Corrections

Chris Ritter, J.D., M.Ed.

Chief Legal Counsel
State Bar of Texas

Trish Rivera

Rural Health Specialist
Texas Department of Agriculture

Michelle Romero, M.P.A.

Associate Director
Texas Medical Association

Simone Salloum, J.D.

Policy Attorney
Texas Health and Human Services
Commission

Rachel Samsel, M.S.S.W.

*Deputy Associate Commissioner for
Regional & Local Operations*
Texas Department of State Health
Services

Melissa Schank, M.A.

Executive Director
Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers
Association

Jonas Schwartz, M.S.

Program Manager
Texas Workforce Commission

Susan Scott, Ph.D., L.P.C.

*Manager of Community Interventions &
Supports*
Texas Juvenile Justice Department

JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH
Collaborative Council

Melissa Shearer, J.D.

Director
Travis County Mental Health Public
Defender's Office

Jennie Simpson, Ph.D.

*Associate Commissioner and State
Forensic Director, Office of Forensic
Coordination*
Texas Health and Human
Services Commission

Hon. Mike Smith

Judge
Brown County, 35th District Court

Sandra Smith, Ph.D.

Vice President
Via Hope

Lt. Scott Soland

Patrol Lieutenant
Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office

Hon. Rosie Speedlin-Gonzalez

Judge
Bexar County Court at Law #13

Hon. Nancy Tanner

County Judge
Potter County

Gloria Terry

Chief Executive Officer
Texas Council on Family Violence

Jennifer Toon

Executive Director
Lioness Justice Impacted Women's
Alliance

Haley Turner, M.S.W.

*Deputy Executive Commissioner
for Community Services*
Texas Health and Human
Services Commission

Hon. Ryan Kellus Turner

Executive Director
Texas Municipal Courts Education
Center

Hon. Brian Keith Umphress

County Judge
Jack County

Sally Uncapher, J.D.

Assistant District Attorney
Bexar County District Attorney's Office

Nicole Weaver

*YES Waiver Manager, Mental Health and
Substance Use Programs*
Texas Health and Human Services
Commission

Thea Whalen, J.D.

Executive Director
Texas Justice Courts Training Center

Hon. Deborah Wigington

Judge
Comal County Court at Law #3

Hon. Angela Williams

Justice of the Peace
Williamson County Precinct #2

Thomas Wilson, J.D.

Assistant District Attorney, Civil Division
Smith County District Attorney's Office

Jay Wooten, J.D.

Chief Public Defender
Galveston County Misdemeanor Mental
Health Public Defender's Office

Hon. Michael York

Justice of the Peace
Lee County Precinct #2

Tab 3

TEXAS JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON MENTAL HEALTH
MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETING
April 12, 2024
9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
Virtual

COMMISSIONER ATTENDEES:

Hon. Jane Bland, Chair, *Justice, Supreme Court of Texas*
Hon. Barbara Hervey, Chair, *Judge, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals*
Hon. Rebeca Huddle, Deputy Liaison, *Justice, Supreme Court of Texas*
Hon. Bill Boyce, Vice-Chair, *Justice (Fmr.), 14th Court of Appeals; Partner, Alexander, Dubose & Jefferson*
Hon. John Specia, Jr., *Judge (Ret.), Of Counsel, Mimari Anderson Clifone & Watkins*
Hon. Brent Carr, *Judge (Ret.), Tarrant County Criminal Court No. 9*
Megan LaVoie, *Administrative Director, Office of Court Administration*
Dr. M. Connie Almeida, *Director, Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services*
Hon. Devon Anderson, *President and Chief Executive Officer, Justice Forward*
Hon. Nelda Cacciotti, *Chief of the Mental Health Division, Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office*
Shandra Carter, *Executive Director, Texas Juvenile Justice Department*
Hon. Camile G. Dubose, *Judge, 38th District Court*
Alyse Ferguson, *President of Operations, AKA Home, and Of Counsel, Rosenthal Kalabus & Therrian*
Hon. Cynthia Porter Gore, *Judge, Allen Municipal Court*
Stephanie Greger, *Deputy General Counsel, Office of the Texas Governor*
Hon. Matt Hand, *Judge, Potter County Court at Law No. 2*
Dr. Blake Harris, *Director of the Veterans Mental Health Department, Texas Veterans Commission*
Dr. Courtney Harvey, *Associate Commissioner of the Office of Mental Health Coordination, Texas HHSC*
Hon. Bonnie Hellums, *Judge (Ret.), 247th District Court*
Hon. Dave W. Jahn, *Judge, Denton County Probate Court No. 1*
Hon. Oscar J. Kazen, *Judge, Bexar County Probate Court No. 1*
Yolanda Lewis for Dr. Andrew Keller, *President and Chief Executive Officer, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute*
Adrienne Kennedy, *Past President, National Alliance on Mental Illness*
Hon. Sue Kurita, *Judge, El Paso County Court at Law No. 6*
Beth Lawson, *Chief Executive Officer, StarCare Specialty Health System*
Chief Mike Lee, *Chief Deputy, Harris County Sheriff's Office*
Hon. Elizabeth Byer Leonard, *Judge, 238th District Court*

Hon. Pamela Liston, *Associate Judge, Town of Fairview*
Dr. Octavio N. Martinez, Jr., *Executive Director, Hogg Foundation for Mental Health*
Hon. Stacey Mathews, *Judge, 277th District Court*
Beth Mitchell, *Senior Attorney, Disability Rights Texas*
Magdalena Morales-Aina, *Director, El Paso County Community Supervision and Corrections Department*
Hon. Roxanne Nelson, *Justice of the Peace, Burnet County Precinct 1*
Denise Oncken, *Mental Health Bureau Chief, Harris County District Attorney's Office*
Lee Pierson, *Chief of Mental Health Division, Dallas County District Attorney's Office*
Vickie Rice, *Mental Health and Specialty Court Supervisor, Dallas County Public Defender's Office*
Andrea Richardson, *Chief Executive Officer, Bluebonnet Trails Community Services*
Hon. Renee Rodriguez-Betancourt, *Judge, 449th District Court*
Scott Schalchlin, *Deputy Executive Commissioner for the HHSC Health & Specialty Care System, Texas HHSC*
Prof. Brian Shannon, *Paul Whitfield Horn Distinguished Professor, Texas Tech University School of Law*
Eric Smith, *Consultant, Eric W.T. Smith Consulting*
Matt Smith, *Assistant Executive Director, Williamson County Juvenile Services Department*
Hon. Selena Solis, *Judge, 243rd District Court, El Paso County*
Chief Stan Standridge, *Chief of Police, San Marcos Police Department*
Hon. Charles A. Stephens, *Judge, Comal County Court at Law No. 2*
Hon. Victor Villarreal, *Judge, Webb County Court at Law No. 2*
Julie Wayman, *Director of Mental and Behavioral Health, Texas Education Agency*
Hon. Cynthia Wheless, *Judge, 417th District Court*
Steve Wohleb, *General Counsel, Texas Hospital Association*
Brandon Wood, *Executive Director, Texas Commission on Jail Standards*
Hon. J. R. Woolley, *Justice of the Peace, Waller County Precinct No. 2*
Wayne Young, *Chief Executive Officer, The Harris Center*
April Zamora, *Director, Reentry and Integration Division, Texas Department of Criminal Justice*

Welcome and Announcements

Justice Jane Bland welcomed attendees to the second meeting of 2024 at the Judicial Commission on Mental Health. She encouraged Commissioners to review the January meeting online if they missed it, as new Commissioners were introduced. Recognition was given to Professor Shannon and the Legislative Research Committee for their work on the legislative proposals. She announced that Ron Lucey, Executive Director of the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities, would be giving a presentation, and there would be updates provided by our partner organizations.

Judge Barbara Hervey welcomed and briefed attendees on the [meeting notebook](#) and advised attendees on making announcements within the Zoom platform.

Executive Director Report

Kristi Taylor provided an overview of JCMH activities and initiatives aimed at addressing mental health issues within the justice system. Ms. Taylor explained how the Sequential Intercept Model organized interventions for individuals with mental health issues as they navigate the criminal justice system.

Ms. Taylor then discussed the County Mental Health Law Plan, explaining how the plan serves as a mechanism to provide legal education, assess compliance with mental health laws, and identify areas for improvement. JCMH has piloted this program in nine counties, with plans to expand it to more regions in the future. By working closely with communities to assess their practices, the Commission aims to streamline processes, improve outcomes for individuals with mental health needs, and ultimately enhance the overall efficiency of the justice system.

Ms. Taylor highlighted the importance of collaboration and alignment of funding streams in addressing mental health challenges. She mentioned new resources, including an interactive tool developed by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Council of State Governments that helps communities evaluate their collaboration structures and funding alignment. She also mentioned a handbook from the Treatment Advocacy Center that provides guidance on implementing Assisted Outpatient Treatment Courts in Texas.

Budget

Patrick Passmore, Finance Manager, provided a detailed financial report. Patrick explained the financial status of the JCMH as of April 1 and stated that the Commission is on track with the budget for fiscal year 2024, with 45% of the budget that remains for the rest of the year. He presented tables that showed the funding, expenses, and remaining budget, with a focus on the unobligated amount that will be carried forward to the next fiscal year's revenues.

Legislative Updates

Justice Bill Boyce, Chair of the Legislative Research Committee, highlighted the Commission's active role in shaping legislative proposals to improve justice administration for individuals with mental illness and IDD. He emphasized the collaborative decision-making process and the importance of seeking input from stakeholders. Justice Boyce stated the need for persistence and adaptability in pursuing legislative changes. He introduced Professor Shannon to provide an overview of recent legislative proposals, encouraging continued collaboration in the upcoming legislative session to advance reforms benefiting individuals with mental health challenges within the justice system.

Professor Brian Shannon, Professor, Texas Tech University School of Law, summarized the proposals from the Legislative Research Committee. The proposals will be considered by the JCMH Executive Committee and then will be available in the LRC Report that will be submitted to the Texas Judicial Council by August 1, 2024

OCA and Texas Judicial Council Update

Megan LaVoie, Administrative Director, Office of Court Administration, discussed the Judicial Council's focus on legislative recommendations, including the use of artificial intelligence, court efficiency, security, bail system improvements, and addressing shortages in judicial profession. She also mentioned upcoming Council meetings and proposed Senate interim charges related to mental health services and artificial intelligence. Ms. LaVoie discussed OCA's data bills, case-level data collection project, text reminder system, and a study on the need for judicial staff.

JIR Update

Hon. Brent Carr, Judge (Ret.) and JCMH Jurist in Residence, provided a detailed update on the Mental Health Courts Collaborative that took place during the first quarter of 2024. He described it as a learning collaborative specifically tailored for judges. The collaborative included online classes covering various topics crucial for setting up and running effective mental health courts. These topics included discussions on initiating a court, data collection, ethical considerations, and other relevant factors essential to the success of mental health courts. Judge Carr introduced [a video presentation](#) made by Rose McBride that showcases the collaborative's work and provides insights into the innovative methods and practical strategies discussed during the online classes.

Judge John J. Specia, Jr., Judge (Ret.) and JCMH Jurist in Residence, thanked Justice Boyce and Professor Shannon for their legislative work. He highlighted his experience founding the Bexar County Family Treatment Court and discussed the potential of specialty courts to improve public safety, reduce recidivism, reunite families, and save lives. He recommended a valuable new resource from [All Rise](#), titled "[A Practitioners Guide to Constitutional and Legal Issues in Adult Drug Courts](#)." He stressed the importance of this resource for judges, especially in addressing constitutional issues and best practices in treatment court models. He also mentioned the grand opening of additional beds at the San Antonio State Hospital, which will increase capacity availability.

Molly Davis, Staff Attorney, provided an update on technical assistance projects. JCMH recently completed SIM mappings in Lubbock, Blanco, and Llano counties and has plans to map juvenile justice systems in Smith, Grayson, and Cameron counties later in the year. JCMH is also collaborating with the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute to complete a SIM Mapping of the Williamson County juvenile justice system.

Ms. Davis reported that in the first quarter of 2024, JCMH received 54 requests for technical assistance, fulfilling 42 of them and serving 1,704 people in 33 counties in Texas and even assisted a court in Ohio with implementing a mental health court. The most common types of technical

assistance offered were professional peer networking and training, with staff members conducting relevant training sessions. She stated that Kristi Taylor was invited to speak to a group of the Presiding Judges in Texas and was featured on a nationwide webinar with the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Kama Harris, Staff Attorney, reported on the upcoming 2024 Judicial Summit on Mental Health, scheduled to take place at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Allen, Texas, on November 21st and 22nd. The Summit will have a different schedule this year, with a Commission Meeting on November 20, a full day of presentations on November 21, and a half day of programming on November 22. Ms. Harris mentioned upcoming deadlines, including the release of the Save the Date and a request for proposals in early May, registration opening on May 15th, and proposal submission deadline on May 30th. The Summit Committee will likely begin meeting in July, and individuals interested in joining the committee can contact Ms. Harris via email.

Andy Perkins, Staff Attorney, provided an update on the [Innovations in Mental Health Map](#), mentioning upcoming updates to highlight new and exciting programs in various counties across the state. The map will be updated to better categorize and display youth-specific information that will allow users to view adult or youth-specific resources in each county. The Data Committee will meet to work on a guide for data collection and addressing mental health cases, with a goal to have it ready for publication before the Summit. JCMH is also setting up a committee focused on addressing substance use disorder, chaired by Judge Roxanne Nelson, and individuals interested in joining can contact Mr. Perkins via email.

Communications

Rose McBride, Communications Manager, shared metrics from the Commission's social media accounts over the past 2 years, reporting that the LinkedIn account is the most popular with 1,000 followers reached in March. She encouraged attendees to follow the accounts for updates on grant opportunities, events, news, resources, and projects. Ms. McBride announced the release of three new podcast episodes featuring collaborations with various experts and initiatives in the mental health field. She discussed episodes with Sergeant Shawn Edwards that covered rural diversion, Dr. Sandra Smith and Abena Asante on the Libraries for Health initiative, and Travis County District Attorney Jose Garza on the Travis County Transformation project. Ms. McBride invited attendees to listen to the podcast episodes on Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

Judge Hervey announced the lunch break.

Justice Jane Bland welcomed everyone back from the lunch break and discussed the challenges faced by certain counties with a population over 200,000 in establishing Mental Health Courts. She highlighted the efforts of Kristi Taylor and the team, along with the leadership of Judge Carr and Judge Specia, in providing resources and support to these counties to start their Mental Health Courts. She thanked those who have assisted in this project, including judges who mentor others and mental health providers who educate local stakeholders. She encouraged continued involvement and collaboration to help more people and thanked the team for their progress.

Justice Bland acknowledged the support from individuals like Beth Lawson and others in different regions of the State who appreciate the work being done by the Commission.

Judge Barbara Hervey agreed with Justice Bland's comments and thanked everyone involved for their hard work and dedication. She praised the team for their excellent work, which has been well-received.

Justice Jane Bland introduced Ron Lucey, the Executive Director of the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. The Committee examines disability policies in the state and makes recommendations for change in various areas such as accessibility, employment, criminal justice, education, and emergency preparedness. Justice Bland emphasized the wide-ranging expertise and support provided by the Committee to Texas citizens with disabilities, serving as a resource for information and referrals.

Ron Lucey, Executive Director of the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities, introduced himself and his team and [shared information](#) about the Committee's history, mission, and structure. He discussed their role in advocating for Texans with disabilities and highlighted the 10 policy issue areas they focus on, such as employment, transportation, and accessibility. Mr. Lucey spoke about the importance of listening to the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and shared how the Committee provides resources, conducts studies, and collaborates with various agencies and stakeholders to address policy issues. He also discussed their work in providing accessibility training, issuing reports, and engaging with legislative processes to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities in Texas. Mr. Lucey then passed the floor to Rebecca Lopez to discuss systemic changes related to criminal justice and mental health.

Rebecca Lopez, Research Specialist, Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities, discussed the Committee's approach to addressing systemic concerns and prioritizing input from underserved populations. She highlighted the importance of public engagement through policy proposal forms and public testimony at quarterly meetings. Ms. Lopez shared an example of public concern leading to legislative action, specifically the Texas Driving with Disability Initiative, which aims to improve interactions between law enforcement and drivers with disabilities with unique communication needs. This program allows individuals to disclose communication impediments on their driver's license or vehicle registration, providing trained officers with important information. Ms. Lopez stated that by listening to the public and changes that benefit the entire state were implemented, using the initiative started by a concerned mother.

Magdalena Morales-Aina, El Paso Chief of County Community Supervision and Corrections Department, stated she would be interested in exploring a potential partnership between her organization and the Governor's Committee. She is looking for a way to connect with the probation chiefs from across the state and is interested in learning more about the organization's work.

Hon. Renee-Rodriguez-Betancourt, 449th Judicial Court, discussed an issue with Medicaid's treatment of juvenile probation departments and in-house mental health professionals. She

expressed her concern that Medicaid does not recognize these services as legitimate treatment facilities, which makes it difficult for families to obtain transportation for their children.

Dr. Connie Almeida, Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services Department, asked whether the Department of Family and Protective Services is notified when a 17-year-old with a disability is released from jail without parental notification. She stated she assumed the agency would be notified in such cases but is seeking clarification.

Ron Lucey responded that the Department of Family and Protective Services is an ex officio representative to the Committee. He explained that the policy topics presented by Ms. Lopez were still under development and had not yet been finalized as polished proposals ready for the legislature. Mr. Lucey stated that simple solutions to complicated issues were often incorrect, and they tended to create more problems than they solved. He highlighted concerns about 17-year-olds with intellectual disabilities being released from jails, noting that many of them became human trafficking victims or went missing, only to be found after a second arrest.

Judge Pam Liston, Associate Judge, City of Fairview, commented on the topic and questioned how the Committee's work aligns with the broader efforts of the state. She stated that there had been discussions for years about establishing a consistent age of adulthood and reconsidering the distinction between 17-year-olds and 18-year-olds. She questioned if the current conversation identified needs that could contribute to this broader discussion and inquired about ways to facilitate that integration.

Ron Lucey agreed and suggested a working group with child protective services, judges, policy experts, and intellectual and developmental disability experts to discuss the functional age of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, emphasizing the need for law enforcement officers to consider this perspective.

Partner Organizations Reports and Announcements

Chief Stan Standridge, Chief of Police, San Marcos Police Department, proposed a shift in law enforcement training to focus on prevention rather than response and recovery. He stated he teaches an 8-hour mandatory class for senior law enforcement leadership that covers topics like mental health and jail diversion. Chief Standridge stated the need for collaboration with local mental health authorities (LMHAs) and telehealth crisis services and the importance of behavioral threat assessment groups for proactive case management. He voiced frustration with grant funding requirements, particularly the 100% match requirement.

Chief Mike Lee, Chief Deputy, Harris County Sheriff's Office, agreed with Chief Standridge's points and spoke on the importance of street officers having access to crucial information, such as the CCQ database, which provides mental health history. He advocated for officers to have access to the database via Mobile Data Terminals during traffic stops and calls for service and argued that

providing this information could help prevent individuals with mental health histories from being incarcerated for low-level charges.

Lee Johnson, Chief Executive Officer, Texas Council of Community Centers, Inc., praised Chief Standridge's comments, supported lowering local match requirements for grant programs, and highlighted the success of Rider 52. He stated it would be important to make information accessible to law enforcement and touted the use of iPads in rural and urban areas. Mr. Johnson acknowledged opposition during the legislative process and the need to be mindful of different viewpoints. He also commented that there have been positive outcomes in communities where law enforcement collaboration with LMHAs has been embraced.

Scott Schalchlin, Deputy Executive Commissioner for the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Health & Specialty Care System, reported on the reduction in waitlists and increased staff levels for state hospitals. He reported successful recruitment efforts and pay raises leading to a 93.5% staff fill rate. The forensic waitlist decreased by 27%, and the number of offline beds decreased from 1,500 to under 100. Construction projects funded by Senate Bill 30 have added more beds to address the waitlist. State hospital transition teams have been implemented to help transition challenging patients out of hospitals.

Dr. Octavio N. Martinez, Jr., Executive Director of the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, provided updates and announced the completion of its Reliable Flexible Funding for Mental Health and Wellbeing initiative, which invested over \$5.1 million to support nonprofits in Texas. The initiative aimed to help nonprofits address mental health disparities and enhance operations without micromanaging. The Hogg Academy and Policy Fellowships is beginning its seventh cohort this year, and is specifically focused on policy related to children, youth, and family mental health. The Foundation also organized Peer Fest 2024, an educational event for Texans facing mental health challenges.

Yolanda Lewis, Executive Vice President for Justice and Health and Executive Director, Center for Justice and Health, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, made remarks that focused on justice and health initiatives that included construction projects to increase inpatient capacity, multidisciplinary response teams in Dallas, and efforts to handle 9-1-1 mental health emergencies. She highlighted the need for better mental health training for call takers and the need for expunction and record restoration. She invited feedback from local jurisdictions to contribute to the national conversation on these issues. She stated that these initiatives will be aimed to improve access to housing, employment and reduce the risk of re-entering the justice system.

Dr. Blake Harris, Director of the Veterans Mental Health Department, Texas Veterans Commission, shared updates on various programs and initiatives, including justice-involved veteran programs, suicide prevention, provider training, homeless veteran initiatives, community and faith partnerships, and the military veteran peer network. He reported that The Texas Coordinating Council for Veteran Services finalized recommendations to address rising suicide

rates among veterans. He stated the Commission was also working on integrating veteran-specific mental health training within criminal justice systems to reduce recidivism and aid reentry. Dr. Harris stated there was a need for a competent workforce to provide peer services and mental health support, particularly in rural areas. The Commission is also working on revising trauma-affected veterans training, creating a veteran-specific SIM map, and collaborating with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Shandra Carter, Executive Director, Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD), announced \$200 million for new builds with plans to expand access for volunteers and services for youth with mental health needs. An increase in staff raised the census by 140 youth, but contracted care providers struggled to serve high-acuity youth entering TJJD. Treatment challenges included more prolonged treatment for youth with high mental health needs and violent offender treatment. Ms. Carter acknowledged county partnerships to divert youth, and the Texas Model Approach evolved to include dialectical behavior therapy and trust-based relational intervention. Risk-based funding was introduced to clarify costs for general population youth and those with chronic mental illness or high aggression. Ms. Carter noted collaborative efforts with DFPS, HHSC, and the Governor's Office.

April Zamora, Director, Reentry and Integration Division, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, discussed the focus of the Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI) Advisory Committee on jail diversion, high-level felony charges, and mental health cases. She noted the growing population of inmates with mental health needs and the need for better early interventions. Ms. Zamora stated the importance of information sharing and collaboration among committees and stakeholders. She invited others to join the Committee to consolidate efforts and align initiatives for the legislative session.

Brandon Wood, Executive Director, Texas Commission on Jail Standards, reported work on several initiatives, including an advisory committee on individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, updating the screening form used across Texas, promoting SIM mapping, improving the early identification of individuals with mental illnesses for jail diversion, and collaboration with Dr. Harris's mental health work group within the Texas Coordinating Council for Veteran Services. Mr. Wood also highlighted the importance of better information dissemination for informed decision-making before individuals reach the jail system. He also mentioned ongoing efforts to finalize the legislative report's wording on shifting unmet needs.

Meeting adjourned

Judge Barbara Hervey expressed her gratitude to everyone for attending and announced the upcoming Commission meeting on Wednesday, November 20, 2024, which will be held in Allen, Texas prior to the annual Summit.

Tab 4

Judicial Commission on Mental Health FY2025

November 2024 Financial Report

FY2025 Available Funds

FY2025 JCMH Funding	
FY2024 Appropriation - 13011	\$ 1,350,000
FY2025 COLA - 13011	\$ 70,740
CCA - Summit	\$ 20,000
FY2025 Funds Available	\$ 1,440,740

FY2025 Budget vs. Actuals

	Actual	Budget	Balance
Operating	\$ 104,891	\$ 818,518	\$ 713,627
Commission Projects	\$ 0	\$ 479,250	\$ 479,250
Scholarships	\$ 0	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
Grants	\$ 102,600	\$ 121,454	\$ 18,854
Total	\$ 207,491	\$ 1,429,222	\$ 1,221,731

Financial Status as of November 2024

FY2025 Funds Available	\$ 1,440,740
Expenditures to Date	\$ (207,491)
FY2025 Fund Balance	\$ 1,233,249
Budgeted Expenditures Outstanding	\$ (1,221,731)
FY2025 Unobligated Funds	\$ 11,518

Tab 5



REPORT TO THE COMMISSION

November 20, 2024

www.texasjcmh.gov

Report of the Executive Director

The mission of the Judicial Commission on Mental Health is to engage and empower court systems through [collaboration](#), [education](#), and [leadership](#), thereby improving the lives of individuals with mental health needs, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. The following report will provide an overview of the projects the JCMH has undertaken to further these objectives.

Collaboration

The JCMH has many initiatives created to bring together experts to solve systemic problems. The JCMH legislative committees are an example of multi-disciplinary stakeholders working together to create legislation recommendations for the Texas Judicial Council. Below are descriptions of the legislative committees as well as other collaborative efforts of the JCMH.

1. Commission

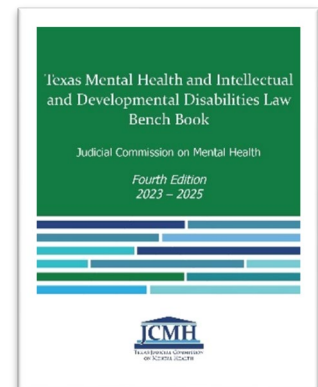
JCMH Commissioners provide a deep well of expertise through their diverse backgrounds and experiences. Commissioners meet three times a year, providing information to promote best practices and improve the function of the judiciary for those with mental health, substance use, or IDD needs. The Commissioners often participate in additional collaborative events when needed. Commissioners typically serve three-year renewable terms and were most recently appointed or reappointed on January 1, 2024.

2. Collaborative Council

The Collaborative Council keeps the JCMH updated on emerging issues in the field. JCMH staff holds online meetings in which the 90 Collaborative Council members can learn about new initiatives and share their organization's conferences, projects, and best practices from around the state. The Collaborative Council met three times in 2024: February 6, May 14, and September 10. After each meeting, JCMH staff provide links to resources that were mentioned during the meeting. [Materials](#) from past meetings and upcoming scheduled meetings can be found on the JCMH website.

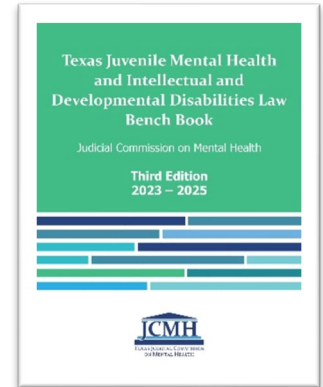
3. JCMH Bench Book Committee

The JCMH Bench Book Committee is chaired by Judge Camile DuBose. The Committee developed the first edition of the Texas Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Law Bench Book in 2018. In October 2023, the Committee published its 4th Edition in print and [online](#). To date, over 800 copies have been distributed. The Committee will begin preparations for the 5th Edition during the Summer of 2025.



4. Juvenile Bench Book Committee

The Juvenile Bench Book Committee is chaired by Judge Cynthia Wheless. The Committee launched the Texas Juvenile Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Law Bench Book (commonly called the Juvenile Bench Book) in 2020. In 2023, the Committee published the 3rd edition in print and [online](#). To date, over 600 physical copies have been distributed.



5. Summit Curriculum Committee

The Summit Curriculum Committee, chaired by Judge Brent Carr, advises on speakers and curriculum for the Annual Judicial Summit on Mental Health. The Committee works to ensure that the presentations promote the JCMH mission and are at the forefront of this dynamic legal field. The Committee met in summer of 2024 to prepare the agenda for the 7th Annual Judicial Summit on Mental Health.

6. Legislative Research Committee

JCMH Vice Chair Bill Boyce chairs the Legislative Research Committee (LRC), which creates legislative proposals to improve the administration of justice and submits them to the Texas Judicial Council. Professor Brian Shannon leads the drafting subcommittee. In November 2023, the LRC began preparing for the 89th Legislative Session and met several times through spring and summer of 2024. Thirteen proposals were submitted to the Texas Judicial Council, which adopted them all unanimously in September 2024. The 2024 JCMH Legislative Recommendations and Report can be found [here](#).

7. Substance Use Disorder Committee

Judge Roxanne Nelson chairs the new Substance Use Disorder Committee. The Committee met on September 24, 2024, and set priorities, including interventions with juveniles and before re-entry. This committee will have an informal gathering during the Summit and will have its next official meeting in 2025.

8. Forms Committee

The Forms Committee, chaired by Judge Dave Jahn, was established in December 2019. Tasked with examining common mental health forms, the Committee sought to produce a set of standardized forms that could be used in any county in the state. The Forms Committee met regularly and developed over 60 [forms](#) related to mental health, which are available on the JCMH website. The Supreme Court Advisory Committee specifically considered seven forms related to mental health and approved these forms for use under Rule 10 (g) of the [Texas Rules of Judicial Administration](#), a rule that prohibits the rejection of these seven forms if they are properly completed. A [report](#) of all Commission activities related to S.B. 362 (86th Reg. Sess. (2019)), including that of the Forms Committee, is available on the website.

9. Long-Term Planning Committee

The Long-Term Planning Committee, chaired by Judge John Specia, Jr., has focused on setting longer-term goals and offering feedback on potential JCMH projects. Specifically, the Committee

discussed how to support judicial leaders in their work: (i) as judicial leaders within with their communities; (ii) creating and augmenting mental health courts and dockets; (iii) incorporating best practices for youth; and (iv) including best practices related to improving disparate outcomes for diversities such as race, geography, gender, and economic factors. On May 19, 2022, the Long-Term Planning Committee met to create an updated JCMH strategic plan with these topics at the forefront. On May 20, 2022, the [2023 Strategic Plan](#) was approved by the Commission and Executive Committee.

10. Data Committee

The Data Committee, chaired by Dr. Connie Almeida and Chief Rosie Medina, held three meetings in 2024 to finalize work on a Best Practice Guide to Texas Mental Health Court Program Data Collection and Use.

The Committee helped to create a Step-By-Step Guide to encourage counties to utilize the 16.22 process for early identification of individuals with mental illness or IDD in the local criminal justice system and to ensure proper reporting to OCA, which is now available [here](#) on the JCMH website and in print. The data collection best practices guide will help courts appropriately collect, store, and use data to improve program effectiveness.

11. JCMH Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is comprised of Justice Jane Bland, Judge Barbara Hervey, Justice Rebeca Huddle, Judge Jesse McClure III, Justice Bill Boyce, Judge John Specia, Judge Brent Carr, Megan LaVoie, and Kristi Taylor. It meets at least quarterly, or more if needed, to advise on JCMH operations, projects, and policy.

Education

The JCMH creates specialized training, resources, and tools for judges, attorneys, court personnel, and other stakeholders.

1. 7th Annual Judicial Summit on Mental Health

The 2024 Summit will take place on November 20-22, 2024, at the Marriott Dallas Allen Hotel and Convention Center in Allen, Texas. As in prior years, the Summit will offer a web simulcast for attendees who are unable to travel in person. This year the Summit includes a Keynote from Robert Canino, the attorney who pioneered litigation involving the EEOC and the Americans with Disabilities Act to find justice for exploited individuals taken from Texas State Supported Living Centers and forced into manual labor in Iowa in the 1970s.

2. Texas Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Law [Bench Book](#)

The Bench Book is a 358-page book for Texas judges hearing cases regarding persons with mental illness and/or IDD. Each section contains applicable statutory processes, relevant best practices

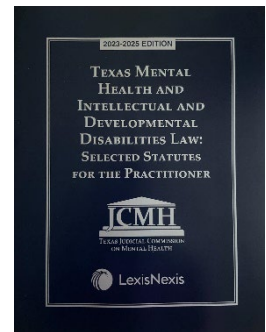
and guidance, and cross-references to mandatory forms. The fourth edition of the Bench Book added over 100 pages of new material and forms, including an index, and was released in October 2023 at the Judicial Summit on Mental Health. Print copies of the Bench Book and all other JCMH publications can be ordered by sending an email to JCMH@Texascourts.gov, and a digital version of the 4th Edition is currently available on the JCMH website.

3. Texas Juvenile Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Law Bench Book

The Juvenile Bench Book is a 190-page book for Texas judges hearing cases regarding youth and adolescents with mental illness and/or IDD. Each section contains applicable statutory processes, relevant best practices and guidance, equity considerations, and suggested forms. The third edition of the Juvenile Bench book was released at the 2023 Judicial Summit on Mental Health. Print copies can be ordered by sending an email to JCMH@Texascourts.gov and a digital version of the 3rd edition is currently available on the JCMH website.

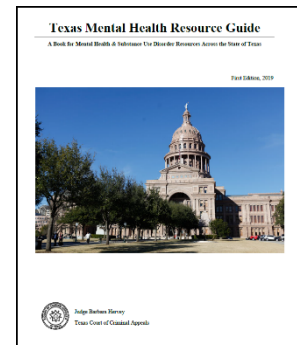
4. Mental Health Code Book

The JCMH, building on the work of Chris Lopez at HHSC, created the *Texas Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Law: Selected Statutes for the Practitioner*, a collection of Texas statutes related to mental health and IDD in one convenient volume. The Code Book was updated and streamlined following the 88th Legislative Session. Print copies can be ordered by sending an email to JCMH@Texascourts.gov and a digital version is available on the JCMH website.



5. Texas Mental Health Resource Guide

The [Texas Mental Health Resource Guide](#) was created from Judge Barbara Hervey's vision and provides an explanation of mental health services and lists resources indexed by type, region, and county. The Resource Guide is intended to be continually updated, and information or resources for the benefit of those with mental health challenges can be sent to the Court of Criminal Appeals at Mentalhealthresource@Texascourts.gov.



6. Jurist in Residence Letters

Judge John Specia, Jr., Senior District Judge (Ret.) and Judge Brent A. Carr (Ret.) distribute letters to keep judges, attorneys, and other stakeholders updated on relevant changes to the law and share helpful resources and tools. Two letters were sent in 2024 and recent topics include information about the competency restoration webinar series, Summit registration details, and applications for the Treatment Courts Collaborative. All previously released Jurist-in-Residence letters are available on our website, [here](#).

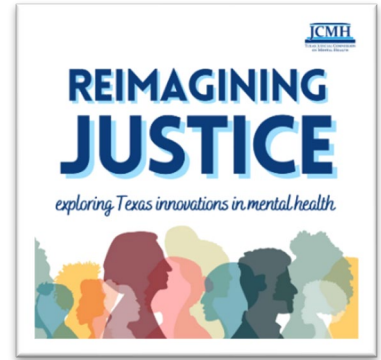
7. Resource Letters

Resource Letters are short communiques designed to quickly disseminate information and announcements about resources and training opportunities for stakeholders. JCMH issued eight

Resource Letters in 2024 including information on grants, helpful publications, and training and education opportunities. All previous Resource Letters are available [here](#).

8. JCMH [Website](#)

The JCMH website highlights the JCMH’s body of work. The site showcases JCMH’s [events](#), [publications](#), various [technical assistance](#) offerings, and [news](#) related to the Commission. The home page of the website always has the latest announcements and important links from the JCMH. By utilizing forms on the website, requests for [technical assistance](#) have been streamlined to allow users to make a request directly from the page. Our [Beyond the Bio](#) page adds a unique touch by sharing personal information about our commissioners and collaborative council members. The Video Library section of the site gives users access to educational materials in a video format. The JCMH recorded a series of three webinars about competency restoration this summer, and all three are now featured in the Video Library.

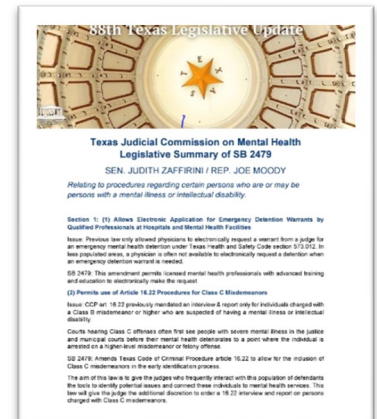


9. JCMH Podcast

In 2023, JCMH launched its podcast called: [Reimagining Justice: Exploring Texas Innovations in Mental Health](#). Each month, we highlight a program or practice that other counties can learn from and replicate. So far, 19 episodes have been released. Our latest episode was with Dustin Schellenger about the Texas Law Enforcement Peer Network. Email JCMH staff if you have an innovative program in your county that you would like to see highlighted.

10. Legislative Materials

The JCMH prepares tools and resources regarding mental health and IDD legislation. You can find summaries of the bills passed in the last legislative session from JCMH proposals, as well as a summary of passed mental health legislation organized by sequential intercept [here](#).



12. Presentations to Partner Organizations

JCMH leaders have been featured speakers at national and statewide events. JCMH staff have also been invited to speak on mental health topics, specialty courts, and collaborative leadership at many conferences and events in the past few months:

- November 1, 2024, Kama Harris co-presented “Complexities in Texas Competency Restoration Law,” at the Williamson County Bar Association’s Fall CLE in Georgetown, Texas.
- October 26, 2024, Kristi Taylor co-presented “Collaborative Care in Forensic Psychiatry: A Proposal for the Innovative Collaboration Between Academic Psychiatry and the Local Justice System,” at the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law’s 55th Annual Meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia.

- October 10, 2024, Kristi Taylor co-presented on behavioral health policy issues in the upcoming Legislative Session at The Texas Coalition for Healthy Minds & the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health inaugural Behavioral Health Policy Summit in Austin, Texas.
- September 19, 2024, Kama Harris presented “Complexities in Texas Competency Restoration Law,” to the Williamson County Inns of Court in Georgetown, Texas.
- August 27, 2024, Kristi Taylor taught a Mental Health Law class at the University of Houston School of Law in Houston, Texas.
- August 23, 2024, Kristi Taylor co-presented with Judge Yolanda Huff and a panel at the Pathways to Hope Conference in San Antonio, Texas.
- July 9, 2024, Kama Harris presented “Not Competent/Not Restorable: What’s Next?” at the Center for American and International Law in Plano, Texas.
- June 26, 2024, Molly Davis co-presented at HHSC’s “New Resources to Support Competency Restoration Decision-Making,” webinar.
- June 26, 2024, Andy Perkins presented “Mental Health Toolkit: Preparing Your Court for Success” at the Texas Municipal Court Education Center West Texas Regional Clerks Seminar in Odessa, Texas.
- June 14, 2024, Molly Davis presented “Mental Health for Juvenile Probation Officers,” to the Travis County Juvenile Probation Department in Austin, Texas.
- June 10, 2024, Andy Perkins presented “Mental Health Toolkit: Preparing Your Court for Success” at the Texas Municipal Court Education Center Juvenile Case Managers Conference in Austin, Texas.
- May 30, 2024, Molly Davis presented “Mental Health in Municipal Courts,” at the TMCEC Prosecutors Seminar in Houston, Texas.
- May 2, 2024 Andy Perkins presented “Mental Health Toolkit: Preparing Your Court for Success” at the Texas Municipal Court Education Center Mental Health Awareness in the Courts webinar.
- April 19, 2024, Kristi Taylor presented “Rural Strategies in Mental Health Law,” to the National Rural Justice Collaborative online.
- April 17, 2024, Kama Harris presented “Mental Health in Texas: Updates to the 17.032 Process,” to the Texas Association of Pretrial Services Annual Conference in Round Rock, Texas.
- April 4, 2024, Molly Davis presented “The History of Treatment Courts,” at the Hays County Spring 2024 Mental Health Workshop in San Marcos, Texas.

To request a JCMH staff member to speak at your event, please complete the [speaker form](#) on our website.

Leadership

The JCMH recognizes that judicial leadership is essential to furthering our mission and supports statewide and local initiatives to provide courts with the tools and resources they need.

1. Texas County Mental Health Law Plan Pilot Program

In 2024, JCMH launched a pilot program called the [Texas County Mental Health Law Plan](#), in which the eight participating counties received four classes on Texas Mental Health Law, a checklist for self-analysis, and in-person workshops offering hands-on assistance, tools, and resources to support their work in creating a County Mental Health Law Plan. The goals of the pilot are to determine if creating such a plan encourages discussions that add collaboration, efficiency, cost-savings, and accountability to county mental health law systems.

Administrative Judges were asked to create a multidisciplinary team, if one did not already exist, that would review the JCMH Mental Health Law Checklist and then complete a template reflecting the county's current and future plans related to the relevant mental health law issues according to the Sequential Intercept Model. JCMH plans to continue this initiative in 2025.

2. Community Diversion Coordinator Pilot Project

The JCMH, in partnership with HHSC, granted funds to three counties for a pilot project to create a position focused on diversion of individuals with mental illness charged with nonviolent misdemeanor offenses from the criminal justice system. Denton, Grayson, and Smith Counties were selected as pilot sites. Each county hired a Coordinator in Fall 2021. In 2022, JCMH hosted SIM workshops for all three counties and assisted each coordinator with creation of an action plan. The program counties are receiving technical assistance from the National Center for State Courts to assist with evaluation of the programs as well as the development of a blueprint for other counties to follow to create a community diversion coordinator.

3. Competency Restoration Webinar Series

In the summer of 2024, JCMH produced a three-part series of [webinars](#) approved for CLE credit on various aspects of competency restoration law. Over 800 people attended the sessions, which were recorded and are available on the [JCMH website](#).

4. Round Table Series

Round Table discussions are designed to address key issues affecting mental health and IDD law and the courts that hear those cases. The discussions are usually a half-day program facilitated by a subject matter expert. The topics vary year to year and the number of Round Tables hosted each year also varies according to the interest of stakeholders and issues demanding attention. A Round Table on children's mental health issues was co-hosted by the Supreme Court Children's Commission in June 2022; the [report](#) is available on both commissions' websites. In December 2022, a Round Table on complex issues in Emergency Detention proceedings was held; the [report](#) is available on the JCMH website.

5. Technical Assistance for Courts and Communities

JCMH continues to provide Technical Assistance services, including connecting judges with experts and peers, and assisting in the creation of treatment court programs. In 2024, JCMH held the first-of-its-kind [Mental Health Courts Collaborative](#), an online peer mentorship and collaboration forum for judges who want to start a mental health court, that culminated at the Texas Association of Specialty Courts Conference in March 2024 in Fort Worth. Judges from seven counties participated in the Collaborative. The Collaborative will be offered again in 2025 and will expand to include treatment courts that are related to substance use.



JCMH also provides Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) Mapping Workshops to communities, and in 2024 and 2025 will target juvenile justice systems for mapping workshops. So far in 2024, JCMH has completed mappings of the Lubbock County adult criminal justice system and the juvenile justice systems of Blanco and Llano Counties, Cameron, Grayson, Smith, and Williamson Cameron Counties. JCMH partnered with the Texas Justice Court Training Center to map the adult criminal justice system of Duval County as well.



6. Innovations Map

The County Resources and Innovations in Mental Health Map ([Innovations Map](#)) was published in 2022. The Commission continues to add resources to this map as well as allow user submission, and the map has been redesigned to allow a specific focus juvenile resources and to highlight notable milestones and innovations, locally and statewide.

Tab 6

RECOGNIZING VISION

The Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health strives to improve the administration of justice for citizens with mental health needs, substance use disorders, or intellectual and developmental disabilities.

WRITTEN BY BILL BOYCE

Few court proceedings can match the visual and policy impact of a joint session of the Supreme Court of Texas and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

When the two high courts convened their historic joint session in 2018 to launch the Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health, they conveyed an unmistakable message: Texas can do better for its justice-involved citizens with mental health needs, substance use disorders, or intellectual and developmental disabilities. This public commitment of judicial capital and energy has spurred collaboration in all branches and at all levels of Texas government.

Texas is indeed doing better by these citizens, and the work continues to do better still.

The challenges have been apparent nationwide for years. Scarce hospital beds and lack of treatment options turned courts, prisons, and jails into default providers of mental health services. The resulting system too often has become a revolving door characterized by arrest during a crisis; temporary (at best) stabilization; decompensation after release; and re-arrest as the cycle repeats and underlying conditions remain unaddressed.

The Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators urged court leaders to address the impact of the broken mental health system on the nation's courts. Under the leadership of Supreme Court of Texas Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals Presiding Judge Sharon Keller, and Texas Court of Criminal Appeals Judge Barbara Hervey, Texas became the first state to respond to this crisis by creating a judicial commission focused on mental health.

The impending retirements of Hecht, Keller, and Hervey make this an appropriate time to recognize their vision and commitment; thank them for their efforts; and celebrate the commission's accomplishments.

The commission is currently co-chaired by Supreme Court of Texas Justice Jane Bland and Hervey. I have been honored to serve as the vice chair since its inception. With Kristi Taylor at the helm as executive director, this commission and its small staff have moved some mountains.

In the past six years, the commission and its leaders have:

- Planned and hosted seven Judicial Summits on Mental Health, a free annual symposium drawing more than a thousand attendees each year that has become a premier mental health conference.

- Written and distributed publications including:
 - The *Texas Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Law Bench Book* and its juvenile counterpart.
 - The *Texas Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Law Code Book*.
 - The *Reimagining Justice* podcast, which features community leaders sharing innovative ideas.
 - Toolkits including *Eliminate the Wait*, the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Article 16.22 guide, and the *10-Step Guide to Creating a Mental Health Court Program*.
- Provided technical assistance via in-person workshops, presentations at state and national conferences, virtual trainings, and professional peer networking to hundreds of court professionals.
- Worked with the Texas Judicial Council to submit proposals to the Texas Legislature for review, contributing to the passage of 16 commission-sponsored legislative proposals.
- Created a series of mental health forms to streamline and promote efficiency in court processes.

The commission's efforts have extended throughout Texas to help individuals involved in the judicial system and those who administer justice. This commission would not have achieved these results, which have been recognized and replicated nationally, without the steadfast leadership of the two high courts.

Six years ago, Hecht, Keller, and Hervey were instrumental in issuing this challenge: We can do better.

The best way to thank them for their dedication to improving the administration of justice for citizens with mental health needs, substance use disorders, or intellectual and developmental disabilities is to answer: We can. We have. We will. **TBJ**



BILL BOYCE

is vice chair of the Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health. He practices appellate law as a partner at Alexander Dubose and Jefferson in Houston and serves as an arbitrator through the American Arbitration Association. Boyce formerly served as a justice on the 14th Court of Appeals in Houston.

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Scan the QR codes to follow us on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Instagram

