

Behavioral Health Breakout: Judicial Commission on Mental Health Update

Speakers

Liz Wiggins

Elizabeth “Liz” Wiggins joined JCMH in the summer of 2021 and assisted with the roll out of JCMH’s technical assistance services to courts across Texas. She has experience as both a former prosecutor and defense attorney, and with various leadership roles while volunteering with local organizations. Liz has a passion for identifying and addressing the root issues to reduce recidivism, keep communities safe, and to elevate people to become the best versions of themselves. She is also a Facilitator for PRA’s Sequential Intercept Model Mapping.



Kama Harris



Before joining the Judicial Commission for Mental Health as a staff attorney in 2020, Kama Harris worked as a criminal defense lawyer, defending hundreds of adult and juvenile clients at all levels of the Texas criminal justice system. She began her legal career at a public defender’s office, working as a mitigation specialist for death penalty cases. In that role, she gained instrumental insight on the way trauma, poverty, racism, mental health, and intellectual and developmental disabilities had an impact on her clients, their families, the community, and the legal system. Ms. Harris utilized that knowledge during her time as the First Assistant Public Defender in Burnet County, as an attorney in private practice, and now as a staff attorney with the JCMH.

In this presentation, Kama and Liz gave an overview of the JCMH’s work and mission. They highlighted projects the JCMH has either created or participated in including:

- Judicial Summit on Mental Health
- Children’s Mental Health Round Table
- Emergency Detention Order Stakeholder Meeting
- Eliminate the Wait
- Legal Flow Charts
- Jurist in Residence Letters
- SIM Mapping
- Community Diversion Coordinator Pilot Program

