

This resource letter of the Jurist in Residence (JIR) program is designed to facilitate communication among the JCMH, the judiciary, and mental health stakeholders. Please forward this letter to any judges, attorneys, mental health professionals, law enforcement, or other community and state leaders who might be interested. To ensure that you regularly receive this letter, please click on the subscribe button at the bottom of this page, if you have not already.



**Collaborate. Educate. Lead.**

## **Jurist in Residence Resource Letter** From Senior District Judge John Specia (Ret.)

### **Congratulations, Community Diversion Coordinator Grantees!**

In May, the JCMH announced a pilot project to enhance coordination between courts and behavioral health providers. The Community Diversion Coordinator Pilot Program is intended to divert individuals with mental illness who are charged with nonviolent misdemeanor offenses from the criminal justice system.

The JCMH received many impressive applications and selected three counties for the pilot program. Congratulations to Denton County, Grayson County, and Smith County! The JCMH is excited about these partnerships and looks forward to seeing your progress.

### **Registration Open for 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Judicial Summit on Mental Health**

This year's annual Summit is scheduled for October 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, with options to attend in person or virtually. The Summit brings together judges from all levels of the judiciary, academics, law enforcement, advocacy groups, prosecutors, defense attorneys, mental health and IDD service providers, representatives from various state agencies, policymakers, and persons with lived experience. The Summit is free and offers up to 15 hours of CLE, CEU and TCOLE credit, including up to 2.75 hours of ethics credit.

This year's Summit features a focus on civil proceedings and a spotlight on innovative diversion and treatment programs, including the new Eliminate the Wait initiative.

Participants will receive tools to help navigate the complex mental health laws, including new editions of JCMH's Juvenile and Adult Bench Books. Summit registration is still open. For more information, or to register for the Summit, click [here](#).

### **Announcing Eliminate the Wait: the Texas Action Plan for Right-Sizing Competency Restoration Services**

Like other states across the country, Texas is experiencing a growing crisis in effectively serving the number of individuals waiting for inpatient competency restoration services in county jails. The fiscal costs and human toll of this problem are immense. It is time to right-size competency restoration services for Texans by taking a holistic approach to address this challenge. JCMH and HHSC present a call to action to join in on a collaborative effort to change the way Texas serves people at the intersection of mental health and the criminal justice system. We all have a role to play to **ELIMINATE THE WAIT**.

A session at the Summit will bring together a diverse group of panelists to discuss a comprehensive action plan in which each stakeholder can play a small part to decrease the inpatient competency restoration waitlist. Together we can Eliminate the Wait in Texas. For more information on how you can get involved, click [here](#), and attend the Competency Restoration Crisis – Texas Action Planning session of the Summit.

Sincerely,



John J. Specia Jr.  
Jurist in Residence

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