

Mental Health Issues in Magistration Including 16.22 Procedures

Speakers

Kristi Taylor



Kristi Taylor is the Executive Director of the Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health (JCMH). She has over 25 years of experience as an attorney and policymaker. After receiving a BBA with Honors in Finance from the McCombs School of Business and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Texas School of Law, Taylor represented children and parents in the child welfare system for seven years.

In 2006, Taylor was selected by the Supreme Court of Texas to create the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth, and Families. She later served as a Staff Attorney and Assistant Director of the Children's Commission. In 2017, Ms. Taylor spearheaded the planning for a new judicial commission on mental health and was named the Executive Director in 2018.

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.

Kama Harris



In this presentation, Kristi and Kama explained topics that Magistrates in Texas need to know. Topics included:

- Emergency Detention - what is it, and why is it used? Kristi and Kama described the types of emergency detention and how to start the process of getting a warrant, then how to apply for emergency detention.
- Early Identification (16.22) - from initial detention to the defendant's first court appearance, the presenters explained the 16.22 process.
- Mental Health Bonds - what are they and why are they important?
- Resources - Kristi and Kama told the audience about resources available to them, including JCMH Bench Books, Forms, and Technical Assistance.