



Justice Jane Bland, *Chair*

Judge Barbara Hervey, *Chair*

Kristi Taylor, *Executive Director*

January 6, 2022

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JCMH and HHSC Release Toolkit to “Eliminate the Wait” for Competency Restoration Services

“Eliminate the Wait” helps stakeholders work together

TEXAS – A person must be competent to stand trial to protect the rights of people who do not understand the charges against them and cannot assist in their own defense. Like other states across the U.S., Texas faces a growing number of people who are waiting in jail for inpatient services because they have been declared incompetent to stand trial. This increases costs and burdens on county jails and takes a significant toll on the health and well-being of those who are waiting in jail for these inpatient competency restoration services.

- More than 1,900 people are currently waiting in Texas jails for competency restoration services.
- Over the past 20 years, Texas has seen a 38% increase in people found incompetent to stand trial.
- Nearly 70% of state hospital beds in Texas are used by the forensic population.

The Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health and Health and Human Services Commission ask judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, sheriffs and jail staff, police, and behavioral health providers to join this effort to change the way Texas serves people at the intersection of mental health and criminal justice. We all have a role to play to ELIMINATE THE WAIT.

“We applaud this collaborative effort to raise awareness about competency-restoration services and best practices,” JCMH Co-Chairs Hon. Jane Bland and Hon. Barbara Hervey said. “It engages courts, law enforcement, and mental health professionals in an effort to better use state resources for people with mental health disorders or intellectual and developmental disabilities who encounter our justice system.”

The JCMH and HHSC have created a toolkit with strategies to help ELIMINATE THE WAIT for inpatient competency restoration services in Texas. You can find the toolkit [here](#).

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About the Judicial Commission on Mental Health

The Judicial Commission on Mental Health (JCMH) was created by a joint order of the Supreme Court of Texas and the Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas. The mission of the JCMH is to empower the state courts through collaboration, education, and leadership to improve the lives of individuals with mental health needs, intellectual and development disabilities, and substance use disorders. For more information, see www.texasjcmh.gov.

About the Texas Health and Human Services Commission

The Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) System is comprised of more than 41,000 public servants under two agencies: The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and The Department of State Health Services. These agencies serve millions of people each month and deliver hundreds of programs and services. Additionally, HHSC operates 13 state supported living centers, which provide direct services and supports to people with IDD, and 10 state hospitals, which serve people who need inpatient psychiatric care.