
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS



Texas County Mental Health Law Plan Pilot Program

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION IN ITS ENTIRETY
INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

THE APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED BY OCTOBER 31, 2023

Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health
PO Box 12248
Austin, Texas 78711

Questions may be submitted to JCMH Staff

Phone: 512.463.1400

E-mail: JCMH@txcourts.gov

OVERVIEW

The Judicial Commission on Mental Health (JCMH) was established by joint order of the Supreme Court of Texas and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals to develop, implement, and coordinate policy initiatives designed to improve the courts' interaction with—and the administration of justice for—children, adults, and families with mental health needs or intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

The Texas County Mental Health Law Plan (MH Law Plan) is intended to assist counties in developing a comprehensive mental health law plan to enhance collaboration, efficiency, cost-saving, and accountability to county mental health law systems which will ultimately prevent more people with mental illness or IDD from going to jail when treatment was appropriate. The JCMH requests applications from counties to participate in the pilot program. Two to six counties will be selected.

AUTHORITY

The JCMH is funded by the 86th Texas Legislature Regular Session H.B.1 (“General Appropriations Act”), Supreme Court of Texas, Strategy B.1.2 (“Court Improvement Projects”).

TEXAS COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH LAW PLAN PROGRAM

In Texas, statutes across the Texas Health & Safety Code, the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, and other codes direct the many stakeholders to act in ways that create opportunities and requirements to divert individuals with mental illness or IDD away from the criminal justice system and into treatment when appropriate. These statutes span across the entire Sequential Intercept Model and include court-ordered mental health services, law enforcement procedures, early identification of people with mental illness or IDD, specialty courts, competency restoration, and information sharing. Because these laws are complicated and require coordination, it is JCMH's belief that counties will benefit from judicial leaders bringing together multidisciplinary stakeholders to create a Texas County Mental Health Law Plan.

The Purpose of the MH Law Pilot Program is to determine if creating the plan is beneficial to counties.

The MH Law Plan will provide counties with:

- MH Law Plan Checklists;
- MH Law Plan Templates;
- Hands-On Technical Assistance from JCMH;
- Step-by-Step instruction on coming into compliance with Texas MH Law; and
- Connection to other resources.

The intended output is to encourage collaboration, efficiency, cost-savings, and accountability to county mental health law systems, thereby leading to fewer people with mental illness or IDD in the criminal justice system when diversion is possible and appropriate.

SITE SELECTION

The County Mental Health Law Plan project will be monitored by JCMH for 6-9 months and counties will help evaluate their progress. Two to six test sites will be selected.

Preference will be given to Applicants who:

- Do not currently have a comparable program in place;
- Have completed SIM Mapping or is willing to participate in SIM Mapping;
- Have an ongoing collaborative meeting of the target community stakeholders (see Target Stakeholders/Partners in next section) or have the will to create such an ongoing collaborative meeting.

All applications must be received by October 31, 2023.

TARGET STAKEHOLDERS/PARTNERS

It is suggested that each applicant identify leaders within their community who support this project and are dedicated to allocating staff time to participate in the technical assistance activities.

Please consider whether you have the support of:

- Local law enforcement agency(ies)
- Hospital emergency departments
- Local Mental Health Authority
- Probate Judge
- Criminal Judge
- District Attorney
- County Attorney
- County Commissioner or Judge
- Representative from the Defense Bar or Public Defender
- Community Supervision Corrections Department

DATA COLLECTION & DELIVERABLES

The JCMH will assist counties in data collection and deliverables to be shown through the MH Law Plan Checklist.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

A link to the online County Mental Health Law Plan Pilot Program grant application can be found below. Applications must be completed and submitted online. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Application Review, Selection, & Notification

1. Only one application per County will be considered.
2. Review Criteria: At the conclusion of the application period, the JCMH staff will review each application's eligibility, need, and impact. The JCMH staff will draft recommendations based on the criteria above.
3. Past Performance: The JCMH staff will review applicants' performance, implementation, and evaluation of past projects (if applicable).
4. Final Selection: Applications, past performance reports (if available), and JCMH staff recommendations will be presented for vote to the JCMH executive committee. The JCMH staff may recommend to the JCMH that a program not be selected.
5. Notification: Selection statements will be sent on or about November 17, 2023.

General Rules

1. Compliance with Laws: The applicant shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, statutes, codes, ordinances, rules, and regulations, and the orders and decrees of any court or administrative bodies or tribunals in any matter affecting the performance of this program, including, without limitation, workers' compensation laws, minimum and maximum salary and wage statutes and regulations, nondiscrimination laws and regulations, and licensing laws and regulations. When required, the applicant shall furnish JCMH with satisfactory proof of its compliance.
2. Single Contract: A partnership, multi-county region, or other conglomerate entity submitting an application must appoint one entity to be the administrator. If selected, the JCMH will only contract with one entity for the program. Only one county or agency may be designated as the administrative county in partnerships or regions.
3. Disclosure: Applicants must disclose if any members of the Supreme Court of Texas, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, JCMH, a JCMH Committee, or JCMH Collaborative Council serve on the applicant's governing or advisory board, or if such a member has been retained by the applicant for a profit—a fee which exceeds the actual expenses to participate in funded activities.
4. Officials: Each application must have the following designated to serve as officials:
 - a. Authorized official. This person must be authorized to apply for, accept, decline, modify, or cancel the application for the applicant. A judge or a designee authorized by the governing body in its resolution may serve as the authorized official.
5. Maintain Official Contact Information: Applicants must advise the JCMH of changes in the authorized official, or program director. This information will be used to provide notices for information. The JCMH will use e-mail whenever possible to notify selected counties of required reports and funding opportunities.
6. Records Retention: Selected counties must maintain records related to the monitored activity for at least three years after the end of the project period. Records may be stored electronically.
7. Monitoring and Auditing: Records must be made available to the JCMH or its designees upon request. JCMH staff or their designees must have access to project events or be allowed to conduct on-site inspections.