



**Grantee Report**  
*Executive Summary*

**December 2021 Reporting**

**Supreme Court of Texas • Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Judicial Commission on Mental Health  
201 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas 78701**

**Caldwell County**  
*Caldwell County Sequential Intercept Model Mapping*

Grant Number: 201-20-061  
Contact Person: Dennis Engelke  
**Funds Granted: \$8,350**

Summary of Status

The funds are intended to be used to do a SIM mapping of Caldwell County. Due to COVID-19, the training was delayed. Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute would facilitate a mapping of Caldwell County intercepts (SIM) into the local justice system. The training occurred August 3, 2021. A final report was produced by MMHPI. The SIM training brought together key stakeholders -- County government, Sheriff's Office, Municipal Justices, County Jail and local community law enforcement representatives. This was the first opportunity that the stakeholders openly and candidly discussed their respective perspectives of the day-to-day administration of mental health incidents among perpetrators. Issues that came forth included: transporting of individuals, accessing mental health professional services, communication technology barriers, and disposition of clients through the current criminal justice system.

**Comal County**  
*Comal County Data Sharing Project*

Grant Number 201-20-057  
Contact Person: Judge Charles A. Stephens, II  
**Funds Granted: \$60,000**

Summary of Status

Grantee used award funds to contract with a health systems administrator that could assist in the creation of a data sharing portal. The County approved and published a Request for Proposals and after a selection process the Grantee contracted with Signify Health. Final contract negotiations with Signify Health are currently ongoing. The Grantee has also sought the assistance of Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council (STRAC) to assist in developing an approach that will best suit the needs of the Grantee.

Data collection is anticipated to begin when the portal is operational.

Due to the Pandemic, Grantee received a no-cost extension which extends the project period beyond the original award end date. No additional funding will be forthcoming, but the extension will allow additional time to spend down existing funds and ensure that all deliverables can be met.

**Harris County Probate Court No. 3**  
*Technological Remote Access for Patients to Court Hearings*

Grant number 201-20-060

Contact Person: Judge Jason A. Cox

**Funds Granted: \$11,458.33**

Summary of Status

Grantee used award funds to purchase 3 iPad Pros, 1 laptop with auxiliary monitors, and supplies related to technology hardware, including Apple Care subscriptions. The increased remote hearing access, especially in the time of COVID19, has allowed for mental health commitment proceedings to occur along statutorily mandated timelines, while also ensuring compliance with due process rights and expectations.

Anecdotal data collection shows that approximately 50 to 60 remote hearings were conducted. The types of hearings included, but were not limited to probable cause hearings, final commitment hearings, and forced medication hearings.

Grantee reports an overall improvement in regard to not only access to the court via remote hearings but has also in increased participation of those receiving services. It is anticipated that increased utilization of remote hearing technology will create a greater familiarity and comfort with the technology which will further improve participation and outcomes.

Due to the Pandemic, Grantee received a no-cost extension which extends the project period beyond the original award end date. No additional funding will be forthcoming, but the extension will allow additional time to spend down existing funds and ensure that all deliverables can be met.

**Hill Country MHDD Centers**  
Mental/Behavioral Health Electronic Access

Grant Number: 201-21-217

Contact Person: Beverly Smith

**Funds Granted: \$5,000**

Summary of Status

Grantee used funds to purchase twenty-five tablets to be used by inmates for video conferencing, tele-health visits and virtual 16.22 screenings. Of the twenty-five tablets that have been purchased, nine have been distributed to nine county jails. The counties that received a table are Bandera County, Balco County, Hays County, Kendall County, Kerr County, Kimble County, Uvalde County, and Val Verde County.

Grantee is making efforts to engage the remaining counties in order to provide them with a tablet. One county jail refused a tablet, citing a concern of staff responsibility for the technology.

As a result of the purchased tech, Grantee reports a decrease in travel time for MHDD Centers' staff, which has resulted in higher productivity and reduced costs associated with travel. There has also been an improvement in access to individuals in the jails that require mental healthcare and screenings. Grantee anticipates improved outcomes as soon as the remaining counties are supplied with tablets.

Data collection is anticipated to begin when all counties have received a tablet.

**Office of Court Administration (OCA)**

*JCMH-OCA Technology Grant*

Grant Number: 2021-21-079

Contact Person: Charlotte Velasco/Mena Ramon

**Funds Granted: \$184,218.34**

Summary of Status

Funds were granted to assist the Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health (JCMH) on developing an interactive website that would act as a portal for mental health resources. The

website would include comprehensive information on available resources and would allow county representatives to enter/update resource information directly. It is anticipated that the site will eventually include mental health resource information for all 254 counties in Texas.

Initial challenges created by staffing needs within the project team have been addressed and a beta test website has been developed. It is expected that the website will go live in early 2022.

**Pecan Valley Centers**  
*Hood County Sequential Intercept Model Training*

Grant Number: 201-20-058  
Contact Person: Coke Beatty  
**Funds Granted: \$23,487.56**

Summary of Status

Funds will eventually be used to conduct a sequential intercept model training in Hood County. Due to the Pandemic, the awarded funds have not been used, and Grantee received a no-cost extension which extends the project period beyond the original award end date. No additional funding will be forthcoming, but the extension will allow additional time to spend down existing funds and ensure that all deliverables can be met.

**Tarrant County**  
*Mental Health Diversion Program:  
Program Development & Court Improvement*

Grant Number: 201-20-055  
Contact Person: Judge Brent Carr  
**Funds Granted: \$25,000**

Summary of Status

The Grantee has been able to accomplish most of the objectives identified in their application. The Tarrant County Mental Health Diversion Program purchased a tablet and printers, which improved access to tele-conferences and virtual hearings for individuals in the court program who do not have a means to get to their court appointments.

Additionally, the Grantee was able to obtain a program evaluation from Dr. Clete Snell, Ph.D., from the University of Houston-Downtown.

Grantee also used funds to send program staff to the Texas Association of Specialty Courts training conference, which allowed program staff to learn from state leaders in specialty court implementation and application. Additional trainings through the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, BJA, CJD, TASC, NIMH, JCMH and NDCI will also be funded with the award.

**38th and 45th Judicial Districts CSCD**  
*Mental Health Court Software and Tech*

Grant Number: 201-21-255

Contact Person: Todd Winslow

**Funds Granted: \$8,736**

Summary of Status

Funds were awarded to assist Grantee in the continued use of the CSS Specialty Court Application, as well as the purchase of hardware (Microsoft Surface tablet) that would allow the Specialty Court to utilize shared software in the field.

Grantee reports an improved collaboration between criminal justice and mental health team members of the 38th and 45th Mental Health Court Program, as well as an improvement in the screening and acceptance of individuals into the program. Data sharing between the Probation Department, the Court, and the mental health team improved, as each department had access to updated case information and participant data. Grantee also reports a vast improvement in the process of screening and onboarding program participants. Overall, the Application software combined with the portable technology has allowed the Grantee to improve services and outcomes.

Data collection is anticipated to include reports on administration of drug tests, hearings, appointment listings, phase movements, incentives/sanctions, and placement and referral listings. Due to COVID-19 data collection has been limited, but Grantee anticipates a larger sample set and improved data collection as the Court transitions back to in-person settings.