



HHSC's Jail In-Reach Learning Collaborative

The Jail In-Reach Learning Collaborative (JIRLC) supports county forensic teams in identifying strategies to actively monitor people in county jails who have been found incompetent to stand trial and are awaiting admission into a State Hospital.

Who?

County forensic teams representing key stakeholders from local mental health authorities and local behavioral health authorities, county sheriffs' offices, jail administration, jail medical/psychiatric providers, prosecution, defense counsel, and the judiciary.

What?

- JIRLC participants will work directly with the Health and Human Services Commission's (HHSC) Chief of Forensic Medicine, the State Forensic Director, and their respective teams to receive:



Clinical Consultations

- Difficult clinical cases
- Medication management
- Guidance on competency restoration
- Guidance on court-ordered medications



Forensic Services

- Free competency screenings and re-evaluations
- Education on the Maximum Security Unit waiver process and expedited admission consideration
- Ongoing support for restored individuals once returned to jail



Legal Education

- Legal/statutory requirements
- Court-ordered medication process
- Alternate dispositions



Planning Support

- Assistance strengthening county forensic teams
- Engagement in behavioral health and justice systems planning
- Development of *Eliminate the Wait* county action plans

- Be part of a peer-to-peer learning collaborative and network with behavioral health and justice system professionals from across Texas.
- Learn about the *Eliminate the Wait* toolkit to identify strategies for reducing the wait for inpatient competency restoration services.
- Build strong local cross-system forensic teams.
- Implement techniques for monitoring individuals on the waitlist with 46B commitments in county jails.

Why?

The competency to stand trial process is designed to protect the rights of persons who do not understand the charges against them and are unable to assist in their own defense. Through the JIRLC, HHSC works collaboratively with partners across the continuum of care to improve outcomes for people waiting in county jails for inpatient competency restoration services after being declared incompetent to stand trial (IST).

How?

- Four two-hour long virtual training sessions.
- Nine monthly one-hour technical assistance calls featuring expert speakers from across Texas and the country.
- Ongoing one-on-one support to enhance collaboration and coordination with local behavioral health and justice system stakeholders.

Testimonials

Our county greatly benefitted from participating in the JIRLC. It helped local stakeholders – Jail, LMHA, Community Supervision, and Courts – communicate more efficiently and effectively. As a Judge, not only did I learn more about the law, but I became more confident in the decisions I was making for this population. From the knowledge obtained through the collaborative, we have enhanced our Court procedures and have developed a road map to make even more improvements that will save local taxpayer dollars and provide better outcomes for defendants.

- Judge Phillips, The 59th Judicial District Court, Grayson County

This JIRLC allowed us as a rural community to walk through the competency restoration and jail in-reach process with community partners representing the local mental health authority, jail and courts. The technical assistance calls gave us the knowledge and processes needed to provide additional help to those in jails who have been found IST. We will apply what we have learned with Jackson County to our five other rural county jails to improve outcomes for those found IST.

- Jeff Tunnell, Chief Executive Officer, Gulf Bend Centers

For more information, contact jailinreach@hhs.texas.gov.