

RESOLUTION
FORT BEND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
IN SUPPORT OF REDUCING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS
IN JAIL & OVERALL INCREASING SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH
MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

- WHEREAS** counties across the nation routinely provide treatment services to the estimated 2 million plus people with serious mental illnesses booked into county jails each year, and;
- WHEREAS** the prevalence rates of serious mental illness in jails are three to six times higher than for the general public, and;
- WHEREAS** almost three-quarters of adults with serious mental illnesses in jails have co-occurring substance use disorders, and;
- WHEREAS** adults with mental illness tend to stay longer in jail and cost taxpayers two to three times more during their incarceration and, upon release, are at a higher risk of recidivism than people without these disorders, and;
- WHEREAS** without the appropriate treatment and services, people with mental illnesses continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, often resulting in tragic outcomes for these individuals and their families, and;
- WHEREAS** it is in the best interest of Fort Bend County policy makers to have a full understanding of the effectiveness and costs of criminal justice and mental health programs they fund, and;
- WHEREAS** Members of Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County take pride in their responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of its residents in efficient and cost-effective ways; and
- WHEREAS** Fort Bend County developed various programs in our justice system to divert and /or provide services to residents with serious mental illnesses, such as our Crisis Intervention Team, and;
- WHEREAS** on March 13, of 2018, Fort Bend County Commissioners Court approved the Resolution for “Stepping to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illness in Jail,” and;
- WHEREAS,** through *Stepping Up*, the National Association of Counties, the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation are encouraging public, private and nonprofit partners to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails.

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT FORT BEND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT, does hereby encourage all Fort Bend County stakeholders to identify, develop and enhance programs that provide measurable outcomes that will ultimately reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in our county jail and increase services to people with mental health needs. This may include, but not limited to, the development of a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council structure by the Director of Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services. We are committed to working with all agencies and partners to sharing data, information, and lessons learned and encourage all county officials, employees, and residents to develop and participate in programs for the benefit of these individuals.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 27th day of October, 2020.

FORT BEND COUNTY

KP George, County Judge

ATTEST:

Laura Richard, County Clerk