



**FORT BEND**  
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## Fort Bend County Health & Human Services

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Jacquelyn Johnson-Minter, MD, MBA, MPH | Director & Local Health Authority

To: OJJDP Administrator

RE: Letter of Commitment for Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) – Second Chance Act Addressing the Needs of Incarcerated Parents and Their Minor Children (O-OJJDP-2022-171233)

As the Director of Fort Bend County Health and Human Services (HHS) I am pleased to write this letter in support of the Fort Bend County (FBC) proposal to the OJJDP for funding under the FY 2022 Second Chance Act Addressing the Needs of Incarcerated Parents and Their Minor Children. Fort Bend County is one of the fastest growing counties in the United States with a current population of approximately 850,000 and one of the most ethnically diverse counties in all of America. As the population grows, so does the number of children and families with potential for interaction with our justice system. We have been informed that without services and support, children of incarcerated parents are more likely to become negatively involved in the justice system and have poorer outcomes, including educational, mental health and substance abuse problems.

Health and Human Services supports Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services' (BHS) application to develop and implement a coordinated system for the provision of programs and services that support the needs of incarcerated parents and their children. We understand the efforts will contribute to the reduction in crime and recidivism, while improving outcomes for the children of incarcerated parents, by mitigating the adverse effects of parental incarceration and providing services that support the parent-child relationship. This program builds on the foundational efforts accomplished in FBC by the Sheriff's Office, BHS department, courts, juvenile probation department, behavioral health providers, and many others to reduce the number of individuals in our justice system and to connect them to the needed services..

Fort Bend County has a long history of collaboration with other county partners to address the needs of children and adults who are negatively impacted in the legal system. The requested funding would provide an additional opportunity to prioritize and develop interventions for this "at risk" population, mitigate the negative impact of having a parent that is incarcerated, enhance a parent's ability to care for their children, and break the intergenerational cycle of criminality. .

Fort Bend County HHS will collaborate in the planning and review of projects planned within the scope of our ability to address performance measures related to linkage to care for substance use disorder treatment and mental health treatment services in addition to any other areas identified during the course of the funding cycle. We strongly support the FBC BHS grant application and the efforts to address a significant gap in current systems and services. We feel confident your investment in FBC BHS will yield successful and sustained results.

Sincerely,

  
Jacquelyn Johnson-Minter, MD

Director

Fort Bend County Health & Human Services

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*Protecting and promoting the health and safety of the people of Fort Bend County*

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