Criminal Justice and Mental Health Policy

Due to the large number of individuals experiencing mental health disorders in Texas jails and prisons and the limited coordination between criminal justice and mental health systems, a group of advocates convened to:

• inform lawmakers and other stakeholders on best practices to address the intersection of mental health and criminal justice policy;
• increase coordination across systems to improve outcomes; and
• reduce the number of people with mental health disorders in the Texas correctional system and improve quality of care for those who become justice-involved.

Legislation we support in the 84th

HB 1855 (Rose): Relating to incorporating mental health crisis intervention training (CIT) into already required training for correctional officers in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ).

HB 1908 (Naishtat): Relating to continuity of care services available for individuals released from TDCJ, preventing exclusion based on diagnosis. Companion to SB 1477 (Garcia)

HB 2023 (Naishtat): Relating to the appointment of a forensic director to provide statewide coordination & oversight of forensic mental health evaluation & services. Companion to SB 1507 (Garcia/Rodríguez)

SB 1777 (Menéndez): Relating to the suspension and reinstatement of Medicaid benefits for individuals incarcerated in a county jail. Companion to HB 2523 (Collier)

SB 890 (Rodríguez): Relating to restricting the use of administrative segregation for people with mental health disorders & limiting the practice of releasing individuals directly from administrative segregation in TDCJ.

SB 891 (Rodríguez): Relating to comprehensive changes to TDCJ policies regarding the confinement of individuals with mental health disorders.

Contact: Cate Graziani
Mental Health America of Texas
cate@mhatexas.org

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