

Eliminate the Wait for Competency Restoration Services

Speakers

Dr. Jennie M. Simpson is the State Forensic Director at the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and a nationally recognized policy expert on cross-sector collaborations between behavioral health and criminal justice systems. In addition to oversight and coordination of forensic services, programs, and policies, Dr. Simpson leads innovative statewide policy and technical assistance initiatives. A specialist in diversion programs and policy, Dr. Simpson has provided training and technical assistance to law enforcement agencies, consulted with law enforcement leadership on behavioral health, and conducted research on behavioral health and law enforcement collaborations. Dr. Simpson received a Ph.D. in medical anthropology from American University.

Dr. Jennie Simpson



Simone Salloum



Simone Salloum is a Policy Attorney at Texas Health and Human Services. Prior to beginning her work with HHSC in 2019, Salloum worked as first Assistant General Counsel and then Senior Council in the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings in New York City. Salloum received her bachelor's degree from the University of Southern California. She received her J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law in Austin.

Kristi Taylor is the Executive Director of the Texas Judicial Commission on Mental Health (JCMH). She has over 25 years of experience as an attorney and policymaker. After receiving a BBA with Honors in Finance from the McCombs School of Business and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Texas School of Law, Taylor represented children and parents in the child welfare system for seven years.

In 2006, Taylor was selected by the Supreme Court of Texas to create the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth, and Families. She later served as a Staff Attorney and Assistant Director of the Children's Commission. In 2017, Ms. Taylor spearheaded the planning for a new judicial commission on mental health and was named the Executive Director in 2018.

Kristi Taylor



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Summary



Competency restoration can be a multifaceted and complicated issue. JCMH and HHSC have developed an initiative to assist counties in reducing their competency restoration waitlist and expediting the processes when a defendant is deemed incompetent or if the defendant has returned from state hospital unable to be restored. The presentation covered:

- Eliminate the Wait—how to use this Toolkit to make sure your county is considering all diversion options including Jail In-Reach
- Q&A about issues dealing with competency—what to do when people come back from SH when they cannot be restored, working with Civil Courts for commitment or court-ordered medications
- The first draft of a new checklist for pretrial services. Previously, the toolkits included checklists for LMHA/LBHA/LIDDA and other Providers, Police, Sheriffs and Jail Administrators, Judges and Court Staff, Prosecutors, Defense Attorneys, and the State Hospital System. JCMH requested the assistance of pretrial services to finalize the checklist.

