

TEXAS COMMISSION ON JAIL STANDARDS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Brandon Wood



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MEMORANDUM

To: Sheriffs and Jail Administrators

From: Brandon S. Wood, Executive Director

Re: Department of Veteran Affairs' Veterans Justice Outreach Program

According to the Department of Justice, approximately 10% of individuals incarcerated in the United States are veterans. In an effort to contend with this special population, the Department of Veteran Affairs created the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) program. The goal of the VJO program is to provide timely access to VA services for justice-involved veterans to avoid unnecessary criminalization and incarceration of veteran defendants. Many of these veterans are burdened with mental illness and/or traumatic brain injury (TBI) and the VA is trying to assist them through outreach, reentry planning, and case management services upon veterans' release from county jails or prison.

Currently, Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists (VJOS), who are licensed clinical social workers and/or psychologists, are working with some Texas county sheriffs across the state to develop community-specific programs such as continuity of care planning, education, and collaborating in the creation of veteran court programs. The Commission on Jail Standards urges all sheriffs and jail administrators to consider collaborating with the Veteran Justice Outreach Specialists in assisting veterans in your facility and possibly avoid future re-incarceration of those that served this county.

If your facility is interested in working with the Department of Veteran Affairs, attached is a list of Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists and their assigned territory. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Judge Donna S. Klaeger, Burnet, Chair
Stanley D. Egger, Abilene, Vice Chair
Irene A. Armendariz, El Paso

Allan D. Cain, Carthage
Jerry W. Lowry, New Caney
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Sheriff Gary Painter, Midland
Dr. Michael M. Seale, M.D., Houston
Sheriff Tam Terry, Panhandle

Mission Statement

To empower local government to provide safe, secure and suitable local jail facilities through proper rules and procedures while promoting innovative programs and ideas.
The Commission on Jail Standards welcomes all suggestions and will promptly respond to all complaints directed against the agency or any facilities under its purview.



VHA Justice-Involved Staff Contact Information and Texas		
VISN 16 (Houston and Gulfcoast) MH Product Line Leader Kathy Henderson, MD (501) 257-1721 Homeless Coordinator Dorothy Thomas, LCSW (318) 473-0010 ext. 4229	VISN 17 (South, Central and Northeast Texas) MH Product Line Leader Steve Holliday, MD (210) 694-6223 Homeless Coordinator Heloise Ferguson, MSW, MPH (214) 857-0943	VISN 18 (West and Northwest Texas) MH Product Line Leader Lori Highberger, MD (602) 200-2354 Homeless Coordinator Steve Cohen, LCSW (520) 792-1450, ext. 1-2995
VJO Specialists (Jails)	VJO Specialists (Jails)	VJO Specialists (Jails)
Harris County Loretta A. Coonan, LCSW (832) 260-1361 (713) 791-1414 ext. 6475	Austin Karen Janda, LCSW (512) 433- 2017	Amarillo Kathleen Caldwell, LCSW (806) 355-9703 ext. 7543
Montgomery County Henry Molden, LCSW (832) 477-2463 (713) 791-1414 ext. 6676	Bonham Melissa Kale, LCSW (903) 583-6241	Big Springs Position new-hire will begin in July 2012
	Dallas Kathy Finch, LCSW (214) 857-2260 Latisha Gaten, LCSW (214) 857-2252	El Paso Joel Arrigucci, LCSW (915) 564-6100 ext. 6526
	Harlingen Chad Henderson, PhD (361) 806-5600 ext. 62295	
	San Antonio Desi Vasquez, PhD (210) 617- 5300 Treva Neiss, LCSW (210) 616-9915	
	Temple/Waco Rekita Justice Logan, LCSW (254) 953-7156	
HCRV Specialists (Prisons)	HCRV Specialists (Prisons)	HCRV Specialists (Prisons)
David Sands, LCSW (713) 791-1414 ext. 2321	Warren Pearson, LCSW (254) 297-3699	John Kehoe, LISW (505) 265-1711 Ext. 1-2580
	Eileen Callejas, LCSW (210) 949-9007	Susann Adams, LCSW (602) 212-2139 (602) 290-8226

Email Contact Information for VJO and HCRV specialists across the country are available at:

www.va.gov/HOMELESS/VJO_Contacts.asp
www.va.gov/homeless/reentry_specialists.asp