



**Dallas County Criminal Justice Advisory Board  
General Membership Minutes for Monday, September 13, 2021  
Via Microsoft TEAMS**

**Welcome & Introductions**, Commissioner Dr. Garcia, called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. All in attendance recorded via Microsoft TEAMS.

**Membership & Infrastructure:**

There were no changes to membership or infrastructure at this time.

**Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes from the CJAB General Membership meeting held on June 14, 2021, were made a part of the packet. There was a motion made to accept the minutes as printed.

**Presentations:**

**Opioid Response Grant and Pretrial Diversion Assessments – Laura Edmonds, Crystal Garland and Julie Turnbull**

Commissioner Garcia introduced the presenters Laura Edmonds, Crystal Garland and Julie Turnbull and read their bio.

Laura Edmonds began the presentation by giving a brief description of the two new programs in Dallas County. The first is our Opioid Response grant, which really focuses on those offenders that are in the jail that are in need of detox, identifying them, assessing them, and then looking to link them to treatment. The second is our Pretrial Diversion program, which targets first time felony offenders to see if we can assess them and then link them appropriately to diversion court programs in order to resolve their case in an alternative way. Mrs. Edmonds turned it over to Crystal Garland who will introduce her staff.

Crystal Garland began by introducing herself as the Opioid Response Program Manager. The two clinical assessors that work under Mrs. Garland are Domingo Davila and Tonia Williams, and they are both licensed clinicians. They both received and assess the referrals that are sent to us and they make treatment recommendation and recommendations for resources that they may need within the community.

Mrs. Edmonds stated that the Opioid Response grant is actually a grant that the DA's Office applied for through the Bureau of Justice assistance. The goal of the grant is to address the overall opioid crisis, focusing on increasing access to treatment; reducing unmet treatment needs reducing overdose related deaths and then focusing in on just prevention treatment. As mentioned before, this grant was awarded to the DA's office, however oversight and all staff hired under this grant will be housed in the Criminal Justice Department in order to maintain confidentiality and then neutrality for the work being done.

Mrs. Edmonds stated that according to Parkland, from August 2018 through July 2019, Parkland medical staff at Lew Sterrett jail treated 7,136 unique individuals for detox from heroin or opioids. However, one of the largest providers for medication assisted treatment or MAT Services in Dallas County treated only 639 individuals in 2019; of those only 15% were forensically involved. This was the starting place for applying for this grant. There really is a very big disconnect between the number of individuals that we're seeing that are needing detox, that have an opioid use disorder entering our jail. Mrs. Edmonds stated that Medication Assisted Treatment or MAT involves the use of medications in combination with treatment, to address opioid use disorder. MAT is designed to normalize the brain chemistry to block the euphoric effects of alcohol and opioids, help to relieve physiological cravings, and normalize body functions without the negative and euphoric effects of the substance used. Mrs. Edmonds went over a flow chart on the process for Opioid intervention (please refer to PowerPoint presentation for details).

Mrs. Edmonds reported that one of the big goals of this grant is to release defendants from the jail with Naloxone (NARCAN). NARCAN is an overdose prevention medication. Persons with opioid use disorder are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and face higher risks for opioid-related death. Within the first 2 weeks after release, the risk of death from drug overdose is 12.7 times higher than the general population. NARCAN is a nasal spray that is FDA approved for treatment of known or suspected opioid overdose, and is designed for use in the community. NARCAN is needle free and ready to use. Mrs. Edmonds stated that the funds for this grant will fund residential treatment, transitional housing and also research. Mrs. Edmonds turned it over to Crystal Garland to provide an overview of Pretrial Diversion assessments.

Mrs. Garland stated that they are currently using the Texas Risk Assessment tool to assess potential new clients. They want to make sure that they do not place offenders in program that does not meet the assessment level, because you can actually do more harm to them. Persons who assess low risk, we do not want to place them in high-risk specialty court either. So of the defendants who assess low are referred over to the conditional dismissal program. Mrs. Garland turned it over to Julie Turnbull to finish the presentation.

Mrs. Turnbull stated the DA's office is very excited about receiving these grants and that we were able to place these positions in the Criminal Justice

Department because it allows us to provide a much more streamlined process to identify defendants for possible pretrial diversion. There was not an assessment done before that, and so prosecutors were struggling to come up with agreements that would be beneficial for both the defendant as well as the prosecutor so having these positions is allowing us to do assessments on everyone and then funnel them to a specialty court or a pretrial intervention agreement. This program will also allow us to identify these cases, much earlier in the process and we will be able to hold these cases from being heard at the grand jury. If that is what defense counsel and the defendant prefer. They can also go through the specialty courts or pretrial Intervention agreements and sometimes even get these agreements, finished before we would even be set for a grand jury hearing. Clients will be receiving full expunctions. However, we are reserving the right at our office to keep a little bit of identifying information for grant reports. We have to be able to answer certain questions for our grant reporting. Mrs. Turnbull went over a flow chart on the process for Pre-Trial Diversion (please refer to PowerPoint presentation for details).

Mrs. Turnbull went over eligibility criteria. This program will be suited for first time felony offender (no prior felony conviction, probation, deferred probation or expunction), who have a non-violent offense. The following charges are ineligible for pretrial diversion: aggravated felony charges, offenses involving death, anything sexual, family violence/child abuse charges, arson charges, felony 1 Man/Del charges, felony intoxication offenses. The DA's office has new software in which they will be able to track progress, which should allow us to get more effective as we evaluate these programs.

### **Committee Project Updates:**

#### **Criminal Justice Administration & Jail Population Management Update:**

LaShonda Jefferson gave the update. The Jail Population committee meeting was held on Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. Excerpts from that packet can be found on pages 26 through 32 of the CJAB packet. The jail population for today is 5,928. The Criminal Justice Department continues to collaborate with our stakeholders to manage our jail population. Our August 2021 average jail population was 5,710 and our yearly average so far is 5,574.

#### **Fair Defense Committee:**

Lynn Richardson was not able to attend the meeting. Update was emailed to committee.

#### **Justice of the Peace:**

Judge Steve Seider gave the update. The court management system seems to be making some progress. We've completed that dismissal project, but now we're looking at possibly an uncollectible funds project to the dial down the amount of information that has to be converted to get that down to a manageable

level. Then finally the e-filing that's in most of the courts in all the higher courts and in many of the JP courts have begun a pilot program. We going to be working with Tyler Technologies to hopefully vet that and come up with a product and process that fits all of the JP courts in Dallas County.

**Law Enforcement/Jurisprudence:**

Ellyce Lindberg gave the update. Chief Sylvester wasn't is not able to make it to this meeting. We have not had a formal CJAB LEA/Jurisprudence meeting. But we have been in a lot of communication with the Dallas Police Department regarding their data loss and we've been in contact with all the agencies regarding the new law that's called the Richard Miles Act. This new law tells law enforcement agencies that they need to provide a written verification that all the evidence in cases has been submitted. We have been working with our law enforcement partners on both of those initiatives.

**Pretrial:**

Jeff Segura gave the update. A CJAB Pretrial subcommittee meeting was held on August 30<sup>th</sup> 2021. Please see minutes for details. All units continue to do well; there have been some modifications to the ELM unit in order to be able to handle the influx of cases they are receiving. All courts have been notified of the new supervision guidelines. Smart justice is, part of the 1622 initiative and there could be some changes and expansion coming up, which were prepared for.

**Reentry:**

Christina Crain gave the update. Ms. Crain reported the annual Texas Re-entry Symposium will be September 14<sup>th</sup> and will be virtual. Mr. Canales will send out last minute remainder to register. There is CE credits for social workers of family and marriage therapist and professional counselors a total of 5.5 hours can be earned. We have a great lineup this year; we have a legislative update with members from the Legislature and Brian Collier, executive director of TDCJ. We have a panel regarding transportation and mobility issues of former incarcerated. We also have another panel that is dealing with the medical situation and where we stand after the pandemic.

**Research:**

Dr. Jennifer Gonzalez gave the update. The results from AIM study are about 90% completed we did have some mix up with a couple of SID numbers. There was some discrepancy between data dystems as we got that worked out and we expect to share a preliminary report by the end of the month. The results are really looking wonderful and I think everyone will be very happy with the cost benefit analysis as well. Therefore, I am happy to do a presentation on that, if everyone is agreeable at the next meeting. Commissioner Garcia stated that a formal presentation of the AIM evaluation would be great for our next meeting.

**Program Update:**

**Local Data Advisory Board:**

LaFayne McCall gave the update. Dallas County is currently at 82.11% for percentage completeness with a goal of 90%. This goal needs to be reached by August 1, 2022. The Local Data Advisory Board is now meeting every two weeks.

**Public Comments:**

None

**Announcements:**

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Expunction Expo is ongoing. Please see attached flyer in CJAB packet for further details.

The next CJAB meeting will be held on December 13, 2021, at 2:30pm.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded and approved at 3:30PM.