



June 22, 2022

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For Immediate Release: Commissioners Court Unanimously Approves Dallas County DA Creuzot's \$250k Donation to Further Fund RIGHT Care

(Dallas, Texas) – Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot is proud to announce the donation of \$250,000 to the Dallas Police Department in support of the Rapid Integrated Group Healthcare Team (RIGHT) Care Program.

“This will change the dynamic between police and the homeless, the mentally ill, and those struggling with substance use disorders,” Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot said of the donation.

The RIGHT Care Program is a data-driven approach to emergency mental health crisis response that is helping transform criminal justice and health systems in Dallas, across Texas, and nationally.

“Though we have different roles in the criminal justice system, contributions like this further cement the alignment between evidence-based policing and evidence-based prosecution,” DA Creuzot said.

Dallas Police Chief Eddie Garcia added, “This donation will help the Dallas Police Department to continue and further this important program in our city. The men and women of DPD are committed to community policing and care deeply about the people we serve, and how we can better serve the public. Together, with crisis intervention and our partners in the RIGHT Care program, we are working to improve how we respond to everyone who may be experiencing a mental or social health crisis.”

Moving the Ball Forward

The \$250,000 comes at no cost to the taxpayer, rather, the money is a donation of state-asset forfeiture funds, i.e., money legally taken from criminals. The Dallas County Commissioners approved the use of the money in a unanimous vote.

“We’re glad to use this money in a different way,” said DA Creuzot. “It’s been used to buy trucks and this, that, and the other in the past. It’s time to make an investment with this money taken from criminals and put it back into the community in ways that move the ball forward for the entire Dallas County area, especially in the city of Dallas where 50% of our cases come from.”

All four Dallas County Commissioners and County Judge Clay Jenkins praised the RIGHT Care Program and the collaboration between DA Creuzot and the Dallas Police Department for furthering their commitment to bettering the resources and response to vulnerable members of the population.

“This was a campaign promise of yours and you have our support. We cannot continue to do the same thing and expect different results. Thank you for your leadership,” said Commissioner Dr. Elba Garcia of District 4.

In turn, DA Creuzot credited the commissioners and county judge for their leadership and forward-thinking approach to addressing mental health and substance use issues in the Dallas County Community.

An Important Community Asset

The RIGHT Care Program started as a pilot program in 2018 with one team over the city’s south-central neighborhoods, but it has since expanded to respond to calls citywide. The program has teams consisting of police officers, fire department paramedics, and licensed Parkland hospital clinical social workers who respond to 911 calls related to someone in a mental health crisis. This is an alternative to having only police officers respond to these complex and high-risk calls.

Research shows that people with untreated mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed during a police encounter than other civilians approached or stopped by law enforcement.

DA Creuzot said, “If we can reduce those types of encounters with the police then it allows the District Attorney’s Office to focus on the truly violent criminals.”

In 2021, the City of Dallas received a total of 18,125 Behavioral Health Calls and RIGHT Care answered 10,955 emergency calls. The program served over 7,960 Dallas residents from all sectors of the City of Dallas. The RIGHT Care Team answered 21% of emergency calls independently from Dallas Police. In 2021, the RIGHT Care Team was able to answer 60.4% of all behavioral health calls in 2021.

Continued Commitment

This \$250,000 donation to the RIGHT Care Program is just the latest in DA Creuzot’s ongoing commitment to better mental health services across Dallas County. Previously, under his leadership, the Dallas County DA’s Office contributed \$200,000 to the Northwestern Cities of Carrollton, Addison, Farmers Branch, and Coppell for Needs Assessments. Another \$100,000 contribution will be made to the Dallas County Deflection Center once it becomes fully operational later this summer.