

RESOLUTION
SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE
FUNDED MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY FOR
TARRANT COUNTY RESIDENTS

WHEREAS, Tarrant County is the third-largest county in the State of Texas and the largest county in Texas without a state mental health facility within its borders; and

WHEREAS, the lack of adequate mental health infrastructure has contributed to a growing crisis, with an average of 331 inmates in the Tarrant County jail awaiting competency restoration at any given time; and

WHEREAS, the availability of a dedicated facility for competency restoration services will result in better outcomes for individuals with mental health challenges and enhance community safety; and

WHEREAS, the Tarrant County Commissioners Court respectfully requests for the State of Texas to provide funding to fill a critical gap in the county's mental health continuum of care, providing essential services to residents, and alleviating pressure on the county jail and local mental health providers; and

WHEREAS, the Tarrant County Commissioners Court seeks to implement one of the following; a state mental health facility in Tarrant County, expansion of an existing facility with space allocated specifically for the residents of Tarrant County, or funding for Tarrant County to partner with a private facility to serve Tarrant County residents; and

WHEREAS, Tarrant County has demonstrated leadership in taking steps to treat mental health issues by funding and operating innovative programs, including:

- 136 psychiatric beds in the JPS Health Network for emergent and short-term behavioral healthcare, with more beds planned through the 2018 bond program;*
- a 42-bed mental health jail diversion center to reduce incarceration rates among individuals with mental health conditions;*
- a mental health law liaison program to improve interactions between law enforcement and individuals experiencing mental health crises; and*
- the largest jail-based competency restoration program in the State of Texas.*

WHEREAS, state funding for a mental health facility or designated beds would provide local taxpayer savings and reduce the need for a costly jail expansion and minimize medical expenses incurred for inmates receiving mental healthcare; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Tarrant County Commissioners Court strongly urges the State of Texas to fund the development of a state mental health facility in Tarrant County, expand capacity at an existing state funded mental health facility with space

designated specifically to serve the residents of Tarrant County, or partner with Tarrant County by providing funding to achieve a solution through a public-private partnership with a local hospital to provide services to Tarrant County residents in need of mental healthcare.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Tarrant County Commissioners Court stands ready to collaborate with state leaders, local stakeholders, and mental health advocates to address the critical mental health needs of our community and ensure access to effective, timely, and compassionate care.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hand and caused the great seal of Tarrant County to be affixed this 3rd day of December 2024.