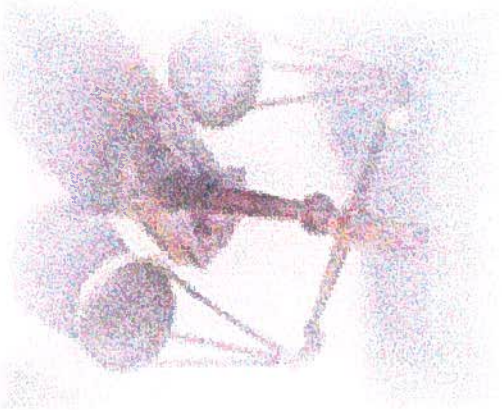


Mental Health Public Defender



2201 Post Road, Suite 200
Austin, Texas 78704
Office: (512) 854-3030
Fax: (512) 854-3037

Jeanette.Kinard@co.travis.tx.us

Program Description:

The Travis County Mental Health Public Defender (MHPD) Office began in April 2007 to serve the needs of persons with mental illness in the criminal justice system. Our staff includes two lawyers, two social workers, three case workers and two support staff.

The social and case workers are also available to assist private court appointed attorneys. Referrals are made for a variety of social services. Follow-up case management services are also provided.



(Standing left to right)

Anthony Macias, Case Worker; Becca Hyatt, LMSW, Case Worker; Antonia Blasini-Vargas, Office Specialist; Stephanie Doyle, LMSW; Cathy Jonse, Administrative Associate

(Sitting left to right)

Valerie Whiting, LCSW, Case Management Coordinator; Melissa Shearer, Attorney; Jeanette Kinard, Director; Karen Hunt, Case Worker

Referral Procedures:

Cases are primarily referred to the MHPD through Travis County Court Administration. Referrals are also made by judges, attorneys, pre-trial services or mental health advocacy groups.

Eligibility Requirements:

- ❖ Must be a Travis County case;
- ❖ Must be a misdemeanor;
- ❖ Client must be defined as indigent according to the county-standard definition;
- ❖ Must have at least one major priority population diagnosis including: schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, major depression and/or schizoaffective disorder;
- ❖ Must NOT have a Travis County felony or felony probation pending.

We have a short film presentation of our office "A Different Kind of Law - Holistic Justice for the Mentally Ill" that can be viewed by going to the following link:

http://www.co.travis.tx.us/criminal_justice/mental_health_public_defender/default.asp

"The Mental Health Public Defender Office will help link our criminal justice system with community-based mental health resources that can help these defendants better manage their illnesses and reduce the chances that they will recycle through our jail system. Creating this type of office is one of the steps the county is taking to try to break the cycle and help offenders stabilize their lives."

Travis County Judge, Sam Shacoe

The Travis County Mental Health Public Defender office is operated in connection with Travis County Justice & Public Safety.