

Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Briefing Memo: Establishing a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) in Brazoria County

Project Background

In 2025, the Gulf Coast Center (GCC) received a one-time grant from the State of Texas to support system improvements within the local criminal justice system, including behavioral health services. As part of this effort, Felicia Jeffery, CEO of GCC, and Brazoria County Sheriff Bo Stallman designated part of the grant funding to contract with Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (Meadows Institute) to develop a plan for establishing a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) in Brazoria County. This briefing memo summarizes the Meadows Institute's work to date and outlines proposed next steps for establishing a Brazoria County CJCC.

Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils (CJCCs)

A CJCC is a collaborative body of local stakeholders that works to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness of the criminal justice system. CJCCs help strengthen coordination across agencies, promote public safety, support fair treatment of individuals involved in the system, and increase community engagement in justice-related processes. They also provide a forum for identifying systemic challenges and inefficiencies, and for developing policies, programs, operational improvements, and funding strategies to address them.

National best practice for CJCCs focuses on collaboration, data-driven decision-making, and accountability. Effective CJCCs lead to more equitable, efficient, and effective criminal justice processes. CJCCs encourage further collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and implementation of best practices. Communities with well-functioning CJCCs benefit from improved system efficiency, improved public safety outcomes, and greater equity and fairness across systems.

The Meadows Institute's Texas CJCC Efforts

Grounding CJCCs in these best practices helps ensure that behavioral health integration is not just aspirational, but practical, achievable, and measurable.

To date, the Meadows Institute has helped establish, support, and manage CJCCs in several Texas communities – including [Dallas](#), [El Paso](#), Galveston, [Harris](#), and Tarrant counties – and is engaged in similar work in Fort Bend and Galveston counties.

Building Consensus for a Brazoria County CJCC

The Meadows Institute team facilitated strategic planning discussions with GCC, Sheriff Stallman, and Brazoria County Sheriff’s Office leadership, and conducted key informant interviews with more than 30 stakeholders. Through this work, we found broad support for establishing a Brazoria County CJCC. We also found strong interest and community readiness for focused planning around next steps for a crisis facility in Brazoria County, as well as opportunities to use new state funding that will soon be available to strengthen local crisis services.

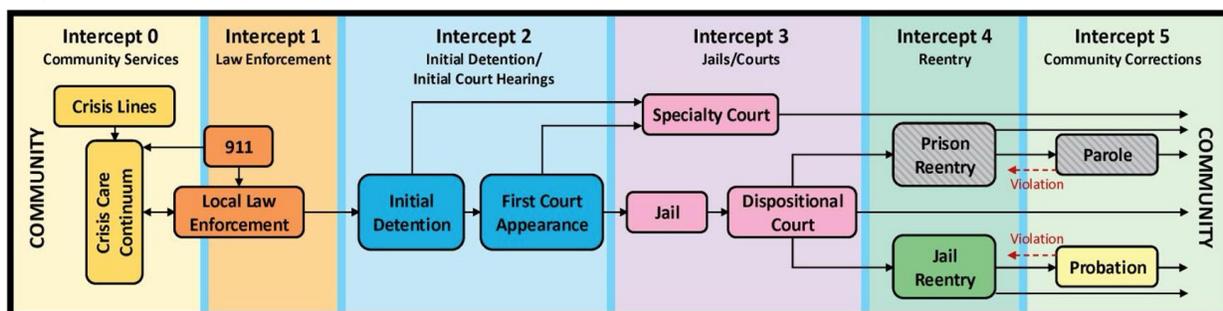
Next Steps to Establish a Brazoria County CJCC

The Meadows Institute recommends that the Brazoria County Commissioners Court formally authorize the creation of the Brazoria County CJCC by approving a charter document that outlines its leadership, membership, and initial operating procedures. The Meadows Institute team will coordinate with the District Attorney’s Office to draft the charter for consideration and approval by the Court.

Brazoria County Justice System Scan

The Meadows Institute conducted a [high-level scan of the Brazoria County criminal justice system](#) using the Sequential Intercept Model (SIM), as a framework to examine six critical decision points, or “intercepts,” where people with behavioral health needs interact with the justice system. The scan identifies system-level challenges, assesses the availability and capacity for evidence-based interventions.

Sequential Intercept Model (SIM)



The scan is intended to inform long-term planning, prioritize actionable reforms based on feasibility and impact, and guide the development of the CJCC. The Council will provide ongoing oversight, facilitate collaborative problem-solving, and help advance the implementation of evidence-based practices across the county’s criminal justice system. By providing a clear picture of existing resources, service gaps, and opportunities for coordination, this scan serves as a foundational tool to strengthen the intersection of the criminal justice and behavioral

health systems, advance system-level reforms, and improve outcomes for individuals and the broader Brazoria County community.

System Scan by SIM Intercept Point in Brazoria County: Priority Considerations

Intercept 0	- Brazoria County should continue efforts to plan, develop, and implement a crisis facility with inpatient treatment capacity.
	- The new Rider 64 funding allocated to GCC for expanded crisis services is an immediate opportunity to improve crisis services while the broader facility planning continues.
	- A first priority of the CJCC is to conduct a rapid analysis of MCOT and CCRT staffing to determine the added resources needed to meet service demand within reasonable response times.

Intercept 1	- A first priority for the CJCC is to acquire and evaluate data from local police departments on arrests and other activities to identify opportunities for diversion.
	- Standardize protocols across all PSAPs to improve coordination among 911, 988, and crisis line services, starting with the Brazoria County Sheriff’s Office, which receives the largest volume of calls.
	- Expand partnerships like those at Alvin and Lake Jackson Police Department to embed behavioral health staff in police crisis response and follow up.

Intercept 2	- A priority for the CJCC is to collect and report key data metrics for the justice system, publish that data to stakeholders, and use the data for planning system improvements. The dashboard under development at the Sheriff’s office is a key first step.
	- Compare current jail triage and initial court activities to the requirements of Texas CCP Art. 16.22 to ensure compliance with all processes.
	- Review current attorney appointment processes to confirm timeframes for appointments, access to attorneys with mental health experience, and timeliness of first contact with defendants.
	- Build upon the DA’s pretrial program to establish a formal pretrial diversion program with clear eligibility, standardized referrals, and defined roles for justice partners.

Intercept 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A priority for the CJCC is understanding the steps and timeframes for processing cases of persons in jail in the pretrial stage. Factors such as the time needed to file cases, schedule grand jury proceedings, obtain evidence such as drug analysis, and manage court capacity can all influence how long a person stays in jail before case disposition.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review the need for behavioral health care in the jail compared to current staffing. It is critical to have real time, on demand access to crisis care when needed. Specifically, determine the cost to expand psychiatrist hours, case management, and night/weekend coverage.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A deeper review of the competency restoration process will find opportunities to reduce the number of people in jail awaiting competency restoration. A starting point is to understand the timeframes for ordering and completing competency evaluations.
Intercept 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rapidly review current discharge planning to ensure continuity of care, especially for people on medication. Ensuring a strong connection to community care is critical to successful reentry.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A priority for the CJCC should be to coordinate stakeholders to ensure that people leaving jail have access to staffing, housing, transportation, and medication supports at discharge.
Intercept 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Examine the current capacity for specialized supervision caseloads (those funded by TCOOMMI) compared to need and determine if additional capacity is needed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A priority for the CJCC is to bring community stakeholders together to expand affordable housing, improve transportation options, clarify program eligibility, and increase shelter access for justice involved individuals.