



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: December 20, 2011

Prepared By/Phone Number: Judge Susan Steeg 854-8878

Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head: Judge Susan Steeg, Justice of the Peace
Pct. 3

Commissioners Court Sponsor: Judge Sam Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

**Consider and take appropriate action on an order regarding regarding
Ethical and Training Standards for Juvenile Case Managers**

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

See attached Memorandum

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Justices of the Peace recommend approval of this item to comply with Senate Bill 61.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

No fiscal impact

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Jim Connolly, Assistant County Attorney 854-9415

MEMORANDUM

TO: Hon. Sam Biscoe
Travis County Judge

COPY TO: Hon. Ron Davis County Commissioner Precinct 1
Hon. Sarah Eckhardt County Commissioner Precinct 2
Hon. Karen Huber County Commissioner Precinct 3
Hon. Margaret Gomez County Commissioner Precinct 4
Hon. Yvonne Williams Justice of the Peace Precinct 1
Hon. Glenn Bass Justice of the Peace Precinct 2
Hon. Raul Gonzalez Justice of the Peace Precinct 4
Hon. Herb Evans Justice of the Peace Precinct 5

FROM: Judge Susan Steeg
Justice of the Peace Precinct 3

DATE: December 12, 2011

RE: (1) Court Approval of Ethical and Training Standards for Juvenile Case Managers
(2) Court Approval of Juvenile Case Management Fund Guidelines for FY2012

I am submitting two items for your approval that concern the Juvenile Case Management Program in the Justice Courts. On behalf of my colleagues, I ask that you sponsor these items and present to the Court at your earliest convenience.

1) Court Approval of Ethical and Training Standards for Juvenile Case Managers

Senate Bill 61 passed during the 82nd Texas Legislature requires the Commissioners Court to adopt ethical and training standards for juvenile case managers employed by Travis County. Attached is a proposed order with the attachments that has been approved by a majority of the Justices of the Peace and reviewed by the County Attorney's Office. The legislation required adoption of these standards by December 1st.

2) Juvenile Case Management Fund Guidelines for FY2012

The Justices of the Peace met on October 14, October 21, and October 28 to develop a strategic plan for the Juvenile Case Management Program and recommendations for expenditures from the Juvenile Case Management Fund in FY2012. The Justices of the Peace invited other county departments to participate, including the Planning & Budget Office, Criminal Justice Planning, Human Services, Human Resources, and Counseling and Education Services. We submit the proposed recommendations to the Commissioners Court to reflect the consensus of the judges on additional funding requests that may be presented in FY2012.

On behalf of the Judges, we thank you for your consideration. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Attachments

**AN ORDER ADOPTING ETHICAL AND TRAINING STANDARDS FOR JUVENILE
CASE MANAGERS EMPLOYED BY TRAVIS COUNTY, PROVIDING FOR
IMPLEMENTATION OF SAID STANDARDS, AND PROVIDING FOR PERIODIC
REVIEW TO ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REQUISITE STANDARDS**

WHEREAS, Travis County has, pursuant to Code of Criminal Procedure 102.0174, authorized a juvenile case manager fund supported by additional costs assessed and collected in Justice Court; and

WHEREAS, Travis County has, pursuant to Code of Criminal Procedure 45.056, employed juvenile case managers to provide services in cases involving juvenile offenders before the court; and

WHEREAS, the 82nd Texas Legislature enacted Senate Bill 61, which requires a governing body employing a juvenile case manager to adopt, by December 1, 2011, reasonable rules for juvenile case managers that provide for a code of ethics, educational pre-service and in-service training standards, and training in relevant substantive areas; and

WHEREAS, Travis County wishes to ensure that its juvenile case managers receive the requisite training and are held to the highest ethical standards;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY the COMMISSIONERS COURT OF TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS, AS FOLLOWS:

1. Travis County hereby adopts the Juvenile Case Manager Code of Ethics, attached hereto as Exhibit "A", as the ethical standard to which the County's juvenile case managers shall be held.
2. Travis County hereby adopts the Educational Pre-service and In-service Training Standards, attached hereto as Exhibit "B", as the appropriate educational standards for its juvenile case managers.
3. Travis County hereby requires that its juvenile case managers receive training in the role of the juvenile case manager, case planning and management, applicable procedural and substantive law, courtroom proceedings and presentation, services to at-risk youth, local programs for juveniles, and the detection and prevention of abuse, exploitation, and neglect of juveniles.
4. Travis County hereby directs that the rules adopted herein be implemented by the appropriate personnel.
5. Travis County hereby requires annual review of its juvenile case managers to ensure implementation of the rules adopted herein.

PASSED AND APPROVED ON THIS THE ____ DAY OF _____, 2011.

TRAVIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT

Samuel T. Biscoe, Travis County Judge

Ron Davis
Commissioner, Pct. 1

Sarah Eckhardt
Commissioner, Pct. 2

Karen Huber
Commissioner, Pct. 3

Margaret J. Gomez
Commissioner, Pct. 4

EXHIBIT A

MODEL CODE OF ETHICS FOR JUVENILE CASE MANAGERS

PREAMBLE

The goal of the juvenile case manager is to assist the Court in administering the Court's juvenile docket and in supervising its court orders in juvenile cases. The mission of the juvenile case manager is to assist judges in providing juveniles the resources to shape their futures, connect with the community, and become law abiding citizens. When applying this Code of Ethics, keep foremost in mind that Travis County is guided at all times by the values of integrity, excellence, compassion, and respect for the dignity of every person.

STANDARDS

Confidentiality. A juvenile case manager shall not disclose to any unauthorized person any confidential information acquired in the course of employment. A juvenile case manager shall not violate the confidentiality of juvenile clients, unless it is to seek consultation services from within the case management program, school campus, or the juvenile has threatened to harm himself, herself or others, or to provide details of any criminal activity or enterprise.

Conflicts of Interest. A juvenile case manager shall be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. In order to maintain the community's trust in the judicial system, a juvenile case manager should avoid soliciting or accepting improper gifts, gratuities, or loans, and should avoid engaging in business relationships that give rise to an appearance of impropriety.

Competence. A juvenile case manager shall endeavor at all times to perform official duties properly and with courtesy and diligence. A juvenile case manager shall fulfill his or her duty and represent himself or herself only within the boundaries of the case manager's education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, or other relevant professional experience.

Respect for the Law. A juvenile case manager shall abide by all federal, state, and local laws. A juvenile case manager shall be familiar with the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct and the basic standards to which members of the judiciary are held.

Abuse of Position. A juvenile case manager shall not use or attempt to use his or her official position to secure unwarranted privileges or exemptions for himself, herself, or any other person. A juvenile case manager shall always maintain an appropriate relationship with juveniles coming under the jurisdiction of the Court. A juvenile case manager shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of age, sex, creed, sexual preference, disability, or national origin.

ENFORCEMENT

Any alleged violation of applicable ethical standards shall be subject to investigation and discipline by the Court.

EXHIBIT B

Pre-Service and In-Service Recommendations for Travis County Juvenile Case Managers

Courts may use these guidelines when establishing educational and training requirements for their staff.

Recommendations for Applicants:

Most Preferred: a four year degree in relevant social or behavioral sciences, criminal justice, or a directly related field and (1) year experience working with adolescents

Optional Preferred: Any combination of education and experience that has been achieved and is equivalent to the “Most preferred” with the knowledge, skills, and abilities sufficient to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of the position

Recommendations for currently employed Juvenile Case Managers:

Currently employed juvenile case managers who lack training in the pre-service categories will satisfy any deficiencies through in-service as determined by the Justice of the Peace.

Definitions:

Pre-service Training refers to those skills, training, or certifications possessed at the time of hire or prior to the commencement of the juvenile case manager’s full duties.

In-Service Training refers to additional skills, training, or certification hours obtained after commencement of juvenile case manager’s full duties.

Pre-Service Training Requirements:

At least 4 hours of orientation in the following areas prior to start case work:

- The role of the juvenile case manager
- Ethics
- Juvenile law & introduction to court procedure
- Fundamentals of case planning and management
- Local programs and services for juveniles

In-Service Training Requirements:

At least 20 hours per year in any of the following areas (note that most programming is available through Travis County or the Region 13 Education Service Center):

- Mental health (juvenile and family)
- Legal updates
- Recognizing and Reporting Abuse & Neglect
- Substance Abuse
- Special Topics
 - Juvenile Gangs
 - Family Violence
 - Bullying
 - Sex offenders
 - Juveniles with Learning, Psychological, and Physical Disabilities
- Upgrades in Documentation and Technology
- Ethics
- Child Psychology
- Cultural Diversity