



Judicial Council of California

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Subject Text

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Title

Mental Health Issues Implementation Task Force: Final Report (Action Required)

Summary

In January 2012, Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye appointed the Mental Health Issues Implementation Task Force (Implementation Task Force), chaired by Judge Richard J. Loftus, Jr., of the Superior Court of Santa Clara County, to review the 137 recommendations of the Task Force for Criminal Justice Collaboration on Mental Health Issues and to develop a plan for implementing those recommendations. The Implementation Task Force focused on identifying ways to improve case processing and outcomes for court users with mental illness while being mindful of cost and public safety considerations in the post-recession/post-realignment environment. The term of the Implementation Task Force ends on December 31, 2015. While significant progress has been accomplished since the Implementation Task Force's inception, there are still unresolved challenges for the courts when handling cases involving persons with mental illness. It is recommended that the Judicial Council receive the final report of the Implementation Task Force and that the work in this area be transitioned to the appropriate Judicial Council advisory bodies.

Recommendation

The Mental Health Issues Implementation Task Force recommends that the Judicial Council, effective December 11, 2015:

1. Receive the final report of the Mental Health Issues Implementation Task Force.
2. Annually task all appropriate Judicial Council advisory bodies with examining the mental health issues in their case type and developing strategies to address these issues, in order to help meet the needs of courts and their court users with mental health issues.
3. Direct that advisory body chairs coordinate implementation efforts, including identification of the appropriate work to be done, determination of which committee will be responsible for the identified effort or require collaboration or consultation with multiple committees, and identification of any work that should be accomplished by staff of the Judicial Council to assist the committees in their efforts. Further, direct that staff of the Judicial Council's Center for Families, Children & the Courts, who coordinated the work of the Implementation Task Force, should, if possible, oversee this coordination.
4. Approve the addition of two new positions to the Criminal Law Advisory Committee and the addition of new positions to other advisory committees, such as the Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee, the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, and the Probate and Mental Health Advisory Committee, so that the designated advisory bodies can expand their membership to include additional committee members with mental health expertise in order to absorb this work without adversely impacting their current commitments; and direct that consideration be given to nominees from the Implementation Task Force who are willing to continue to serve and can provide expertise in the area of mental health.
5. If these recommendations are adopted, it is further recommended that on an annual basis, advisory committees report on the results of their committees' efforts to address the issues of the mentally ill as part of the annual agenda process.

Speakers

Hon. Richard J. Loftus, Jr., Chair, Mental Health Issues Implementation Task Force