



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY JUDGE  
County Of Hidalgo

RAMON GARCIA  
County Judge

June 7, 2016

Christopher Craft, Director of Grant Review  
Office of Financial Resources  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
Room 17E06  
Fishers Lane  
Rockville, MD 20857

**RE: LETTER OF COMMITMENT**

Dear Mr. Craft:

The Hidalgo County Commissioners' Court is pleased to offer this letter indicating our commitment to partner with Tropical Texas Behavioral Health on their Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) grant program. We are committed to serving the people of the Rio Grande Valley, working in partnership with our communities, and achieving prosperity.

Communities in the RGV face substantial disparities in the availability of quality healthcare in comparison to other parts of the state and the country. The types and degree of illness and disability faced by the clients and families Tropical Texas Behavioral Health serves, coupled with high rates of poverty and lack of insurance, make it especially difficult to obtain healthcare and social services. With a population of more than 1.5 million predominantly Hispanic residents (83%), the RGV has grown faster and has higher rates of poverty compared to other areas of the state.

As an organization that is creative about its approach to finding solutions, we are excited about the potential to serve our community by implementing a program designed to reduce the incidence and duration of psychiatric hospitalization, homelessness, incarcerations, and interactions with the criminal justice system while improving the health and social outcomes of individuals with a serious mental illness (SMI). To ensure program success, the Hidalgo County Commissioners' Court is committing to appointing a representative to serve on a team (i.e., District Attorney, Public Defender, Probation Officer, Behavioral Health Staff, and/or the like) to:

1. Discuss potential cases and determine if they are good program candidates for the jail diversion program;

2. Develop and/or refine program structure and guidelines; and,
3. Determine and apply progressive consequences for program candidates that are noncompliant.

If you have any questions about this letter, please feel free to contact me at (956) 318-2600 or by email at [countyjudge@co.hidalgo.tx.us](mailto:countyjudge@co.hidalgo.tx.us).

Sincerely,

Hon. Ramon Garcia  
Hidalgo County Judge