



BALDWIN COUNTY COMMISSION
BALDWIN COUNTY, ALABAMA

RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING THE STEPPING UP INITIATIVE: A NATIONAL INITIATIVE TO REDUCE
THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES IN JAILS.

WHEREAS, counties routinely provide treatment services to the estimated two million people with serious mental illnesses booked into jail each year; and

WHEREAS, prevalence rates of serious mental illnesses in jails are three to six times higher than for the general public; and

WHEREAS, almost three-quarters of adults with serious mental illnesses in jails have co-occurring substance use disorders; and

WHEREAS, adults with mental illnesses tend to stay longer in jail and, upon release, are at higher risk of recidivism than people without these disorders; and

WHEREAS, county jails spend two to three times more on adults with mental illnesses that require interventions compared to those without these treatment needs; and

WHEREAS, without the appropriate treatment and services, people with mental illnesses continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, often resulting in tragic outcomes for these individuals and their families; and

WHEREAS, the month of May is National Mental Health Awareness Month and is used to build understanding of mental illness, increase access to treatment and ensure those who are struggling know they are not alone; and

WHEREAS, through Stepping Up, the National Association of Counties, The Council of State Governments Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation are encouraging the public, private, and nonprofit partners to reduce the number of people with mental illness in jails; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BALDWIN COUNTY COMMISSION, IN REGULAR SESSION ASSEMBLED, that the Baldwin County Commission adopts *Resolution #2019-081* and hereby supports the Call to Action to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails, commit to sharing lessons learned with others to support a national initiative and encourage all county officials, employees, and residents to participate in Stepping Up. We resolve to utilize the comprehensive resources available through Stepping up to:

- Convene or draw on a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies committed to safely reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in jails; and
- Collect and review prevalence numbers and assess individuals' needs to better identify adults entering jails with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk, and use that baseline information to guide decision making at the system, program, and case levels; and
- Examine treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in the county for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders, and identify state and local policy and funding barriers to minimizing contact with the justice system and providing treatment and support in the community; and
- Develop a plan with measurable outcomes that draws on the jail assessment and prevalence data and the examination of available treatment and service capacity, while considering identified barriers; and
- Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan; and
- Create a process to track progress using data and information systems, and to report on successes.

DONE, at the County Seat, in Bay Minette, Alabama, and under the Seal of Baldwin County, Alabama, as affixed on this the 7th day of May, 2019.

Commissioner Charles F. Gruber, Chairman

ATTEST:

Wayne A. Dyess, County Administrator