



Texas hospitals are asking lawmakers to back **Senate Bill 1815** by Sen. Nathan Johnson and **House Bill 3504** by Rep. Jeff Leach.

The bills would strengthen several critical steps toward **securing behavioral health care for people in need** by:



- Allowing for the electronic application of emergency detention warrants.
- Allowing physicians to testify remotely.
- Clarifying mental health court processes to create consistency.

**These changes ensure that outdated processes don't stand in the way of securing swift and efficient behavioral health care for the people who need it most.**

**Electronic Applications.** It is critical that certain steps – like emergency detention warrant applications – can be achieved quickly and efficiently through electronic channels. **This keeps patients and communities safe** by ensuring faster access to care. It also helps reduce burdensome steps that can tie up resources and slow down processes that are critical to the wellbeing of Texans in need of mental health care.



## SB 1815/HB 3504 would:



- Require a judge to permit a physician who applies for an emergency detention warrant to do so electronically rather than in person.
- Clarify that an application for court-ordered mental health services can be filed in the county in which a patient is apprehended under emergency detention or is located at the time the application is filed.



- Require a county in which there's a judge or magistrate on duty after hours to accept applications for court-ordered mental health services whenever that judge is on duty.
- Require a court to accept applications for court-ordered mental health services and motions for orders of protective custody for filing in the same manner as other documents.



- Clarify that an emergency detention is not a prerequisite to the issuance of an order of protective custody.
- Require that physicians be allowed to testify remotely for good cause shown, including disruption to care of their other patients, using reasonably available technology.

