

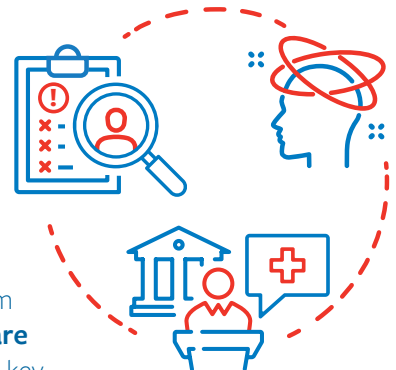


Support Sweeping Efforts to Modernize Behavioral Health Care

The medical community and law enforcement are asking lawmakers to back **House Bill 3504** by Rep. Jeff Leach. The legislation is an extensive effort to strengthen several critical steps toward **securing behavioral health care for people in need.**



- Allow for certain remote/electronic actions.
- Improve process transparency and consistency.
- Ensure attorney representation.
- Ensure physicians can designate a suitable commitment facility.



Bringing Texas Behavioral Health Forward

With 254 counties in Texas, there are a variety of approaches and interpretations from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. **Changes outlined by HB 3504 ensure that processes are standardized and that outdated processes don't stand in the way of care.** Two key provisions:

1. Electronic Applications. It is critical that certain steps – like emergency detention warrant applications – be allowed to be achieved quickly and efficiently through electronic channels. This **keeps patients and communities safe by ensuring faster access to care** and helps reduce burdensome steps that can tie up resources and slow down processes.

2. Transparency for Orders of Protective Custody. The bill will require that if an order of protective custody is denied, the rationale must be communicated to the applicant. It will require that the rationale for the denial is communicated to the applicant. This helps **ensure a more transparent and equitable process.**



HB 3504 would:

Streamline and modernize several aspects of behavioral health care in Texas. The legislation ensures:



- The ability to apply electronically for an emergency detention order.
- Applications for court-ordered mental health services can be filed in the county where the patient resides, the county in which a patient was apprehended, or in the county where the person is located at the time the application is filed.



- Certain documents – applications for court-ordered services and motions for orders of protective custody – can be accepted in the same manner as other court documents.
- After-hours receipt of applications for court-ordered services is available when a judge is on duty after hours.



- That an emergency detention is not a prerequisite to the issuance of an order of protective custody.
- That physicians can testify remotely for good cause.
- That if evidence supports the issuance of an order of protective custody, the judge shall issue the order.

