



# Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

## Bylaws

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## Name, Authority and Purpose

The Harris County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (hereinafter referred to as HCCJCC or Council) was created by Order of Harris County Commissioners Court dated July 14, 2009 as the focal point for efforts to improve the criminal justice system and seek reductions in the jail population. The HCCJCC was created to enable the county to begin moving forward on the recommendations outlined in a report from the Justice Management Institute (JMI) accepted by Commissioners Court on June 23, 2009. The Council shall be responsible for policy development and oversight of improvement initiatives for the criminal justice system.

## Membership

### Members

By Commissioners Court Order dated July 14, 2009, the HCCJCC is composed of:

District Attorney  
District Clerk  
Sheriff  
County Attorney  
Administrative Judge of the District Courts  
Administrative Judge of the Criminal Trial Division of the District Courts  
Presiding Judge of the County Criminal Courts  
Presiding Judge of the 16 Justice of the Peace Courts  
Constable to represent the 8 Constables  
Two (2) members of Commissioners Court

Upon recommendation of the HCCJCC members on January 8, 2014 and Commissioners Court Order dated February 11, 2014, the HCCJCC includes the following members:

Judge of the Juvenile Division of the District Courts  
Mayor of the City of Houston or the Mayor's designated representative\*  
\*Should the Mayor send a designated representative, the designee is non-voting member of the Council.

Upon recommendation of the HCCJCC members on March 9, 2016 and Commissioners Court Order dated April 12, 2016 the HCCJCC includes the following members:

Administrative Judge of the Statutory County Courts

### Non-Voting Members

Upon recommendation of the HCCJCC members on January 8, 2014 and Commissioners Court Order dated February 11, 2014, the HCCJCC includes the following non-voting members:

Chief Public Defender  
Director of the Community Supervision & Corrections Department  
Executive Director of the Juvenile Probation Department  
Director of Pretrial Services

Upon recommendation of the HCCJCC members on May 10, 2017 and Commissioners Court Order dated May 23, 2017 the HCCJCC includes the additional non-voting member:

#### Criminal Defense Bar Representative

Appointment of the Criminal Defense Bar Representative shall occur at the meeting following the meeting at which nominations are made. Term of membership is two years in length and shall begin in January of the even-numbered years and end in December of the odd-numbered years. Member may be re-elected to serve an unlimited number of additional terms. Those eligible must have practiced criminal defense for a minimum of 2 years. Each Harris County area criminal defense bar association may offer one nomination for Criminal Defense Bar Representative, either to fill a vacancy or nominate a new representative at the end of a term. The criminal defense bar association shall make a nomination in writing to the Council Chair and Vice-Chair, 14 days in advance of a Regular Meeting.

#### Member Duties

A Council member shall perform his or her duties, including the duties as a member of any committee upon which the member may serve, with care and in good faith, supporting the purpose of the Council.

#### Alternates

In the event a Council member must miss a Council meeting, the member may send a knowledgeable alternate that can represent the member's interests and provide information and input for the Council. The alternate will not have voting authority on matters that come before the Council.

#### Officers

The Officers of the HCCJCC shall consist of a Chair and Vice-Chair.

#### Powers and Duties

It shall be the Chair's responsibility to:

- Preside at each of the meetings of the Council
- Keep Council members informed of matters pertinent to their responsibility
- Set the agenda for all Council meetings

It shall be the Vice Chair's responsibility to:

- Carry out all duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence
- In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chair, preside as Chair until such time as a new Chair is elected

## Nomination Procedures

A current member of the Council may nominate any member of the Council for Office. Nominees shall have served on the Council for at least one calendar year prior to being eligible to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair. Nominations shall occur at the October or November Council meeting held in each odd numbered year.

## Election, Term of Office

Elections shall occur by majority vote of the Council members present at the meeting following the meeting at which nominations are made. Terms of office are two years in length and shall begin in January of the even-numbered years and end in December of the odd-numbered years. Officers may be re-elected to serve an unlimited number of additional terms.

## Vacancies

A vacancy of an Officer because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or other reason shall be filled by the Council according to the nomination and election procedures above, with nominations taken at the Council Meeting next following the vacancy. The newly elected officer shall serve the remainder of the term for the vacant position.

## Meetings

### Regular Meetings

Meetings shall occur regularly at locations and times scheduled at least 10 days in advance.

### Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Chair or by a majority vote of the Council members with at least 72 hours advance notice.

### Meeting Agendas

- Agenda items may be submitted by any Council member for inclusion on an agenda
- Items to be included on a Council meeting agenda are to be submitted to the Chair with a copy to the Office of Criminal Justice Coordination at least seven days prior to Council meetings
- Agendas will be distributed to Council members at least 72 hours prior to a scheduled regular meeting or special meeting

### Quorum

Fifty percent plus one of the Council's voting members constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.

### Council Decisions

Decisions shall be made by majority vote of Council members present at a scheduled Council meeting.

### Meeting Attendees

Although Council meetings are not subject to the Open Meetings Act (Op. Gen. No. GA-0504 (2007)), the Council believes that open and transparent government is the basis of a robust democracy and will generally

conduct its meetings in public. A meeting of Council members closed to the public may be called by the Chair or by a majority vote of the Council members.

## Committees

### Establishment

Committees may be established by the Council to serve the purpose and special interests of the Council. Recommendations for committees can be made to the Council by any interested party.

The Standing Committees of the CJCC, established by the Council on May 10th, 2017, are the following:

Jail Population Management

Mental Health

Racial & Ethnic Disparity

Re-Entry

Pre-Entry

### Members

The Committee Chair shall be appointed by the Council. Additional persons who have knowledge and expertise in the subject matter of the committee or a working group of a committee will be appointed from governmental agencies and from within the community. At a Council member's request, the Committee Chair shall appoint that Council member or her/his designee to a committee or committee workgroup.

The Sheriff's designee will presumptively serve as the Chair of the Jail Population Management Committee.

The Racial Disparity & Fairness Administrator (RDFA) will presumptively serve as the Chair of the Racial & Ethnic Disparity Committee.

A presumptive Chair may decline and defer appointment to the Council.

### Committee Chair's Powers and Duties

It is the Committee Chair's responsibility to:

- Address the goals and objectives of the committee, including developing action plans that assign responsibility and establish target completion dates.
- Establish workgroups to complete tasks or prepare analysis required for effective decision making by the committee, including appointing workgroup leaders and setting deadlines for workgroups. The Budget Management Department's Criminal Justice Group is to be notified in advance of all workgroup meetings.
- Report committee and related workgroup activities, progress, outcomes and issues to the Council at each Council meeting.

- Ensure that any proposal of the committee includes a statement of the budget impact to all stakeholders, facilities needed and/or any grants that may be available to support the proposal.

## Staff

The Budget Management Department's Criminal Justice Group shall, as one of its duties, provide strategic planning, policy development, research, and staffing support to the Council. Staff duties shall include but are not limited to:

- Work with the Chair to set agendas for Council meetings
- Keep schedules and serve notice of all Council, committee and workgroup meetings to Council members
- Attend all regular and special meetings of the Council. Attend committee and workgroup meetings when possible
- Take minutes at regular and special meetings of the Council and distribute to Council members
- Prepare and maintain Council and committee goals, objectives and action plans
- Maintain membership rosters of the Council, committees and workgroups
- Coordinate with the Council, committees and officials and their staffs for preparation of reports
- Maintain files of any documents deemed important to the Council
- Prepare Commissioners Court agenda items as requested by the Council or the Chair
- Conduct research and prepare reports or other information in response to the interests and established plan of the Council including best practices, legislative matters and emerging issues
- Develop training and educational materials related to the interests of the Council for governmental agencies and the public

## Modification of Bylaws

These Bylaws may be modified at any regular meeting of the Council by agreement of at least 60 percent of the Council's voting members, provided that the modification was previously submitted in writing to all Council members. Beginning in January 2011, the Council Chair will periodically review these guidelines at least every two years to ensure they are current and relevant.

## Revision History

| Date       | Summary of Changes   |
|------------|--|
| 10/14/2009 | Original adoption of Procedural Guidelines   |
| 2/11/2014  | Expansion of the Council with six new members  |
| 4/12/2016  | Expansion of the Council with one new member   |
| 07/20/2016 | Title change from Procedural Guidelines to Bylaws, updates to nomination procedures and terms of office.   |
| 05/10/2017 | Expansion of the Council with one new member<br>Appointment of committee chairs by Council vote<br>Establishment of five standing committees<br>Presumptive chairs designated for two committees |

## Appendix

### CJCC Organization Chart

