

## **Texas Commission on Jail Standards Workforce Plan 2009—2013**

### **I. Agency Overview**

The Texas Legislature created the Commission on Jail Standards in 1975 to implement a declared state policy that all county jail facilities conform to minimum standards of construction, maintenance and operation. In 1983, the Texas Legislature expanded the jurisdiction of the commission to include county and municipal jails operated under vendor contract. In 1991, the Texas Legislature added the requirement for count, payment, and transfer of inmates when precipitated by crowded conditions as well as expanding the commission's role of consultation and technical assistance. In 1993, the legislative function expanded the role of the commission again by requiring that it provide consultation and technical assistance for the State Jail program. In 1997, the Texas legislature affirmed that counties, municipalities and private vendors housing out-of-state inmates are within the commission's jurisdiction. It is the duty of the commission to promulgate reasonable written rules and procedures establishing minimum standards, inspection procedures, enforcement policies and technical assistance for:

- (1) the construction, equipment, maintenance, and operation of jail facilities under its jurisdiction;
- (2) the custody, care and treatment of inmates;
- (3) programs of rehabilitation, education, and recreation for inmates confined in county and municipal jail facilities under its jurisdiction.

The Commission's office is located in downtown Austin, Texas, and there are currently 17 FTE's budgeted.

### **Agency Mission**

The mission of the Texas Commission on Jail Standards is to empower local government to provide safe, secure and suitable local jail facilities through proper rules and procedures while promoting innovative programs and ideas.

During its regular session of 1975, the 64<sup>th</sup> Legislature enacted House Bill 272 creating the Texas Commission on Jail Standards in an effort to end federal court intervention into county jail matters and return jail control to state and local jurisdictions. Formerly through Title 81 of the Civil Statutes and currently through Chapters 499 and 511 of the Government Code, the state has evinced a strong commitment to improving conditions in the jails by granting us the authority and responsibility to promulgate and enforce minimum standards for jail construction, equipment, maintenance and operation. Related duties and rules are set forth in Chapters 351 and 361 of the Local Government Code, Title 37 of the Administrative Code, and our own Minimum Jail Standards.

## **A. Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Related Functions**

### *Goal 1- Inspection and enforcement*

Develop and implement a uniform process to inspect, monitor compliance and ensure due process in enforcement of standards for local jails.

*Objective:* Monitor local facilities and enforce standards

*Strategy:* Perform inspection of facilities and enforce standards

### *Goal 2- Juvenile Justice Survey*

Perform annual survey of local jail facilities to determine compliance with the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.

*Objective:* Monitor local facilities and enforce standards

*Strategy:* Perform annual survey of jails to determine compliance with JJDP.

### *Goal 3- Construction Plan Review*

Develop and implement a comprehensive facility needs analysis program and review and comment on construction documents for construction projects.

*Objective:* Provide consultation and training for jail construction/operation

*Strategy:* Assist with facility need analysis and construction document review.

### *Goal 4- Management Consultation*

Review and approve jail operation plans, provide needed jail management training and consultation and perform objective jail staffing analyses.

*Objective:* Provide consultation and training for jail construction/operation

*Strategy:* Assist with staffing analysis, operating plans and program development.

### *Goal 5- Auditing Population and Costs*

Collect, analyze and disseminate data concerning inmate population, felony backlog and jail operational costs.

*Objective:* Implement process to relieve crowding or ensure accurate compensation

*Strategy:* Collect and analyze data concerning inmate population, backlogs and costs.

Through Chapters 499 and 511 of the *Government Code*, the Commission on Jail Standards is given the authority and responsibility to promulgate and enforce minimum standards for jail construction, equipment, maintenance, and operations. Texas Minimum Jail Standards are contained in Title 37, Part IX, and Chapters 251 – 301 of the Texas Administrative Code. Related duties and rules are set forth in Chapters 351 and 361 of the *Local Government Code*.

Most of our activities are oriented toward county functions; however, we retain the responsibility to regulate privately operated county and municipal facilities. Our principal operations include on-site inspections of jails to verify compliance with standards, review of proposed construction and renovation plans to assess conformity to standards, provision of jail management technical assistance and training, administration of inmate population reports and audits, resolution of inmate grievances, providing counties with objective staffing and facility needs analyses, and various other activities relating to policy development and enforcement.

Primary relationships exist with county judges, commissioners and sheriffs. Secondary relationships are maintained with architectural firms, private operators, criminal justice professional associations and regulatory agencies concerned with issues such as fire safety, legal matters, and civil liberties. Jail inmates awaiting trial, serving sentences, or awaiting transfer to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Institutional Division, jail staff and the public are served by the enforcement of standards that are based on safety, security and sanitation. While on-site inspections remain the most visible activity, awareness of our ability to provide technical assistance has increased due mostly to a strong effort to provide quality regional training and a greater emphasis on providing assistance by all staff, including the Inspectors.

Administrative staff provides internal administrative support to the agency, including human resources, accounting, budgeting, information technology, and other staff services functions.

## **B. Anticipated Changes in Strategies**

Although, the Commission does not anticipate significant change to the agency mission, strategies, and/or goals over the next five years, the manner in which the mission is carried out may change due to recommendations from the Sunset Advisory Commission. The Commission is and will remain committed to providing high-quality service to county jails and ensure that counties are working to maintain safe and secure jails in their communities. With time, of course, adjustments are often necessary in the strategies used to meet these goals. The emphasis on information technology in the agency will be a major driver in the future of the Commission; however, a small yet dedicated workforce of professional and administrative personnel will continue to keep the agency on course toward achieving its goals and stated mission.

## II. Current Workforce Profile

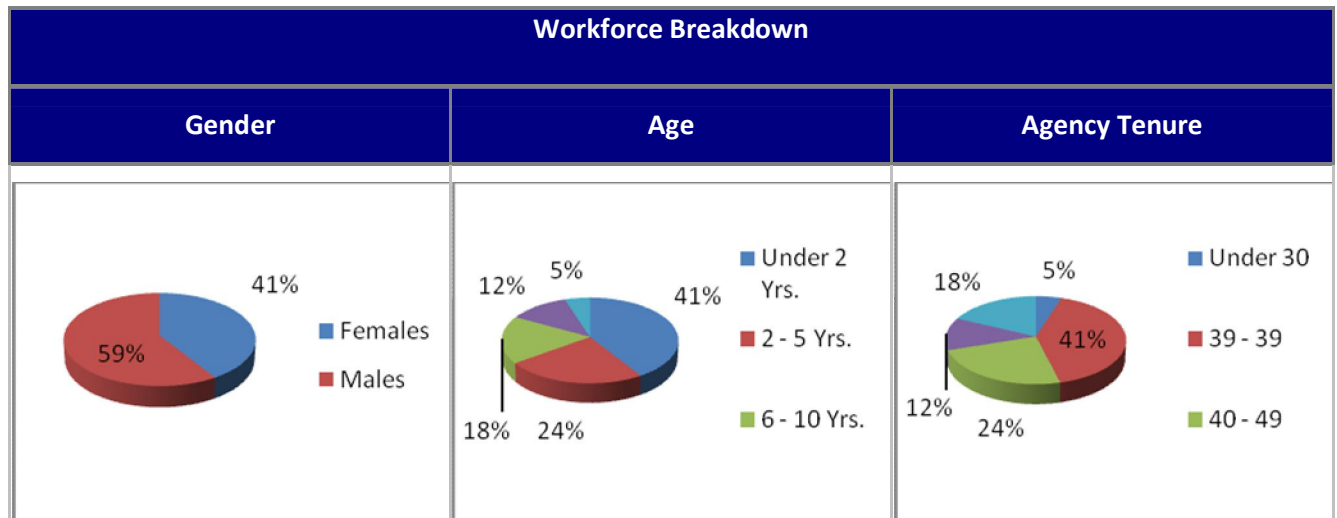
### a) Skills

Every Commission employee is valuable to the success of agency operations. Each of the 17 employees has more than one critical function that supports the Commission on Jail Standards. Some of the critical skills required to complete our mission are include customer service, auditing, communication, problem solving, project management, information analysis.

### b) Demographics

The following charts reflect the current profile of the agency's workforce. The Commission's workforce is comprised of 59% male and 41% female of which 41% are African American or Hispanic. The average age for the Agency staff is 44 and the total staff has an average of 5.58 years with the agency. There is a higher ratio of professional staff due to the Agency's objectives. Sixty-five percent are professionals, providing inspections, training and technical assistance, much of which is conducted in the field.

The present staff of seventeen is composed of one exempt position and sixteen classified positions. Currently the agency has no vacancies and the positions are filled by seven females and ten males. The ethnic composition exhibits diversity, with three African Americans, three Hispanics and eleven whites. There are fourteen professional, one technical and two administrative support positions.



c) Employee Turnover

In 2007, the Commission experienced a 31% turnover rate, and increase from the previous year in which the agency experienced a 19% turnover rate. Of the current staff, 47% have been with the agency for 2 years or less but continuity for our service population has not been affected.

d) Employee Attrition

Eighteen percent of the agency's workforce will be eligible to retire within the next 5 years. Replacement for those positions may prove to be difficult to find due to the loss of institutional knowledge, key positions and the combination of over 60 years of experience. When long-term experienced individuals vacate positions, it is our practice to fill those positions at a lower level until the individual gains experience in that position and then promote or provide merit increases.

### **III. Future Workforce**

a) Expected Workforce Changes

The Commission on Jail Standards will experience many of the workforce changes seen across the country, impacted by an aging population, an unstable economy, and a decreasing employment rate. These factors may improve the pool of qualified employees.

b) Future Workforce Skills Needed

Communication and interpersonal skills will continue to be critical, as the agency staff has daily contact with the public and with county officials. Computer skills are also vital, as the agency continues to upgrade information resources, dependent on available funding.

c) Anticipated Increase in Number of Employees Needed

With the increase in both the size and number of jails that must be inspected, the need for a fifth inspector is becoming critical, and in order to continue the traditionally high level of service to the counties, not only will this additional inspector be a necessity, but it has also become apparent that there is a growing need for an employee to focus on jail diversion. An additional staff person will be required in order to devote sufficient resources to this much-needed service for the counties.

d) Critical Functions that must be performed

Performance of all agency functions is critical to achieving the agency's goals and objectives.

### **III. Gap Analysis**

#### **Anticipated Surplus or Shortage of Staffing Levels or Skills:**

The agency does not anticipate a shortage of skills available for the needs of the agency, under its current mission; however, there is a concern that its ability to attract future employees and retain current employees who possess the needed skills may be impaired by a disparity in salaries between state employees and employees in private industry.

### **IV. Strategy Development**

#### **a) Retention Programs**

The agency supports its employees by rewarding merit increases and retention bonuses to employees who perform above satisfactory levels. Additionally, the agency continually strives to maintain a work environment that allows for flexibility, without compromising productivity.

#### **b) Recruitment Plans**

To the fullest extent possible, the agency will strive to recruit the number of qualified individuals required to carry out the agency's mission, including qualified persons of minority, disability, and/or the female gender.

#### **c) Organizational Training, Employee and Career Development**

The agency provides organizational training, including equal employment opportunity, sexual harassment and procedural training. The agency utilizes cross training to enhance the knowledge and skill levels of all employees. The agency provides for the cost of training for its employees, when the training is in the best interest of the agency, and funding allows for the expense.

#### **d) Leadership Development**

Cross training is essential in leadership development for a small agency. Division managers share their experience and knowledge with staff. The agency provides for leadership training for the professional staff, subject to budgetary constraints.

e) Succession Planning

All of the factors indicated for organizational training, employee, leadership and career development are essential in planning for succession. Additionally, the agency will maintain awareness of qualified sources outside of the agency.