



# **Semi-annual Reporting of Waiting Lists for Mental Health Services**

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**As Required by**

**2020-2021 General Appropriations Act,  
House Bill 1, 86th Legislature, Regular  
Session, 2019 (Article II, Health and  
Human Services Commission, Rider 58)**

**Health and Human Service**

**Commission**

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**TEXAS**  
Health and Human  
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# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Data Context and Limitations.....	2
<b>2. Adult and Children’s Community Mental Health Services Waiting List Data .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Adult Community Mental Health Services.....	3
Children’s Community Mental Health Services.....	8
Funds Expended to Remove Individuals on the Waiting List.....	12
Factors Impacting Community Mental Health Waiting Lists for Adults and Children .....	13
<b>3. Forensic State Hospital Bed Waiting List Data .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Factors Impacting Forensic State Hospital Bed Waiting Lists.....	16
<b>List of Acronyms .....</b>	<b>19</b>

# 1. Introduction

The *Semi-annual Reporting of Waiting Lists for Mental Health Services* meets requirements in the 2020-21 General Appropriations Act, House Bill (H.B.) 1, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 (Article II, Health and Human Services Commission [HHSC], Rider 58). The rider requires HHSC to report semi-annually to the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) and Governor regarding waiting lists for mental health services.

Rider 58 requires the report to include for each Local Mental Health Authority (LMHA), Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA), state facility, and contracted entity, any required waiting list and expenditure data for community mental health services for adults and children, forensic state hospital beds, and maximum security forensic state hospital beds. Required data include:

- Number of individuals waiting for all services
- Number of underserved individuals waiting for additional services
- Number of individuals removed from the waiting list
- Funds expended to remove individuals from the waiting list in the current fiscal quarter
- Average number of days on a waiting list
- Whether waiting lists are due to operational or other short-term factors, or to long-term issues such as insufficient capacity

## Data Context and Limitations

The community mental health waiting list is a point-in-time calculation of the total number of people waiting for mental health services. During any given reporting period, the list will change as people are added or removed daily for various reasons (e.g., admitted to services, no longer interested in services, receiving services elsewhere, no longer able to be contacted).

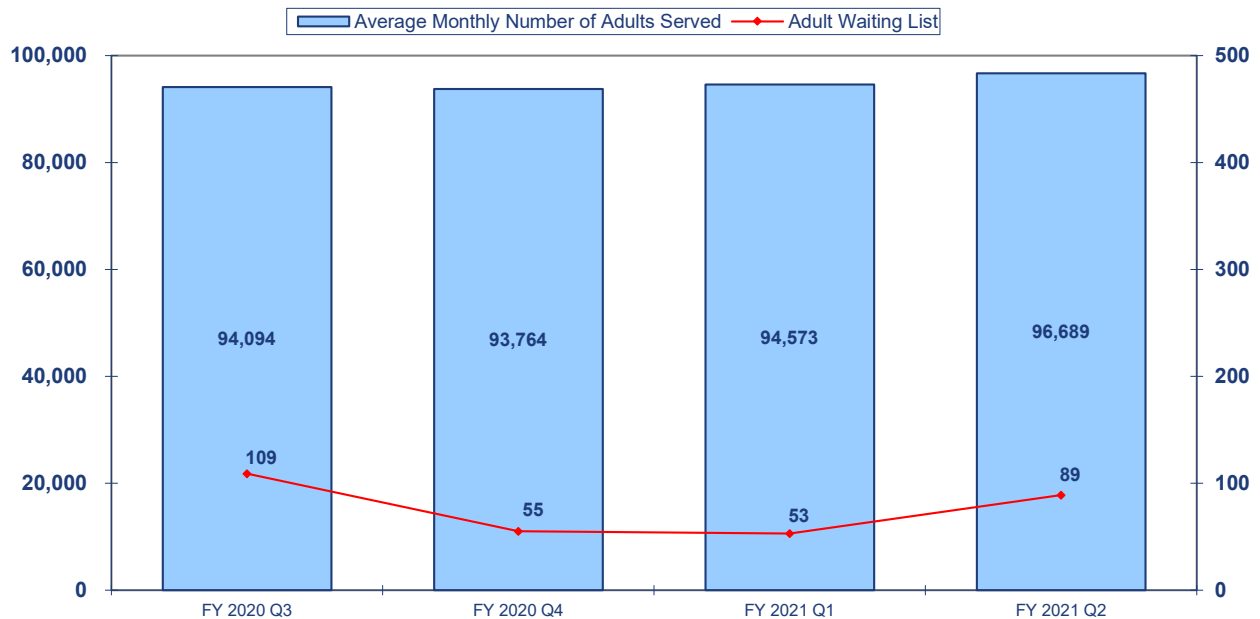
HHSC anticipates additional funding associated with waiting list reduction would increase numbers served and reduce the waiting list. However, if demand increases beyond the total funded capacity for mental health services, a waiting list may remain despite the effective use of additional funding and local authorities' success in meeting their contracted targets.

## 2. Adult and Children’s Community Mental Health Services Waiting List Data

### Adult Community Mental Health Services

The following chart compares the average monthly number of adults served and adult waiting list for the previous four state fiscal quarters.

Chart 1. Adult Community Mental Health Waiting List<sup>1</sup>



Tables 1 and 2 show the required report elements for the community mental health services waiting list for adults.

<sup>1</sup> Average monthly number of adults served per LBB performance measures. Adult Waiting List is number of adults waiting for all services in last month of quarter. Source: Client Assignment Registration (CARE) (March 16, 2021).

**Table 1. Number of Adults Waiting for All Services<sup>2</sup>, Number of Adults Removed from the Waiting List<sup>3</sup>, and Average Number of Days Adults on Waiting List<sup>4</sup>**

LMHA/LBHA	Number of Adults Waiting for All Services		Number of Adults Removed from Waiting List		Average Number of Days on Waiting List	
	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2
Anderson/Cherokee Community Enrichment Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Andrews Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Austin Travis County Integral Care	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Behavioral Health Center of Nueces County	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Betty Hardwick Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Border Region Behavioral Health Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Burke Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Camino Real Community Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Center for Health Care Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Center for Life Resources	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Central Counties Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Central Plains Community Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coastal Plains Community Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

<sup>2</sup> Data represents the waiting list for Q1 as of November 2020 and Q2 data as of February 2021.

<sup>3</sup> N/A indicates there was not a waitlist for that quarter.

<sup>4</sup> This data represents the average number of days all individuals spent on the waiting list. Data is based on the sum of total number of days for each individual assigned to a Level of Care 8 across each month of the reporting period, divided by the total number of individuals in the respective LMHA/LBHA. N/A indicates there was not a waitlist at the time the report was generated.

LMHA/LBHA	Number of Adults Waiting for All Services		Number of Adults Removed from Waiting List		Average Number of Days on Waiting List	
	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2
Community Healthcore	N/A	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	21
Denton County MHMR Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emergence Health Network	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gulf Bend Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gulf Coast Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Heart of Texas Regional MHMR Center	37	25	6	4	78	101
Helen Farabee Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hill Country MH and DD Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lakes Regional Community Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LifePath Systems	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley	N/A	37	N/A	N/A	N/A	41
MHMR Services for The Concho Valley	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
My Health My Resource of Tarrant County	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Texas Behavioral Health Authority	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pecan Valley Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Permian Basin Community Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spindletop Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Starcare Specialty Health System	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Texana Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Texas Panhandle Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

LMHA/LBHA	Number of Adults Waiting for All Services		Number of Adults Removed from Waiting List		Average Number of Days on Waiting List	
	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2
Texoma Community Center	0	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	41
Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare	16	19	4	1	29	36
Tropical Texas Behavioral Health	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
West Texas Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>240</b>

**Table 2. Number of Underserved Adults Waiting for Additional Services by LMHA/LBHA<sup>5</sup>**

LMHA/LBHA	Numbers	
	Q1	Q2
Anderson/Cherokee Community Enrichment Services	5	2
Andrews Center	10	24
Austin Travis County Integral Care	249	244
Behavioral Health Center of Nueces County	73	58
Betty Hardwick Center	23	17
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	2	2
Border Region Behavioral Health Center	6	16
Burke Center	0	0
Camino Real Community Services	0	3
Center for Health Care Services	26	38
Center for Life Resources	39	40
Central Counties Services	13	4

<sup>5</sup> Number of underserved adults waiting for additional services is different from the adult community mental health waiting list. An LMHA/LBHA may not have a waiting list, but still have individuals receiving a lower level of care than recommended based on assessment scores. Data reflects only those underserved due to program-level resource limitations. Q1 data represents the waiting list as of November 2020 and Q2 data is as of February 2021.

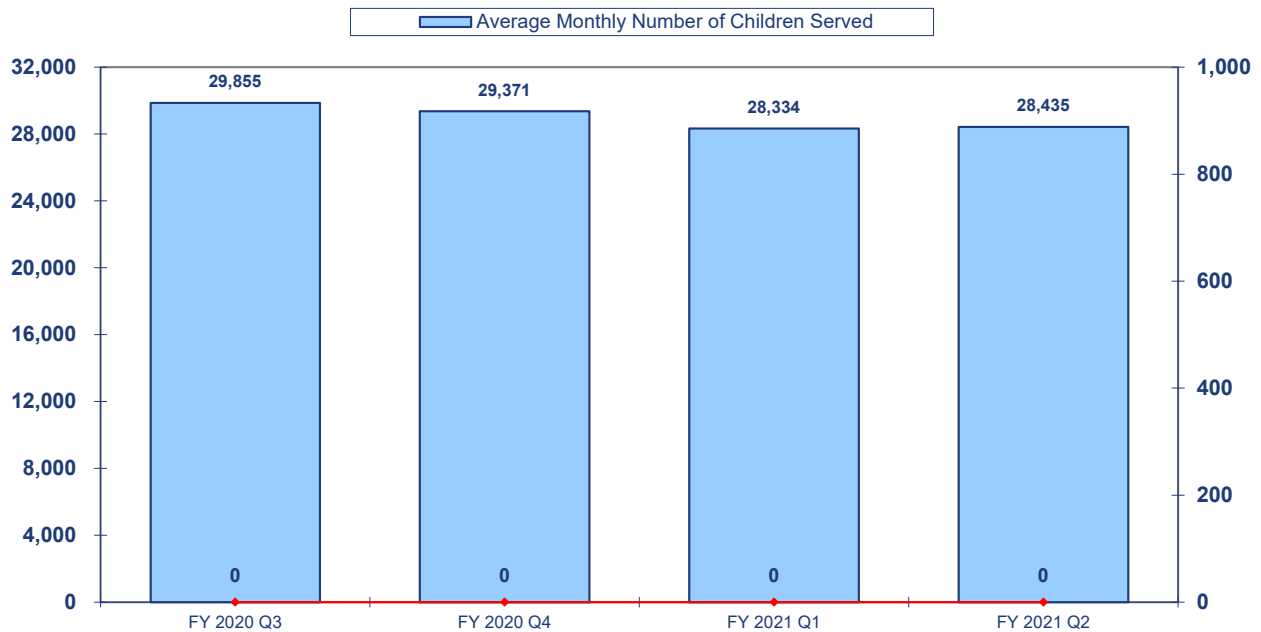
LMHA/LBHA	Numbers	
	Q1	Q2
Central Plains Community Center	0	0
Coastal Plains Community Center	0	0
Community Healthcore	0	0
Denton County MHMR Center	15	12
Emergence Health Network	17	18
Gulf Bend Center	10	4
Gulf Coast Center	15	6
Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD	0	0
Heart of Texas Regional MHMR Center	0	0
Helen Farabee Centers	0	0
Hill Country MH and DD Center	0	0
Lakes Regional Community Center	0	0
LifePath Systems	1	1
MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley	61	63
MHMR Services for The Concho Valley	0	0
My Health My Resource of Tarrant County	0	0
North Texas Behavioral Health Authority	8	5
Pecan Valley Centers	17	17
Permian Basin Community Centers	0	0
Spindletop Center	9	8
Starcare Specialty Health System	126	116
Texana Center	0	0
Texas Panhandle Centers	0	0
Texoma Community Center	1	0
Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare	50	62
Tropical Texas Behavioral Health	222	235
West Texas Centers	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>1,004</b>



## Children's Community Mental Health Services

Chart 2 compares the average monthly number of children served and children's waiting list for the previous four state fiscal quarters.

**Chart 2. Children's Community Mental Health Waiting List<sup>6</sup>**



Tables 3 and 4 show the required report elements for the community mental health services waiting list for children.

<sup>6</sup> Average monthly number of children served per LBB performance measures. Child Waiting List is number of children waiting for all services in last month of quarter. Source: CARE (March 17, 2021).

**Table 3. Number of Children Waiting for All Services<sup>7</sup>, Number of Children Removed from the Waiting List<sup>8</sup>, and Average Number of Days Children on Waiting List<sup>9</sup>**

LMHA/LBHA	Children Waiting for All Services		Number of Children Removed		Average Number of Days on Waiting List	
	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2
Anderson/Cherokee Community Enrichment Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Andrews Center	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Austin Travis County Integral Care	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Behavioral Health Center of Nueces County	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Betty Hardwick Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Border Region Behavioral Health Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Burke Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Camino Real Community Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Center for Health Care Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Center for Life Resources	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Central Counties Services	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Central Plains Community Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coastal Plains Community Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Community Healthcore	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Denton County MHMR Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emergence Health Network	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gulf Bend Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gulf Coast Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

<sup>7</sup> Q1 data represents the waiting list as of November 2020 and Q2 data is as of February 2021.

<sup>8</sup> N/A means these providers do not have a children’s mental health waiting list for Q1 as of November 2020 or for Q2 as of February 2021.

<sup>9</sup> This data represents the average number of days all individuals on the waiting lists spent on the waiting list. Data is calculated using the sum of total number of days for each individual who is assigned to a Level of Care 8 (LOC-8) across each month of the reporting period, divided by the total number of individuals in the respective center. N/A indicates that there was not a waitlist at the time the report was generated.

LMHA/LBHA	Children Waiting for All Services		Number of Children Removed		Average Number of Days on Waiting List	
	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2
Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Heart of Texas Regional MHMR Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Helen Farabee Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hill Country MH and DD Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lakes Regional Community Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
LifePath Systems	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MHMR Services for The Concho Valley	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
My Health My Resource of Tarrant County	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Texas Behavioral Health Authority	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pecan Valley Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Permian Basin Community Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spindletop Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Starcare Specialty Health System	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Texana Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Texas Panhandle Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Texoma Community Center	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tropical Texas Behavioral Health	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
West Texas Centers	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

**Table 4. Number of Underserved Children Waiting for Additional Services by LMHA/LBHA<sup>10</sup>**

LMHA/LBHA	Number of Underserved Children	
	Q1	Q2
Anderson/Cherokee Community Enrichment Services	0	0
Andrews Center	1	0
Austin Travis County Integral Care	15	10
Behavioral Health Center of Nueces County	0	10
Betty Hardwick Center	0	0
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	18	15
Border Region Behavioral Health Center	0	0
Burke Center	0	0
Camino Real Community Services	0	0
Center for Health Care Services	0	0
Center for Life Resources	0	0
Central Counties Services	1	0
Central Plains Community Center	0	0
Coastal Plains Community Center	0	0
Community Healthcore	30	22
Denton County MHMR Center	0	0
Emergence Health Network	0	0
Gulf Bend Center	0	0
Gulf Coast Center	0	1
Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD	0	0
Heart of Texas Regional MHMR Center	0	1
Helen Farabee Centers	0	0
Hill Country MH and DD Center	0	0
Lakes Regional Community Center	0	0
LifePath Systems	0	0
MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley	0	0

<sup>10</sup> Number of underserved children waiting for additional services is not the same as the children's community mental health waiting list. An LMHA/LBHA may not have a waiting list, but still have individuals receiving a lower level of care than recommended based on assessment scores. Data reflects only those underserved due to resource limitations. Q1 data represents the waiting list as of November 2020 and Q2 data as of February 2021.

LMHA/LBHA	Number of Underserved Children	
	Q1	Q2
MHMR Services for The Concho Valley	0	0
My Health My Resource of Tarrant County	0	0
North Texas Behavioral Health Authority	0	0
Pecan Valley Centers	11	16
Permian Basin Community Centers	0	0
Spindletop Center	0	0
Starcare Specialty Health System	0	0
Texana Center	0	0
Texas Panhandle Centers	0	1
Texoma Community Center	0	0
Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare	0	0
Tropical Texas Behavioral Health	79	74
West Texas Centers	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>150</b>

## Funds Expended to Remove Individuals on the Waiting List

The 2020-21 General Appropriations Act, H.B. 1, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 (Article II, HHSC, Rider 63) appropriated \$59,055,770 to address waiting lists and increase outpatient mental health treatment capacity at the LMHAs and LBHAs. HHSC has fully allocated these funds among LMHAs and LBHAs, encumbered the funds onto their contracts and distributed all state fiscal year 2020 outpatient funds. The first two quarterly allocation payments for state fiscal year 2021 were also completed, and the remaining state fiscal year 2021 funds will be paid according to the regular quarterly payment allocation schedule.

## Factors Impacting Community Mental Health Waiting Lists for Adults and Children

Table 5 shows long- and short-term factors LMHAs and LBHAs identify as impacting waiting lists.

**Table 5. Factors Impacting Community Mental Health Waiting Lists for Adults and Children**

Issue	Long or Short-term	Description
As Texas' population grows, so will the number of people likely to qualify for state-approved mental health services.	Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texas population to increase to more than 40.5 million by 2050. 811,000 adults likely to qualify for state-supported mental health services by year 2050, compared to 576,226 in state fiscal year 2020. 320,000 youth likely to qualify for state-supported mental health services by year 2050, compared to 262,318 in state fiscal year 2020.</li> </ul>
Workforce shortages.	<p>Short-term</p> <p>Long-term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic induced staff shortages due to personal illness, required quarantine due to exposure, or taking personal leave to care for ill family members.</li> <li>• Shortages cause challenges to recruiting and retaining psychiatrists, licensed clinicians, nurses, and qualified mental health professionals. Challenges are greater in rural and underserved areas.</li> </ul>
Other workforce issues.	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Losing prescribing providers due to staff turnover, competitive employment, or retirement was a challenge.</li> <li>• Limited funding prevented hiring of new staff.</li> </ul>

### 3. Forensic State Hospital Bed Waiting List Data

Tables 6 and 7 show required data elements for the forensic state hospital bed waiting lists. The state hospital system maintains two distinct lists of pending admissions for people on forensic commitments: one for people pending admission to a non-maximum-security unit; and one for people pending admission to a maximum-security unit.

**Table 6. Non-Maximum Security Forensic State Hospital Bed Waiting List**

Data Element	Number	
	Q1	Q2
<b>People Added to the Waiting List</b>	509	436
<b>People Removed from the Waiting List</b>	365	411
<b>People on the Waiting List<sup>11</sup></b>	842	889
<b>Average Number of Days People Remained on Waiting List</b>	127	159

<sup>11</sup> Data as of the last day of the quarter.

**Table 7. Maximum Security Forensic State Hospital Bed Waiting List**

Data Element	Number	
	Q1	Q2
<b>People Added to the Waiting List</b>	151	119
<b>People Removed from the Waiting List</b>	95	135
<b>People on the Waiting List<sup>12</sup></b>	581	565
<b>Average Number of Days People Remained on Waiting List</b>	346	365

<sup>12</sup> Data as of the last day of the quarter.



## Factors Impacting Forensic State Hospital Bed Waiting Lists

Table 8 shows the long- and short-term factors that impact the forensic state hospital bed waiting list.

**Table 8. Factors Impacting Forensic State Hospital Bed Waiting Lists**

Issue	Long or Short-term	Description
Staffing shortages take beds offline.	Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment and retention of direct care and professional staff are challenging due to a variety of factors, including new challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. HHSC continues exploring new recruitment efforts to improve hiring.</li> <li>Health and Specialty Care System (HSCS) is using telemedicine to extend psychiatric coverage and expanding recruitment and retention efforts.</li> <li>The 86th Legislature appropriated pay increases for direct care staff. HHSC is currently monitoring the outcomes of the targeted pay increases.</li> </ul>
Mitigation or remediation of life safety code issues.	Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When resources to address deferred maintenance related to life safety code or regulatory requirements (e.g., ligature risks) are not available, hospitals must take beds offline until issues can be mitigated.</li> <li>The Health and Specialty Care System (HSCS) is using deferred maintenance funds appropriated for this biennium for anti-ligature projects and other effects to keep beds online; however, funds are insufficient to address all issues. Specifically, the cost of ligature remediation exceeds the total appropriation for deferred maintenance</li> </ul>

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Long or Short-term</b>	<b>Description</b>
<p>COVID-19 precautions require that HHSC manage the state hospitals at a lower census</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To create a safe environment for patients and staff, all state hospitals have created space for social distancing and established places where patients who were possibly exposed or tested positive can be quarantined.</li> <li>● State hospitals are also placing patients who are being admitted from jails and other places initially on isolation units to determine their COVID-19 status.</li> </ul>

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Long or Short-term</b>	<b>Description</b>
Demand exceeds capacity.	Long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The inability to successfully and safely discharge individuals into the community is a factor impacting the waiting list.</li> <li>● Patients on a forensic commitment have longer lengths of stay on average, meaning discharge rates have slowed and fewer people can be served with existing beds. Revised forensic policies and procedures are underway to enhance forensic services, with impacts on the waitlist and length of stay efforts.</li> <li>● Statutory changes from the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session have allowed the assignment of maximum security based on clinical needs, rather than offense charge. In response, HHSC developed a review process of forensic commitments to determine clinical need for maximum security.</li> <li>● HSCS implemented a new forensic treatment parameter operating procedure with an effective date of September 1, 2020 at state hospitals. State hospital evaluators have also had additional training on conducting evaluations, and the chief of forensic medicine continues to work with hospitals on implementing new evidence-based assessment procedures.</li> <li>● Collaboration continues across the continuum of care to understand the challenges and explore opportunities for community-based treatment and diversion.</li> </ul>

## **List of Acronyms**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Full Name</b>
H.B.	House Bill
HHSC	Health and Human Services Commission
HSCS	Health and Specialty Care System
LBB	Legislative Budget Board
LBHA	Local Behavioral Health Authority
LMHA	Local Mental Health Authority