



Tarrant County Judge
B. Glen Whitley

The Great Need to Improve Mental Health Services

The Tarrant County jail keeps the bad guys locked up and off our city streets.

The jail does a good job safeguarding our community.

But there is a problem in the jail.

Around one-quarter of its 3,200 inmates have mental health issues.

They are in and out of jail repeatedly, mostly for misdemeanors like criminal trespass or public intoxication. Some-

times they are arrested when they are caught acting out what's in their head, because they forgot to take psychiatric medication.

It's a tremendous cost to taxpayers and a terrible burden on families. It adds unneeded stress to the jail, because our jailers aren't trained mental health counselors.

On any given day, of the approximately 800 inmates with mental health issues, on average 600 are in jail twice a year and 70 have been arrested more than a dozen times. It costs taxpayers \$20 million a year or more to keep them in jail.

Undoubtedly, some inmates need to be confined in jail and that's right where they'll stay.

But the mentally ill inmates may need help to repair their lives.

Those who are not a public-safety risk may need treatment in community-based programs rather than using the revolving door to the jail.

A Shortage of Care and Facilities

Unfortunately, there is a shortage of inpatient psychiatric and substance-abuse beds. Although many people need inpatient care for just a few days till they stabilize, we lack capacity. There is also a shortage of outpatient treatment services.

It's not just a Tarrant County issue. It is a national problem.

The number of people diagnosed with a mental illness continues to rise and treatment options are not keeping pace.

There is less funding for mental health services than for many other medical issues. Also, there is a stigma attached to a mental health diagnosis, and that can keep people from seeking help.

We are making progress with some innovative programs.

In Tarrant County, we have a new misdemeanor court program, called the Enhanced Mental Health Services Docket. It's a collaborative effort of the criminal courts, MHMR of Tarrant County, the District and County clerks, defense attorneys and the Criminal District Attorney's office.

The court handles defendants with a diagnosed mental health



Some of the Tarrant County Jail inmates Need Mental Health Care condition who have been arrested at least twice in the past year. An action plan is developed for each defendant and the case is managed by MHMR.

Innovative Programs

In September, the Tarrant County Mayors Council held a half-day conference that was a community conversation about mental health, law enforcement, the criminalization of mental illness and creating sustainable outcomes. MHMR already developed a law liaison program to help police route mentally ill people to treatment instead of jail.

But, the concern about mental health care is about much more than people in jail.

Many veterans need help, as do others in our community.

MHMR has a new veterans counseling program, Operation Open Door, funded by the Texas Veterans Commission, that offers free help to veterans and their families who need assistance.

The John Peter Smith Health Network needs to expand its mental health services adding at least 100 psychiatric beds in an effort to meet the demand.

The Mental Health Reform Act of 2016 stalled in Congress after nearly passing. If it does pass it could increase funding for mental health care.

Improving access to mental health care, helping veterans and fewer mentally ill inmates in the county jail are tough problems to tackle. Like many serious issues we face, working together and engaging in the spirit of collaboration we can succeed. In Tarrant County we are up to the task.



NEW MENTAL HEALTH COURT PROGRAM

Keeping Low-level, Mentally Ill Offenders Out of Jail

There's a new criminal court program in Tarrant County that practices tough love.

The court handles misdemeanor defendants with a diagnosed mental health condition who have been arrested at least twice in the past year and regularly bounce in and out of jail.

The court, called the Enhanced Mental Health Docket, is presided over by Judge Rainey Webb. It works with repeat misdemeanor offenders, with no pending felonies, and directs them to a treatment program in which they are closely monitored and held accountable for their behavior and actions.

The goal of the court is to get the defendants the help they need to repair their lives, as much as that may be possible, and to prevent them from being rearrested and sent to jail again.

"We've seen some huge transformations in people's lives," said Webb, a former Tarrant County prosecutor who became a magistrate in 2013.

Of the people who have been in the program the past year, over 45 percent have been able to remain stable, on their medication and out of the criminal justice system, Webb said. Some have developed job skills, found employment and reestablished contacts with families, she said.

Repairing Lives; Staying out of Jail

"I have learned that any gains we make are better than what was happening before with this population," Webb said. "We are talking about very sick people with complicated issues."

If the defendants are not a public-safety risk, and if they are accused only of a crime like criminal trespass, then it probably doesn't make sense for them to take up a bed in the overcrowded state mental hospital system, Webb said. The few psychiatric beds in Texas can then go to the sickest individuals, she said.

Most of the defendants in the program have been arrested for misdemeanors such as criminal trespass or public intoxication. Sometimes they forget to take psychiatric medication and are arrested when they act out in public.

The defendants choose to participate in the program, plead guilty to their charge or go to trial.

On average, the people in the program have multiple arrests and have been in the criminal justice system about 12 years. In the past, when they were released, there wasn't a plan or program designed to keep them out of trouble and jail.

Under the new program, defendants can see a judge



Judge Rainey Webb of Tarrant County's Enhanced Mental Health Docket

more quickly and a determination can be made on whether they are competent to stand trial.

They can be released on a no-cost, pretrial bond with expectations, conditions and regularly scheduled court appearances. An action plan is developed for each person and the case is managed by MHMR of Tarrant County.

Therapists meet with the defendants several times a week for motivational counseling between court appearances. Each defendant leaves the jail with medication, a doctor's appointment and arrangements for transportation to the doctor or to where they are living.

"We have not been able to stop the entire flow of folks back into the jail, but we have reduced the number of new cases filed on them," Webb said.

Tarrant County Criminal Justice Collaboration

The new court is a collaborative effort of the criminal courts, MHMR, the district and county clerks, defense attorneys and the criminal district attorney's office.

In Tarrant County, there are two kinds of "problem-solving courts" for lower-level offenders, said Criminal Court Judge Brent Carr, who created the county's Veterans Court and helped to create the new mental health court.

There are diversion courts, like the Veterans Court, for those without a record, which give people the tools to stay out of the criminal justice system. And, there are intervention courts, like the new mental health court, which work with people already in the criminal justice system.

"The terms of participating in a problem-solving court are, for the most part, more demanding than regular probation, because it includes facetime with the judge and closer monitoring," Carr said. "All of these programs have a single purpose, to restore people to a successful life."



TILLIE BURGIN: ARLINGTON'S MOTHER TERESA

Mission Arlington Lends a Hand when it's Needed the Most

Tillie Burgin is always at work, from well before sunup until after dark.

Burgin, the founder and director of Mission Arlington/ Mission Metroplex, collects and distributes supplies, organizes volunteers, unloads trucks and ministers to the poor.

She's seemingly on the cell phone 24/7, busy scheduling activities for the coming days and weeks.

Burgin has been called Arlington's Mother Teresa more than once.

In fact, she's an Arlington homebred and former school teacher who answered a call 30 years ago to help out in her hometown community.

"It's an honor to do this," said Burgin, displaying the peaceful, reassuring determination and smile that is her hallmark. She is sweet and calm, but also the woman in charge.

The agency she founded in 1986 continues to flourish.

On a typical day, Mission Arlington helps hundreds of families with rent or utility bills, food, clothing, shelter, school supplies, training and transportation.

There are dental and medical clinics, after-school programs, childcare and services for seniors.

A fleet of vans and minibuses helps clients access Mission Arlington services and those provided by the JPS Health Network and other agencies.

Burgin grew up at 104 South Street, one block from where Mission Arlington is today.

"I really haven't gone far," she said.

As a youngster, she spent time at her father's Abram Street gas station in



Tillie Burgin
Mission Arlington founder
and Executive Director

downtown Arlington.

"I would fix flats with the guys and dust floorboards," she said. "If a car is old enough, I can fix it."

She graduated from Arlington High School in 1954 and met her husband, Bob, at college. They married in 1956. When her husband was drafted and sent to South Korea, she joined him, teaching at a Methodist boys high school in Inchon.

Mission Work in Korea

The couple returned to Arlington in 1959, and Burgin had the first of her two children the following year.

Burgin's family lived in South Korea twice between 1966 and 1978.

When the family settled again in Arlington she taught school, eventually becoming head of personnel for the school district in 1980, a post she held for five years.

But missionary work is a calling, and the call was strong.

"If you can do missions in Korea, why not do missions in Arlington?" Burgin said.



Mission Arlington / Mission Metroplex

missionarlington.org (817) 277-6620

First Baptist Church in Arlington agreed to give it a try. The mission was born in what Burgin describes as a "little, bitty space, not much bigger than a closet."

In her first week, Burgin helped a woman get electricity restored and set up a Bible study group.

Today, Mission Arlington has 344 Bible study groups and more than 1,000 volunteers who contribute time throughout the year. On some days, several hundred volunteers scatter across the community doing after-school programs, delivering furniture, teaching English as a second language, taking kids to activities and running the clinics.

Mission Arlington was the first resource Arlington called upon when Hurricane Katrina evacuees arrived in the city.

This time of year Mission Arlington is preparing for the winter holidays.

Christmas Toys and Holiday Meals

Last Thanksgiving, Mission Arlington fed 6,000 families.

"We prepared cooked and uncooked meals to go and did a sit down dinner for the homeless," Burgin said. "That's a bunch of turkeys."

The Mission's Christmas Store gave 34,000 children toys and distributed 1,000 bikes.

"It's all donated," she said. "The graciousness of the volunteers make this place happen."

Burgin's office is filled with many recognitions, among them a handwritten note from President George W. Bush. On one office wall hangs a copy of Rembrandt's Return of the Prodigal Son. Nearby is a Norman Rockwell print of a multicultural crowd with the title, "Do Unto Others."

Burgin always wears a small lighthouse pin on her lapel.

"If you are out somewhere and need help and find a lighthouse, you will get help," she said. "A lighthouse is a refuge."



Tarrant County Steps up for Veterans: Operation Open Door

Easing Veterans Transition to Community and Home Through Counseling

Veterans and their families who need assistance moving forward with their lives can get help from a new Tarrant County counseling program.

Operation Open Door, a project of MHMR of Tarrant County, funded by a grant from the Texas Veterans Commission, provides free and confidential counseling by mental health professionals.

“We want to break down the barriers that keep veterans from getting help,” said Robert McGowen, director of the Open Door program which began this summer.

Any veteran or active duty member of the Armed Forces can get help, regardless of their discharge status, he said. There are men and women counselors, all veterans, who can help veterans build a support system.

Reintegration into the Community

The 12-session counseling program can address anxiety, education, working through past trauma and other issues that can affect a veteran’s smooth integration into the community.

“We come alongside an individual or family and help them meet their goals,” he said.

After the counseling concludes, the veterans are handed off to agencies like the Military Veteran Peer Network, a veterans-helping-veterans organization that can provide long term support and some case management.

Operation Open Door, and other counseling programs like it, provide an urgently needed service, say veterans and the mental health experts who work with them.

Roughly one in four post-9/11 combat veterans may have some degree of post-traumatic stress, experts say.

Post-traumatic stress symptoms, can appear quickly or over many years. They include flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, depression and confusion. Trust can suffer and there can be negative feelings about relationships, other people and themselves.

While veterans make up about 9 percent of the population, they account for 18 percent of the suicides. About 20 veterans take their lives every day, according to the most recent Department of Veterans Affairs data, available through 2014. There were more than 7,000 suicides that year.

A huge issue with post-9/11 veterans is their disconnect with veterans services. It is estimated that half of recent veterans don’t access VA services at all and that two-thirds of the veterans who commit suicide don’t use those services.

“Not every veteran has post-traumatic stress, but most everyone has some difficulty going through the transition from the service to home,” said Jeff Helmsley, the North Texas director of Iraq-Afghanistan Veterans of America.

More Veterans Coming to North Texas

As of 2014, there were about 2.7 million Americans who served in the Armed Forces since 9/11. In North Texas, there are roughly 400,000 veterans, but that number is expected to jump by 25 percent to 500,000 in five years.

About 115,000 veterans now call Tarrant County home.

“We are maxed out in our workload,” said Joel Chaveri, acting director of the Tarrant County Vet Center in Pantego, an arm of the Department of Veterans Affairs that operates community-based counseling centers.

“I’ve seen a rise since the troop withdrawals from Afghanistan,” Chaveri said. “They are getting out, not going back.”

For his part, McGowen’s staff will go where they are needed.

“They had courage to schedule an appointment,” he said. “We want to meet them wherever they are.”



Connecting Texas Veterans, their Family Members & the General Public with area Employers looking for qualified candidates for a variety of positions.

Thursday, November 10, 2016

9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Globe Life Park in Arlington

1000 Ballpark Way, Arlington, Texas

For more information & to register for your FAST PASS visit, <https://2016rvwjjobseekers.eventbrite.com>

Veterans Assistance

Operation Open Door (817) 335-3022; (800) 866-8255

Tarrant County Veteran Service Office (817) 531-5645
www.tarrantcounty.com/veterans

Tarrant County MHMR Hotline (800) 866-2465
www.MHMRtarrant.org

Tarrant County VA Vet Center (817) 274-0981
www.va.gov/directory/GUIDE/facility.asp?ID=5941

National Veterans Crisis Line (800) 273-8255
www.VeteranCrisisLine.net; text 838255



Helping **REAL** PEOPLE with **REAL** PROBLEMS find **REAL** SOLUTIONS

Support United Way to Strengthen Tarrant County

At United Way, we help people by investing in **EDUCATION**, **INCOME**, & **HEALTH**. Through strategic programs, we help to make a better, stronger Tarrant County.



LEARN WELL Education

BOLD 8,000 students at risk of dropping out will have
GOAL graduated on time by 2020.

Our **LEARN WELL** partnerships include:

- **GO Center** (college and career coaching)
- **Destination Diploma** (drop-out prevention)
- **Reading Oasis**
- **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**

EARN WELL Income

BOLD 24,000 low-income working families will be on the
GOAL path to financial stability by 2020.

Our **EARN WELL** partnerships include:

- **VITA** (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)
- **Adult Literacy**
- **Job Training/Employment**
- **Financial Coaching**

LIVE WELL Health

BOLD 17,000 adults with ongoing health concerns will have
GOAL improved lives by 2020.

Our **LIVE WELL** partnerships include:

- **Diabetes Salud!** (diabetes management)
- **A Matter of Balance** (fall prevention)
- **HomeMeds** (medication management)
- **REACH** (Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health)

GIVE through **UNITED WAY**
Call (817) 258-8000
Click unitedwaytarrant.org/REAL
Text [uwTarrant](tel:8172588000) to 41444



WE GIVE PEOPLE THE TOOLS TO HELP THEMSELVES.

Central Office
1500 N. Main Street
Suite 200
P.O. Box 4448
Fort Worth, TX 76164
817-258-8000
unitedwaytarrant.org

2-1-1 - A toll-free, 24-hour
referral service with free
information on literacy and
financial education classes,
health services and more.
Dial 211
tarrantcounty211.org

Northeast Tarrant Office
221 Bedford Rd.
Suite 306
Bedford, TX 76022
817-282-1160
unitedwaynortheast.org

Arlington Office
401 W. Sanford Street
Suite 2600
Arlington, TX 76011
817-548-9595
unitedwayarlington.org

Area Agency on Aging and
Disability Resource Center of
Tarrant County Resources for
older adults, people with
disabilities and caregivers.
888-730-2372
unitedwaytarrant.org/aaa



PACK YOUR BAGS

Get Your Passport at the County Clerk's Office

Feel a need to take a long trip overseas?

Then get your passport or renew it at the Tarrant County Clerk's Office.

After a little more than a one-year hiatus, Tarrant County is once again offering United States citizens an easy way to get the papers they need to travel around the world.

"We are so pleased to be able to offer this service," said Mary Louise Garcia, the Tarrant County Clerk. "It's an important service to the taxpayers of the county."

The County Clerk's office now has two locations where citizens can submit an application for a passport, Garcia said. The County Clerk's office looks forward to opening additional passport offices in Tarrant County in the future, she said.

One of the current passport offices is in the Precinct 1 sub-courthouse at 6551 Granbury Road, in Fort Worth. The other is at the Precinct 3 subcourthouse in Southlake Town Hall, Suite 340, at 1400 Main Street in Southlake Town Square.

Both offices are a walk-in service and are open weekdays from 8:00 a.m. until 2:15 p.m.

The County Clerk's passport office can perform all the tasks that are required to accept an application for a U.S. passport, including taking a passport photograph, for which you must not smile.

One thing is certain, in order to get a passport it is necessary to provide proof of U.S. citizenship.

Proof of Citizenship and Identification

That proof can be a previous U.S. Passport, a birth certificate or a naturalization certificate.

The birth certificate must have a seal from the city, county, or state and show that it was filed within one year of birth. Hospital birth certificates are not acceptable. The long form official birth certificate is recommended.

Applicants can supply their own passport photographs, but the rules are finicky. The photo must be a 2-inch square color photograph taken in the last six months. It must be a full-face view with a neutral expression, against a white back-



ground. The head must be between 1-inch and 1 3/8 inches from the chin to the top of the hair.

Beginning on November 1st, passport photographs must be taken without glasses.

Anyone applying for a passport should also be prepared to show identification, like a driver's license, a state-issued I.D., a military ID or a previous passport.



Children Must be Accompanied by Both Parents

Applicants who are younger than 16 must appear in person and be accompanied by both natural parents named on the birth certificate.

The application fee for a passport must be paid by personal check, a cashier's check or a money order. Credit and debit cards are not accepted. The fee paid to the State Department is \$110 dollars. Another \$37 is paid to the county, which includes the cost of a photograph. If a photo is supplied, the county fee is only \$25.

It takes about six weeks to process a passport application. If there is a hurry, tack on an additional \$60 to the State Department and get delivery in three weeks. If there is a need to check on the application, call the National Passport Information Center at 1-877-487-2778 or check online.

Online Passport Information

The U.S. Department of State offers passport and travel information online at Travel.State.Gov, including application forms, application information, online status checks and where to apply.

Passport Forms:

travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/forms.html

How to Apply for a U.S. Passport:

travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/apply.html

Application Status:

travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/information/application-status.html

Passport Requirements for Children:

travel.state.gov/content/childabduction/en/preventing/passport-req.html

For more information, contact the Tarrant County Clerk
www.tarrantcounty.com; (817) 884-1196



GET VACCINATED: PREVENT THE FLU

Feeling Lousy Undeniably: The FLU

Put the mosquito spray away and get a flu shot.

That’s the message from the Tarrant County Public Health Department.

Fall and winter do not offer mosquito friendly temps, but the flu virus thrives when the mercury dives.

“With temperatures dropping, we could have an early circulation of the flu virus,” said Vinny Taneja, Tarrant County Public Health Department director. “There is no ‘it’s too early’ to get a flu shot.”

The flu virus is very unpredictable. It appears in the fall, peaks in January or February, but can start as early as Halloween and last until Memorial Day.

There is often a surge in flu cases around Thanksgiving and Christmas, when families gather and there is an opportunity to pass the bug around with the turkey.

Flu spreads when sick people cough, sneeze or talk and tiny droplets land on people. A person can get flu touching a surface that has the virus on it and then touching the mouth, eyes or nose.

Protect Yourself and Your Family

Flu can be contagious a day before symptoms develop and up to seven days after becoming sick. Young children and people with weakened immune systems can infect others for an even longer time.

Usually, it’s just a little bit of misery for a week or longer, though in severe cases it can lead to hospitalization and even death.

Mild or severe, flu is a highly contagious viral illness that attacks the nose, throat, and lungs. Symptoms, which can come on quickly, can include fever and chills, a thumping headache, muscle aches, fatigue, a sore throat and runny nose and a deep, bronchial cough.

Older adults with chronic health conditions and young

children are most at risk for serious complications.

The severity of a flu season can vary. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that in the United States, flu-associated deaths range from a low of about 3,000 people to as many as 50,000 people annually, depending on the seriousness of the seasonal outbreak.

The good news, for the most part, is that the flu can be prevented through immunization, Taneja said. Getting vaccinated is especially important for those with chronic heart, lung and immune system diseases.

“Don’t go unprotected,” he said.

There are some special flu vaccines made for seniors or people with egg allergies. Unlike previous years, there will not be a spray vaccine administered through the nose, that often was used for children. There is no preferred vaccine except the one right for you based on your age and health.

Flu Medication can Shorten the Duration

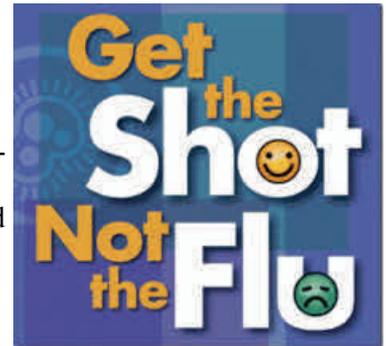
“If you feel like you are getting the flu, see your health care provider immediately and start Tamiflu within 48 hours, because it works well.” Taneja said. “If you do catch the flu, medications like Tamiflu and having taken the vaccine, can shorten the duration and severity of the illness.”

Flu shots are generally easy to get and they are offered in many locations. It is to your benefit to get vaccinated early. The vaccine takes about two weeks to be effective.

The Tarrant County Public Health Department is offering flu shots at its public health centers throughout the county. Pharmacies, college health centers and some employers, schools and places of worship offer immunization.

If a special vaccine is required or desired, you should contact your primary health care provider.

There are two important things to remember, Taneja said: “Wash your hands often with soap and water and now is the time to get your flu shot.”



SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
ONSET	SLOW, days	SUDDEN, hours
FEVER	RARE, low	COMMON, high
HEADACHE	RARE, mild	COMMON, severe
BLOCKED NOSE	COMMON	OFTEN
DRY COUGH	COMMON	OFTEN
CHEST PAIN	NO or mild	OFTEN
MUSCLE PAINS	NO or mild	COMMON
TIREDNESS	NO or mild	COMMON
DURATION	7-10 DAYS	3-7 DAYS

For more on flu and immunization contact Tarrant County Public Health (817) 321-4700; <http://health.tarrantcounty.com>



Work on I-35W Nears Completion as More is Contemplated

There's light at the end of the I-35W tunnel, kind of. The massive \$1.6 billion North Tarrant Express construction project on Interstate 35W that began in 2013 is on schedule to wrap up in 2018, as planned.

The 10-mile stretch from Interstate 30 and downtown Fort Worth north to U.S. 287 is a makeover of a very, very busy road, some of which was built in the 1960s.

The highway, which bisects Tarrant County, is the nation's main north-south corridor, traveling through the heart of North America, from the border with Mexico to Minnesota.

"We're just over the 50 percent completion mark," said Robert Hinkle, spokesman for project developer North Texas Express (NTE) Mobility Partners. "We're on budget, on schedule and making great progress."

NTE Mobility Partners has moved some I-35W travel onto the new pavement and straightened out some of the curves from construction, Hinkle said.

"Traffic is already beginning to move a whole lot better," he said.

The Texas Department of Transportation is considering some additional improvements and new lanes on I-35W to the north and the south of the area that is currently under construction.



Long-awaited improvements to I-35W north of downtown Fort Worth

TxDOT and NTE Mobility Partners are nearing an agreement on \$700 million in improvements on eight miles of I-35W from U.S. 287 north to Eagle Parkway, near the Alliance Airport, said Jodi Hodges, of the TxDOT Fort Worth District office.

There are preliminary discussions about adding a lane in either direction on I-35W south of I-20 to the Johnson County line, but the contemplated long range study has not yet been started, she said.

"We see that we have problems south of Interstate 20 and we are also looking at that," Hodges said.

TARRANT COUNTY CONTACTS

County Clerk

Criminal / Misdemeanor Records.....	817-884-1066
Probate Courts.....	817-884-1770
Records Intake / Deeds.....	817-884-1062
Records Library.....	817-884-1069
Vital Records: Birth/Death Certificates, Marriage Licenses, and Business Records/DBA's.....	817-884-1550

District Attorney

District Clerk

Civil Records.....	817-884-1240
Criminal Records.....	817-884-1342
Family Court / Divorce Records.....	817-884-1265
Jury Services.....	817-884-3820

Fire Marshal

Human Services

Public Health

Resource Connection

Tax Assessor-Collector

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Veterans Services

Sheriff's Office

Jail Information

Victim Information

Warrant Division

817-531-7600

817-884-1100

817-884-1945

817-531-5645

817-884-3009

817-884-3116

817-894-8463

817-884-1320

**Commissioners Court meets every Tuesday at 10 am
Tarrant County Administration Building
100 E. Weatherford Street, 5th Floor**

County Judge, Glen Whitley..... 817-884-1441

Commissioner Roy Brooks, Precinct 1..... 817-531-4500

Commissioner Andy Nguyen, Precinct 2.... 817-548-3900

Commissioner Gary Fickes, Precinct 3..... 817-581-3600

Commissioner JD Johnson, Precinct 4..... 817-238-4400

GENERAL INFORMATION 817-884-1111



For additional information, visit: www.tarrantcounty.com