



State of Kansas

Office of Judicial Administration

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Joint Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice Oversight
Testimony on Community Mental Health Treatment Options

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I am Chris Mechler, Court Services Officer Specialist with the Office of Judicial Administration. I work with our District Court Services Probation Officers in each of the 31 Judicial Districts in Kansas.

Court Services works with a variety of adults and juveniles in Kansas. In addition to traditional probation supervision, our officers supervise Child in Need of Care, House Arrest, Diversion, and Pre-Trial cases for both adults and juveniles. In July this number totaled 23,208 individuals. Many of these individuals need mental health services – therapy, medications, supported employment, supported housing, crisis stabilization, and case management. These kinds of services are a compliment to supervision and assist the individual in making progress on pro-social goals. Probation supervision is completely different. It cannot substitute for mental health services – both are needed in many cases.

Court Services reports that mental health services are lacking throughout the state. If a local community has a mental health center, the offenders get in line with everyone else. Several Kansas communities do not have mental health centers available.

Court Services would welcome any additional mental health resources in communities.