

**EAST TEXAS COUNCIL
OF GOVERNMENTS
FY2026**

REGIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN

A Strategic Plan for Meeting the
Criminal Justice needs of the ETCOG Region



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Regional Profile

Overview

The East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) serves a 14-county region encompassing nearly 10,000 square miles of rural and urban communities. With a population exceeding 900,000 residents, the region includes a diverse array of criminal justice stakeholders from law enforcement and emergency personnel to nonprofit service providers and court systems.

ETCOG partners with 14 counties and more than 100 municipalities, both incorporated and unincorporated. Where available, direct links to local government websites are provided through the ETCOG Regional Directory, which includes contact information for city and county officials, school districts, and legislators.

Counties Represented

Anderson	Camp	Cherokee	Gregg
Harrison	Henderson	Marion	Panola
Rains	Rusk	Smith	Upshur
Van Zandt	Wood		

Municipalities (Incorporated & Unincorporated)

ETCOG's region includes a mix of small towns and mid-sized cities, such as Tyler, Longview, and Palestine, as well as dozens of rural communities. A complete list of municipalities is maintained in the ETCOG Regional Directory, which includes contact information for local government officials, school districts, and legislators.

Alba	Elkhart	Lindale	Quitman
Alto	Emory	Log Cabin	Reklaw
Arp	Eustace	Longview	Rocky Mound
Athens	Frankston	Mabank	Rusk
Beckville	Fruitvale	Malakoff	Seven Points
Ben Wheeler	Gallatin	Marshall	Scottsville
Berryville	Gary	Maydelle *	Smithland *
Big Sandy	Gilmer	Mineola	Star Harbor
Brownsboro	Gladewater		Tatum
Bullard	Grand Saline	Montalba *	Tennessee Colony *
Caney City	Gun Barrel City	Moore Station	Tool
Canton	Hallsville	Mt. Enterprise	Trinidad
	Hawkins	Murchison	Troup
Carthage	Henderson	Neches *	Tyler
Chandler	Hideaway	Nesbitt *	Uncertain
Clarksville City	Holly Lake*	New Chapel Hill	Union Grove
Coffee City	Jacksonville	New London	Van
Crims Chapel*	Jefferson	New Salem	Warren City
Cuney	Karnack *	New Summerfield	Waskom
Diana*	Kilgore	Noonday	Wells
East Mountain	Laird Hill *	Ore City	Whitehouse
East Tawakoni	Lakeport	Overton	White Oak
Easton	Laneville *	Palestine	Wills Point
Edgewood	Leesburg *	Payne Springs	Winnsboro
Edom	Leverett's Chapel *	Pittsburg	Winona
Elderville*	Liberty City	Point	Woodlawn *
Enchanted Oaks		Poynor	Yantis

*Unincorporated

[ETCOG Regional Directory](#) – provides phones numbers, email addresses and names of officials for each City, County, School District, and all East Texas Legislators.

[ETCOG Downloaded Solutions Report](#) – Regional or by County

[ETCOG GIS Data, KML Data and County Maps](#)

[ETCOG Provided Services](#)

[ETCOG Governing Boards](#)

Accessibility & Infrastructure

The ETCOG region is well connected by major transportation corridors including:

- Interstate 20 (I-20)
- U.S. Highways 59, 69, 79, 80, 84, 175, 259, and 287

These critical infrastructure routes facilitate regional commerce, public safety access, and daily travel. However, this same connectivity also contributes to the movement of drugs, trafficking, and other illicit activity—reinforcing the need for coordinated criminal justice planning and interdiction efforts.

Demographics

The region’s population continues to grow, rising from 829,749 in 2010 to an estimated **918,025 in 2024**, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This growth places increased demands on law enforcement, courts, juvenile justice systems, and victim services.

The breakdown of population by county and year is shown below.

REGIONAL POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS (2010-2024)

County	Square Miles	2010 Census	2013 Estimate	2015 Estimate	2017 Estimate	2018 Estimate	2021 Estimate	2022 Estimate	2023 Estimate	2024 Estimate
Anderson	1,062.6	58,458	57,960	57,641	57,741	58,057	58,402	58,064	57,736	59,512
Camp	195.8	12,401	12,435	12,663	12,855	13,033	12,616	12,716	13,000	13,164
Cherokee	1,052.9	50,845	51,088	51,573	52,240	52,592	51,097	51,645	52,217	53,223
Gregg	273.3	121,730	123,172	123,851	123,367	123,707	124,201	125,443	126,243	126,679
Harrison	900.0	65,631	66,254	66,760	66,661	66,726	69,150	69,955	70,895	71,370
Henderson	873.8	78,532	78,628	79,447	81,064	82,299	83,667	84,511	86,158	87,467
Marion	380.9	10,546	10,273	10,127	10,064	9,928	9,645	9,560	9,571	9,704
Panola	801.8	23,796	23,786	23,660	23,243	23,148	22,675	22,677	22,838	23,022
Rains	229.5	10,914	11,026	11,129	11,762	12,159	12,509	12,823	12,986	13,306
Rusk	924.0	53,330	53,336	52,930	52,833	54,450	52,743	53,333	53,079	53,391
Smith	921.5	209,714	216,426	222,410	227,727	230,221	237,186	241,922	245,209	249,091
Upshur	583.0	39,309	39,757	40,381	41,281	41,260	41,774	42,488	43,281	44,050
Van Zandt	842.6	52,579	52,317	53,410	55,182	56,019	61,275	62,859	64,000	65,304
Wood	645.2	41,964	42,401	43,220	44,314	45,129	45,875	46,857	47,921	48,742
Totals	9,686.90	829,749	838,859	849,202	860,334	868,728	882,815	894,853	905,134	918,025

Source: www.census.gov/quickfacts

About ETCOG

Established in 1970, ETCOG is a voluntary association of local governments - counties, cities, school districts, and special districts collaborating to address shared needs. ETCOG supports the region by:

- Coordinating 9-1-1 emergency services;
- Providing law enforcement training and homeland security planning;
- Administering grant funding and technical assistance; and
- Supporting rural transportation, workforce development, and senior services.

Through strategic planning and collaborative partnerships, ETCOG plays a vital role in advancing public safety and enhancing quality of life across the region.

Planning Process Overview

PLAN COORDINATION

The East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) Public Safety staff coordinate the development of the ETCOG Regional Criminal Justice Strategic Plan (ERCJSP). For the FY2026 planning cycle, ETCOG issued a regional stakeholder survey on **July 2, 2024**, to identify key service gaps, trends, and priority needs. Survey responses, along with supporting data from state and local agencies, form the foundation of this plan.

The ERCJSP is reviewed and updated at least once every five years or more frequently if goals, priorities, or state guidelines change.

Stakeholder Engagement

To ensure the plan reflects local priorities, ETCOG engages a diverse group of stakeholders representing the following sectors:

- Elected Officials
- Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) Members
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- Adult and Juvenile Probation Departments
- Courts and Prosecutors
- Independent School Districts and Higher Education Institutions
- Public and Private Nonprofits
- Emergency Management Coordinators
- Concerned Citizens

Stakeholders are invited to complete a survey that collects feedback on regional needs and service gaps. The survey is also a tool for local service providers to advocate for priority issues in their communities. The electronic survey designed to:

- Identify service gaps and emerging needs
 - Collect feedback on existing priorities
 - Provide a platform for agencies to advocate for regional concerns
-

Survey Response Summary By County Participation

In July of 2024, a total of **44 survey responses** were received across the 14 counties:

County	% of Total Responses	# of Respondents
Anderson	11.36%	5
Camp	6.82%	3
Cherokee	18.18%	8
Gregg	22.73%	10
Harrison	9.09%	4
Henderson	20.45%	9
Marion	6.82%	3
Panola	6.82%	3
Rains	9.09%	4

County	% of Total Responses	# of Respondents
Rusk	13.64%	6
Smith	22.73%	10
Upshur	11.36%	5
Van Zandt	11.36%	5
Wood	13.64%	6

By Field of Expertise

Stakeholders represented a broad cross-section of professional backgrounds:

- 59.09% – Law Enforcement
 - 13.64% – Non-Profit Agency
 - 11.36% – Courts/Prosecution
 - 11.36% – Legal Services
 - 11.36% – Juvenile Probation
 - 9.09% – Crime Victim/Service Recipient
 - 9.09% – Elected Official
 - 6.82% – Concerned Citizen
 - 6.82% – Faith-Based Organization
 - 6.82% – Public Official
 - 4.55% – Civic Organization
 - 4.55% – Parent
 - 2.27% – Education (K–12)
 - 2.27% – Child Protective Services
 - 2.27% – Substance Abuse Provider
 - 2.27% – College/University
 - 2.27% – Private Sector
 - 2.27% – For-Profit Corporation
-

Use of the Strategic Plan

The *ERCJSP* is available on the ETCOG website at: pineywoods911.com/criminal-justice

It serves as a key resource for:

- **CJAC Members**, who use it to evaluate and score regional grant applications based on alignment with regional and state priorities.
- **Grant Applicants**, who use the plan to design projects that directly address local service gaps.
- **ETCOG Staff**, who provide training and technical assistance to new CJAC members and guide stakeholders through the application process.

All CJAC members receive orientation and training, which includes an overview of the *ERCJSP*, current regional and state priorities, budget allocations, and updates on available funding sources.

Executive Summary

The **ETCOG Regional Criminal Justice Strategic Plan (ERCJSP)** serves as a guiding document for identifying and addressing criminal justice priorities across the 14-county East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) region. Covering nearly 10,000 square miles and serving a population of over 900,000, this plan reflects both local input and regional data to support decision making and resource allocation.

The ERCJSP is required by the Office of the Governor (OOG), Public Safety Office (PSO), and fulfills Section CJ6.1 of the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between ETCOG and the OOG/PSO. It is used by local stakeholders to align programs, secure funding, and build collaborative solutions to complex criminal justice issues.

Purpose and Use of the Plan

The plan is a tool for:

- **Engaging stakeholders** in identifying community level service gaps;
- **Informing CJAC decision-making** when scoring and prioritizing grant applications;
- **Supporting applicants** in the design of projects that address identified needs;
- **Aligning local strategies** with state level priorities and funding opportunities;
- **Ensuring accountability** in the administration of public safety resources.

The ERCJSP is reviewed at least every five years or sooner if significant changes in regional needs, funding mechanisms, or state guidelines occur.

Planning Process Summary

The FY2026 update is based on an electronic survey issued to regional stakeholders in July 2024, along with supplemental data from law enforcement agencies, courts, nonprofit providers, school systems, and health organizations. Survey responses were analyzed alongside public safety data to define both current service gaps and emerging needs.

The Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC), made up of multidisciplinary experts from across the region, uses the ERCJSP to evaluate applications for criminal justice grants, ensuring alignment with both regional and state priorities.

Key Regional Priority Areas

The following categories reflect the most critical needs across the region, based on stakeholder feedback and supporting data:

1. Law Enforcement Priorities

- Training on crime scene investigations, drug enforcement, and mental health response
- Equipment upgrades for safety, communications, and investigation
- Enhanced response times and visibility
- Family violence and DWI enforcement
- Victim advocacy, gang prevention, and cold case investigations

2. Criminal Justice System Priorities

- Prosecutors and investigators specializing in crimes against children and sexual assault
- Expansion of mental health, family violence, and drug courts
- Court security and justice information systems
- Defense-side investigators and offender monitoring
- Diversion and reentry programs

3. Juvenile Justice & Truancy Prevention Priorities

- Behavioral health and prevention programs
- Family support, character development, and life skills training
- School resource officers and afterschool programs
- Mentoring and dropout prevention

- Diversion for first time offenders and specialized services for female youth

4. Mental Health Priorities

- Crisis intervention training for law enforcement and jail staff
- Increased access to psychiatric services and inpatient treatment
- Mobile crisis teams and community-based support
- Trauma-informed therapy for victims and court-involved individuals

5. Substance Abuse Priorities

- Prevention education and early intervention programs
- Inpatient and outpatient treatment options
- Recovery support and reentry assistance
- Substance-related specialty courts and coordinated case management

6. Victims of Crime Act / Violence Against Women Priorities

- Crisis services including 24/7 hotlines, SANEs, and emergency transport
- Shelter and transitional housing for victims of domestic violence and trafficking
- Legal assistance for protective orders, custody, and immigration
- Trauma recovery services tailored to children, the elderly, and underserved communities
- Culturally competent outreach and bilingual support

Implementation and Scoring Process

All criminal justice grant applications submitted in the ETCOG region are reviewed by the CJAC using a standardized scoring instrument. The process includes:

1. **Applicant Presentations** – Each applicant gives a 5-minute presentation to the CJAC, followed by a Q&A session to clarify project goals and outcomes.
2. **Application Scoring** – Projects are scored based on their alignment with:
 - Local priorities outlined in the ERCJSP
 - State priorities issued by the Office of the Governor
 - Project need, impact, and design
3. **Ranked Recommendations** – Applications are ranked and submitted to the OOG for final funding decisions.

The strategic plan ensures that decisions are equitable, data-informed, and responsive to the region's most pressing public safety needs.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Overview

This section outlines the major criminal justice challenges across the ETCOG region, identified through stakeholder feedback and supported by local data. These priorities guide funding decisions, policy development, and collaborative initiatives aimed at improving public safety outcomes in East Texas.

Many of these issues stem from limited financial and staffing resources. Each year, local agencies apply for funding through ETCOG's criminal justice grant process, and these applications are reviewed and ranked by the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC).

Purpose of the CJAC

The Criminal Justice Advisory Committee plays a vital role in regional criminal justice planning. Its responsibilities include:

- Reviewing and scoring grant applications based on alignment with regional and state priorities
- Identifying service gaps and confirming priority areas
- Recommending funding decisions to the ETCOG Executive Committee
- Promoting collaboration across criminal justice, education, health, and nonprofit sectors

CJAC members are appointed to represent a broad range of criminal justice and community disciplines. Their collective expertise ensures a fair, transparent, and informed review process.

CJAC Membership

Name	Representation
Ted Debbs (Chair)	Mental Health
David Dobbs (Vice Chair)	Prosecution/Courts
Maxey Cerliano	Law Enforcement
John Cortleyou	Law Enforcement
Clint Davis	Prosecution/Courts
Charles Helton	Law Enforcement
Linda Oyer	Other
Mark Taylor	Other
Christie Burleson	Juvenile Justice
Cliff Carruth	Law Enforcement
Patti Eason	Juvenile Justice
Angel Townsend	Juvenile Justice
Charles Worley	Education
Tonya Watson	Non-Profit

Stakeholder Feedback Process

To identify emerging priorities and validate existing ones, ETCOG Public Safety staff distribute a Regional Needs Survey to criminal justice stakeholders across the 14-county region. The survey:

- Highlights service gaps across law enforcement, courts, juvenile justice, mental health, and victim services
- Allow stakeholders to recommend updates to existing priorities
- Informs annual revisions and long-term updates to the ERCJSP

Stakeholders are also encouraged to submit new data, program recommendations, and concerns at any time to ensure the plan remains current and responsive.

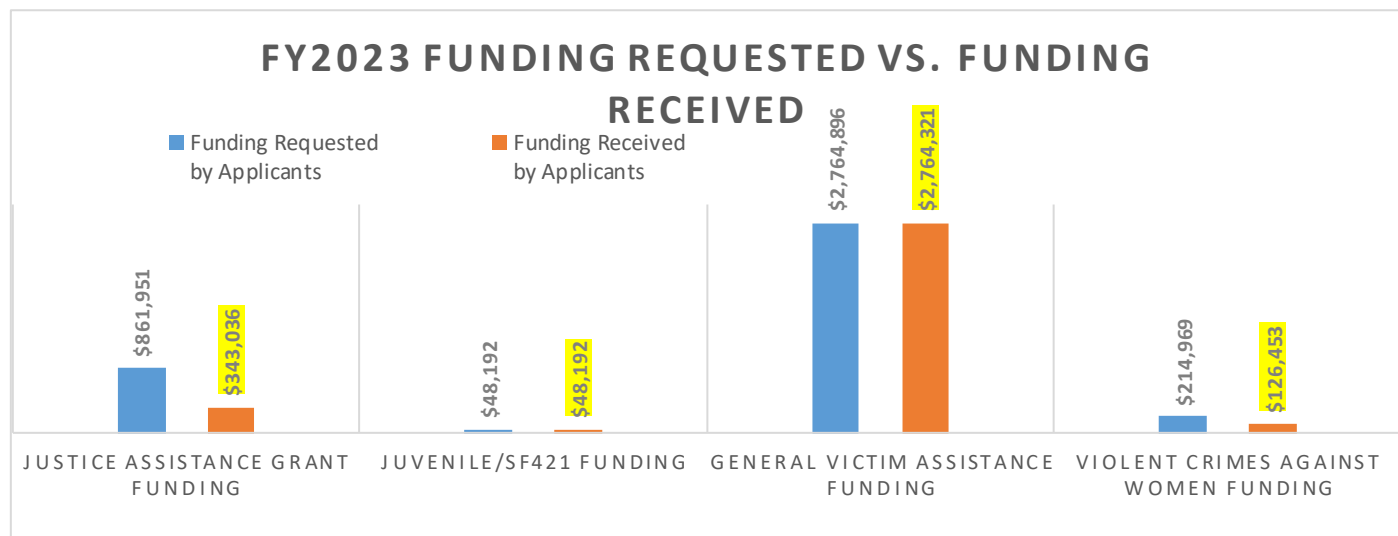
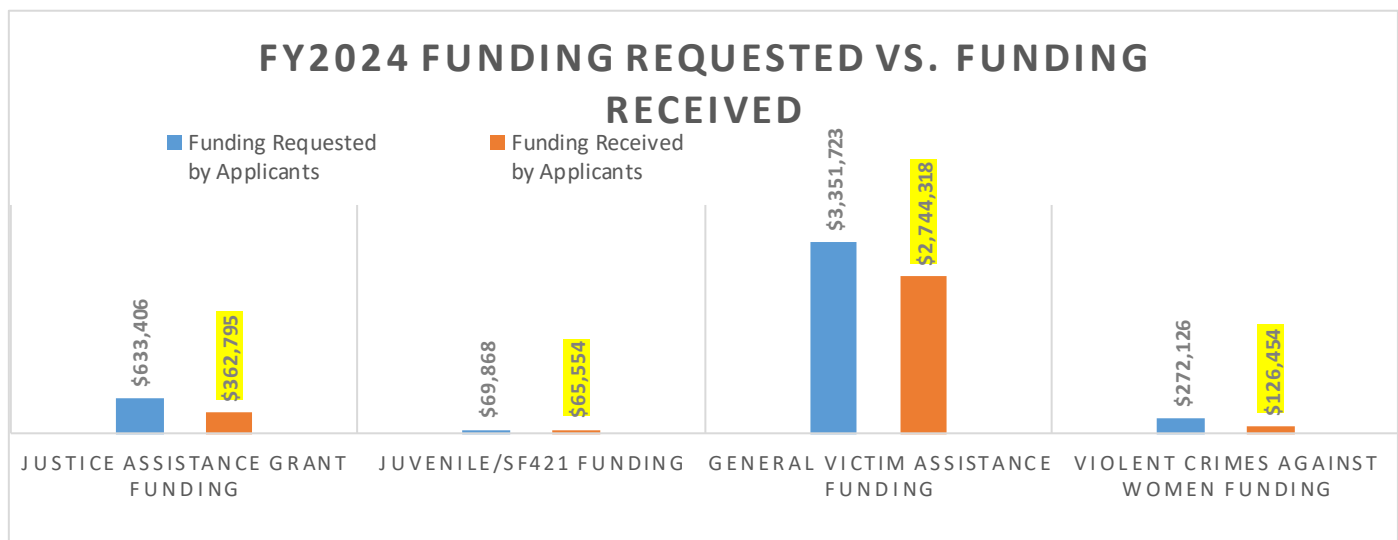
Funding Challenges

Despite the number of quality proposals submitted each year, available state and federal funds are often insufficient to meet the full scope of regional needs. As a result, many valuable projects are either underfunded or unfunded.

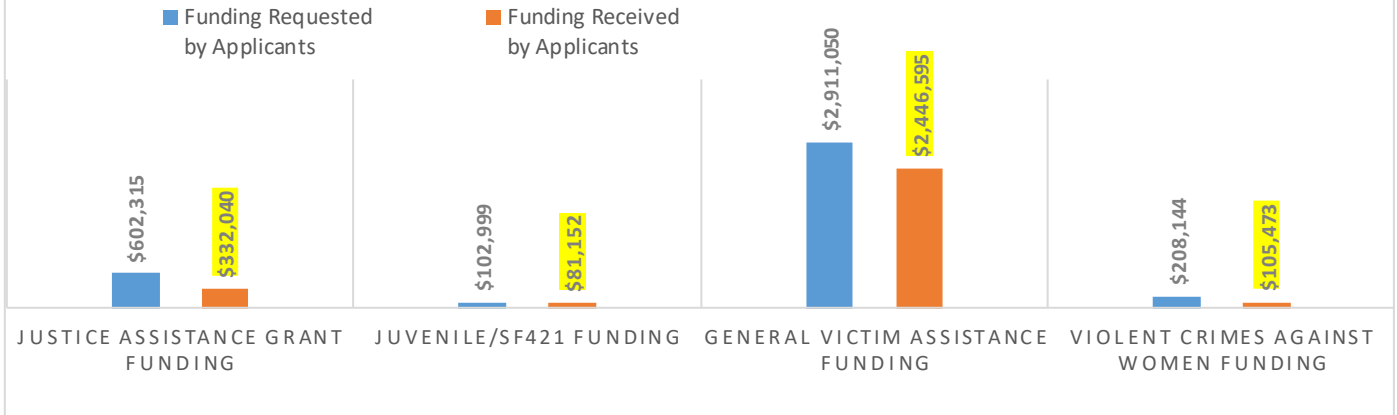
The ERCJSP helps the CJAC make informed, equitable decisions that balance:

- Local priorities and needs
- Evidence of community impact
- State funding guidelines and eligibility
- Available allocation levels for the ETCOG region

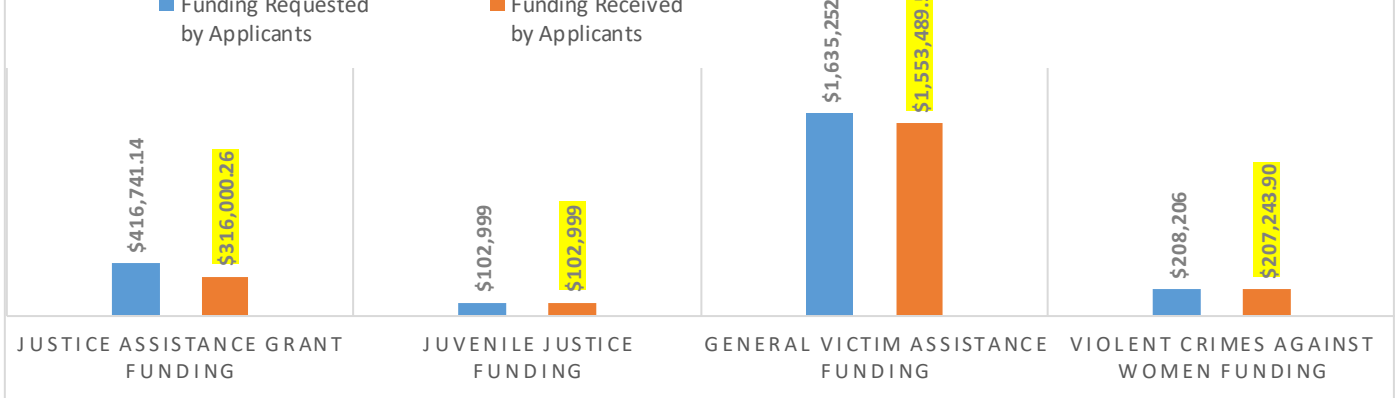
“The most significant barriers to regional progress are not lack of awareness—but limited funding and capacity.”



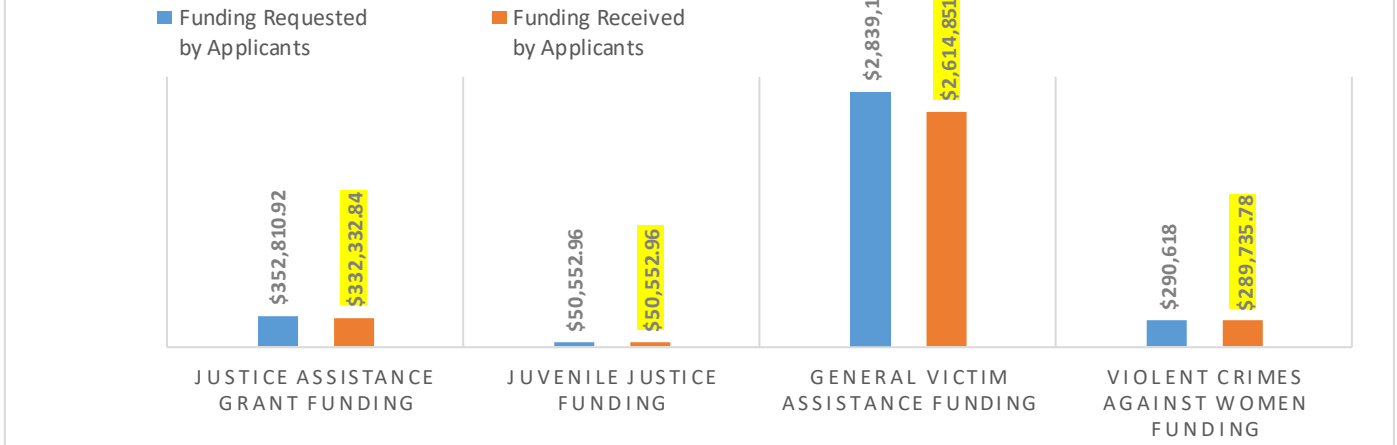
FY2022 FUNDING REQUESTED VS. FUNDING RECEIVED



FY2021 FUNDING REQUESTED VS. FUNDING RECEIVED



FY2020 FUNDING REQUESTED VS. FUNDING RECEIVED



Law Enforcement Priorities

Overview

Law enforcement agencies across the ETCOG region face a range of operational, training, and resource-based challenges. These priorities were identified through the 2024 Regional Criminal Justice Needs Survey and are supported by local and statewide data. The top concerns include personnel training, equipment modernization, emergency response capacity, and support for specialized units.

Regional Law Enforcement Priorities

1. Officer Training and Equipment

- General law enforcement training
- Specialized training for:
 - Crime scene investigations
 - Drug Enforcement operations
 - Mental health-related calls and de-escalation
- Modern equipment for investigations, communications, and officer safety

2. Emergency Response and Community Presence

- Improved response times to emergency calls
- Increased police visibility and patrol in neighborhoods
- Stronger enforcement of:
 - Family violence offenses
 - DWI/DUI violations

3. Specialized Services

- Victim assistance and advocacy training
- Gang prevention and suppression units
- Cold case investigations
- Terrorism prevention and community intelligence initiatives

Stakeholder Survey Results

Which law enforcement services are most vital in your county?

Response Option	% of Respondents
Training for Law Enforcement	72.73%
Drug Enforcement	68.18%
Police Visibility in the Community	65.91%
Family Violence Investigation	65.91%
Adequate Response Time to Emergency Calls	63.64%
Crime Scene Investigation	59.09%
DWI Enforcement	56.82%
Specialized Mental Health Training	47.73%
Victim Assistance Advocacy	47.73%
Speed Enforcement	36.36%

Adequate Arrest Rates	36.36%
Gang Prevention Unit	31.82%
Cold Case Investigation	29.55%
Neighborhood Watch	27.27%
Terrorism Prevention	15.91%
Citizens on Patrol	13.64%

Which law enforcement services have the most gaps in your county?

Response Option	% of Respondents
Training for Law Enforcement	40.48%
Specialized Mental Health Training	38.10%
Victim Assistance Advocacy	33.33%
Drug Enforcement	28.57%
Family Violence Investigation	28.57%
Police Visibility in the Community	26.19%
Response Time to Emergency Calls	26.19%
Cold Case Investigation	19.05%
Gang Prevention Unit	16.67%
Crime Scene Investigation	16.67%
Neighborhood Watch	9.52%
Citizens on Patrol	9.52%
Terrorism Prevention	9.52%
Arrest Rates	9.52%
Speed Enforcement	7.14%

What are the critical law enforcement equipment/services needs in your county?

Response Option	% of Respondents
Training for Law Enforcement	70.73%
Drug Enforcement	58.54%

Crime Scene Investigation	56.10%
Police Visibility in the Community	53.66%
Adequate Response Time to Emergency Calls	48.78%
Family Violence Investigation	48.78%
Specialized Mental Health Training	46.34%
DWI Enforcement	41.46%
Victim Assistance Advocacy	34.15%
Gang Prevention Unit	21.95%
Cold Case Investigation	19.51%
Terrorism Prevention	12.20%
Neighborhood Watch	9.76%
Citizens on Patrol	7.32%

Supporting Data

Smith County Specifics:

- Local coverage highlights rising jail turnover, staffing challenges, and inmate population growth <https://www.kltv.com>.

Crime Rates and DWI Arrests (2023)

Selected Counties

County	Violent Crime (per 100k)	Property Crime (per 100k)	DWI Arrests
Smith	406.0	2,238.3	1,245
Gregg	164.5	1,478.2	210
Harrison	177.9	1,598.6	165
Van Zandt	140.2	1,310.4	112
Anderson	155.2	1,234.7	120

Source: Texas DPS 2023 Crime by Jurisdiction

Texas Department of Transportation – Crashes and Injuries by County - 2024

County	Fatal Crashes	Fatalities	Suspected Serious Crashes	Suspected Serious Injuries	Suspected Minor Crashes	Suspected Minor Injuries	Possible Injury Crashes	Possible Injuries	Non-Injury Crashes	Non-Injuries	Unknown Severity Crashes	Unknown Injuries	Total Crashes
Anderson	12	13	32	44	116	173	122	198	477	1390	15	54	774
Camp	4	4	10	17	23	35	22	47	92	291	6	5	157
Cherokee	10	10	36	47	154	216	95	165	551	1534	9	39	855
Gregg	25	25	78	94	447	624	502	790	2046	6655	52	221	3150
Harrison	15	15	67	84	214	309	178	304	948	2661	27	84	1449
Henderson	18	26	77	100	190	311	182	330	678	1961	26	81	1171
Marion	2	2	13	15	25	46	12	18	81	210	5	8	138
Panola	6	7	21	25	51	76	51	77	289	703	8	25	426
Rains	3	4	6	11	17	24	11	21	81	237	9	18	127
Rusk	17	17	30	37	134	181	58	132	486	1227	22	57	774
Smith	46	53	154	201	811	1193	1049	1806	3826	12335	102	493	5988
Upshur	15	16	39	51	100	166	58	118	379	1095	11	31	602
Van Zandt	11	12	62	86	148	217	140	233	639	1880	13	45	1013
Wood	8	8	42	58	64	99	90	131	352	970	14	50	570

Source: [Crashes and Injuries by County](#)

Texas Department of Transportation – Crashes and Injuries by Cities and Towns - 2024

City	Fatal Crashes	Fatalities	Suspected Serious Crashes	Suspected Serious Injuries	Suspected Minor Crashes	Suspected Minor Injuries	Possible Injury Crashes	Possible Injuries	Non-Injury Crashes	Non-Injuries	Unknown Severity Crashes	Unknown Injuries	Total Crashes
ALBA	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	8	29	1	1	10
ALTO	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	7	8	21	0	0	11
ARP	0	0	1	1	3	3	2	3	9	21	0	0	15
ATHENS	3	3	17	18	74	130	66	140	150	551	3	18	313
BECKVILLE	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	12	0	1	6
BERRYVILLE	2	4	0	0	1	4	1	1	1	4	0	0	5
BIG SANDY	0	0	2	3	1	2	3	3	20	58	2	4	28
BROWNSBORO (HENDERSON)	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	4	0	0	2
BULLARD	0	0	1	1	10	13	7	10	26	90	0	0	44
CANTON	0	0	5	5	28	36	37	67	187	554	1	16	258
CARTHAGE	1	2	3	3	10	18	12	15	129	327	4	10	159
CHANDLER	1	1	4	4	13	18	6	11	57	170	0	4	81
CLARKSVILLE CITY	1	1	0	0	2	2	1	1	9	23	0	1	13
COFFEE CITY	0	0	1	1	4	4	1	3	10	30	1	3	17
CUNEY	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	3	0	0	3
EAST MOUNTAIN0	0	0	1	1	3	7	0	0	8	20	0	0	12
EAST TAWAKONI	N/A												
EASTON	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	10	0	1	7
EDGEWOOD	N/A												
EDOM	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
ELKHART	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	9	7	19	1	1	13

EMORY	0	0	0	0	4	5	7	10	49	143	3	8	63
FRANKSTON	0	0	3	3	3	4	4	5	9	32	0	1	19
FRUITVALE	0	0	1	4	2	5	3	3	5	17	0	0	11
GALLATIN	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	4	0	0	2
GARY	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	6	0	0	6
GILMER	1	1	5	7	17	20	12	20	134	417	1	9	170
GLADEWATER	1	1	4	4	9	13	21	28	65	195	2	10	102
GRAND SALINE	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	5	15	34	2	4	23
GUN BARREL CITY	0	0	8	14	20	26	30	46	124	400	1	9	183
HALLSVILLE	1	1	1	1	7	9	6	7	38	126	0	0	53
HAWKINS	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	6	16	45	0	0	21
HENDERSON	2	2	2	2	42	57	20	30	159	455	9	19	234
JACKSONVILLE	2	2	9	9	61	86	27	56	210	741	5	24	314
JEFFERSON	0	0	4	4	6	15	1	2	34	84	2	4	47
KILGORE	1	1	9	13	66	99	31	54	159	552	4	10	270
LAKEPORT	0	0	0	0	5	6	2	4	17	42	0	1	24
LINDALE	2	2	11	18	26	44	42	65	184	645	2	15	267
LONGVIEW	7	7	37	39	266	349	375	580	1428	4831	37	156	2150
MABANK	0	0	8	11	17	31	23	37	100	328	12	38	160
MALAKOFF	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	3
MARSHALL	1	1	14	17	79	117	109	187	290	1040	70	21	500
MINEOLA	1	1	3	3	10	14	20	26	76	231	9	28	119
MOORE STATION	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	1	1	1	1	1	4
MOUNT ENTERPRISE	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	15	57	1	3	20
MURCHISON	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	6	17	0	0	9
NESBITT	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	6	10	0	0	7
NEW CHAPEL HILL	0	0	2	2	0	4	1	1	5	19	0	0	8
NEW SUMMERFIELD	0	0	0	0	7	9	4	4	7	27	0	0	18
NOONDAY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	12	0	1	6
ORE CITY	0	0	1	1	3	4	1	2	0	3	0	0	5
OVERTON	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	13	0	1	7
PALESTINE	4	4	7	10	63	90	53	87	251	849	5	36	383
PAYNE SPRINGS	0	0	2	2	4	4	4	6	18	48	1	2	29
PITTSBURG	1	1	1	3	8	12	13	27	57	196	2	2	82
POINT	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
POYNOR	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	2
REKLAW	0	0	0	0	3	4	1	1	7	14	0	0	11
RUSK	0	0	2	2	15	22	13	18	52	146	1	3	83
SEVEN POINTS	0	0	2	2	6	7	16	21	30	93	1	6	55
TATUM	0	0	1	2	4	7	0	3	8	22	0	1	13
TOOL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1
TRINIDAD	1	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	2	0	1	4
TROUP	0	0	0	0	4	6	2	5	19	44	0	2	25
TYLER	13	16	58	75	419	603	705	1199	2142	7403	59	335	3396
UNION GROVE (UPSHUR)	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	5	13	0	0	6
VAN	0	0	1	1	7	9	8	11	37	105	0	3	53

WARREN CITY	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	7	0	0	5
WASKOM	1	1	4	4	4	5	1	1	19	37	1	2	30
WELLS (CHEROKEE)	N/A												
WHITE OAK (GREGG)	0	0	2	2	7	10	11	17	48	126	0	1	68
WHITEHOUSE	0	0	1	1	4	8	7	11	68	204	1	5	81
WILLS POINT	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	4	9	0	0	5
WINNSBORO	0	0	1	4	4	5	3	4	40	89	1	9	49
WINONA	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	6	15	0	2	8
YANTIS	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	8	0	0	6
Total	48	55	246	306	1,375	1,978	1,739	2,877	6,631	21,909	246	833	10,222

Source: [Crashes and Injuries by Cities and Towns](#) *N/A – no data submitted.

Implications for Planning

The combination of survey data, crime statistics, and traffic crash reports clearly demonstrates the need for:

- Ongoing training in specialized areas
- Updated equipment and technology
- Mental health and de-escalation response training
- Targeted enforcement strategies for high-risk issues like family violence, DWI, and gang activity

Continued investment in personnel development, interagency collaboration, and victim support infrastructure is critical to improving public safety outcomes in the ETCOG region.

Criminal Justice Priorities

Criminal justice systems in the ETCOG region face increasing pressure to expand specialized services, improve court operations, and implement innovative programs that address behavioral health, victimization, and offender rehabilitation. These priorities were developed through stakeholder surveys and are supported by regional trends and justice system data.

Regional Criminal Justice Priorities:

1. Specialized Prosecutors

- Dedicated investigators and prosecutors for:
 - Crimes against children
 - Sexual assault cases
 - Family violence and human trafficking cases

2. Court System Enhancements

- Establishment and expansion of:
 - Mental health courts
 - Family violence courts
 - Veteran and drug courts
- Investments in:
 - Court security equipment
 - Justice information systems for improved data sharing and efficiency

3. Defense and Monitoring Resources

- Legal support and investigative resources for defense teams
- GPS monitoring for both juvenile and adult offenders
- Tools to support pretrial diversion and reentry programming

4. Specialty and Diversion Courts

- Juvenile and adult drug courts
 - Reentry and diversion programs focused on rehabilitation
 - Trauma-informed and culturally competent court services
-

Stakeholder Survey Results

Most Important Judicial System Services

Service Area	% of Respondents
Crimes Against Children Prosecutors/Investigators	69.77%
Sexual Assault Prosecutors/Investigators	62.79%
Mental Health Court	55.81%
Family Violence Prosecutors/Investigators	44.19%
Family Violence Court	41.86%
Treatment Services for Offenders	34.88%
Adult Drug Court	30.23%
Juvenile Drug Court	25.58%
GPS Monitoring of Offenders	25.58%
Diversion Programs	23.26%
Court Security Equipment	23.26%
Alternatives to Incarceration	23.26%

Judicial System Service Gaps

Service Area	% of Respondents
Mental Health Court	56.10%
Sexual Assault Prosecutors/Investigators	43.90%
Alternatives to Incarceration	31.71%
Treatment Services for Offenders	26.83%
Diversion Programs	24.39%
GPS Monitoring of Offenders	24.39%
Family Violence Prosecutors/Investigators	19.51%
Human Trafficking Court	17.07%
Court Security Equipment	17.07%

These results suggest significant demand for specialized prosecution units, mental health interventions, and alternative court models across the region.

Supporting Regional Data

Family Violence Incidents by County (2024)

Sample Data from Texas DPS Crime Reports

- **Smith County:** 1,739 total incidents (Tyler PD – 999; Smith Co SO – 685)
- **Gregg County:** 1,156 total incidents (Longview PD – 829; Kilgore PD – 140; others)
- **Henderson County:** 423 incidents (Henderson Co SO – 217; Athens PD – 130)
- **Rusk County:** 421 incidents (Rusk Co SO – 183; Henderson PD – 211)
- **Cherokee County:** 361 incidents (Jacksonville PD – 182; Cherokee Co SO – 136)

Source: Texas Department of Public Safety – Crime in Texas, 2024

Sexual Assault Incidents by County (2024)

- **Smith County:** 276 incidents (Tyler PD – 97; Smith Co SO – 155)
- **Gregg County:** 116 incidents (Longview PD – 86; Kilgore PD – 12)
- **Henderson County:** 61 incidents
- **Harrison County:** 39 incidents
- **Rusk County:** 46 incidents

These totals reinforce the need for dedicated investigators and prosecutors for victim-centered crimes.

County Health Rankings (2022): Alcohol, Substance Use & Mental Health

County	Excessive Drinking	Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths	Mental Health Provider Ratio
Henderson	19%	36%	1:1,680
Harrison	18%	31%	1:2,290
Camp	19%	29%	1:2,610
Marion	19%	19%	1:9,960
Panola	20%	19%	1:5,800

Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (2022)

These indicators support the regional demand for mental health courts and DWI court alternatives.

Implications for Planning

The ETCOG region continues to experience increased pressure on court systems due to:

- High rates of family violence and sexual assault
- Lack of access to mental health services in many counties
- Gaps in court infrastructure and staffing
- Underutilization of diversion and reentry tools

Investments in court-based alternatives, specialty prosecution, and victim-centered justice programs will be essential to improving outcomes and reducing recidivism.

Juvenile Justice & Truancy Prevention Priorities

Overview

Juvenile justice stakeholders in the ETCOG region report significant challenges in addressing behavioral health, family dynamics, and prevention programming for at-risk youth. Many counties lack adequate resources to divert first-time offenders or provide long-term support for court-involved juveniles. Stakeholder feedback reflects strong demand for community-based services and holistic approaches that address trauma, mental health, and family functioning.

Regional Juvenile Justice & Truancy Prevention Priorities:

1. Prevention and Early Intervention

- Behavioral health screening and counseling
- School-based prevention and intervention services
- Character development and conflict resolution training
- Parenting classes and family support initiatives

2. Diversion and First-Offender Programs

- Juvenile diversion alternatives to detention
- Teen court, peer court, and family-based interventions
- Case management focused on education and life skills

3. Specialized Support Services

- Trauma-informed care for court-involved youth
- Mentorship and tutoring programs
- Girls-specific programming addressing abuse and exploitation
- After school and summer programs to reduce idle time and risk factors

4. Law Enforcement and School Collaboration

- School resource officers (SROs) with training in de-escalation and adolescent development
 - Coordination between school districts and juvenile probation departments
 - Threat assessment teams and mental health partnerships within school settings
-

Stakeholder Survey Results

Most Important Juvenile Justice Services

Service Area	% of Respondents
Behavioral/Mental Health Programs	65.12%
Juvenile Diversion and First-Offender	44.19%
Family Support & Parenting Classes	44.19%
Girls' Programs (Runaway, Abuse, Trauma)	39.53%
School Resource Officers	34.88%
After-School Programs	30.23%
Mentoring Services	27.91%
Dropout Prevention/Alternative Education	27.91%
Life Skills and Conflict Resolution	27.91%

Juvenile Justice Service Gaps

Service Area	% of Respondents
Behavioral/Mental Health Programs	53.66%

Service Area	% of Respondents
Family Support & Parenting Classes	39.02%
Juvenile Diversion and First-Offender	36.59%
Girls' Programs (Runaway, Abuse, Trauma)	29.27%
Mentoring Services	24.39%
Dropout Prevention/Alternative Education	24.39%
After-School Programs	21.95%
School Resource Officers	19.51%

These results suggest strong demand for trauma-informed, prevention-focused programs that address both youth behavior and family dynamics.

Supporting Regional Data

Juvenile funding is at an all-time low. There is a real need for afterschool programs for youth but not much money is available for these types of projects. At this time we are starting to see afterschool programs in our region shut down - [East Texas school district cancels afterschool programs due to 'unexpected loss of federal funding'](#).

Children in Single-Parent Households (2022)

(Social risk factor associated with juvenile crime)

County	% in Single-Parent Households
Gregg	41%
Harrison	39%
Anderson	38%
Cherokee	37%
Rusk	35%
Smith	34%

Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (2022)

Juvenile Detention Information

The Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) has 3 registered secure facilities in the ETCOG Region. They are in Harrison County, Smith County and Van Zandt County.

Juvenile Court Capacity

Limited availability of specialized courts and services (such as juvenile drug courts or mental health dockets) continues to strain existing juvenile justice infrastructure. Prevention and diversion are essential to keeping youth out of formal detention systems.

Juvenile Probation Referral Activity by County - Calendar Year 2023

County	2023 Juvenile Population	Violent Felony	Other Felony	Misdemeanor A & B	VOP	Status	Other CINS	Total Referrals	Referral Rate/1,000	Youth Referred
Anderson	4444	1	9	6	0	0	0	16	4	13
Camp	1281	4	13	3	1	0	0	21	16	19
Cherokee	5370	3	17	24	4	0	0	48	9	43
Gregg	13234	31	44	116	4	2	3	200	15	167
Harrison	6965	10	32	41	9	32	2	126	18	95
Henderson	7136	23	26	33	7	0	0	89	12	81
Marion	730	1	10	1	0	0	0	12	16	10
Panola	2192	2	10	1	0	0	0	13	6	12
Rains	866	0	2	4	0	0	0	6	7	5
Rusk	5269	14	12	26	0	0	5	57	11	52

Smith	22509	54	159	134	92	1	1	441	20	335
Upshur	3820	7	12	13	1	0	0	33	9	33
Van Zandt	4726	13	15	35	0	2	2	67	14	57
Wood	3375	4	7	19	5	0	0	35	10	35
Totals	81,917	167	368	456	123	37	13	1164	167	957

Juvenile Probation Disposition Activity by County - Calendar Year 2023

County	Dismissed	Consolidated	Other	Supervisory Caution	Deferred	Probation	Commitment	Adult Certification	Total Disposition
Anderson	3	1	0	5	4	7	0	1	21
Camp	1	2	0	8	10	4	1	0	26
Cherokee	8	0	0	4	27	6	1	0	46
Gregg	33	7	0	11	95	15	6	0	167
Harrison	103	0	0	0	11	12	5	1	132
Henderson	27	1	0	8	41	19	0	1	97
Marion	2	1	0	0	7	2	0	0	12
Panola	9	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	15
Rains	1	0	0	1	3	2	0	0	7
Rusk	5	0	0	14	24	1	0	0	44
Smith	59	19	1	27	115	233	18	1	473
Upshur	1	0	0	3	22	9	1	0	36
Van Zandt	13	2	0	9	19	7	0	0	50
Wood	3	0	0	12	16	8	0	0	39
Totals	268	33	1	102	400	325	32	4	1165

Juvenile Probation Supervision Workload Activity by County Calendar Year 2023

	Beginning of Period	Added during Period			Exited During Period			End of Period		Unsuccessful Terminations
		Adjudicated Probation	Deferred Prosecution	Pre-Disposition	Adjudicated Probation	Deferred Prosecution	Pre-Disposition			
Anderson	22	10	4	8	8	2	15	19	3	0
Camp	10	5	11	18	4	9	16	15	1	4
Cherokee	20	8	27	14	11	21	12	25	2	3
Gregg	69	18	97	4	26	114	5	43	8	13
Harrison	36	9	11	38	7	8	45	34	4	2
Henderson	35	21	53	11	13	51	15	41	2	4
Marion	7	2	7	6	1	11	5	5	0	1
Panola	8	0	6	13	4	0	12	11	0	0
Rains	5	2	3	0	4	4	0	2	0	0
Rusk	12	1	23	2	0	28	0	10	0	4
Smith	207	175	122	20	203	89	24	208	26	12
Upshur	23	10	22	2	12	22	2	21	2	3
Van Zandt	28	10	21	20	5	24	28	22	0	6
Wood	19	8	21	16	10	16	19	19	1	2
Totals	501	279	428	172	308	399	198	475	49	54

Detentions and Placements by Offense Category – Calendar Year 2023

	Detentions				Placements							
					Non-Secure		Secure					
	Felony	Misdemeanor AB & VOP	CINS/Status	Total Detentions	Felony	Misdemeanor AB & VOP	CINS/Status	Total Non-Secure	Felony	Misdemeanor AB & VOP	CINS/Status	Total Secure
Anderson	5	4	0	9	0	1	0	1	3	2	0	5

Camp	16	4	0	20	2	1	0	3	2	0	0	2
Cherokee	8	10	0	18	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	5
Gregg	39	53	4	96	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Harrison	49	50	35	134	1	4	0	5	3	0	0	3
Henderson	21	7	0	28	5	3	0	8	1	2	0	3
Marion	8	1	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Panola	5	0	0	5	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Rains	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Rusk	5	5	0	10	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Smith	97	159	0	256	3	7	0	10	3	14	0	17
Upshur	6	1	0	7	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Van Zandt	19	19	3	41	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	3
Wood	3	2	0	5	2	1	0	3	1	0	0	1
Totals	281	316	42	639	18	18	0	36	23	19	0	42

Source: [The State of Juvenile Probation Activity in Texas](#)

Implications for Planning

Youth and family services remain under-resourced across much of the ETCOG region. Stakeholders consistently identify behavioral health care and parental engagement as two of the most critical needs for preventing juvenile justice involvement.

Key strategies for addressing these priorities include:

- Expanding evidence-based counseling and diversion programs
- Supporting school and community partnerships
- Investing in mentorship and positive youth development initiatives
- Creating trauma-informed services tailored to high-risk youth, especially girls

Mental Health Priorities

Overview

Mental health continues to be a significant concern across the ETCOG region, affecting individuals in both the criminal justice system and the general community. Survey responses and regional data highlight persistent gaps in access, treatment availability, and coordination among service providers. These challenges are further compounded in rural counties, where resources are often limited or non-existent.

Across the ETCOG region, mental health challenges are among the most pressing issues facing law enforcement, courts, and community-based service providers. Stakeholders report persistent shortages of psychiatric care, limited crisis response capabilities, and rising demand for trauma-informed services especially for victims, incarcerated individuals, and youth. Counties with rural populations are particularly impacted due to limited access to qualified providers.

The following priorities reflect the most critical mental health needs identified through the *Regional Criminal Justice Needs Survey* and regional planning data.

Regional Mental Health Priorities:

1. Crisis Response & Intervention

- Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for law enforcement
- Mobile crisis response units
- 24/7 behavioral health hotline access
- Crisis stabilization centers and short-term beds

2. Treatment Access & Continuity of Care

- Inpatient and outpatient psychiatric treatment
- Case management for individuals with co-occurring disorders
- Tele-mental health expansion in rural areas
- Community-based support services (peer specialists, housing, employment)

3. Justice System Integration

- Mental health screenings in jails
- Mental health courts and diversion programs
- Jail-based behavioral health support and discharge planning
- Collaboration with probation, parole, and reentry programs

4. Trauma-Informed Care

- Trauma-specific services for victims of crime
 - Counseling for children exposed to domestic violence
 - Mental health support for first responders and veterans
 - School-based therapy and grief counseling
-

Stakeholder Survey Results

Most Important Mental Health Services

Service Area	% of Respondents
Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training	59.09%

Service Area	% of Respondents
Psychiatric Care for Individuals in Crisis	59.09%
Inpatient/Outpatient Mental Health Treatment	54.55%
Case Management Services	45.45%
Jail-Based Mental Health Services	43.18%
Trauma Therapy for Victims	43.18%
Mobile Crisis Outreach	40.91%
Suicide Prevention and Awareness	34.09%
Mental Health Diversion Courts	31.82%

Mental Health Service Gaps

Service Area	% of Respondents
Psychiatric Care for Individuals in Crisis	47.73%
Inpatient/Outpatient Mental Health Treatment	43.18%
Jail-Based Mental Health Services	40.91%
Mobile Crisis Outreach	36.36%
Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training	34.09%
Case Management Services	31.82%
Trauma Therapy for Victims	31.82%
Mental Health Diversion Courts	29.55%
Suicide Prevention and Awareness	29.55%

These results highlight critical resource gaps, especially in crisis response, jail-based services, and access to licensed mental health professionals.

Supporting Regional Data

Many counties in the ETCOG region are federally designated as **Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas (MHPSAs)**.

Mental Health Provider Shortages (2022)

Higher ratios indicate fewer providers per capita.

- **Marion County:** 1 provider per 9,960 residents
- **Panola County:** 1 per 5,800
- **Camp:** 1 per 2,610

- **Harrison:** 1 per 2,290
- **Henderson:** 1 per 1,680
- **Smith 1 per 430**

Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (2022)

These ratios illustrate the urgent need to recruit and retain licensed mental health professionals and expand telehealth options.

County Health Rankings (2022)

High rates of:

- **Excessive Drinking:** Henderson (36%), Harrison (31%), Camp (29%)
- **Poor Mental Health Days:** Above state average in nearly every ETCOG county

Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (2022)

These indicators correlate with increased rates of domestic violence, substance abuse, suicide, and emergency detentions.

Mental Health-Related Jail Data (2023)

County	% Jail Population with Diagnosed MH Condition
Smith	42%
Gregg	39%
Henderson	38%
Cherokee	33%
Harrison	29%

Source: Regional Jail Reports, Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHLAs), 2023

County-Level Courts

Mental Health Case Activity by County

September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2024

		New Applications Filed			Hearings Held		
County	2023 Population	Temporary Mental Health Services	Extended Mental Health Services	Order to Authorize Psychoactive Medications	Temporary Mental Health Services	Extended Mental Health Services	Order to Authorize Psychoactive Medications

Anderson	57,736	76	0	0	0	0	0
Camp	13,000	25	0	1	0	0	0
Cherokee	52,217	76	44	120	89	48	119
Gregg	126,243	156	0	156	302	0	141
Harrison	70,895	12	2	1	14	2	1
Henderson	86,158	111	0	6	59	0	0
Marion	9,571	0	0	0	0	0	0
Panola	22,838	2	0	0	0	0	0
Rains	12,986	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rusk	53,079	17	0	0	2	0	0
Smith	245,209	117	17	31	9	1	3
Upshur	43,281	24	0	0	0	0	0
Van Zandt	64,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wood	47,921	21	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	905,134	637	63	315	475	51	264

Source: [4-mental-health-activity-by-county.xlsx](#).

Justice Courts

Summary of Juvenile or Minor Activity by County

September 1, 2023, through August 31, 2024

County	Transportation Code	Non-Driving Alcoholic Beverage Code	Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol	Drug Paraphernalia	Tobacco	Truancy	All Other Non- Traffic, Fine Only	Parent Contributing to Nonattendance	Held in Contempt	Warnings Administered	Statements Certified	Detention Hearings Held
Anderson	31	6	0	0	1	38	5	18	0	1	1	0
Camp	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cherokee	64	2	0	0	2	0	4	5	0	0	0	0
Gregg	42	16	8	0	31	0	23	276	0	0	0	24
Harrison	91	7	5	23	12	0	8	133	0	0	3	0
Henderson	43	13	0	0	2	12	9	163	0	0	0	0
Marion	17	6	2	0	8	0	16	0	1	1	0	0
Panola	20	26	6	0	36	1	15	0	0	0	0	0
Rains	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rusk	31	3	0	0	0	7	3	4	0	0	0	0
Smith	146	30	13	2	33	0	18	131	0	0	0	0
Upshur	48	6	2	0	23	68	13	79	0	0	0	17
Van Zandt	51	3	0	0	0	24	57	124	0	0	0	0
Wood	25	5	2	0	0	6	0	3	0	8	6	4

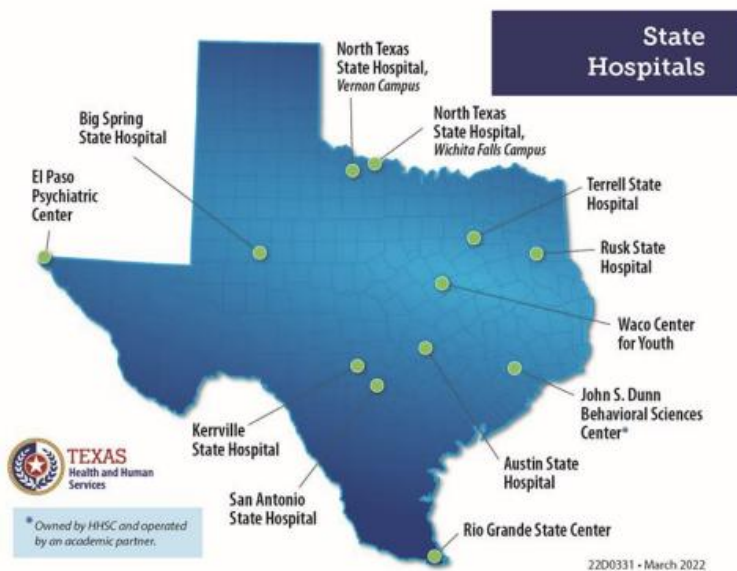
Total	610	125	38	25	148	156	171	936	1	10	10	45
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Source: [9-justice_court_juvenile-minor-activity.xls](#).

STATE HOSPITAL SYSTEM

Per the Texas Statewide Behavioral Health Strategic Plan Update (TSBHSP), Fiscal Years, 2022-2026 – HHSC has (9) state psychiatric hospitals, an adolescent psychiatric residential treatment center, and an outpatient primary care clinic, as shown in Figure 2 below. One of those hospitals is located within the ETCOG Region, which is the Rusk State Hospital (288 beds, including 60 maximum security beds). Five of the Nine provide “specialized care for the entire state” and Rusk State hospital is one of those.

“Each hospital provides forensic and civil inpatient psychiatric services for adults who meet admission requirements. Patients admitted to state hospitals are people with complex needs who require extended treatment and cannot be appropriately served in community beds. sites provide adult, child, or adolescent, and civil or forensic services. HHSC also contracts with inpatient psychiatric hospitals in Montgomery County, Palestine, and at UTHSC-T for additional capacity.” Two of which are also in the ETCOG region.



Source: [Texas Statewide Behavioral Health Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2022–2026](#)

Local Mental Health and Behavioral Health Authority Contacts

[Community HealthCore](#) – 800-446-8253

Gregg County Health Department – 903-237-2620

[East Texas Aging & Disability Resource Center](#) – 855-937-2372

[Cherokee County Public Health Department](#) – 903-586-6191

[Henderson County Health Department](#) – 903-675-7742

[Marshall-Harrison County Health District](#) – 903-938-8338

[Northeast Texas Public Health](#) – 903-535-0030

[Rusk County Health Department](#) – 903-657-3832

Gilmer Health Department – 903-843-3039

Canton Health Department – 903-567-5441

Implications for Planning

The combination of survey feedback and regional data confirms that mental health priorities are deeply interconnected with public safety, criminal justice, and victim services. Planning strategies should include:

- Expanding crisis response capacity (mobile units, stabilization beds)
- Supporting training for law enforcement and first responders
- Embedding licensed professionals in jails and courts
- Promoting tele-mental health access in underserved counties
- Increasing trauma informed services for victims, youth, and at-risk adults

Addressing mental health as a core public safety issue will require long term investment, interagency coordination, and culturally competent programming.

Substance Abuse Priorities

Overview

Substance abuse remains a persistent and complex issue across the ETCOG region. Stakeholders report significant needs related to prevention education, treatment access, recovery support, and the integration of services into the criminal justice system. Many counties, especially rural ones, lack affordable inpatient and outpatient options. Overdose deaths and substance-related crime continue to rise, intensifying the demand for early intervention and long-term recovery strategies.

Regional Substance Abuse Priorities

1. Prevention and Early Intervention

- School-based and community education
- Anti-drug youth campaigns and peer education
- Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) programs
- Trauma-informed prevention for children exposed to substance use

2. Treatment Access and Capacity

- Inpatient detox and residential treatment programs
- Outpatient programs with flexible scheduling
- Co-occurring disorder treatment (mental health + substance use)
- Transportation and financial assistance for treatment

3. Recovery and Reentry Support

- Recovery housing and sober living environments
- Peer-led support groups and coaching
- Recovery support for veterans and justice-involved individuals
- Employment, education, and housing assistance

4. Criminal Justice Integration

- Substance abuse diversion courts (DWI, drug court)
 - Screening and referral in jails and court systems
 - Reentry case management focused on relapse prevention
 - Court-ordered treatment and compliance monitoring
-

Stakeholder Survey Results

Most Important Substance Abuse Services

Service Area	% of Respondents
Inpatient Treatment	60.47%
Prevention and Early Intervention	48.84%
Outpatient Services	46.51%
Substance Abuse Diversion Court	34.88%
Recovery Support Services	32.56%
Education and Outreach Campaigns	30.23%
Reentry Case Management	27.91%
Peer Coaching	23.26%
Sober Living or Transitional Housing	23.26%
Faith-Based Support Services	20.93%

Substance Abuse Service Gaps

Service Area	% of Respondents
Inpatient Treatment	56.10%
Outpatient Services	46.34%
Recovery Support Services	29.27%
Substance Abuse Diversion Court	24.39%
Reentry Case Management	24.39%
Peer Coaching	21.95%
Sober Living or Transitional Housing	21.95%
Prevention and Early Intervention	21.95%
Education and Outreach Campaigns	19.51%

These results show particularly strong concern about the availability of inpatient and outpatient services, along with growing interest in integrated recovery models. These gaps are consistent across counties, with rural areas reporting the most limited access.

Supporting Regional Data

Overdose Deaths by County (2022–2023)

Top 5 Counties in ETCOG Region

County	2022 Deaths	2023 Deaths	% Change
Smith	42	58	+38%
Gregg	30	41	+37%
Cherokee	17	22	+29%
Henderson	21	27	+29%
Rusk	12	15	+25%

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Opioid Dashboard

Drug-Related Offenses by County (2023)

Top Offense Categories: Possession of Controlled Substance, Methamphetamine, Marijuana

County	Total Drug Offenses
Smith	1,126
Gregg	978
Henderson	684
Cherokee	523
Rusk	489
Harrison	421

Source: Texas Department of Public Safety – Crime in Texas, 2023

These figures underscore the urgent need for enforcement, education, and treatment resources.

2021 ETCADA PCR4 REGIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Substance Use Behaviors: Region 4’s adult drug related arrests rate per 100k (524.3) is significantly higher than the state rate (389.8). The same is true for Region 4’s adult arrests for possession of drugs per 100k (481.7) compared to the state rate (328.1). The most alarming is Region 4’s incarceration rate for drugs as the offense on record per 10k population (12.3) compared to the state rate (5.8) with many of them being white males (20.9).” Source: PRC4, 2021 RNA, page 9.

The counties in Region 4, with the highest number of adult sale/manufacturing arrests for 2020, are Smith (97), Lamar (43), Henderson (40) and Gregg (38). There were no juvenile arrests for sale/manufacturing. Additionally, there were a total of (57) juvenile arrests for possession of drugs. Source: PRC4, 2021 RNA, page 40.

Region 4 Prescription Medication Drop Box Locations		
County	Location	Address
Anderson	CVS Pharmacy-Store #6918	1919 S. Loop 256 Palestine, TX 75801
Cherokee	Jacksonville Police Department	210 W. Larissa St. Jacksonville, TX 75766
Gregg	Gladewater Police Department	511 S. Tyler St. Gladewater, TX 75647
Gregg	Kilgore Police Department	909 N. Kilgore St. Kilgore, TX 75662
Gregg	CVS Pharmacy- Store # 6899	1754 W. Loop 281 Longview, TX 75604
Gregg	Longview Police Department	302 W. Cotton St. Longview, TX 75601
Gregg	Louis Morgan Drug #4	110 Johnston St. Longview, TX 75601
Gregg	Walgreen's Pharmacy- Store #07611	511 E. Marshall Ave. Longview, TX 75601
Gregg	White Oak Police Department	103 E. Old Hwy 80 White Oak, TX 75693
Harrison	Hallsville Police Department	115 W. Main St. Hallsville, TX 75650
Harrison	Marshall Police Department	2101 E. End Blvd. Marshall, TX 75670
Henderson	Copeland's Chandler Drug	201 State Hwy 31 W. Chandler, TX 75758
Henderson	Gun Barrel Police Department	209 Municipal Dr. Gun Barrel City, TX 75156
Panola	Panola County Sheriff's Department	314 West Wellington St. Carthage, TX 75633
Rusk	Rusk County Sheriff's Department	210 W. Charlevoix St. Henderson, TX 75702
Smith	Eagle Pharmacy	1404 S Main St. Lindale, TX 75771
Smith	Brick Street Pharmacy	314 W. Rusk St. Tyler, TX 75701
Smith	CVS Pharmacy- Store # 7446	2626 W. 5 th St. Tyler, TX 75701
Smith	Smith County Emergency Operations Center	11325 Spur 248 Tyler, TX 75707
Smith	Smith County Sheriff's Department	227 N. Spring Ave. Tyler, TX 75702

Source: <https://prcfour.org/uploads/cms/nav-11-5d6547b1170c1.pdf>

Youth Drug Abuse - Texas

Teenagers in Texas are 15.18% less likely to have used drugs in the last month than the average American teen.

- 177,000 or 7.07% of 12- to 17-year-olds report using drugs in the last month.
- Among them, 83.62% report using marijuana in the last month.
- 10.82% of all 12- to 17-year-olds report using marijuana in the last year.
- 0.44% report using cocaine in the last year.
- 0.12% report using methamphetamines.
- Up to 0.02% used heroin (data is limited).
- 3.91% report misusing pain relievers.
- 9.02% of all 12- to 17-year-olds used alcohol in the last month.
- They're 1.40% less likely to use alcohol than the average American in their age group.
- 817,000 adults aged 18- to 25-years-old used drugs in the last month.
- 18- to 25-year-olds in Texas are 18.82% less likely to use drugs than the average American in the same age group.
- 2.51% of all 12- to 17-year-olds met the criteria for IDUD in the last year.
- 1.44% of all 12- to 17-year-olds met the criteria for AUD in the last year.

Source: [Teenage Drug Use Statistics \[2023\]: Data & Trends on Abuse \(drugabusestatistics.org\)](https://teenagedrugusestatistics.org/) Assessed – 3-6-2023.

Cost of Drug Rehab in Texas

Texas ranks 18th in cheapest to most expensive state for residential drug rehabilitation services (non-hospital). Texas' average cost of outpatient drug rehabilitation is the same as Tennessee's. The major drug problem in Texas is methamphetamine.

- In Texas there are 550 active treatment facilities.
- 35,995 patients in Texas are serviced annually for drug rehab.
- 31,281 patients enroll in Texas' drug rehab outpatient services annually.

- 2.30% or \$53.13 million of the U.S. public's total is spent on outpatient services in Texas.
- On average an individual patient in outpatient rehab in Texas can expect to pay \$1,698.
- 4,033 patients enroll in Texas' drug residential (non-hospital) services.
- 4.4% or \$228.4 million of the U.S. public's total is spent on residential treatment in Texas.
- On average an individual enrolled in Texas residential rehab can expect to pay \$56,623.
- 681 patients are in Texas' hospitals for drug rehab.
- 11 facilities in Texas offer free drug rehab treatment for all clients.

Source: [Average Cost of Drug Rehab \[2023\]: by Type, State & More \(drugabusestatistics.org\)](#). Assessed – 3-6-2023.

Opioid Epidemic - Texas

- 1,402 people die from opioid overdose in one year.
- Prescription opioids are a factor in 39% of opioid overdose deaths.
- Heroin is a factor in 47.6% of deaths.
- 25.5% of deaths involve synthetic opioids.
- Opioids are a factor in 46.7% of all overdose deaths.
- 4.8 out of every 100,000 residents die from an opioid overdose.
- That's 67.1% below or less than half the national death rate.
- 0.25% of hospital births are cases of neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome.
- Doctors write enough prescriptions for 47.2% of residents to have one.
- 205,500 cases of hepatitis C are attributed to intravenous drug use.
- 88,099 cases of HIV/AIDS are attributed to intravenous drug use.

Source: [Opioid Crisis Statistics \[2023\]: Prescription Opioid Abuse \(drugabusestatistics.org\)](#). Assessed – 3-6-2023.

Implications for Planning

Survey results and regional data confirm that substance abuse is a top-tier public safety and public health concern. Key recommendations include:

- Expanding access to inpatient and outpatient treatment across counties
- Promoting diversion courts to reduce jail overcrowding and improve recovery outcomes
- Integrating peer-led and faith-based support with clinical services
- Investing in youth-focused prevention and trauma-informed early intervention
- Increasing regional collaboration to build recovery housing and transportation networks

Effective intervention requires cross-sector collaboration and investment in both infrastructure and personnel capable of delivering long-term recovery outcomes.

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Priorities

Overview

Victim service providers across the ETCOG region report rising demand for trauma-informed care, legal advocacy, emergency shelter, and culturally competent services. High rates of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse continue to strain limited resources particularly in rural counties where survivors face barriers related to distance, stigma, and service availability.

Stakeholders consistently prioritize access to crisis intervention, housing, and support for underserved and vulnerable populations.

Regional Victim Services Priorities

1. Crisis Response Services

- 24/7 hotlines for domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking
- Emergency transportation and mobile advocacy
- SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) programs
- On-scene response partnerships with law enforcement

2. Shelter and Transitional Housing

- Emergency housing for survivors and their children
- Transitional housing with case management
- Long-term safe housing options for trafficking victims
- Supportive services to reduce homelessness and recidivism

3. Legal Advocacy and Navigation

- Assistance with protective orders, custody, and divorce
- Court accompaniment and victim impact support
- Legal services for survivors with immigration concerns
- Training for prosecutors and courts on trauma-informed approaches

4. Trauma Recovery and Support Services

- Individual and group counseling
 - Specialized services for children, seniors, and LGBTQ+ survivors
 - Culturally competent care for Black, Hispanic, Native American, and immigrant communities
 - School-based recovery programs for children and teen survivors
-

Stakeholder Survey Results

Most Important Services for Victims of Crime / Violence Against Women

Service Area	% of Respondents
Emergency Shelter/Housing	61.36%
Crisis Response (Hotlines, Transportation)	54.55%
Legal Advocacy (POs, Custody, Immigration)	52.27%
Victim Support and Trauma Counseling	50.00%
Transitional Housing	45.45%
Culturally Competent Outreach and Education	31.82%
Services for Children Exposed to Family Violence	31.82%
Mobile Advocacy Services	29.55%

Victim Services Gaps

Service Area	% of Respondents
Emergency Shelter/Housing	47.73%
Legal Advocacy	38.64%
Crisis Response	36.36%
Victim Support and Trauma Counseling	34.09%
Culturally Competent Outreach and Education	31.82%
Transitional Housing	31.82%
Services for Children Exposed to Family Violence	27.27%
Mobile Advocacy Services	22.73%

These results highlight the urgency of expanding core victim support systems, particularly around shelter and legal access. They also show the lack of core services in some counties and an unmet need for inclusive, specialized victim care.

Supporting Regional Data

Family Violence Incidents (2023)

Selected Reporting Agencies

Agency	Incidents
Tyler Police Department	999
Longview Police Department	829
Smith County Sheriff	685
Gregg County Sheriff	184
Athens Police Department	130
Rusk Police Department	122

Source: Texas DPS, Family Violence Summary Report, 2023

Sexual Assaults Reported by County (2023)

County	Total Incidents
Smith	276
Gregg	116
Henderson	61
Rusk	46
Cherokee	39

Source: Texas DPS, Crime in Texas 2023 Report

Barriers Identified by Regional Providers

- Long waitlists for trauma counseling
- Inadequate transportation and shelter capacity
- Limited access to bilingual or culturally specific services
- Lack of long-term housing for survivors exiting shelters
- Difficulty coordinating multi-county response to trafficking

Implications for Planning

The ETCOG region must continue strengthening its victim services network through:

- Increased investments in emergency and transitional housing
- Expansion of SANE, mobile advocacy, and trauma recovery programs
- Legal navigation and multilingual services for underserved survivors
- Cross-agency partnerships for rapid response and wraparound care
- Targeted outreach to children, seniors, and culturally marginalized groups

REGIONAL PROVIDERS, AGENCIES & GENERAL RESOURCES

Included below are resources identified by the ETCOG that are available to provide services that could potentially help in closing criminal justice gaps.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Adolescent Development & Achievement Program of Tyler	Longview Teen Court
Anderson County Juvenile Probation Department	Marion County Juvenile Probation Department
Camp County Juvenile Probation Department	Martin House Children's Advocacy Center
	Panola County Juvenile Probation Department
Cherokee County Juvenile Probation Department	Partners in Prevention
Children's Advocacy Center of Smith County	Rains County Juvenile Probation Department
Children's Advocacy Center of Van Zandt County	Rusk County Juvenile Probation Department
Crisis Center of Anderson & Cherokee Counties	North East Texas Children's Advocacy Center
East Texas CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)	Next Step Community Solutions
Gregg County Juvenile Probation Department	Rusk and Panola County Children's Advocacy Center
Harrison County Juvenile Probation Department	Smith County Juvenile Probation Department
Henderson County HELP Center	Upshur County Juvenile Probation Department
Henderson County Juvenile Probation Department	Van Zandt County Juvenile Probation Department

LAW ENFORCEMENT

ALERT Academy	Marion County Sheriff's Office
Alba Police Department	Marion County Constable Precinct 1 and 2
Alto Police Department	Marshall Police Department
Anderson County Sheriff's Office	Mineola Police Department
Anderson County Constable Precincts 1 - 4	New London Police Department
Arp Police Department	New Summerfield Police Department
Athens Police Department	Ore City Police Department
Big Sandy Police Department	Overton Police Department
Brownsboro Police Department	Palestine Police Department
Bullard Police Department	Panola County Sheriff's Office

Camp County Sheriff's Office	Panola County Constable Precinct 1 - 4
Camp County – County Wide Constable	Payne Springs Police Department
Caney City Police Department	Pittsburg Police Department
Canton Police Department	
Chandler Police Department	Point Police Department
Cherokee County Constable Precinct 1 - 4	Quitman Police Department
Cherokee County Sheriff's Office	Rains County Sheriff's Office
Coffee City Police Department	Rains County Constable
East Mountain Police Department	Rusk County Sheriff's Office
East Tawakoni Police Department	Rusk County Constable Precinct 1 - 5
Edgewood Police Department	Rusk Police Department
Emory Police Department	Seven Points Police Department
Enchanted Oaks Police Department	Smith County Constables
East Texas Police Academy	Smith County Sheriff's Office
Eustace Police Department	Tatum Police Department
Frankston Police Department	Tool Police Department
Gilmer Police Department	Trinidad Police Department
Gladewater Police Department	Troup Police Department
Grand Saline Police Department	Tyler Police Department
Gun Barrel City Police Department	Upshur County Sheriff's Office
Gregg County Constables	Upshur County Constables
Gregg County Sheriff's Office	Van Police Department
Hallsville Police Department	Van Zandt County Constables
Harrison County Sheriff's Office	Van Zandt County Sheriff's Office
Harrison County Constables	Waskom Police Department
Hawkins Police Department	Wells Police Department
Henderson County Sheriff's Office	White Oak Police Department
Henderson County Constables	Whitehouse Police Department
Henderson Police Department	Wills Point Police Department

Jacksonville Police Department	Winnsboro Police Department
Jefferson Police Department	Wood County Sheriff's Office
Kilgore Police Department	Wood County Constables
Lakeport Police Department	Yantis Police Department
Lindale Police Department	
Log Cabin Police Department	
Longview Police Department	
Malakoff Police Department	

ISD POLICE DEPARTMENTS

Jacksonville ISD PD
Jefferson ISD PD
Malakoff ISD PD
Winnsboro ISD PD

VICTIM SERVICES

Crisis Center of Anderson & Cherokee Counties http://www.mycrisiscenter.com/	Anderson County District Attorney's Office http://www.co.anderson.tx.us/default.aspx?Anderson_County/District.Attorney
East Texas Crisis Center http://etcc.org/	Gregg County District Attorney's Office Gregg County District Attorney
Henderson County HELP Center http://thehelpcenter.org/	Upshur County District Attorney's Office http://www.countyofupshur.com/page/district_attorney
Van Zandt County District Attorney's Office http://www.vzda.org/	
Smith County Crime Victim Services http://www.smith-county.com/Law/DA/Default.aspx	Wood County District Attorney's Office http://www.mywoodcounty.com/default.aspx?name=distatty
Women's Center of East Texas http://www.wc-et.org/	

MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Access http://www.accessmhmr.org/	Henderson County HELP Center http://www.thehelpcenter.org/
Andrews Center Behavioral Healthcare http://www.andrewscenter.com	Kirkpatrick Family Center http://communityhealthcore.com/
Azleway Substance Abuse Program http://www.azleway.com	Longview Wellness Center Inc.
Choices Child and Adolescent Services Ltd.	Methadone Centers – East Texas Clinic Inc. Methadone Clinic - East Texas Clinic Inc.
East Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse http://www.etcada.com/	Oceans Behavioral Hospital of Longview
ETMC Behavioral Health Center UTHealth East Texas - Behavioral Health	Palestine Regional Medical Center http://www.palestineregional.com/

Heart Light Ministries Boarding School http://www.heartlightministries.org/	Rusk State Hospital Rusk State Hospital
Special Health Resources of East Texas, Inc. http://www.specialhealthresources.org	Sundown Ranch, Inc. https://sundownranchinc.com/
Van Zandt County Voices Project http://vzcpd.com/services/voices.html	

SCHOOLS

Alba – Golden ISD	Malakoff ISD
Alto-ISD	Miller Grove ISD
Arp ISD	Marshall ISD
Athens ISD	Martins Mill ISD
Beckville ISD	Mineola ISD
Big Sandy ISD	Mt. Enterprise ISD
Brownsboro ISD	Murchison ISD
Bullard ISD	Neches ISD
Carlisle ISD	New Diana ISD
Carthage ISD	New Summerfield ISD
Cayuga ISD	Ore City ISD
Chapel Hill ISD	Overton ISD
Cross Roads ISD	Palestine ISD
Cumberland Academy	Panola Charter School
East Texas Charter Schools	Pine Tree ISD
Edgewood ISD	Pittsburg ISD
Elkhart ISD	Quitman ISD
Elysian Field ISD	Rains ISD
Eustace ISD	Rusk ISD
Frankston ISD	Sabine ISD
Fruitvale ISD	Slocum ISD
Gary ISD	Spring Hill ISD
Gilmer ISD	Tatum ISD
Gladewater ISD	Trinidad ISD
Grand Saline ISD	Troup ISD
Hallsville ISD	Tyler ISD
Harleton ISD	
Harmony ISD	
Hawkins ISD	
Henderson ISD	
Jacksonville ISD	
Jefferson ISD	
Karnack ISD	
Kilgore ISD	
La Poynor ISD	
Laneville ISD	
Leveretts Chapel ISD	
Lindale ISD	
Longview ISD	
Mabank ISD	

GENERAL RESOURCES FOR REVIEW

TEXAS KIDS COUNT PROFILE – [HTTPS://WWW.AECF.ORG/DATABOOK](https://www.aecf.org/databook)
BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS - [HTTPS://BJS.GOV/](https://bjs.gov/)
CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL - [HTTPS://WWW.CDC.GOV/](https://www.cdc.gov/)
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION NETWORK - [HTTP://WWW.CHILD-ABUSE.COM/](http://www.child-abuse.com/)
CHILD WELFARE INFORMATION GATEWAY - [HTTPS://WWW.CHILDWELFARE.GOV/](https://www.childwelfare.gov/)
CHILDREN AT RISK - [HTTPS://CHILDRENATRISK.ORG/](https://childrenatrisk.org/)
COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE - [HTTP://WWW.JUVJUSTICE.ORG/](http://www.juvjustice.org/)
COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS JUSTICE CENTER - [HTTPS://CSGJUSTICECENTER.ORG/](https://csjusticecenter.org/)
FBI VIOLENT CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN - [HTTPS://WWW.FBI.GOV/INVESTIGATE/VIOLENT-CRIME/CAC](https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/violent-crime/cac)
HOGG FOUNDATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH - [HTTPS://HOGG.UTEXAS.EDU/](https://hogg.utexas.edu/)
KIDS COUNT DATA CENTER - [HTTPS://DATACENTER.KIDSCOUNT.ORG/DATA#USA/3/0/CHAR/0](https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#USA/3/0/CHAR/0)
NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS - [HTTPS://WWW.NAMI.ORG/](https://www.nami.org/)
NATION CENTER FOR SAFE SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS - [HTTPS://SAFESUPPORTIVELEARNING.ED.GOV/](https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/)
NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE - [HTTPS://WWW.THEHOTLINE.ORG/](https://www.thehotline.org/)
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DRUG ABUSE - [HTTPS://WWW.DRUGABUSE.GOV/](https://www.drugabuse.gov/)
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH - [HTTPS://WWW.NIMH.NIH.GOV/INDEX.SHTML](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml)
NATIONAL NETWORK TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - [HTTPS://NNEDV.ORG/](https://nnedv.org/)
RAPE, ABUSE & INCEST NATIONAL NETWORK - [HTTPS://WWW.RAINN.ORG/ABOUT-RAINN](https://www.rainn.org/about-rainn)
TEXAS CRIMINAL JUSTICE COALITION - [HTTPS://WWW.TEXASCJC.ORG/](https://www.texascjc.org/)
TEXAS COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT - [HTTP://TCOLE.TEXAS.GOV/](http://tcole.texas.gov/)
TEXAS DEMOGRAPHIC CENTER - [HTTPS://WWW.DEMOGRAPHICS.TEXAS.GOV/](https://www.demographics.texas.gov/)
TEXAS OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL - [HTTPS://WWW.TEXASATTORNEYGENERAL.GOV/](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/)
TEXAS OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR - [HTTPS://GOV.TEXAS.GOV/](https://gov.texas.gov/)

REGIONAL TRENDS AND SUPPORTING DATA

Overview

The ETCOG region spans 14 counties in East Texas, encompassing both urban centers and rural areas with varying public safety, judicial, and behavioral health needs. Regional planning efforts are driven by both stakeholder input and quantitative data from state agencies. This section provides a high-level snapshot of key trends influencing criminal justice priorities, with an emphasis on crime, health, population, and system capacity.

Demographic Overview

Indicator	Value
Total Population (2023 est.)	932,460
Rural Population (%)	64.3%
Total Land Area	~10,021 square miles
Counties	14
Largest Cities	Tyler, Longview, Palestine
Top Counties by Population	Smith, Gregg, Henderson

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Texas Demographic Center

Crime Trends (2023)

Selected Counties – Top Offense Types

County	Violent Crime	Property Crime	Drug Offenses	Family Violence
Smith	406.0/100k	2,238.3/100k	1,126	1,739
Gregg	164.5/100k	1,478.2/100k	978	1,156
Henderson	128.4/100k	1,264.5/100k	684	423
Rusk	109.2/100k	1,189.4/100k	489	421
Cherokee	137.6/100k	1,323.0/100k	523	361

Source: Texas Department of Public Safety, Crime in Texas 2023

Mental Health Access

County	Mental Health Provider Ratio
Smith	1 per 430
Henderson	1 per 1,680
Harrison	1 per 2,290
Camp	1 per 2,610
Marion	1 per 9,960

Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (2022)

Substance Abuse Indicators

Opioid Overdose Deaths (2022–2023)

County	2022	2023	% Change
Smith	42	58	+38%
Gregg	30	41	+37%
Cherokee	17	22	+29%
Henderson	21	27	+29%

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services, Opioid Dashboard

Excessive Drinking & Driving Deaths

County	Excessive Drinking	Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths
Henderson	19%	36%
Harrison	18%	31%
Panola	20%	19%

Juvenile Justice Indicators

County	Juvenile Referrals (2023)	Top Offense Types
Smith	347	Assault, Drug Possession, Theft
Gregg	254	Assault, Criminal Mischief, Runaway
Cherokee	163	Criminal Trespass, Theft, Assault
Henderson	148	Possession of Marijuana, DWI, Assault
Rusk	132	Truancy, Assault, Criminal Mischief

Source: Texas Juvenile Justice Department, Annual Activity Report 2023

Family Dynamics & Risk Factors

Indicator	Highest Counties (%)
Children in Single-Parent Households	Gregg (41%), Harrison (39%), Anderson (38%)
Teen Birth Rate (per 1,000 females 15–19)	Cherokee (31), Marion (29), Rusk (28)
Uninsured Population (%)	Anderson (23%), Marion (22%), Rains (21%)

Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (2022)

Victimization Trends

County	Family Violence (2023)	Sexual Assault (2023)
Smith	1,739	276
Gregg	1,156	116
Henderson	423	61
Rusk	421	46
Cherokee	361	39

Source: Texas DPS, Crime in Texas Report 2023

Transportation and Rural Service Gaps

Many rural counties report lack of public transportation, impacting access to:

- Courts and probation offices
- Mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Victim services and emergency shelters

Telehealth expansion is limited by broadband gaps in Marion, Rains, Camp, and Panola counties.

Source: Regional planning surveys, 2024

Implications for Planning

Regional data confirms that key public safety issues are deeply interconnected with poverty, rural access, and health disparities. Future planning efforts should:

- Address service deserts in mental health and substance use care
- Prioritize mobile and telehealth services in rural counties
- Coordinate cross-county strategies for housing, diversion, and trauma recovery
- Improve transportation, broadband, and system navigation support
- Leverage multi-sector partnerships to reduce duplication and expand reach

IMPLEMENTATION & USE OF THE PLAN

Purpose

The East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) Regional Criminal Justice Strategic Plan (ERCJSP) serves as a roadmap for identifying, prioritizing, and addressing criminal justice needs throughout the 14-county region. The plan is designed to guide funding decisions, support cross sector collaboration, and ensure alignment with state and federal priorities.

This document is intended for use by:

- Local and regional criminal justice agencies
- Nonprofit organizations and service providers
- County and municipal leadership
- Grant applicants and program developers
- State and federal funders

The plan supports applicants in developing well aligned projects and assists the CJAC in scoring proposals that best meet the needs of the 14-county region.

Implementation Strategy

1. Grant Prioritization and Review

The plan directly informs the scoring and prioritization of grant applications submitted to ETCOG under the following Office of the Governor funding programs:

- Criminal Justice Program (JAG)
- General Victim Assistance – Direct Services Program (VOCA)
- Violence Against Women Justice and Training Program (VAWA)
- Juvenile Justice and Truancy Prevention Program (JJ/TP)

The **Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC)** uses the plan as a reference when reviewing and scoring applications based on:

- Alignment with regional priorities
- Demonstrated need and service gaps
- Geographic and population-specific impact
- Feasibility and readiness of implementation

2. Plan Updates and Stakeholder Feedback

ETCOG staff update statistics in the ERCJSP every two years based on:

- New data from state and regional sources
- Legislative changes or updates to grant program rules
- Lessons learned from funded programs and community partners

Stakeholders are encouraged to submit feedback or recommended updates at any time. A major plan revision is conducted at a minimum every 5 years in coordination with the CJAC via stakeholder survey.

Monitoring and Evaluation

ETCOG tracks implementation of the ERCJSP through:

- Monitoring outcomes and performance metrics from funded projects
- Review of grant summaries
- Ongoing communication with regional stakeholders and providers
- Identification of emerging trends, unmet needs, or duplications of service

These efforts ensure that the plan remains a living document which is responsive to the evolving needs of East Texas communities.

Promoting Collaboration

The strategic plan serves as a tool to promote regional alignment, reduce service silos, and strengthen partnerships across systems. It encourages the development of:

- Multi-agency task forces
 - Coordinated victim response teams
 - Integrated mental health and substance use service models
 - Shared resource strategies for rural and underserved areas
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Conclusion

This Regional Criminal Justice Strategic Plan represents a collective vision for a safer, healthier, and more equitable East Texas. It reflects the voices of law enforcement officers, prosecutors, victims, youth advocates, mental health professionals, and nonprofit partners working together to ensure that every county has the tools and resources it needs to address crime, support recovery, and protect its most vulnerable residents.

Appendix C: Criminal Justice Funding Streams Administered by ETCOG

Grant Program	Administering Agency	Purpose
JAG – Criminal Justice Program	Office of the Governor (OOG)	Equipment, personnel, and training for law enforcement and court operations
VOCA – Victim Assistance Program	Office of the Governor (OOG)	Direct services for victims of crime
VAWA – Violence Against Women Program	Office of the Governor (OOG)	Domestic violence and sexual assault prevention
JJ & TP – Juvenile Justice and Truancy Prevention	Office of the Governor (OOG)	Early intervention and prevention for at-risk youth

Appendix D: Acronyms and Key Terms

Acronym	Definition
CJAC	Criminal Justice Advisory Committee
CJIS	Criminal Justice Information System
CIT	Crisis Intervention Team
DSHS	Department of State Health Services
DPS	Department of Public Safety
ERCJSP	East Texas Regional Criminal Justice Strategic Plan
ETCOG	East Texas Council of Governments
JJDP	Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
LMHA	Local Mental Health Authority
SANE	Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
SBIRT	Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment
VOCA	Victims of Crime Act
VAWA	Violence Against Women Act