



AUDITOR

Mission Statement

COUNTY AUDITOR

Mission Statement

Our mission is to promote public oversight, provide financial accountability, safeguard county assets, maintain accurate financial and accounting data, and support financial decision making for the County of Hays by providing timely, accurate and essential financial information on the fiscal and financial operations of the County. The County Auditor is the acting comptroller of all county funds, as well as state and federal grant funding. The County Auditor's Office ensures financial integrity, oversees county finances, enforces financial laws, and audits all financial records. The County Auditor provides reliable financial information to the public, County elected officials, department heads, employees, individuals, vendors, regulatory agencies, and other governmental agencies while also fulfilling statutory financial oversight responsibilities.

Goals

To accomplish our mission, we have established the following strategic goals:

- Provide and maintain reliable financial data, safeguard county assets and preserve the county's financial resources while maintaining responsible fiscal policies for the county as a whole.
- Ensure the safeguarding, proper handling and appropriate accounting for receipts, disbursements and management of county assets through continuous auditing of transactions.
- Function as a resource to all officials, departments and other users in the processing, compilation and comprehension of accurate, timely financial information and statistics.
- Maintain and enhance the professional and technical expertise of staff by investing in personnel and financial accounting systems and staying current with legislation and governmental accounting pronouncements in order to re-examine and improve our procedures.

The responsibilities of the County Auditor's Office are separated into six (6) divisions: Financial Reporting, General Ledger and Fixed Asset Accounting, Accounts Payable and Disbursements Auditing, Grants and Project Accounting and Auditing, Internal and Statutory Auditing, and Payroll Accounting and Auditing. Each division is designed to ensure the overseeing and monitoring of county-wide financial activities for compliance with County policies, as well as with Federal and State laws and regulations.



DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Mission Statement

Hays County Criminal District Attorney's Office

FY 2026 Budget Request Narrative

(Updated July 2025)

I. Mission Statement

The mission of the Hays County Criminal District Attorney's Office is to see that justice is done in all criminal matters and in civil cases relating to protective orders and child welfare. In all other matters, we provide the highest quality legal services for Hays County and its citizens while protecting the constitutional and statutory rights afforded to every person in our county.

We work within the criminal justice system to protect the public while reflecting our community's values regarding the role of a prosecutor. We diligently prosecute violent offenders and protect the vulnerable, but we are also committed to crime prevention through the implementation of innovative programs to break the cycle of crime for youthful and first-time offenders through diversion programs. We also seek to address the needs of offenders with severe mental illness or addiction through specialty dockets that focus on treatment and services.

Our office demands the highest level of honesty, integrity, and transparency and expects our attorneys and staff to be models of ethical and professional conduct. As public servants, we are committed to hard work, integrity and accountability and we are careful stewards of taxpayer resources.

II. Organizational Responsibilities and Structure

The Hays County Criminal District Attorney's Office (HCCDAO) is responsible for all of Hays County's legal business, both civil and criminal. Hays County does not have a separate county attorney.

The office is divided into two divisions, a Criminal Division and a Civil Division, with a First Assistant District Attorney overseeing each division.

The Civil Division is the smaller of the two divisions with eight attorneys and fourteen non-attorney support staff for a total of 22 FTEs. The Civil Division is divided into two sections, the Civil Trial Section and the General Counsel Section, and the sections are located in separate buildings.

1. The General Counsel Section handles matters including, but not limited to: providing legal counsel to the Hays County Commissioners Court, elected officials, and department heads; representing Hays County in civil litigation matters, to include law enforcement matters; handling and processing public information requests; handling employment and unemployment matters; negotiating economic development incentives; coordinating road and right-of-way projects; drafting contracts, interlocal agreements, etc.; and assists in the County's parks, open space, development, and conservation efforts.
2. The Civil Trial Section handles matters including, but not limited to: representing the Department of Family and Protective Services in child protection matters; handling and processing protective order applications and hearings; processing applications and handling hearings for mental health orders for protective custody; representing the State of

Texas in asset forfeiture and bond forfeiture cases; and representing Hays County in expunction and non-disclosure cases.

The Trial Section also includes a newly-created Environmental Enforcement Unit that focuses on both civil and criminal aspects of environmental law and regulations in an effort to better regulate environmental compliance for the health and safety of County residents.

The Criminal Division is the larger of the two divisions with 35 attorneys and 53 non-attorney support staff for a total of 88 FTEs. The Criminal Division is divided into six sections:

1. The Misdemeanor and Specialty Courts Section consists of 12 prosecutors. The section chief supervises the three misdemeanor trial teams, one for each County Court at Law, a juvenile prosecution unit that handles misdemeanors and felonies, a mental health prosecutor, and most of the office's specialty dockets. The misdemeanor and juvenile prosecutors handle all criminal cases on the dockets of their assigned courts. They also review incoming cases filed by law enforcement and make charging decisions on all misdemeanor cases. Misdemeanor prosecutors also represent the State in Justice of the Peace courts, and the Veteran's Treatment Court. The mental health prosecutor handles a specialized caseload that includes the mental health court program, jail-based competency restoration, and the assisted outpatient treatment program. The mental health prosecutor is a new position that was added in 2025 as the result of a mid-year request. Finally, the section will have primary responsibility for implementation of the future DWI and Drug courts.
2. The Felony Trial Section consists of 15 prosecutors that are organized into six trial teams with a team assigned to each of the six District Courts. Each court team is supervised by a felony court chief. The felony trial attorneys handle all criminal cases on the dockets of their assigned courts, the felony trial attorneys review and make charging decisions on most violent felony cases and handle the presentation of those cases to the grand jury.
3. The Family Justice Unit is supervised by a section chief and consists of four prosecutors that handle cases of child abuse, intimate partner sexual assault, and high-risk domestic violence. They handle the cases vertically which means that they engage with law enforcement starting in the investigative phase, present the cases to the grand jury, and prosecute the cases in court after indictment. This unit was formed in 2024 and is still developing and growing.
4. The Intake Section is consists of three prosecutors that handle all intake and grand jury work on non-violent felony cases. One of the intake prosecutors also handles case screening for and management of the pretrial diversion program.
5. The Victim Services section consists of a team of ten Victim Assistant Coordinators (VACs) that support the criminal prosecutors across all criminal sections. They are supervised by a Victim Services Supervisor.
6. The Investigations Section consists of ten DA Investigators supervised by a Chief Investigator. One investigator is assigned to each trial team in the Criminal Division, and the Chief Investigator serves as the investigator for one of the court teams. Two investigators are assigned to the Litigation Division in the civil section.

Underlying the entire criminal division are additional teams of support staff. This includes a records management team, teams of legal assistants assigned to support the misdemeanor and felony sections, a legal assistant for the intake section, and a team of legal assistants and intake coordinators that serve as DME/discovery specialists. That team gathers and organizes all evidence and manages the production of that evidence for discovery in criminal cases.

The office has a total authorized strength of 111 FTEs, which includes the Criminal District Attorney, a state official. All but three positions are county funded. Of the three grant-funded positions, one Attorney VII is funded by a state grant under SB 22, the Rural Prosecutor Assistance grant, and one DA Investigator and an Administrative Assistant are funded by an environmental enforcement grant from CAPCOG.

III. Recent Changes and Initiatives

Since taking office in January of 2023, Criminal District Attorney Kelly Higgins has sought to modernize and improve the efficiency of the HCCDAO and improve the ability of the office to protect the community while ensuring that the rights of both accused individuals and crime victims are protected. Over the last two years, several changes have been made in furtherance of this goal. Those changes include the following:

1. **The HCCDAO reduced its ‘intake backlog’ by approximately 68%.** At the beginning of 2023, the office had a backlog of more than 5,600 unfiled cases, and most of those cases had never been reviewed by an attorney. This meant, effectively, that a criminal case would languish for a year or more before a prosecutor began the review process. This delay had the potential to cripple prosecutions before they could even begin. The backlog resulted from inefficient and outdated processes of the previous administration. To resolve the backlog, much of the Criminal Division support staff was reorganized and the process for how cases moved through the office was changed. The HCCDAO also created an intake section with three attorneys dedicated to handling all non-violent felonies while violent felonies are still assigned directly to the trial court attorneys. These changes have had a dramatic effect on the caseload. By March of 2024, the backlog of unfiled cases had been reduced from 5,625 to fewer than 1,800. After monitoring caseload reports for an extended period of time, it appears that the normal caseload of unfiled cases is somewhere between 1,800 and 2,000 cases at any given time. The office has managed to keep those numbers at or near that range for the last year so we are confident that the changes that eliminated the backlog will help prevent it from reoccurring.
2. **The HCCDAO increased efficiency by merging with the former Office of General Counsel.** Prior to 2023, a separate Office of General Counsel represented the county for civil transactional purposes. The artificial divide in civil county representation produced inefficiencies and resource shortages for both the General Counsel and District Attorney’s Office. In 2023 the two offices merged, resulting in a larger civil division within the HCCDAO. This has eliminated redundant functions, allowed the sharing of resources, and

significantly increased the legal resources available for serving the overall needs of Hays County.

3. **The HCCDAO emphasized comprehensive care for vulnerable domestic violence victims.** After recognizing deficiencies in meeting the needs of victims of domestic violence and stalking, the office requested funding for and received a new Victim Assistance Coordinator specifically to provide a deeper level of service to those victims. This position has improved our ability to serve these vulnerable victims by focusing on high-risk situations, implementing the use of standardized risk-assessments and safety planning measures, and coordinating county-wide trainings focused on victim relations.
4. **The HCCDAO overhauled its protective order procedures to support victims.** Around that same time, the Civil Division revamped the internal processes for helping victims of domestic violence and stalking with protective orders. Those changes resulted in a significant increase in the number of protective orders applications accepted and the number of orders obtained from the courts. In 2021, the HCCDAO received 36 applications for protective orders and obtained 7 protective orders. By 2024, the changes implemented resulted in the office receiving 169 applications and obtaining 77 protective orders.
5. **The HCCDAO supplemented resources for victim-focused positions.** In 2024, the HCCDAO applied for and received a rural prosecution grant under SB 22. In line with statutory restrictions on use of grant funds, part of the grant was used to pay supplements to the victim assistance coordinators and DA investigators.
6. **The HCCDAO identified and addressed a need for increased specialization and prosecutor focus on child abuse, high-risk domestic violence, and intimate partner violence cases.** The remainder of the SB 22 grant was used to create a new chief prosecutor position to build and oversee a new Family Justice Unit. Aside from grant funds supporting the supervisor's position, this unit is being created using existing resources. The rest of the prosecutors being added to the Family Justice Unit are being reallocated from the Felony Trial Section and will handle the prosecution of criminal cases involving child abuse, high risk domestic violence, and intimate partner sexual assaults. The reallocation of resources is possible due to a recent change to the case assignment procedures for the three District Courts with multi-county jurisdiction. The number of new cases being assigned to those three courts is dropping under the new procedure. This has allowed us to plan to reduce the size of the trial teams for those courts to only two attorneys per court. The remaining courts will still have three prosecutors on each trial team. We have reassigning experienced prosecutors to the Family Justice Unit and are providing those attorneys with specialized training in the handling of these types of cases. Once this transition is complete in the Fall of 2025, the Family Justice Unit will have four prosecutors dedicated to this specialized caseload.

7. **The HCCDAO collaborated with the courts and criminal justice partners on multiple efforts to address the intersection of mental health and the criminal justice system.** The HCCDAO has dedicated substantial resources to supporting the misdemeanor Mental Health Court and the creation of a felony mental health specialty docket. In addition, the office now engages in structured direct weekly meetings with jail staff to facilitate the flow of information regarding mental health issues within the Hays County jail to the courts, defense, and State. These programs represent significant advances in the handling of the increasing number of criminal cases where the defendant suffers from a severe mental illness that has contributed to the commission of the offense. These programs and cases are extremely time-intensive and necessitated a dedicated Mental Health Attorney as a mid-year request for FY2025, but as new dockets and programs, such as Jail-Based Competency Restoration and Assisted Outpatient Treatment Court, continue to grow and develop, further investment will be needed.
8. **The HCCDAO worked to proactively address environmental issues county-wide.** The HCCDAO applied for a grant for environmental prosecution efforts from CAPCOG during FY 2024 that was finally awarded in FY 2025. The purpose of this grant was to help our office create an Environmental Enforcement Unit. Once we knew we had the grant, the office used a vacant civil attorney position to hire a prosecutor with a deep level of experience handling environmental cases in both the civil and criminal courts. The grant provides funding for an investigator and administrative assistant to support the work of the environmental prosecutor.
9. **The HCCDAO initiated a new diversion program for low-level offenses.** During 2024, the HCCDAO launched a new diversion program that is different from anything previously done in Hays County. The program is designed to steer people charged with low-level, non-violent offenses that do not have extensive criminal histories to services and away from the criminal justice system. The goal is to reduce the number of cases crowding the dockets of the criminal courts while helping certain offenders avoid a conviction that will only make finding a job and housing more difficult. Prosecutors actively screen incoming cases to determine whether defendants would be appropriate for the program, and defense attorneys may also refer cases for consideration. If someone is identified as an appropriate fit, they will be offered the opportunity to participate. If they accept and sign the participation agreement, their case will be dismissed or declined. The case will not be refiled if they successfully complete the program, and they may be eligible to have the arrest expunged from their record. It was important to make this program accessible to everyone, so the office made the decision to remove financial barriers for participation by not charging fees that would otherwise be allowed under the law. There are some classes that may have a fee, but the office is working to find a way for indigent defendants to be able to take those classes with no cost. The HCCDAO partnered with the Judicial Services Department to administer the program, and they have assisted by monitoring the people allowed into the program. Since the launch of the diversion program, the HCCDAO has evaluated 694 cases and entered into agreements with 387 people to join the program. Many individuals are

continuing to work their way through the program, while 127 have successfully completed it.

10. **The HCCDAO initiated an intensive and groundbreaking diversion program specifically for low-level DWI offenses.** In February of 2025, the HCCDAO launched a new DWI diversion program to address a critical gap in the balance between addressing enhanced public safety concerns and the need for some rehabilitative option for low-level DWI offenses. The HCCDAO utilized DWI diversion models from multiple counties, including Williamson and Galveston, and collaborated with the probation department to create a uniquely Hays County approach to DWI diversion. Specifically, the diversion program is not available for individuals with prior DWIs and higher-level breath or blood alcohol contents. In addition, the program is not available for DWIs resulting from a vehicular collision or involving belligerence towards arresting officers. Program participants must complete strenuous requirements including classes, community service, and a required ignition interlock device for 15 months post-agreement. If successful, participants are entitled to dismissal and partial expunction (excluding the HCCDAO's own records) of the DWI charges.

IV. Physical Space Limitations and the FY 2025 Budget

The HCCDAO submitted no requests for additional staff during the FY 2025 budget cycle because of a lack of physical space. We had clearly identified needs, but did not believe it made sense to ask for additional positions when we were unsure of where to put them.

Since that time, the office has worked with Purchasing and Countywide Operations to clear out a large storage room within the DA's office that can be converted into workspace for up to six additional staff. In addition, we have investigators and prosecutors sharing offices. For instance, our four newest prosecutors share a single office space that was originally meant for one chief position. We have also shifted one prosecutor to the historic courthouse and are temporarily housing an investigator in another department's building.

Even though it is cramped, and the current situation is not sustainable long-term, we now have some flexibility to ask for additional positions. We can no longer defer the needs of the office due to the lack of space.

V. FY 2026 Initiatives and Ties to the Budget Request

As the HCCDAO continues to move forward with improvements to processes and business practices to improve efficiency, as well as new initiatives to better protect the public and provide justice is done in all criminal matters, we have identified several specific needs that will require additional staff. These needs are summarized below, and we will also provide detailed justifications for each separately.

1. **An Appellate Prosecutor is needed to handle appeals and initiate a conviction integrity review process.** The HCCDAO traditionally assigned the job of responding to appeals to the trial attorneys. This may have worked when the office was small and the caseloads were lighter, but the current volume of appeals and the size of caseloads mean that this is no longer working. We are driving the attorneys to move cases through the system much faster, and we are taking more cases to jury trials than ever before. This does not leave our prosecutors with the time to stop and write appellate briefs. For this reason, we are requesting the addition of a dedicated appellate attorney. It has also come to our attention that the community and members of the commissioner's court would like to see the establishment of a conviction integrity process for reviewing past convictions. To that end, we are requesting a new Attorney IV position that will allow us to designate an attorney to handle all appeals for the office. This person would also be tasked with starting up a conviction integrity review process. See the detailed information regarding this request for additional information.
2. **A Mental Health Legal Assistant is needed to address the continued evolution and growth of mental health programs and initiatives.** Hays County, specifically through the efforts of the BAT (Behavioral Advisory Team), the HCCDAO, Judge Elaine Brown, and Judge Sherri Tibbe, is rapidly expanding the County's various mental health programs that are tied to the criminal justice system. Each of these programs require the participation of the HCCDAO as the attorney representing the State. In addition to the already existing misdemeanor and felony mental health courts, Hays County is now adding a new jail-based competency restoration program (JBCR), the assisted outpatient treatment program (AOT), and various other efforts that we are participants in. Both JBCR and AOT require not only attorneys with specialized knowledge, but also legal staff that can aid in coordinating strict treatment timetables because of the enhanced liberty interests and complex legal concepts at stake. While extremely effective at changing long-term behavior, both competency-restoration and AOT place strenuous conditions on participants, which mean that allowing a single participant to 'slip through the cracks' due to stretched resources or attention is simply not an option. It should also be noted that this request is not only necessary for already approved programs but is also necessary for this office to adequately engage in any future programs proposed throughout FY26 by other Hays County criminal justice partners. We submitted a budget request for a new Attorney position and a new legal assistant position to handle mental health cases and dockets. The rapid increase in the volume of work necessitated a 2025 mid-year request for the new attorney position and that position was funded. However, we still need a legal assistant to support that attorney and help track the cases in each of the mental health programs. The legal assistant will work to supplement and support office duties associated with other current and future court-initiated diversion programs including the Veteran's Treatment Court, potential-DWI Court, and Drug Court.
3. **A Legal Assistant and an Investigator are needed to provide support for our Family Justice Unit.** As described above, we have used a grant-funded position and existing

resources to build a new Family Justice Unit to handle child abuse, intimate partner sexual assaults, and high-risk domestic violence case. The four attorneys assigned to the Family Justice Unit need logistical support. A trial team typically consists of a legal assistant, a victim assistance coordinator, a DME/Discovery assistant, and a DA investigator. We have determined that the Family Justice Unit attorneys can share victim services support and digital media evidence/discovery services with the trial court teams, but the unit needs a dedicated legal assistant position for direct support managing their dockets and an investigator dedicated to tracking down witnesses and serving trial subpoenas on their cases. This unit will be sending their prosecutors to all courts and the types of cases they handle will go to trial more frequently than other types. The legal assistant and investigator will be needed to make sure they make all court appearances and are ready for trial.

4. **A Civil Paralegal is needed to facilitate an increased flow of public information requests.** The Civil Division of the HCCDAO handles all public information requests for Hays County outside of a couple of offices that have decided to handle their own. The number of requests received each year has been growing significantly from year to year, with approximately 5,500 public information requests received and processed by the Civil Division in 2024. As of July 1st, the Civil Division has already received over 3,100 public information requests for 2025, which is on track to yield approximately 6,200 public information requests processed by the Civil Division for 2025. Pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act, each request must generally be received, processed, and either fulfilled or have submitted a legal argument to the Office of the Attorney General within ten (10) business days. The Civil Division simply needs additional resources to keep up with the workload. For this reason, we are requesting a new paralegal position that will be assigned to the Civil Division and dedicated to this effort.
5. **The HCCDAO Chief Investigator is overwhelmed, leading to a request for a new investigator position to allow focus on management duties and coverage for our Intake attorneys.** Our Chief Investigator has to cover basic job responsibilities while also trying to supervise, train and manage staff, and it has become overwhelming. Because we have one fewer investigator position than what we need, our chief investigator is also assigned as a trial team's investigator. The Chief Investigator has significant responsibilities related to hiring and onboarding of new investigative staff, training and supervision of existing investigators, management of physical evidence, management and oversight of the office's access to law enforcement databases, and issues related to office security. He is unable to effectively perform these tasks because he also serves as the assigned investigator for a felony trial team. We are requesting a new DA investigator position to take over that trial team. That would allow the Chief to be freed up to adequately perform his duties as a supervisor. This will also allow him to serve as the investigator for our intake unit that currently has no investigator but still needs one at times.
6. **Contingency requests for grant-funded environmental positions in case the CAPCOG grant is not renewed.** Our new Environmental Enforcement Unit is primarily built on

grant funded positions. (Two out of the three positions are grant funded.) While we expect the grant to be renewed for FY 2026, we are making contingency requests for funding to support the unit's DA Investigator and Administrative Assistant in case that grant is not renewed.

7. **A technology equipment request to allow the HCCDAO to move completely to a paperless prosecution model and to fully interact with the new case management system.** The HCCDAO, in conjunction with the Hays County IT Department, is implementing TechShare Prosecutor, a completely paperless case management system that will streamline the handling of cases and the production of criminal discovery. This system should be fully operational in September 2025. To work within the system, our staff and prosecutors require adequate computer equipment. A failure of a laptop, which is a far too often occurrence with our current computers, represents a work stoppage for employees, and can even delay court proceedings. The technology request that is submitted during this budget cycle is large, but much of it is to update old computer equipment that would struggle or fail to meet the requirements of the new system.
8. The HCCDAO budget request adds funding for witness travel, as we have consistently fallen short of being able to cover these expenses which are to be reimbursed by the State. We are also requesting a larger amount for training. In the past, the office only asked for enough for the attorneys to attend training, and that amount was often insufficient for that purpose. We have found that our investigators, VACs and some key personnel are also in need of training and our request would include training for some of those employees.

VI. Requests for Compensation Regrades for Existing Staff

1. Victim Assistance Coordinators (VACs) – a two-grade increase for 10 staff members from their current grade of 116 to grade 118:

During the 2023 meetings with MAG (the Management Advisory Group), everyone in the DA's meeting agreed that Victim Assistance Coordinators (VACs) should be at least one pay grade higher than legal assistants due to the type of work being done and the difficult tasks VACs face in dealing with survivors of traumatic events. Despite that conversation, when the final salary plan was released, the VACs were placed in the same paygrade as legal assistants and intake coordinators – grade 116. The HCCDAO has been striving to improve the quality of the victim services provided by the office and is in a constant struggle to hire and retain employees in this demanding and emotionally stressful role. We have used some of the funds made available to the HCCDAO from the State through the Rural Prosecutor Grant (SB 22) to pay a supplement to the VACs of \$7,500 per year. This has helped us attract candidates for the job, but that grant is also being used to pay for supplements to investigators and to pay the salary of the chief prosecutor in the Family Justice section. The SB 22 grant is not a sustainable funding source for this supplement.

We are requesting to have the VACs moved to grade 118 which is more in line with the demands of that role.

2. Creation of New Position of Senior Victim Assistance Coordinator – an additional grade increase for any VACs with advanced degrees and relevant experience placing a Senior VAC at grade 119:

In addition to the requested regrade of VACs to grade 118, the HCCDAO is requesting the creation of a new level that would be a step on a career ladder for VACs. This would be titled as a Senior Victim Assistance Coordinator and would be placed one grade higher on the pay scale compared to the other VACs, at grade 119. To qualify as a Senior Victim Assistance Coordinator, an employee would need an advanced degree, master's or higher, in any mental health field plus at least three years of experience working in counseling or victim services. Having this would help us attract qualified applicants as well as providing an incentive for current VACs to continue their education.

3. Investigators/Chief Investigator – a one-grade increase for 10 investigators from grade 123 to grade 124 and 1 Chief Investigator from 124 to 125:

The HCCDAO investigators have presented the District Attorney with compelling information they have gathered from surrounding counties and other local law enforcement agencies in the area. They demonstrated that, following the recent changes to Hays County Sheriff's Office and Constable salaries, the DA investigators are far below market for their roles. HCCDAO Investigators are paid less than the same positions in Comal County and Guadalupe County. We are at risk of losing investigators to open positions in those offices. We are requesting a one-grade increase from grade 123 to grade 124 to allow us to remain competitive with these neighboring counties as well as with other local law enforcement agencies, including other county departments. If this increase is approved, then it will necessitate a one-grade increase for the Chief Investigator to maintain his current grade position.

4. Legal Assistants – a one-grade increase for 15 staff members from their current grade of 116 to grade 117:

During FY 2025, the County Courts at Law sought, and received approval for, a regrade for paralegal positions from grade 117 to grade 120. In line with the paralegal regrade in the County Courts at Law, paralegals within the HCCDAO were regraded to remain consistent across the board for paralegal positions within the County. While this was appreciated, it has caused a significant pay disparity among staff within the District Attorney's Office that do similar work. Our legal assistants are at grade 116 but the work that they do is substantially similar to the work done by the paralegals. In fact, the work

done by our legal assistants and intake coordinators that are assigned to the DME/Discovery Team may be even more complicated and difficult than the work done by some of the paralegals on our staff. Staff in those roles are managing all criminal discovery. Their work is vitally important to ensuring that the constitutional rights of criminal defendants are protected and that the HCCDAO is in full compliance with all laws related to criminal disclosure. The 4-grade difference between legal assistants and paralegals seems unfair and has resulted in a drop in morale among many on the staff. We are requesting that the Legal Assistants be regraded to level 117, a single grade increase from their current position.

5. Intake Coordinators serving as Legal Assistants on the DME/Discovery Team – convert 5 staff from Intake Coordinators to Legal Assistants and regrade from grade 116 to grade 117:

During FY 2025, the County Courts at Law sought, and received approval for, a regrade for paralegal positions from grade 117 to grade 120. In line with the paralegal regrade in the County Courts at Law, paralegals within the HCCDAO were regraded to remain consistent across the board for paralegal positions within the County. While this was appreciated, it has caused a significant pay disparity among staff within the District Attorney's Office that do similar work. Five of our intake coordinators that are assigned to the DME/Discovery Team are serving as legal assistants at grade 116, but the work that they do is substantially similar to the work done by the paralegals and may be even more complicated and difficult than the work done by some of the paralegals on our staff. Staff in these roles are managing all criminal discovery. Their work is vitally important to ensuring that the constitutional rights of criminal defendants are protected and that the HCCDAO is in full compliance with all laws related to criminal disclosure. The 4-grade difference between legal assistants and paralegals seems unfair and has resulted in a drop in morale among many on the staff. We are requesting that the five Intake Coordinators serving as Legal Assistants be converted to Legal Assistants and regraded to level 117, a single grade increase from their current position.

VII. Summary of New Positions Requested

In this budget request, the HCCDAO is requesting a total of six new FTEs. There is also a contingent request for two positions in case a current grant is not renewed by CAPCOG. Each position is detailed separately on the documentation submitted at the time of the budget request and includes the position title, grade, and a description of the core duties and justification for the requested FTE, but the following is a summary of the positions with an explanation of the direction we are taking with the request.

We are requesting a new attorney, two new investigators, one paralegal, and two legal assistants. We also have contingency requests for an investigator and an administrative assistant that currently exist but are funded by a grant.

The attorney is a new Attorney VI to handle all of the office's appeals and to launch a conviction integrity process within the office.

The two new investigators are (1) a new investigator to be assigned to one of the felony trial teams so that our Chief Investigator can function as a supervisor and no longer have to personally cover a court team assignment; and (2) a new investigator to support our new Family Justice Unit working on criminal cases involving child abuse, intimate partner sexual assault, and high-risk domestic violence. We are also making a contingency request for an investigator for our environmental enforcement unit that would only be necessary if CAPCOG does not renew the grant that currently funds that position.

The paralegal is for our Civil Division to provide additional support to the team that responds to all public information requests directed to Hays County departments. The volume of requests received each year has outgrown the resources of this office. Additional help is needed to avoid missing important deadlines and to stay in compliance with applicable law.

The two legal assistants are (1) a new legal assistant to support the newly formed Family Justice Unit, and (2) a new legal assistant to directly support the mental health prosecutor and the office's management of the mental health court dockets, our veteran's treatment court, and newly court-proposed DWI Court and Drug Court.

Finally, our request includes a contingency request for an administrative assistant for our Environmental Enforcement Unit that is currently funded by a CAPCOG grant in case the grant is not renewed.



PRE-TRIAL SERVICES

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Judicial Services

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Judicial Services Department serves all Hays County courts and the community by fostering positive relationships with those under Pretrial supervision and providing objective investigative reports with recommendations to assist the courts in making fair pretrial release & supervision decisions. By utilizing evidence-based practices, technology, and treatment resources, Judicial Services ultimately helps to protect the community by assisting criminal defendants with the opportunity to make positive changes in their lives, resulting in better outcomes.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. Increase Interview and Risk Assessment Capacity

Specific: Expand intake operations by hiring two (2) additional Pretrial Officer I to increase interviews and risk assessments.

Measurable: Conduct a minimum of 25 additional monthly pretrial interviews and risk assessments.

Achievable: Utilize new hires to increase interview volume without reducing quality.

Relevant: Enhances release recommendations and supports jail population management.

Time-bound: Hire two (2) additional pretrial officer I positions and establish an intake unit by the start of Q1 FY2026.

2. Enhance Monitoring of Alcohol Device Cases

Specific: Redistribute caseloads and hire one (1) Pretrial Officer II position to improve oversight of alcohol-monitoring clients.

Measurable: Reduce average caseload per Pretrial Officer II by 20%.

Achievable: Reallocation enabled by one (1) new staff position.

Relevant: Ensures effective monitoring and compliance with court-ordered supervision of alcohol devices.

Time-bound: Caseload reductions to be achieved within 90 days of onboarding new staff.

3. Reduce Jail Overcrowding Through Pretrial Releases

Specific: Collaborate with the Magistrate's Office to increase monthly pretrial releases.

Measurable: Increase monthly release rate from 49 to 60 inmates.

Achievable: Possible with additional staff and optimized processes.

Relevant: Reduces jail costs and overcrowding; promotes public safety.

Time-bound: Reach target by the end of FY2026.

4. Create a Caseload to Address the Unhoused Populations

Specific: Develop targeted support services for the unhoused population and high-needs pretrial clients (e.g., employment, housing, substance use, and mental health).

Measurable: Refer at least five (5) clients per month to appropriate support services.

Achievable: Use internal referrals and external partnerships.

Relevant: Directly addresses risk factors linked to nonappearance and reoffending.

Time-bound: Begin program implementation by Q1 FY2026.

5. Improve Court Appearance Rates

Specific: Utilize text message reminders for all clients under supervision to reduce failure-to-appear rates.

Measurable: Achieve a 10-15% reduction in missed court dates within 12 months.

Achievable: Leverage existing communication infrastructure and automate reminders.

Relevant: Aligns with evidence-based practices and department mission.

Time-bound: Monitor progress quarterly and reach the goal by August 2026.

6. Increase in Continuing Education Funds

Specific: Request an increase in the department's continuing education budget to \$10,000.00 to expand employee training opportunities, specifically for evidence-based practices and skill development relevant to pretrial services and case management.

Measurable: Per department policy, staff are required to obtain 20 hours of job-related training per year. Management will track the number of staff training hours and post-training performance

improvements using feedback surveys. Additionally, management will require staff who attend training to give a short presentation to the staff who did not participate in the training.

Achievable: The training plan includes affordable programs offered by the Texas Association of Pretrial Services and other associations. A budget increase to \$10,000.00 will cover sending 20 employees to at least one training course during the budget year of FY2026.

Relevant: Increased training aligns with the department's strategic objective of improving service delivery, enhancing compliance monitoring, and reducing pretrial failure-to-appear rates through more informed and skilled staff.

Time-bound: Fully utilize the training budget by the end of FY2026.



DISTRICT CLERK

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT:

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

The District Clerk's Office staff are public servants to all people that reside in Hays County, and neighboring counties. Our primary purpose is to maintain the records for the District Courts, while executing our duties efficiently and accurately. We strive to utilize technology to enhance service delivery for the public. We aim to be a beacon of knowledge and training, sharing our knowledge with other Hays County departments, so that, together, we can create an effective, united and accessible government entity, for our community.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. **Training**-Our office is in the knowledge building phase. The most critical need is access to current education and trainings, in person and virtually. We have designated various conferences in the 2026 budget year that will benefit our office and staff. We seek not only to perform our job well but also help educate other offices in the county. This year we have worked with many JP offices as well as the County Clerks Office, to do Jury training; expunction training and are in the process of working on a presentation for training on Bonds. My desire is to continue to these multi office trainings. To do so, I want my team to be as informed and educated as possible. I know if we are able to attend the trainings outlined in our budget, we will be able to continue and expand this cooperative effort that will benefit not only our office but the entire county, as well.
2. **Efficiency/Availability**- We are trying to bring timeliness and efficiency into the services provided by our office. Particularly providing certified copies of records. This process should not only be timely but also be of high security and authenticity standards. Unfortunately, this is currently not the case for most offices in the state and leaves them exposed to fraudulent record representation. We have found a reasonably priced software, that will rid our office of the potential for fraudulent exposure, eliminate our inefficient process, and provide immediate results to our citizens. The Triedata software will be an online portal, that anyone can access to purchase and immediate download certified documents. If these documents are tampered with, the certification, will be immediately unauthenticated. We have worked with our IT department to determine that it is practical and compatible with our current case management system, and they had no concerns. We also informed and included the County Clerk's office, to see if they would be interested in this program for their office, they too seemed intrigued by the services this software provided.
3. **Sufficient Staff**- To get our staff size up to par to the appropriate need for our county size we are requesting Two more Deputy Clerk Seniors, and one additional Chief Deputy Clerk. This addition of staff will allow more efficient delegation of the responsibilities of our office, and result in minimal staff request in the future, with the expectation of 0-1 per year. Our office organization chart shows how the current vs anticipated office structure will create an organized, sufficient, and supported chain of command. With the additional, needed, staff it should allow us to provide services timelier to the public, begin our long needed archival of records, and adhere to the proper scheduled for destruction of Exhibits. By performing these tasks, we are hoping to eliminate the need for space expansion in our office, as we will turn a significant amount of our filing room into a work area, with these clearances.
4. **Proper Compensation/ Retention of Employees**-The majority of our staff receive sufficient and adequate compensation for their position. There is one position whose responsibilities do not fit their pay grade. The current two Chief Deputy clerks are supervisors with positions that require a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the law and legal process. Each Chief Deputy Clerk recruits, trains and supervises all the staff members in their division, a minimum of five employees. They oversee the facilitation of Civil and Felony jury trials that range from Theft to Capital Murder weekly, as well as all Civil and Criminal Non-Jury dockets, and hearings. They are also responsible for processing appeals after trials, with the Court of Appeals. These duties and responsibilities are some of the most sensitive processes in the criminal justice system and as supervisors of such should be compensated in such a way that reflects that. Otherwise, I believe

the responsibility to pay ratio is untenable, to maintain skilled employees. However, I think a regrade will help us retain employees for years to come.

5. **Communication-** Communication and accessibility are very important in Hays County. The census for 2024 noted that 25% of people in Hays County speak another language other than English, with an emphasis on Spanish speaking. Though we have many employees who are bilingual, these employees are not additionally compensated for this valuable skill. Therefore, to be able to professionally engage with the public of multiple languages, we are requesting money in our budget to purchase 2 translation devices for our office.



COUNTY COURTS AT LAW

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: County Courts at Law

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT: Render justice in a fair, efficient, and timely manner. Our office strives to provide the people of Hays County with a competent, engaged judicial system that will uphold the law for all parties involved.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. To resolve outdated cases and enhance the efficiency of managing current and future cases.
2. To establish and launch the DWI & Drug Court program that will offer an alternative resolution to individuals who may require special services to address issues related to the criminal offense.
3. To maintain, promote, and improve the Veterans Treatment, Mental Health, and Assisted Outpatient Treatment Specialty Courts.
4. To promote and improve upon early identification of defendants with mental health, substance use and/or intellectual or developmental challenges by providing access to treatment options to support recovery and reduce recidivism through participation in the Mental Health Court.
5. To help individuals in the community achieve stability by supporting individuals who have mental health and substance abuse challenges and have experienced frequent hospitalizations or involvement with the criminal justice system through participation in the Assisted Outpatient Treatment Court.
6. To improve oversight of guardianship and probate cases with enhanced review and procedures.



COMBINED EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT:

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

Our department is dedicated to serving the residents, visitors, and public safety partners of Hays County with professionalism, integrity, accountability, and innovation. We aspire to provide responsive, accurate, and compassionate emergency communications that support the safety of our community and the effectiveness of first responders. We are committed to continuous improvement, creative problem-solving, and excellence in public service.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

- 1. Enhance Training and Professional Development** – expand ongoing training programs for ECO's and strengthening professionalism, consistency, and quality of services. Additional staff requests will be essential to the overall success of our operational goals.

2. Replace outdated technology in accordance with CJIS standards. - replacement desktops for the consoles, laptops for supervisors, and laptops for remote operations

3. Invest in innovative technology to improve service delivery - Coordinate interfaces with City of Austin (CTECC) to have access to data and real-time information for Hays/Caldwell ESD 1 which is staffed by Travis County ESD 11. Ensuring timely and accurate response protocols for our eastern Hays County citizens.

4. Quality Assurance / Quality Control – working to become ACE certified with Priority Dispatch by establishing call review processes, hosting in service training, and coaching. The newly requested LEAD positions will help ensure timely call review and coaching of ECO's. This additional layer of oversight will be paramount in a successful deployment of the programs.

5. Expand radio service for operational safety – We have prioritized the upcoming hiring cycle to allocate two Emergency Communications Officer (ECO) positions specifically to Fire/EMS operations. The request for four additional ECO's will allow u



COUNTY CLERK

Mission Statement

From: [Cynthia Millonzi](#)
To: [Victoria Vasquez](#)
Cc: [Vickie Dorsett](#); [Cassy Polen](#); [Elaine Cardenas](#)
Subject: RE: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives
Date: Thursday, July 24, 2025 2:30:04 PM

My apologies for the delay.

Here you go:

Mission Statement

The Hays County Clerk's Office is committed to delivering exemplary customer service in strict adherence to all applicable laws and regulations. We endeavor to provide professional leadership in the areas of records management, court administration, and archiving. Through the evaluation and implementation of innovative practices, we seek to enhance operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness. We are dedicated to developing accessible, user-friendly resources for all residents, fostering a respectful and welcoming environment for both the public and our employees, while actively contributing to the advancement of county management and public administration.

Cynthia A Millonzi

Deputy Director
Hays County Clerk's Office
712 S Stagecoach Trail, Ste 2008
San Marcos, TX 78666
(512) 393-2809

From: Victoria Vasquez <victoria.vasquez@hayscountytexas.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 9:50 AM
To: Vickie Dorsett <vickie.dorsett@hayscountytexas.gov>; Cassy Polen <cassandra.polen@hayscountytexas.gov>
Subject: FW: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives

Good morning,

I'm reaching out regarding the email sent out on Thursday, June 26th about mission statements. These were due on Friday, July 18th. Will your department be submitting a mission statement?

Respectfully,

Victoria Vasquez
Budget Analyst II

Budget Office
712 S Stagecoach Trail, Ste. 1045
San Marcos, TX 78666
Work (512) 749-1156

From: Vickie Dorsett <vickie.dorsett@hayscountytexas.gov>
Sent: Thursday, June 26, 2025 8:17 PM
To: Elected Officials <ElectedOfficials@hayscountytexas.gov>; Department Heads
<departmentheads@hayscountytexas.gov>
Cc: Victoria Vasquez <victoria.vasquez@hayscountytexas.gov>; Cassy Polen
<cassandra.polen@hayscountytexas.gov>
Subject: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives

Good Evening Elected Officials & Department Heads,

Per Commissioner Cohen's request, please provide a mission statement and brief narrative outlining your departments goals and initiatives for Fiscal Year 2026. This information will be compiled and presented to the Commissioners Court for their review during the annual budget workshops in August. Please email this information to me by Friday, July 18th.

Feel free to contact my office if you have any questions. Thank you.

Vickie G. Dorsett
Hays County Budget Officer
O: 512-393-2275
M: 512-757-5917



SHERIFF

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE MISSION STATEMENT

Dedicated to serving our community with integrity, accountability and unwavering commitment to public safety and justice.



TAX OFFICE
Mission Statement

From: [Jennifer Escobar](#)
To: [Vickie Dorsett](#)
Cc: [Theresa Cruz](#)
Subject: RE: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 12:44:04 PM

Here you go Vickie – here’s our mission statement, goals, and initiatives. Thank you!

Mission statement:

Our mission is to provide the people of Hays County with accurate, transparent, and efficient Motor Vehicle and Property Tax services. We are committed to delivering professional service, fostering collaboration with our community partners, and responsibly managing the resources entrusted to us by the Hays County Commissioners Court.

Goals & Initiatives:

Deliver Accurate & Efficient Tax Services by:

- Implementing technology updates to improve accuracy and processing speed
- Conducting regular staff training on updated tax laws, regulations, and procedures

Promote Transparency and Accountability by:

- Providing regular public reports on tax collections and office performance
- Creating clear and accessible information on tax policies and payment options on the office website
- Developing a feedback system for taxpayers to voice concerns or suggestions

Strengthen Collaboration with Community Partners by:

- Hosting regular meetings with Appraisal District, school districts and other taxing entities
- Developing joint public education campaigns with partner entities to improve taxpayer understanding of the process

Responsibly Manage Resources Provided by Commissioners Court by:

- Conducting audits of resource use and budget allocations to ensure fiscal responsibility
- Identifying and proposing efficiency improvements to reduce costs without compromising service

Jennifer M. Escobar

Hays County Tax Assessor-Collector
712 S. Stagecoach Trail, Ste. 1120
San Marcos, TX 78666
512-393-5508 (phone)

From: Vickie Dorsett <vickie.dorsett@hayscountytexas.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:27 AM
To: Jennifer Escobar <jennifer.escobar@hayscountytexas.gov>
Subject: RE: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives

They are due this Friday. If you go to the original email I sent on June 26th, there is a form attached with the format you can follow. Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks!

From: Jennifer Escobar <jennifer.escobar@hayscountytexas.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:25 AM
To: Vickie Dorsett <vickie.dorsett@hayscountytexas.gov>
Subject: RE: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives

I was not aware that goals and initiatives were needed but I certainly will work on it. How much time do I have?

Thanks, Vickie.

Jennifer M. Escobar
Hays County Tax Assessor-Collector
712 S. Stagecoach Trail, Ste. 1120
San Marcos, TX 78666
512-393-5508 (phone)

From: Vickie Dorsett <vickie.dorsett@hayscountytexas.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:17 AM
To: Jennifer Escobar <jennifer.escobar@hayscountytexas.gov>
Subject: RE: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives

Thank you Jennifer,

Will you be providing goals & initiatives that line up with your additional staffing and software request for FY26?

Vickie G. Dorsett
Hays County Budget Officer
O: 512-393-2275
M: 512-757-5917

From: Jennifer Escobar <jennifer.escobar@hayscountytexas.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 15, 2025 9:15 AM
To: Vickie Dorsett <vickie.dorsett@hayscountytexas.gov>
Subject: Re: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives

Morning Vickie,

The following is the Tax Office's mission statement:

Our mission is to provide the people of Hays County with accurate, transparent, and efficient Motor Vehicle and Property Tax services. We are committed to delivering professional service, fostering collaboration with our community partners, and responsibly managing the resources entrusted to us by the Hays County Commissioners Court.

Thanks!

Jennifer M. Escobar

Hays County Tax Assessor-Collector
712 S. Stagecoach Trail, Ste. 1120
San Marcos, TX 78666
512-393-5508 (phone)

From: Vickie Dorsett <vickie.dorsett@hayscountytexas.gov>
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2025 8:32:09 AM
To: Elected Officials <ElectedOfficials@hayscountytexas.gov>; Department Heads <departmentheads@hayscountytexas.gov>
Cc: Victoria Vasquez <victoria.vasquez@hayscountytexas.gov>; Cassy Polen <cassandra.polen@hayscountytexas.gov>
Subject: RE: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives

Good Morning,

A reminder that your FY 2026 goals and initiatives should be emailed to me by next Friday.
Thank you.

From: Vickie Dorsett
Sent: Thursday, June 26, 2025 8:17 PM
To: Elected Officials <ElectedOfficials@hayscountytexas.gov>; Department Heads <departmentheads@hayscountytexas.gov>
Cc: Victoria Vasquez <victoria.vasquez@hayscountytexas.gov>; Cassy Polen <cassandra.polen@hayscountytexas.gov>
Subject: FY 2026 Goals & Initiatives

Good Evening Elected Officials & Department Heads,

Per Commissioner Cohen's request, please provide a mission statement and brief narrative outlining your departments goals and initiatives for Fiscal Year 2026. This information will be compiled and presented to the Commissioners Court for their review during the annual budget workshops in August. Please email this information to me by Friday, July 18th.

Feel free to contact my office if you have any questions. Thank you.

Vickie G. Dorsett
Hays County Budget Officer
O: 512-393-2275
M: 512-757-5917



TREASURER

Mission Statement

Hays County, Texas Treasury MISSION

Our Mission at the Hays County, Texas Treasury is to provide transparent, accurate and reliable financial services ensuring timely payments and the effective stewardship of county resources. We advocate for accountability, customer service, and community engagement.

Hays County, Texas Treasury Goals

- ❖ Establish and regularly review internal policies and procedures with employee input to improve continuity and effectiveness with progress assessed quarterly.
- ❖ Reduce outstanding payments and stale checks monthly by actively updating The Treasury Website and enhancing engagement with recipients.
- ❖ Launch quarterly workshops on financial literacy across the five precincts and measure effectiveness and engagement.

Hays County, Texas Treasury Objectives

- Elevate customer service to meet the needs of our growing county.
- Foster transparency to strengthen community trust
- Enhance financial accountability for stability and growth
- Optimize efficiency in reporting and payment disbursements.
- Promoting financial literacy through community partnerships



BUDGET OFFICE

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY BUDGET & PAYROLL OFFICE

712 S. Stagecoach Trail, Suite 1045
San Marcos, Texas 78666

VICKIE G. DORSETT, BUDGET OFFICER
vickie.dorsett@co.hays.tx.us
512-393-2275

BUDGET DIVISION

Hays County operates under Texas Local Government Code, Section 111 Subchapter C
Sec. 111.062. APPOINTMENT OF BUDGET OFFICER;(a) The commissioners court of the county may appoint a county budget officer to prepare a county budget for the fiscal year.

MISSION:

The mission of the Hays County Budget Office is to prepare the County's budget for the fiscal year as a readable, informative and accurate forecast of the County's projected revenue and expenditures. Our purpose is to continually monitor the budget and manage resources efficiently, effectively and equitably.

WHAT WE DO:

The Budget Office is responsible for the following:

- Preparing and presenting a balanced operating budget for approval by Commissioners Court annually
- Monitoring departmental appropriations and expenditures and posting budgetary transfers as required
- Monitoring revenue and expenditure trends and make recommendations to Commissioners Court
- Developing and updating budget policies and procedures
- Conducting cost/benefit analysis and determining ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness throughout county operations



PURCHASING Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: PURCHASING OFFICE

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Hays County Purchasing Office is to deliver exceptional service, guidance, and expertise to all County departments in support of their procurement needs. Our objective is to ensure cost-effective, value-driven purchasing practices that maximize the efficient use of taxpayer dollars while upholding the highest standards of integrity and excellence.

Our team is dedicated to fostering collaboration and supporting ongoing purchasing activities while continuously improving procedures, implementing best practices, and enhancing process efficiency.

By embracing sound management principles and encouraging cooperation among County Officials, Department Heads, and employees, we strive to maintain a procurement process that is transparent, efficient, and fiscally responsible—ultimately delivering measurable cost savings and supporting the County's overarching mission.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. Fleet Operations:

On January 6, 2024, the Commissioners Court authorized the Purchasing Agent to be the authorized agent on all documents related to county owned vehicles. On May 6, 2025, the Commissioners Court further authorized the Purchasing Agent to be the primary authorized agent on all documents related to county leased vehicles. The Purchasing Office currently manages the fuel card program for all county-owned and county-leased vehicles, as well as vehicle inventory management for all departments.

Given the increasing complexity of these responsibilities, I have proposed the creation of a Fleet Operations Administrator position in the FY 2026 Budget, which was subsequently adjusted to "Fleet Operations Specialist" by Human Resources to maintain consistency with other position titles within the office.

The responsibilities of this new position would be as follows:

- Assist departments in obtaining quotes for county-owned vehicles, and county-leased vehicles, including any necessary upfitting requirements.
- Coordinates the delivery and pickup of vehicles and equipment.
- Managing all necessary documentation for county-owned and leased vehicles, including title and registration, license plates, and ensuring vehicles are properly added to the county's insurance policy.
- Providing oversight and guidance for all fleet management programs.
- Tracking equipment rental expenditures and quantities and forecasting year-end budgetary needs.
- Coordinating vehicle maintenance schedules with relevant departments.
- Maintaining an up-to-date inventory of vehicles across all county departments.
- Reviewing purchase orders, receipts, and vendor invoices for accuracy when necessary.
- Managing the Fuelman Credit Card program, including issuing PINs, adding and removing vehicles, and providing credit cards for new vehicles or replacements.
- Conducting research related to specific cases, such as vehicle accidents or insurance claims.
- Negotiating, developing, and preparing fleet agreements.
- Collaborating with departments and other purchasing staff to manage the auction of county-owned vehicles and the return of leased vehicles.

Currently, the Senior Purchasing Specialist is responsible for some of these duties, including managing Fuelman cards and PINs, title and registration paperwork, license plates for county-owned vehicles, and vehicle inventory. However, most other responsibilities, such as obtaining quotes, coordinating deliveries, and vehicle maintenance, remain under the purview of the Purchasing Agent.

The establishment of the Fleet Operations Specialist position would enable a realignment of duties between the Purchasing Specialist and Senior Purchasing Specialist. This would also create opportunities to implement additional programs to enhance the efficiency of the Purchasing Office and further support the needs of the County.

2. Accounts Payable (AP) Payment Card & Travel Card Program:

Currently, the County utilizes a credit card system primarily for training and travel-related purchases; however, the County does not currently benefit from any form of rebate. The Purchasing Office is

proposing the introduction of a new program that would allow Accounts Payable (AP) to pay allowable invoices via a line of credit, enabling the County to receive rebates on these transactions. In addition to the AP Payment Card, we also propose implementing a Travel Card Program, designed for use by county employees on approved travel.

With the implementation of both programs, the Senior Purchasing Specialist would assume the following responsibilities:

- Reviewing and approving travel card requests.
- Loading the appropriate funds onto travel cards.
- Issuing travel cards to designated employees.
- Collecting travel cards upon employees' return.
- Reconciling charges to ensure compliance with policy and guidelines.

Under typical P-card programs, entities generally receive a rebate ranging from 1% to 3% of total charges. In Fiscal Year 2025, Hays County expended \$300,477.33 in credit card transactions, which could have resulted in a rebate between \$3,004.78 (1%) and \$9,014.32 (3%). This potential rebate does not account for the additional rebate that could be earned through the AP Payment Card program, which would contribute to an even greater overall rebate.

3. Development and Implementation of Centralized Purchasing:

In accordance with Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 262.011(d), it is the Purchasing Agents responsibility to purchase all supplies, materials, and equipment required or used, and contract for all repair to property used, by the county or a subdivision, officer, or employee of the county.

I would like to propose the development and implementation of a centralized purchasing program, initially focusing on office supplies and countywide furniture needs. It is well-established that bulk purchasing results in significant cost savings compared to buying smaller quantities. Regarding office supplies, I am currently gathering data on current departmental spending and comparing it to the potential costs of bulk purchasing, with the goal of demonstrating the financial benefits to the County. For countywide furniture needs, I am working to establish a standardized selection of office furniture, including desks, chairs, lobby furniture, conference tables, visitor chairs, etc., to ensure a consistent and professional appearance across all county offices. This approach will also help us secure the best possible value for the County.

As part of the program's implementation, I will also establish a streamlined process for offices to place orders for supplies, as well as determine the method for the delivery or pickup of these supplies. Additionally, the allocation of costs to the appropriate departments will be clearly defined. The responsibilities of processing and fulfilling order requests will be assigned to the Purchasing Specialist to further enhancing the responsibilities and development of this role.

4. Continued Development of Purchasing Office Staff:

Purchasing Specialist: The Purchasing Specialist has been with the County for five months and has made significant progress in learning the complexities of various purchase order requests. During this time, she has been reviewing purchase orders in accordance with established policies and guidelines, managing the open PO report each quarter, overseeing business card orders for multiple County offices, submits rebate documentation to the required purchasing cooperatives. She has also built

strong professional relationships with departments to ensure timely and efficient support from the Purchasing Office.

This month, an additional responsibility was introduced to her role: managing the Countywide cell phone account. This includes processing requests for new phone numbers and handling all device upgrades for existing accounts.

Goals for the Next Fiscal Year:

- Continue training and development to enhance her understanding of contract review and procurement policies and guidelines.
- Implement the centralized purchasing program for office supplies, ensuring a smooth rollout across all County departments.
- Provide ongoing support and development to ensure the Purchasing Specialist is fully equipped to manage expanded responsibilities effectively.
- Collaborate with departments to maximize the use of BuyBoard and Choice Partners purchasing cooperatives, ensuring the County receives the highest possible rebates to increase revenue.

Senior Purchasing Specialist: The Senior Purchasing Specialist assists County departments with the yearly auction, county wide inventory, county credit cards, Fuelman pins and cards, copiers, AT&T Phones, and supervises the Purchasing Specialist by reviewing and approving promoted POs. The Senior Purchasing Specialist performs supervision of purchasing and procurement work involving purchasing and procuring commodities, equipment, and services in accordance with guidelines, rules, policies, and laws, and provides advanced administrative work in support of the County's purchasing process. The Senior Purchasing Specialist has been in her new position since March 2025, previously she was a Purchasing Specialist II.

With the addition of the fleet responsibilities within the Purchasing Office, the Senior Purchasing Specialist has taken on the responsibilities of managing vehicle files for the county-owned vehicles.

Goals for the Next Fiscal Year:

- Continue comprehensive training and development to strengthen her expertise in contract review and procurement policies and guidelines.
- Provide ongoing guidance and resources to ensure the Senior Purchasing Specialist is fully prepared to manage expanded responsibilities effectively.
- If the AP Payment Card and Travel Card Programs are implemented, ensure the Senior Purchasing Specialist has a thorough understanding of program requirements and responsibilities. Additionally, conduct Countywide training sessions to educate Department Heads and Elected Officials on program guidelines and compliance standards.

Contract Specialist: The Contracts Specialist position is responsible for contract management activities, including evaluating a broad range of County contracts and supporting various procurement functions within the Purchasing Department. This position is currently vacant.

Goals for the Next Fiscal Year:

- Continue to work to recruit and select the most qualified candidate for this position.

- Provide comprehensive training on the various contract types utilized by the County, including contract interpretation from a procurement perspective, management and execution of renewals, and addressing contract performance issues.
- Upload all existing contracts into the New World Financial System to ensure centralized access and availability for authorized personnel.

5. Implementation & Training of New Countywide Purchasing Policy:

The County is implementing a new purchasing policy that will be effective September 1, 2025.

Implementation Goals for FY 2026:

- Communicate upcoming policy changes clearly by explaining what is changing, why the changes are being implemented, and how they will benefit employees and individual departments.
- Conduct ongoing training sessions to address common issues and ensure consistent application of the new policy.
- Host periodic refresher sessions throughout the year for departments that experience challenges in implementing the new policies.



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE 1, 1 Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Justice of the Peace 1-1

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT: The justice of the Peace 1-1 office is here to serve the community and with that we strive to ensure that we serve efficiently and effectively. Through proper training and education our goal is to continue to provide the best possible service to all. We strive to keep up with all changes handed down by the legislature that affects this office and we take pride in passing our knowledge and expertise to the citizens of Hays County.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. We will continue to have the yearly education needed to keep the office up to date on changes.
2. We have a new jury program put in place by Hays County and we are fully rehearsed in that program in order to ensure the community that comes in for jury service has a pleasant experience when coming to the court.

3. With the many filings received by this office in Civil we have added a second court date in order to accommodate the timely movement of cases with the court.

4. My office is open during the lunch hour in order to serve the community that can only address court business during their lunch hour.

5. I continue to provide the Zoom hearing in order to effectively make it possible for the community to attend court. We have in person and Zoom hearings upon request.



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE 1, 2 Mission Statement

Maggie H. Moreno

Justice of the Peace

Precinct 1 Place 2

Mission Statement

The office of the Justice of the Peace's mission is to administer justice with fairness, integrity, and compassion, while upholding the laws of the State of Texas. In addition to resolving disputes, we fulfill essential magistrate duties, such as issuing warrants, conducting preliminary hearings, presiding over inquests, and, when authorized, performing marriages.

Office of the Justice of the Peace Pct 1 Place 2 - Goals

1. Uphold Fairness, Integrity, and Respect

- Ensure all individuals who interact with the office, whether in-person or remotely, are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.
- Implement regular training for staff on cultural competency, sensitivity, and conflict resolution to improve the experience for every visitor.
- Maintain transparency in all processes, so constituents understand their rights, responsibilities, and the decisions made in their cases.

2. Leverage Technology for Efficiency and Accessibility

- Explore and implement new technologies to streamline office operations, reducing wait times and improving case management.
- Provide easy-to-access online resources (e.g., forms, court schedules, FAQs) to make navigating the court process more straightforward.
- Integrate digital solutions for remote hearings where applicable, making the process more accessible for individuals facing transportation or mobility issues.

3. Support Financially Struggling Constituents

- Recognize and address the financial barriers faced by many constituents by offering payment plan options, fee waivers, or reduced fees for those who qualify.
- Work closely with local community organizations to ensure people are aware of any financial assistance available through the court system.
- Regularly review and adjust policies to ensure they are not unduly burdensome for individuals or families in financial distress.

4. Ensure Office Policies Are in Service to the Community

- Regularly evaluate the office's policies to identify opportunities for improvement and to ensure that they align with the needs of the community.
- Establish a feedback loop with the public, gathering input from constituents to understand their experiences and improve service delivery.
- Engage with local leaders, community organizations, and stakeholders to ensure policies reflect the realities and needs of the community.

5. Increase Access to Court Information

- Develop clear, accessible communication channels to share important court information, including case updates, new policies, and community resources.
- Host community outreach events to educate the public on how to navigate the court system and know their rights.
- Use social media and other platforms to post regular updates about the court's activities and any important news or changes affecting the community.



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE 2, 1 Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT:

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT: The Justice of the Peace is the legal jurisdiction closest to the average citizen. As the place where justice starts, it is the mission of the Justice of the Peace to serve the people by efficient and accessible administration of Justice for all, and to treat all persons with integrity, fairness and respect.

It is the duty of the Justice of the Peace , to act in a neutral capacity to serve all citizens, law enforcement Agencies, merchants, school districts, and various other county and state regulatory agencies who file either civil or criminal actions.

The Justice of the Peace is “The People’s Court.”

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

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Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
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Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. This is the busiest JP office in Hays County. The e-filing system is not yet functioning in Judge Mendoza's office, and with the economy, debt claims and evictions are at an all-time high. Evictions have to be held within 10-21 days of filing and that does happen, but it's sometimes difficult to get as many debt claims and small claims hearings completed as timely as I would like them. We have set every case as efficiently as possible. Our wishful goal is to find the exact cause of the e-filing system issues and push to get it operable to equalize our caseload. Judge Mendoza is working to obtain this goal as well.
2. I've been respectfully holding off on requesting an additional clerk. I didn't this year, but wish I would have. My team is overwhelmed right now with the caseload. The goal toward solving that, is to request an additional clerk in next year's budget. It can absolutely be backed up with numbers from the court. A monthly report is filed for each court and accessible to the public. Extra continuing Ed is offered at no charge through TJCTC, but the clerks don't have time to take advantage of it. I have a goal of getting them there. Personally, I stay in the office as much as possible to be available for the clerks, LEAs and constituents. I will find time for them to take the Continuing Ed that they would like. We may have to close on a non busy day to achieve this.
3. A goal that cannot be obtained without the Commissioners is something I request every year. I will again strive to have my staff pay comparable to their jobs. They have always been overlooked as "clerks". i.e. what does a district Judge's admin asst make? I guarantee that our staff has a more detailed and a higher caseload responsibility. The smaller the case, the higher the number filed.
4. The deficit in the District Clerks office, (until the new clerk took over), has really set us behind with a few jury trials. We are starting to catch up, but they weren't trained until recently on how the new juror program operates. With that said, we do need to upgrade our Justice Enterprise system to keep up with the size of this county. We are, behind as a whole, in upgrades. Only 1 clerk is completely trained on this system. All clerks are cross trained on every court process except this. Goal is to get all trained on the system. We are also looking on our own, to see if there are any shortcuts that can be taken to quicken the process to obtain a more speedy jury trial.
5. This is the first court that went paperless, the first court to utilize the texting capability that our system has, we will continue to maintain the "first" for anything new we can. Our absolute goal is to continue to administer justice effectively and efficiently. Availability to our Law enforcement agencies and constituents is also a top priority.
6. The final and always goal, is to maintain the same professionalism and customer service that this office is recognized for throughout the county.



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE 2, 2 Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Hays County JP 2-2

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Justice of the Peace is the legal jurisdiction closest to the average citizen. As the place where justice starts, it is the mission of the Justice of the Peace to serve the people by efficient and accessible administration of Justice for all, and to treat all persons with integrity, fairness and respect.

It is the duty of the Justice of the Peace , to act in a neutral capacity to serve all citizens, law enforcement Agencies, merchants, school districts, and various other county and state regulatory agencies who file either civil or criminal actions.

The Justice of the Peace is "The People's Court."

A few Goals of the JP2-2 Court:

1. Provide a Case Manager to address Truancy related issues within the public schools through proactive measures and as a result of court hearings. The court will work to locate additional resources to reduce the risk of juveniles dropping out of school.
2. Work with the Juvenile Diversion program to address Juvenile related issues within the public schools and community. The court would develop and implement programs and/or activities for juveniles and families as proactive measures/attempts. The court will work to locate additional resources to reduce the risk of juveniles entering into the Juvenile Justice System.
3. The court will work in the community to increase civic understanding and engagement.
4. To have an interpreter available for parties to a hearing/case.
5. Be available for to the public and ensure efficient court procedures.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. **Appropriately adjust the title, duties and pay for staff. Ensure quality work products and performance by having specific job duties assigned to different job classifications. Improve job moral by having compensation that is competitive with other positions within the County and neighboring counties.**

Measurable – Approval of job classifications from Budget/compensation committee and Commissioners Court.

Attainable – Start of FY 26

Timely – This has been an ongoing process and we would like this to start of FY 26

2. **Hire a Case Manager to address Truancy related cases. This will relieve some of the workload from the Justice Clerk and the Court Administrator.**

Measurable- Approval of FTE from Budget/Compensation committee and Commissioners Court. Once approved achievement of the goal would be the Justice Clerk and Court Administrator not having to constantly contact Students, Parents and School officials. Justice Clerk and Court Administrator will focus on other court related job duties.

Attainable- Jan 1, 2026

Realistic- Jan 1, 2026

3. **Look for additional office space for employees.**

Measurable- The JP 2-2 Office staff is currently in borrowed space, previously utilized by the Sheriff's Department and JP 2-1. The space used by the Court Administrator and the Judge are small and at times have to be shared with interns. Other times, Interns have to use a small jury room that is adjacent to a bathroom that is constantly used by employees. We are aware that there are plans for a County building that will be built with a few years. However with JP 2-1 requesting an additional employee we will be in need of immediate space, if JP 2-1 is able to hire an additional employee.

Attainable- Jan 1, 2026

Realistic- Oct 1, 2028

4. **The court will work in the community to increase civic understanding and engagement. The court will participate in various outreach activities to promote civic engagement and provide education on juvenile related issues and county programs. This will include attending community events, school**

activities and working with local organizations. Funds may be needed in the future to cover costs of educational materials that can be provided to the public and/or organizations.

Measurable- Publicize and participate in various community activities. Observance of a marked increase in participation of community and/or County programs, services and events.

Attainable – Ongoing.

Realistic – Ongoing.



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE PCT 3

Mission Statement



**ANDREW W. CABLE
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE
PRECINCT 3**

July 22, 2025

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING - Justice of the Peace, Pct. 3

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Justice of the Peace is the legal jurisdiction closest to the average citizen. As the place where justice starts, it is the mission of the Justice of the Peace to serve the people by efficient and accessible administration of Justice for all and to treat all persons with integrity, fairness and respect.

It is the duty of the Justice of the Peace to act in a neutral capacity to serve all citizens, law enforcement agencies, merchants, school districts and various other county and state regulatory agencies who file either civil or criminal actions. The Justice of the Peace is "The People's Court."

GOALS:

1. Reduce Case Disposition Time

- Specific: Decrease the average time to dispose of criminal and civil cases.
- Measurable: Reduce average case resolution time by 15%.
- Attainable: Implement monthly case status reviews and streamline scheduling.
- Realistic: With procedural efficiencies and staff coordination, this is manageable.
- Timely: Achieve this reduction within 12 months.

2. Improve Citation Compliance

- Specific: Increase the percentage of individuals responding to citations by the due date.
- Measurable: Improve appearance rate from current baseline to 85%.
- Attainable: Use automated text and mail reminders for court dates.
- Realistic: Technology and staff time needed are available within the current budget.
- Timely: Implement reminder system and track compliance over the next 6 months.

3. Enhance Staff Training

- Specific: Provide ongoing professional development for court clerks and staff.
- Measurable: Hold 4 quarterly training sessions focused on procedural updates and customer service.
- Attainable: Partner with Texas Justice Court Training Center (TJCTC).
- Realistic: Trainings are already available through state programs.
- Timely: Begin the first session by October 2025.



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE PCT 4

Mission Statement



JUDGE JOHN BURNS, J.D.

Hays County Justice of the Peace, Precinct 4

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of this Justice Court is to serve the people of Precinct 4 by providing a local court that is available to all for the prompt and low-cost resolution of disputes and legal issues fairly and impartially.



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE PCT 5

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Justice of the Peace Precinct 5 (Buda)

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Justice of the Peace Office serves as a vital part of the local legal system, providing an accessible and efficient forum for resolving minor offenses and civil disputes. We handle a wide range of cases, including traffic violations, small claims, landlord-tenant matters, and Class C misdemeanors, offering a quicker and more cost-effective alternative to higher courts.

Our mission is to administer justice with fairness, integrity, and compassion while upholding the laws of the State of Texas. In addition to resolving disputes, we perform essential magistrate duties such as issuing warrants, conducting preliminary hearings, presiding over inquests, and, when authorized, performing marriages. Through transparency, professionalism, and respect for all, we strive to foster trust, protect individual rights, and ensure justice is delivered fairly, promptly, and within reach of every member of our community.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. Develop a Comprehensive Cross-Training Manual for Staff

- Create a detailed operations and procedures manual to support cross-training across all core JP office functions.
- Milestones: Draft manual, staff feedback/revisions, implementation as part of onboarding and annual training.
- Outcome: Ensure continuity of operations, reduce delays during staff absences, and empower employees with multi-role proficiency.

2. Increase Pay to Attract and Retain Qualified Employees While Supporting Work-Life Balance

- Advocate for competitive, livable wages to recruit and retain experienced staff.
- Integrate work-life balance policies, including flexible scheduling where possible, and wellness initiatives to prevent burnout.
- Milestones: Submit pay adjustment proposal, implement approved changes.
- Outcome: Reduce turnover rates by 30% and improve employee satisfaction scores in annual surveys.

3. Strengthen Community Partnerships

- Continue to build and foster relationships with Hays CISD administrators and educational leaders, as well as countywide programs supporting youth and families.
- Milestones: Quarterly collaboration meetings, establish annual report of joint initiatives and impact.
- Outcome: Streamlined referral processes and enhanced support for students and parents navigating the justice system.

4. Provide Resources to Empower Students and Parents

- Support students in achieving academic success by connecting them with resources, programs, and mentorship opportunities. Equip parents with additional tools to better support their children's education through workshops, community partnerships, and access to local services.
- Milestones: Launch resource hub online, host at least 2-4 parent/student events annually.
- Outcome: Equip families with tools to avoid legal challenges and encourage academic achievement.

5. Create and Expand the Juvenile Diversion Program

- Build a robust juvenile diversion program to provide alternatives to traditional court proceedings for first-time and low-level offenders.
- Milestones: Expand partnerships with social workers and counselors, pilot additional diversion initiatives, and measure outcomes bi-annually.
- Outcome: Reduce juvenile recidivism by 25% and support youth in building positive futures.



CONSTABLE PCT 1 Mission Statement

Constable Pct. 1 Office

Mission Statement

Our “Mission” is a commitment to honesty, integrity and dedication while providing efficient and lawful service to the courts of the State of Texas, public, in all areas of civil, criminal, and law enforcement duties. The community needs shall be served in the highest professional and ethical manner possible to affect the protection and defense of people’s rights, safety and welfare. The office shall promote and assist with community activities which positively develop, educate and support our youth, elderly and handicapped. This office is committed to improving community safety, health, welfare and improving the quality of life for the citizens of Hays County.

Statement of Commitment

The Hays County Constable’s Office Pct. 1 is an organization comprised of people of integrity committed to providing quality Law Enforcement service to the community in an honest, dedicated, fair, professional and courteous manner.

The primary focus of the Agency is on creating a partnership with the community based on mutual trust, confidence, commitment and communication. Maintain and improve the quality of life, in addition, to promote the safety and welfare of the citizens of Hays County.

All members of the Hays County Constable’s Office pledge both collectively and individually to grow, develop and engage in the reassessment of their personal skills and knowledge in order to meet the current and future needs of the community.

In the continued pursuit of quality, members are guided by the following values:

Respect: Members recognize the worth, quality, diversity and importance of the people they serve.

Compassion: Members will care about others and respect their feelings.

Integrity: Members will be honest and forthright while meeting or surpassing ethical conduct and standards for Law Enforcement Officers.

Efficiency: Members will be prudent and responsible stewards of the resources given to them.

Leadership: Members will work together to set an example of a responsible individual by embracing and embodying Respect, Compassion, Integrity and Efficiency.

Goal: Continue to build on all of the above by serving civil process efficiently, effectively and in a timely manner, enforce the laws with the utmost respect and dignity.



CONSTABLE PCT 2

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT:

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Hays County Precinct 2 Constable's Office is dedicated to serving our community with integrity, professionalism, and dedication. Our mission is to uphold the law while fostering trust and collaboration within our community. Through strategic enforcement, community engagement, and commitment to justice, we strive to ensure a safe and secure environment for all residents. We are devoted to enhancing public safety by building strong relationships, proactively addressing community needs, and supporting other law enforcement agencies to promote the well-being of our community.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
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Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. Effectively execute all process received that has been issued by the courts.
2. Assist other law enforcement agencies as requested.

- 3. Address citizen complaints regarding traffic issues in our precinct.**
- 4. Provide security for the JP court while in session to keep the judge and all participants safe.**
- 5. Build community relationships to help establish trust between law enforcement and the public.**



CONSTABLE PCT 3

Mission Statement



CONSTABLE DON MONTAGUE

Hays County, Precinct 3

200 STILLWATER
WIMBERLEY, TEXAS 78676

Office: (512) 847-5532
Fax: (512) 847-7352



Mission Statement

The mission of our office is to maintain an efficient, professional and respectful manner while executing our responsibilities as peace officers in the State of Texas. We maintain trained officers through continuing education in all areas of law enforcement. Hays County Precinct 3 Constable Office serve the courts through the executing of civil process, court orders, warrants, bailiff of the court, enforce laws and maintain public safety. Our office emphasizes community involvement working with residents and other agencies to address local needs and concerns.

Goals

To preserve the Peace and Dignity of the Community: A fundamental goal, mandated by the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, is for Constables and their Deputies to maintain order within their jurisdictions.

To protect the Community and Enforcing the Law: Our Deputy Constables are fully licensed peace officers with the authority to enforce state law, make arrests, conduct investigations, and proactively work to prevent criminal activity within our precinct.

To provide Security for Justice Court: Our Deputy Constables are bailiffs during trials to maintain order and safety within Justice of the Peace Court.

To strengthen Community Ties and Engagement: Our Constables office proactively participates in community policing initiatives, working with residents to address crime-related problems, create trust, and offer services such as crime prevention initiatives to meet the needs of citizens of all ages.



CONSTABLE PCT 4 Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT:

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT: Hays County Constable, Precinct 4

The mission of the Hays County Precinct 4 Constable's Office is to effectively and efficiently provide for the protection of lives and property, preserve the public peace, and provide needed community services with the highest level of professionalism and ethical standards. Our greatest asset is our personnel; our greatest strength is our partnership with the community.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. To improve the trust and collaboration between community residents, businesses and the Constable's Office.
2. Focusing on the prevention of crime and safety.
3. Provide traffic enforcement directed at the safe movement of the public throughout our community.

4. Efficiently serving the civil and criminal processes to ensure the continuous functioning of our judicial system.
5. Provide timely and professional services to all members of our community.



CONSTABLE PCT 5

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: **Precinct 5 Constable's Office**

MISSION STATEMENT:

The foundation of the delivery of law enforcement services is based in public trust. Hays County Precinct 5 staff members are first and foremost, public servants. As such, we will dedicate ourselves to the citizens of Hays County and serve in an open, ethical, responsive, and accountable manner. We will apply the law equally and fairly and foster an environment free of bias and respectful of all individuals.

Our actions will be guided by these principles:

- We value our integrity above personal gain;
- We will be honest and truthful when dealing with the public and each other;
- We will perform our duties in a manner which preserves the worth, dignity, and rights of every individual;
- We will confront challenges and formulate solutions through open communication and mutual respect for the ideas of all stakeholders;
- We will operate the Constable's Office as efficiently and effectively as possible and will make the best use of available resources;
- We will strive to accomplish our mission and promote and uphold the public trust through
- adherence to the law;
- basing our actions and decisions upon facts;
- taking pride in our commitment to public service;

- committing ourselves to the pursuit of excellence;
 - acting in a professional manner; and
 - endeavoring to continually improve the delivery of law enforcement services to our citizens.
-

GOALS:

1. SPECIFIC GOAL

Increase traffic safety awareness efforts through the addition of two (2) motorcycle officers to our traffic division.

2. MEASUREMENT

Progress will be measured by tracking:

1. the total number of traffic stops;
2. the total number of citations and warnings issued;
3. the total number of traffic violations addressed during traffic stops.

3. ATTAINABLE

Increasing traffic safety efforts is attainable and within reach through the enforcement efforts of our two (2) existing motorcycle officers and the addition of two (2) additional motorcycle officers in the 2026 budget request.

4. REALISTIC

Precinct 5 has requested two (2) additional motorcycle officers in the 2026 budget. These two (2) additional officers working in conjunction with our two (2) current motorcycle officers will ensure that we have the tools necessary to achieve our goals.

5. TIMELY

Progress toward attainment of our goal will begin immediately after acquisition of the two (2) additional officers, the necessary equipment, and the completion of any specific required training.



ELECTIONS

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Jennifer Doinoff, Elections Administrator

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
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Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

It is the responsibility of the Hays County Elections Administrator to administer elections and serve as the Voter Registrar for all Hays County elections. The mission of the office is to ensure proper conduct of elections, promote a diverse workforce and the effective use of resources and to provide a secure and accessible office for the public.

We understand elections are the foundation of democracy and good government. Elections must accurately reflect the intent of the electorate. Transparency, access, security, accuracy, privacy, and integrity are vital voter rights.

We are committed to maintaining public confidence in elections by assuring all our elections are conducted in a fair, efficient, and accurate manner with the highest level of integrity and vote security. We are committed to excellence in maintaining up-to-date, accurate voter registration rolls to provide fair and equal opportunities for all qualified voters to participate in the democratic process.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

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Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

The following are our primary goals that are already in the process of being implemented in 2026. We have other projects we are working on that will further our mission and continue to enhance the election process in Hays County. We're always striving to add processes that lead to our mission goals of transparency, access, security, accuracy, privacy and integrity.

GOALS:

1. Intern Program with Texas State and Austin Community College – Hays Campus to employ interns during the fall and spring semesters. The long-range goal is to collaborate with one of these institutions to create an elections state certification program for election officials across Texas that may ultimately lead to a degree program for election officials that would be a model across the nation.
2. Our office is designing and implementing a new process for communicating via direct messenger with our poll workers during an election that we anticipate will help us serve the voters in an expeditious manner and speed up the voting process. We hope this will also free up our phone lines for public callers during elections. This is in response to past comments from election workers that attempt to reach our office during elections with voter issues only to find it difficult to get through with the amount of phone calls we receive.
3. Our office is currently working to create an online platform for Deputy Voter Registrar training and testing. This will simplify the process of becoming a deputy voter registrar by allowing interested parties to do the training and testing on their own time at a location of their choice. This is a winning situation for all involved in this process. It's a more efficient way to utilize staff time, and a benefit to our program that we believe will increase participation in an already very successful program. The Deputy Voter Registrar program also serves us with other priorities that help us fulfill our mission by keeping our voter rolls up to date with the latest information from registered voters.
4. We are working with our IT Department to design an App that we hope to share with you soon. We hope this effort will expand our opportunity to engage with voters on election schedules, locations, sample ballots and other areas of interest. Additionally, we plan to add a push notification option to communicate potential critical events that impact elections.
5. We will deploy a program for voters to vote in honor of a veteran. We will be doing public outreach to promote the program. Instead of an "I Voted" sticker, these voters will get a sticker that says, "My Vote Honors Veteran _____". The veterans' name will be entered into a journal that will be kept in the lobby of the election office with our historical election collection. We plan to present the sticker and promo material to the Commissioners' Court when we finalize the design. Our goal is to increase voter engagement with this program that will increase turnout.



OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mission Statement

Mission:

The Hays County Office of Emergency Services (HCOES) serves the citizens of Hays County by directing and coordinating emergency management and homeland security programs to prevent/mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters.

Hays County OES is committed to preparing, responding, and recovering from disasters as well as mitigating and preventing threats posed to Hays County. These threats include natural, man-made (including terrorism), and technological disasters. OES coordinates emergency management and homeland security activities with all Hays County agencies, the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG), private organizations, faith-based organizations, volunteer organizations, and other local, state, and federal agencies.

2026 Goals OES

Expand Preparedness Fair and Chili Cook Off 20 (contestants) to larger footprint to accommodate Kyle location Verde Park to the PAC

All Vendors for Preparedness Fair locked into commitment by 30 July

Map ALL Schools and County buildings too include staging and rally locations for evacuations

Update SOP for Fire Marshal division

Hire Fire Marshal Deputies for a total of 5 along with associated vehicles and equipment

Hire Permit specialist/customer service representative

Acquire 4 vehicles to pull CERT trailers for a total of 5 county wide.

Purchase Leica RTC 360 Scanner for Arson investigation and indoor mapping

Complete development reviews within 2 weeks of receiving customer applications

Train 100 Cert candidates

Complete Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Conduct community outreach programs in preparedness and wild fire defensible space using Ready-Set-Go techniques

Add 10 additional Flood Monitoring/road conditions/wildfire detection devices to key county areas

Add 2 cameras using PANO 360 combined with Travis County PANO for wildfire detection

Review all Emergency Service Functions by February 2027

Create and finalize Emergency Operations Plans for all county buildings

Complete Mass Fatalities/Mass Care plan which is coordinated with regional plan.

Family Resource Center MOU's for all schools interested in assistance.

Exercise all school campuses in Standard Response Protocols (SRP)

Exercise Reunification Summer of 2026

Full Scale Exercise Mass Fatality Spring 2026

Continue Emergency Preparedness and GIS internships each semester

Maintain employees on Regional Notification System and State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry data.

Evaluate adopt ArcGIS solutions like WatchCenter, Hub Premium website, or Indoors for 2027 and other software/service providers like resqtech and floodmapp



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT:

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

To promote and protect the public health, environmental health, and safety of Hays County citizens through quality planning, permitting, addressing and inspections.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. **Update and adopt new Development and On-Site Sewage Facilities Regulations that will better serve the County and its citizens as Hays County continues to grow and attract different types of development.**
 - a. **Our department is working with a consulting firm to review existing regulations, identify changes and new policies, implement new procedures, and modernize the development requirements for the County.**
 - b. **The goal is to have new regulations adopted by the County by Q2 of 2026.**

2. Improve public transparency for Department matters, with new education materials, improved access to information, and increased level of outreach.
 - a. Finalize and go-live with a County wide Permit Map by Q1 of 2026. This would allow the citizens to have a direct resource to view active permits in our review.
 - b. Create new educational material related to permits and how-to guides for the various applications required for development. Furthermore, establish interactive guidelines and workflows that can assist with requirements and responsible reviewing authorities.
 - c. Increase attendance at public events related to development and environmental health matters. Create and host open forums to facilitate discussions around development matters for land developers, surveyors, engineers, homebuilders and property owners.
3. Improve Development coordination efforts across the County related to various Departments and the need for a central source for information and communication.
 - a. Currently, there are three different departments that have requirements and application procedures related to the development process (Development Services, Transportation, and Fire Marshal).
 - b. Over the past year, our department has made efforts to start a Development Coordination outfit by creating two new positions that have initiated efforts to coordinate the various types of applications and processes associated with them.
 - c. A concentrated effort and general agreement between departments to move towards coordinating matters through this outfit is highly requested. In addition, the need for additional personnel to assist with coordinating applications and customer service needs is requested. We currently have one Development Coordinator under our Development Services department and have goals to establish a public facing platform for this team. An additional Development Coordinator would be requested to assist with this effort.
4. Implement reorganization of the Department and update hierarchy and job descriptions for the various divisions and roles within the Department.
 - a. The department has been slowly moving toward specializing in certain roles and functions of our department to assist with improved transparency with the public, but also, to assist with improved workflows and functionality for certain processes.
 - b. This is an emphasis towards our Environmental Health Group, which oversees On-Site Sewage Facilities, Floodplain Management, Food Establishments, and Environmental Enforcement.
 - c. The goal would be by Q4 of 2026, there are specific roles and responsibilities for each division of the Environmental Health team, specific job titles and roles for the divisions mentioned above. In addition, Floodplain Administrator and Management duties will be separated into its own group.
 - d. With this effort there may be some additional personnel resources allocated to assist with the conversion of roles and responsibilities.
5. Assess Department historic records, specifically older permit files, with an emphasis on reviewing information and transcribing to our online permit system.
 - a. The goal of assessing older permit files is mainly to create a historical archive for existing permitted ossf systems and even development permits. The County historically receives a substantial number of PIA requests for these files. If these records are put on the project files for our permit site, we then could add them to a permit map for easier access for the public to view and obtain files.

- b. Additional staff in the form of temporary staff or interns would be requested to assist with the process of reviewing older files, transcribing the files online, and redacting those files if necessary.**
- c. The goal of completing an initial batch of these files would be in line with the rollout of the permit map. Therefore, looking to have initial historical files completed by Q1/Q2 of 2026.**



HUMAN RESOURCES

Mission Statement

Hays County Human Resources

MISSION STATEMENT

The Hays County Human Resources Department is committed to empowering our workforce through responsive, people-centered services that reflect integrity, compassion, and excellence. We champion a collaborative culture built on mutual respect, ensuring every employee feels valued, supported, and inspired by growth. By balancing the needs of our County and its team members, we create an environment where everyone can thrive and contribute with purpose.

VISION STATEMENT

To build an environment where ethical practices and thoughtful decision-making drive our collective success and impact to become the employer of choice in Central Texas.

FY2026 SMART Goals

1. Improve Hiring Efficiency Across Departments

- **Specific:** Implement a centralized recruitment process to support all non-elected departments.
 - **Measurable:** Decrease average time-to-fill positions by 20% compared to FY25.
 - **Achievable:** Leverage the proposed Employment & Compensation Specialist, HR Coordinator, and HR Assistant to streamline screening, scheduling, and onboarding.
 - **Relevant:** Aligns with HR's mission to create a responsive and efficient service model.
 - **Time-bound:** Achieve this reduction by the end of Q4 FY26.
-

2. Enhance Equity and Compliance in Compensation

- **Specific:** Conduct a full countywide compensation benchmark and equity analysis.
 - **Measurable:** Complete benchmarking for at least 95% of positions and present a formal report to Commissioners Court.
 - **Achievable:** With the proposed Employment & Compensation team, including specialist and coordinator roles, the team has capacity to deliver this.
 - **Relevant:** Supports the vision of ethical practices and fair pay as a cornerstone of being an employer of choice.
 - **Time-bound:** Complete analysis and recommendations by May 31, 2026.
-

3. Strengthen Onboarding & Exit Processes

- **Specific:** Standardize onboarding and exit interviews for all departments.

- **Measurable:** Implement onboarding, offboarding, and exit interview templates; achieve 90% participation rate from new hires and voluntary separations.
 - **Achievable:** HR Assistant and Coordinator roles will administer these efforts as part of centralizing services.
 - **Relevant:** Enhances workforce development and retention insights per the SWOT analysis.
 - **Time-bound:** Launch by January 2026 and reach target participation by August 2026.
-

4. Expand Training and Workforce Development

- **Specific:** Launch a structured professional development program through the LMS and live trainings.
 - **Measurable:** Offer at least 12 unique courses (self-paced or live) with at least 300 employee completions total.
 - **Achievable:** Reclassification to Senior Learning & Development Specialist enables strategic delivery.
 - **Relevant:** Directly addresses workforce development weaknesses and supports employee growth as outlined in the mission.
 - **Time-bound:** Complete course offerings and participation goals by September 30, 2026.
-

5. Elevate Hays County's Employer Brand

- **Specific:** Develop and launch a strategic employer branding initiative through job fairs, university partnerships, benefits benchmarking, and digital presence.
- **Measurable:** Attend at least 6 job fairs and establish partnerships with 3 local colleges/universities. Provide recommendations on trending benefits amongst competitors.
- **Achievable:** The Employment & Compensation team and HR Coordinator will take lead on branding and outreach. The Benefits Manager and HR Assistant will take the lead on benefits benchmarking, benefit utilization, and cost analysis.
- **Relevant:** Addresses threats around public and private sector competition and supports the vision of becoming the employer of choice.
- **Time-bound:** Secure partnerships and attend events by Q3 FY26. Provide a benefits benchmark for analysis by Q3 FY26.



JUVENILE PROBATION

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Juvenile Probation Department

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

To protect the community, hold the juvenile offender accountable, strengthen families, prevent institutionalization, provide for the basic needs of the juveniles, and facilitate quality interactions with the child's family and other related entities.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

- 1. Continue to serve the juveniles and their families in Hays County with a dedicated, resourceful, well-trained staff of 18 with very low turnover. The goal is to try to keep the juvenile as shallow in the system as possible and in the home with their families by using up to date supervision techniques, community resources and professional service providers as necessary.**

2. Our department is constantly striving to identify more resources for the juveniles and their families. We accomplish this by networking with our community partners and surrounding counties' Juvenile Probation Departments by sharing and recommending resources that enable the juvenile to accept their consequences with the ultimate goal to complete their supervision successfully and develop new methods and secure tools to assist them in not reoffending.

3. 24-hour medical team at the Juvenile Center. This is critical to our operation. We currently have a medical team seven days per week for 16 hours per day. The medical team assesses juveniles as they enter the facility. The medical team determines if the juvenile needs to go to the hospital for medical clearance before they can be detained. The medical staff distributes all medications and makes recommendations if a juvenile needs to be seen by a Dr. or in emergency situations go straight to the hospital. The juvenile center and juvenile probation department staff depend on the medical team to make these determinations because they are the experts in the field. This will require an additional \$190,000 annually to fund the request. This request was made by Joel Ware and would be included in his department's FY 26 Budget request.

4. Mental Health continues to be very important in the field of Juvenile Justice. We are constantly striving to assist the juveniles and their families both in the community and the juveniles in our juvenile center. We continue to up our game by providing and referring families to resources for individual and family therapy, substance abuse treatment both outpatient and inpatient as well as numerous on-line and virtual opportunities to get assistance on a wide array of topics. We also know it is important to provide opportunities to learn and heal with minimal financial impact on the parents. The support and funding our department receive from both the Hays County budget and State Aid from the Texas Juvenile Justice Department enables the department to provide these services.

5. Within the next five years the goal is to have an Intake Unit at the juvenile center with a Juvenile Probation Officer on sight 24/7 to make initial contact with all Law Enforcement Agencies and to determine Probable Cause for the initial detention. This would require hiring an additional staff of 5 Juvenile Probation Officers.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Mission Statement

Information Technology Department Mission and Goals for FY26

Mission Statement

The Office of Information Technology will provide the highest quality technology-based services, in the most cost-effective manner, to facilitate the Hays County mission as it applies to Administration, Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and all aspects of County Government.

To meet this mission, we will:

- Promote and facilitate the effective integration of technology into the basic mission of the County through planning, programming, training, maintenance, and other support activities.
- Develop, enhance, and manage the County's enterprise networks to provide high speed, transparent, and highly functional connectivity among all information resources.
- Develop and maintain highly effective, reliable, secure, and innovative information systems to support Criminal Justice, Administrative offices and Law Enforcement functions.
- Facilitate the collection; storage, security and integrity of electronic data while ensuring appropriate access.
- Promote new uses of information technology within the County through the support for new and innovative applications.
- Provide leadership for effective strategic and tactical planning in the use of technology.
- Provide fast & reliable access to all information systems.
- Provide in-house hardware maintenance of computer systems to reduce downtime.

FY26 Summary

The Hays County Information Technology (IT) Department is committed to supporting the county's operational efficiency, security, and innovation through strategic initiatives in Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26). This document outlines the key goals for the department, focusing on infrastructure deployment, system enhancements, interdepartmental collaboration,

and resilience against emerging threats. These goals align with the county's broader objectives to deliver high-quality services to departments and residents while optimizing resources approved in the FY26 budget.

Department Overview

The IT Department serves as the backbone for Hays County's technological infrastructure, managing hardware, software, networks, and digital services across all county offices. In FY26, the department will prioritize projects that enhance functionality, security, and user productivity, ensuring seamless integration of new technologies and support for critical operations.

Key Goals for FY26

The following goals represent an abbreviated list of projects but are the department's primary focus areas for the fiscal year. Each goal includes a brief description of its scope, anticipated outcomes, and alignment with county priorities.

1. Deployment of Budgeted Hardware and Software

Deploy all hardware and software items approved in the FY26 budget. This includes procuring, installing, and configuring new systems to ensure they are operational in a timely manner. This results in improved performance and reliability across county departments, with minimal downtime during transitions. We will also be upgrading all systems as necessary for security and compliance.

2. Refresh of CECC Technology Infrastructure

We have begun the refresh cycle of the CECC data center equipment in the 3th quarter of FY25. We will continue the data center hardware implementation into FY26 budget period. Starting in October, we will begin the software upgrades and migration of all data related to our 911 center and Law Enforcement agencies into the new systems. Goal: All of our mission critical systems are on a 5-year refresh plan. This ensures that we have fast and reliable systems that support our first responders.

3. Software Replacement for the Tax Office

Begin the process of replacing software in the Tax Office with modern, efficient solutions. This will involve requirements gathering, vendor selection, and initial implementation phases. This is a major project that will span the majority of the FY26 budget period. The benefits include: Streamlined tax processing, reduced errors, and enhanced user interfaces for staff and residents.

4. Implementing New Technologies for the Transportation Department

Provide technical support and expertise to the Transportation Department in adopting new technologies, such as advanced mapping tools, fleet management systems, or data analytics platforms. Expected outcomes: Increased operational efficiency, better resource allocation, and improved service delivery for transportation-related projects.

5. Creation of a New County Website

Design and develop a completely new website for Hays County in coordination with CMS vendor, starting from foundational architecture to ensure it is user-friendly, accessible, and scalable. This project will incorporate modern web standards, mobile responsiveness, and integration with county services. Expected outcomes: Enhanced public engagement, easier access to information, and a more professional online presence.

6. Support for Successful Primary and General Elections

Assist the Elections Office in ensuring the smooth execution of primary and general elections through IT infrastructure support, including secure voting systems, video streaming, data management, and real-time reporting tools. Implementation of an election call center that utilizes new technologies and messaging for better communication between election office staff and election workers. We will also be designing a mobile app to assist the election office with providing real-time information to voters. Goal: Assure reliable election processes, compliance with state and federal regulations, and high levels of voter confidence.

7. Enhancement of Cybersecurity Posture

Strengthen the county's cybersecurity framework by implementing advanced threat detection, employee training programs, regular vulnerability assessments, and updated protocols for incident response. Our goal is to reduce risk of data breaches, protection of sensitive information, and alignment with best practices in cybersecurity.

8. Improvement of Disaster Recovery Systems

Upgrade and test disaster recovery systems, including backup solutions, failover systems, and recovery plans to minimize downtime in the event of natural disasters, cyberattacks, or system failures. Goal: Faster recovery times, data integrity assurance, and enhanced overall resilience for county operations.

9. Techshare – Phase 2 impementation

We will begin Phase 2 of our Techshare implementation for the District Attorney's office. Techshare is the case management/ediscovery system now being implemented. We have an anticipated September 2025 go-live date for Phase 1. Phase 2 will begin seamless integration with our existing enterprise courts and justice system.

Implementation Strategy

To achieve these goals, the IT Department will:

- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including elected officials, department heads, and external vendors.
- Allocate resources responsibly, and execute the FY26 budget efficiently, with regular progress tracking and reporting.
- Conduct quarterly reviews to assess milestones and adjust plans as needed.
- Prioritize training and change management to ensure staff adoption of new technologies.

Conclusion

The FY26 goals for the Hays County IT Department are designed to introduce new technology, security, and efficiency, ultimately benefiting county employees and residents. By successfully executing these initiatives, the department will position Hays County as a leader in technological advancement at the local government level.



BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY - FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Countywide Operations – Building Maintenance

DIRECTOR: Tammy Crumley

MISSION STATEMENT:

Countywide Operations - Building Maintenance of Hays County is committed to maintaining, enhancing and preserving County-owned buildings and grounds through efficiency, sustainability and cost-effective practices. We are thoughtful stewards of our historical properties that reflect our history while providing safe, clean and functional environments that support the essential services Hays County provides. Our team works to deliver high-quality maintenance, responsive service, and strategic planning that uphold the county's commitment to excellence, public trust, and long-term value for taxpayers.

SMART Goal 1 - Implement specialized Building Maintenance software to improve work order efficiency, tracking and coordination efforts.

Specific: Acquire and implement software designed for facilities management and transition from our internal IT developed system. The software would allow staff to have real time access to work orders, asset and inventory tracking, communication with vendors and contractors.

Measurable: We would see results in our work order process immediately with real time access. Staff would be able to upload documents which would result in a more streamlined internal process and improved data accuracy and the financial processes.

Attainable: We had the funds in FY25 but were unable to secure a contract due to contract negotiations. We have not found another software that meets procurement requirements and satisfies the DA-Civil Division's legal recommendations.

Realistic: If we can find another software that fulfills all requirements, we will be able to move forward.

Timely: I would like to have the new software in place and implementation started no later than December 2025.

SMART Goal 2 - Expand Skilled Maintenance Staff and Reduce Reliance on Contract Services

- Specific:** Hire one full-time Journeyman Electrician and one full-time certified HVAC Technician.
- Measurable:** Adding 1-2 skilled positions by December 2025 or June 2026. In the FY26 - \$127k is requested for our HVAC contract alone. That does not account for any emergency repairs or replacements that may arise. We have over 200 A/C units countywide. We were able to hire 1 full-time HVAC Tech in 2025 which is a start to the Implementation Plan but as a registered technician he
- Attainable:** This goal is attainable if funding is available in the FY26 budget.
- Realistic:** As contract costs increase each year, transiting duties to our own team provides a more sustainable and fiscally responsible solution.
- Timely:** If the position(s) are approved in the FY26 budget they we would in place by December 2025 or June 2026.

SMART Goal 3 - Establish an In-House Grounds Maintenance Team to Reduce Reliance on Contract Services

- Specific:** Hire 1-2 full-time Ground Maintenance Staff to maintain the landscaping of our county facilities. Two were requested for FY26.
- Measurable:** Reduce external landscaping costs by at least \$80-90k per year. Our contract services cover landscaping for 5 county buildings. The Building Maintenance Team is responsible for the landscaping at each precinct building.
- Attainable:** This goal is attainable if funding is available in the FY26 budget.
- Realistic:** Creating 1-2 dedicated positions would enable routine groundskeeping responsibilities to be managed internally. Landscaping should be viewed as a year-round function, with off-season tasks – leaf removal, pressure washing, minor repairs, holiday lighting, gutter cleaning, etc.
- Timely:** If the position(s) are approved in the FY26 budget they we would in place by December 2025 or June 2026.



PARKS ADMINISTRATION

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY - FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Countywide Operations – Parks and Natural Resources

DIRECTOR: Tammy Crumley

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Hays County Parks and Natural Resource Departments mission is to preserve our natural resources, promote nature and sustainable parks and recreational opportunities that enrich the quality of life for all residents and visitors.

SMART Goal 1 – Hiring an Easement Coordinator

Specific: Responsible for managing and organizing our conservation easements, working with stakeholders, property owners to ensure compliance and reporting.

Measurable: This position would elevate a huge responsibility off our Natural Resource Coordinator, DA-Civil Division, Countywide Operations and other staff that currently play a role in management of these easements.

Attainable: This goal is attainable if funding is available in the FY26 budget.

Realistic: This position has been needed for some time and the functions are realistic funds are made available.

Timely: If the position is approved in the FY26 budget I would like to see it filled by December 2025 or June 2026 – depending on funding allocation.

I am currently overseeing the administration of POSAC-funded projects, including ensuring compliance with Funding Agreements, processing Draw Requests, and collaborating with partner entities on the initiation and implementation of new projects.

As I understand it, Sentinel Peak Preserve is not anticipated to be complete in late FY27 or early FY28. We had six new positions approved in the FY25 budget that became effective April 1, 2025. We had to back fill one position – we currently have 3 positions remaining vacant. Given the anticipate completion date of Sentinel Peak, we do not need any additional Park Specialist positions currently.

Hays County will be transferring ownership of the Five Mile Dam Park complex to the City of San Marcos in October 2025. This transition will relieve staff of responsibilities and allow them to redirect their efforts toward other park related duties.

The department has increased its education initiatives and requested a dedicated vehicle for education staff. This will facilitate travel to and from outreach events, while preserving the use of existing vehicles for park operational needs.



CWOPS

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY - FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Countywide Operations – Grants

DIRECTOR: Tammy Crumley

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Hays County Grants Team is to support internal departments and bring valuable external funding to the county. By working collaboratively to turn ideas into action – using strategic planning and compelling narratives based on data to strengthen programs, improve services, and meet the evolving needs of Hays County.

SMART GOAL - Complete eCivis Software Implementation

- Specific:** We have just started the implementation phase of our new grants management software – which will allow us to streamline and centralize the full grant lifecycle across all departments.
- Measurable:** A few departments have committed to participating in the initial pilot phase of the system. Upon completion of this phase, we will begin onboarding additional departments through structured training sessions. Full countywide implementation will be contingent upon each department's readiness and their capacity to successfully operate within the new system.
- Attainable:** We are currently in the implementation phase in partnership with the Budget Office and the County Auditor's Office. As some financial components have potentially changed during development, it is essential to work through any remaining adjustments before moving forward with broader deployment.
- Realistic:** We are working closely with the Budget Office and Auditor's Office and eCivis to ensure the goal is achieved.
- Timely:** Full system integration complete and operational for Grants, Budget Office and Auditor's Office and those departments participating in pilot program by end of December 2025.

While the scope of this project may not appear all that large, it represents a significant undertaking—particularly as it is being executed alongside the ongoing responsibilities of securing grants for Hays County. The process requires the entry of all active grants and associated details into the new system, which demands a high level of accuracy and attention. Becoming thoroughly familiar with the system will require extensive training, which is essential before staff can confidently support and train other. Full implementation is a strategic objective for FY26.



RECYCLING AND SOLID WASTE

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY - FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Countywide Operations – Recycling and Solid Waste

DIRECTOR: Tammy Crumley

MISSION STATEMENT:

Hays County Recycling and Solid Waste is committed to providing efficient, cost-effective and sustainable services that protect public health, conserve resources, and reduce landfill use – building a cleaner, greener future for our community.

SMART Goal 1 – Increase Staff for the Safety and Welfare

- Specific:** The department is currently operating with limited staffing. To ensure employee safety, a minimum of three personnel is required at each site. No staff member should be assigned to operate hazardous equipment independently. Given current staffing levels, the absence of more than one employee necessitates operational adjustments that significantly affect site functions. In addition, current staffing shortages have prevented employees from utilizing their earned time off, placing undue strain on the team.
- Measurable:** Adding additional staff would ensure that we are maintaining a safe environment for employees and the public, safeguard financial transactions, ensure consistent operations, reduce the risk of site closures.
- Attainable:** This goal is attainable if funding is available in the FY26 budget.
- Realistic:** If positions are approved the goal will be achieved.
- Timely:** If the position(s) are approved in the FY26 budget they we would in place by December 2025 or June 2026.

SMART Goal 2 - Increase Recycling and Solid Waste Disposal Fees

- Specific:** The disposal fees have not seen an increase since 2017. Even with an increase, our rates will continue to be the most cost-effective option available to residents.
- Measurable:** We will see a small increase in revenue.
- Attainable:** There would need to be a fair amount of planning if we were to increase our fees, i.e., notices posted at each location, social media posts, etc. I would like to have an effective date of January 1, 2026.
- Realistic:** With proper planning we have everything to ensure success.
- Timely:** Yes, January 1, 2026.

SMART Goal 3 – Transition to Card-Only Payments

- Specific:** In addition to cards, we currently accept cash and checks.
- Measurable:** A card only system would increase efficiency, eliminate cash handling, increase security, streamline several internal processes.
- Attainable:** While there are challenges it certainly is possible – it will be an adjustment but one that residents will find be more convenient in the long run.
- Realistic:** We have been looking into our credit card system and into options to make the process easier for the staff. Conversations still need to be had with the Auditor's Office.
- Timely:** January 1, 2026, would be ideal to coincide with the fee changes but that is to be determined.



VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

Department: Veteran Service Office

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Hays County Veteran Service Office is to help servicemembers, veterans, their families, and dependents in obtaining the benefits they have earned. We are dedicated to serving as advocates through the often complex federal, state, and local benefits processes while fostering partnerships with veteran service organizations and nonprofits to amplify support for the veteran community.

GOALS

1. **Primary Goal: “Let the main thing be the main thing!”**
Assist servicemembers, veterans, and their families in preparing, submitting, and presenting claims for benefits to which they are entitled under United States or state law, in compliance with Texas Government Code Sec. 434.035.
2. **Secondary Goals:**
 - **Community Partnerships:**
Strengthen collaborations with local established Veteran Service Organizations (VFW, AMVETS, GI Forum, American Legion, Patriots Hall) and nonprofits (Hays County Food Bank, BR3T, Southside Community Center and HOME Center). These partnerships serve as a force multiplier in providing comprehensive assistance to veterans. Our goal is to be more mobile and “on the ground in person” weekly with these different organizations throughout the county. Requested additional funds in the 2026 budget for travel, continuing education, Data Processing Supplies, Computer Equipment for this goal.
 - **Hope 4 Hays Program Expansion:**
Continue to grow the Hope 4 Hays emergency financial assistance program, providing support for rent, mortgage, utilities, groceries, car repairs, transportation and gas assistance. Pursue additional funding opportunities through the Texas Veterans Commission for increased Transportation assistance. Requested additional funds in the 2026 budget for a regrade in the Hope4 Hays position from Veteran Casework to Program Manager.
 - **Employee Recruitment, Retention, and Training:**
Implement strategies to attract, train, and retain highly qualified staff. The department’s step plan has been beneficial for retention, and this focus will ensure continuity of service excellence. Requested additional funds in the 2026 budget for a regrade in the Hope4 Hays position from Veteran Casework to Program Manager, also requested an increase in 2026 budget for travel and continuing education for this goal.

- **Establishment of the Hays County Veteran Commission:**
Initiate the formation of a formal Veteran Commission to enhance coordination and collaboration within the veteran community. One of the commission's first projects will be the Heroes Road Naming Initiative.
 - **Customer Service Improvement:**
Utilize VetPro software to enhance client interaction tracking and improve service delivery through data-informed decisions. Requested additional funds in the 2026 budget for Data Processing Supplies, telephone/ data plans and Computer Equipment for this goal.
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Recent Accomplishments

- Coordination of efforts has drastically lowered Veteran Homelessness. According to the Point In Time (PIT) Count the number homeless Veteran in Hays County dropped from 16 in 2024 to 3 in 2025. This is an 81% reduction in homeless Veterans in Hays County.
- Continue to utilize the current 16 VA HUD vouchers to assist homeless veterans.
- Partnered with Samaritan Center and Vet Center to provide weekly in-person courthouse counseling for veterans.
- Successfully managed the Hope 4 Hays program for a 5th year, securing another \$250,000 in grant funding in FY2026.
- Despite turnover in the Hope 4 Hays Position, recruited talent personal through our work study program to replace this position contributing to a resilient and capable team.
- Achieved numerous victories in securing benefits and services for our Veterans and their families.

Jude Prather

Hays County Veteran Service Officer



JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER Mission Statement

HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: Juvenile Detention Center

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Juvenile Detention Center serves as a vital component of Hays County's commitment to public safety and youth rehabilitation. We provide secure, professional, and trauma-informed care for juveniles, while striving to operate at standards comparable to adult correctional facilities. Our goal is to reduce recidivism and improve long-term outcomes through evidence-based programs, mental health services, and educational opportunities. For FY 2026 and beyond, we aim to establish the Juvenile Detention Center as the premier residential juvenile facility in Texas by advancing operations and elevating care standards.

GOALS WITH MILESTONES:

1. Achieve Salary Equity for JSOs and Licensed Mental Health Professionals

Juvenile Supervision Officers (JSOs) perform many of the same functions as Adult Jailers while managing the unique challenges of working with adolescents who often have complex behavioral and emotional needs. Equal pay is essential to recruit and retain qualified staff and to reflect the demands of this specialized role. As the Department Head, I will continue to advocate for salary equity and raise awareness of the need to align JSO compensation with that of jailers. This objective requires long-term commitment and continued engagement with County leadership.

Additionally, salary parity to the Hays County Jail is critical. A JSO starting pay for FY 2026 will be \$51,000, while a Hays County Jailer starting pay will be \$63,000. The jailer previously started at \$50,000 in FY 2024 and, after collective bargaining, received an increase to \$60,000 effective FY 2025 with a built-in \$3,000 increase for FY 2026. This places their starting pay at \$63,000. In the long run, we are now \$10,000–\$12,000 behind the jailer starting pay. Notably, without adjustments, a JSO starting at \$51,000 will only earn \$57,000 after 5 years, while a jailer starting at \$63,000 will earn \$74,000 in that same period.

It is equally important to address compensation for Licensed Mental Health Counselors, whose specialized expertise is critical to rehabilitation and behavior management. Most counselors hired at the Juvenile Detention Center do not remain long-term due to the current starting salary of \$53,000, which is not competitive with the private sector. Furthermore, the salary exception pathway—intended to bring experienced counselors in at Step 7 with a salary of \$64,000—is rarely utilized. When counselors graduate college and earn their certification, they often accept the \$53,000 pay as an entry-level position.

However, once they gain job experience, they leave for higher-paying employment. Experienced applicants offered Step 7 at \$64,000 often decline because it represents a pay cut compared to private-sector or previous salaries. To maintain continuity of care and high-quality mental health services, salary structures must reflect market rates—or exceed them—to attract and retain top-tier talent.

Measuring Goal 1 Progress:

- Compare salaries annually against market benchmarks and Hays County Jail.
- Monitor retention rates of JSOs and counselors over 12-month and 5-year periods, with special attention to counselors leaving after gaining experience due to pay gaps.
- Track vacancies and hiring timelines to assess recruitment effectiveness.
- Monitor number of experienced counselor applicants declined offers due to pay disparities.
- Provide annual updates to the Juvenile Board.
- Track costs associated with high turnover, including recruitment, training, and overtime, to demonstrate long-term financial impact.

Milestones:

- Q2 FY 2026: Present salary equity proposal to Commissioners Court.
- Q3 FY 2026: Secure budget approval for phased salary adjustments.
- Q4 FY 2026: Begin implementing salary changes for JSOs and counselors.
- Annually: Report progress on salary parity, retention, and turnover cost savings to Commissioners Court.

2. Reduce Turnover and Increase Staff Retention

Retaining qualified staff is essential for operational stability and consistent youth care. Competitive salaries, strong support systems, and meaningful career development are key strategies to reduce turnover, lower overtime costs, and strengthen morale. As the Department Head, I will work closely with the hiring department to proactively screen and select high-quality applicants, ensuring we build a dedicated and professional team.

Measuring Goal 2 Progress:

- Annual turnover rates compared to previous years.
- Average length of staff employment.
- Reductions in overtime hours and costs.
- Staff satisfaction surveys to assess workplace climate.
- Quarterly updates to Juvenile Board.
- Track experienced applicants for supervisor-level and leadership positions decline offers due to non-competitive salaries.
- Track costs associated with high turnover, including recruitment, training, and overtime, to demonstrate long-term financial impact.

Milestones:

- Q2 FY 2026: Conduct baseline retention and turnover analysis.
- Q3 FY 2026: Launch retention initiatives (mentorship programs, recognition).
- Q1 FY 2027: Report reductions in turnover and propose adjustments, including turnover cost savings.

3. Support Professional Development and Training

Developing and retaining well-trained staff is critical to maintaining a safe, effective facility and fostering a rehabilitative environment. Weekly management training sessions have been implemented to strengthen supervisory oversight and encourage a culture of accountability. For FY 2026, we are requesting continued funding for trauma-informed care, crisis response training, and ongoing professional education for both new and veteran staff.

As the Department Head, I will ensure the training department continues to be creative and find new approaches to training individuals on how to work with juveniles in a secure correctional setting. This approach ensures staff remain equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to address the complex needs of juveniles in a secure setting while maintaining high standards of care and safety.

Measuring Goal 3 Progress:

- Number of training sessions and staff participation rates.
- Improvements in staff evaluations post-training.
- Reductions in incidents related to supervision.
- Retention of staff receiving professional development.
- Annual training effectiveness report to Commissioners Court.

Milestones:

- Q1 FY 2026: Develop and approve the annual training calendar.
- Q2 FY 2026: Roll out leadership training modules for management.
- Q4 FY 2026: Evaluate training outcomes and propose adjustments to training programs.

4. Improve Public Safety Through Better Youth Outcomes

Investing in staff development directly enhances rehabilitation efforts. Stable, skilled staff foster safer environments, increase youth engagement, and promote successful reintegration into the community—reducing recidivism. As the Department Head, I will oversee initiatives that align staff practices with evidence-based approaches to improve youth outcomes and public safety.

Measuring Goal 4 Progress:

- Year-over-year reduction in facility incidents.
- Youth program completion and recidivism rates.
- Surveys assessing youth and family satisfaction.
- Annual outcome reports to Juvenile Board.

Milestones:

- Q2 FY 2026: Establish baseline for youth outcome measures.
- Q4 FY 2026: Report year-over-year reductions in incidents and recidivism.
- Annually: Present findings on youth outcomes to the Juvenile Board.

5. Request Additional Operating Expenditures and Staff

The Juvenile Detention Center requests funding for salary regrades across key positions, including JSOs, Supervisors, Mental Health Counselors, the Transitional Coordinator, Juvenile Mental Health Manager, and Assistant Facility Administrators. Mental Health Counselors and management must be compensated competitively with private-sector peers to retain expertise.

We also propose expanding medical coverage to 24 hours per day; current gaps between 10:00 PM and 6:00 AM leave intakes without adequate support. In addition, it is important to note the growing pay disparity between JSOs and Hays County Jailers, which highlights the need for salary parity in our funding requests. Additionally, installing cameras in blind spots will enhance facility safety and oversight. As the Department Head, I will ensure these operational improvements are effectively implemented and evaluated for their impact on facility performance and public trust.

Measuring Goal 5 Progress:

- Progress on salary regrades and implementation.
- Recruitment and retention rates for newly funded positions.
- Evaluation of 24-hour medical coverage impact.
- Facility incident trends post-camera installation.
- Annual report on operational improvements to the Juvenile Board.
- Monitor the number of experienced applicants declining offers across all positions due to pay disparities.
- Track experienced applicants for leadership and specialty roles declining offers due to non-competitive salaries.
- Track costs associated with high turnover, including recruitment, training, and overtime, to demonstrate long-term financial impact.

Milestones:

- Q1 FY 2026: Submit requests for 24-hour medical coverage and additional cameras.
- Q3 FY 2026: Begin phased implementation of approved operational requests.
- Q4 FY 2026: Assess impact of upgrades and report to Commissioners Court, including analysis of turnover cost savings.



LAW LIBRARY

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: LAW LIBRARY

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Hays County Law Library is to facilitate access to justice by providing patrons with relevant, current, accurate, and practical legal information.

As a public resource, the library is committed to serving the legal information needs of self-represented litigants, legal professionals, members of the judiciary, and county and governmental officials. Ensuring public access to legal information is crucial for promoting open and equitable access to the justice system.

We are committed to modernizing and enhancing our services and user experience, actively engaging with the communities within our county, and offering educational resources to help bridge the justice gap.

VISION

The Hays County Law Library effectively links the public to the world of legal research and practice. Public access to legal information is crucial for open and equal access to the justice system.

By fostering partnerships with local organizations and embracing technology, we aim to bridge the gap between legal information and those who need it most.

FULFILLING OUR MISSION

Community Engagement & Partnerships

- Enhance awareness of Hays County Law Library services through marketing efforts, including pamphlets, flyers, and banners.
- Collaborate with Hays County departments and public libraries in the area to evaluate community needs.
- Develop digital and print resource guides that link communities to legal aid and information.
- Establish partnerships with legal aid organizations to guarantee access to justice for low-income individuals.

Education

- Enhance the knowledge of library staff by providing educational opportunities, training sessions, and conferences.
- Develop public user guides to assist users in conducting research and utilizing various databases and websites effectively.
- Provide continuing legal education courses for legal professionals, covering topics such as ethics and the application of Generative AI in legal research.

Modernizing and Enhancing Services and User Experience

- Maintain a sustainable collection of print and electronic legal materials relevant to the community's needs.
- Ensure knowledgeable library staff facilitate access to legal resources, with volunteers extending hours.
- Offer modern, well-maintained facilities for research, study, and collaboration.
- Foster a safe, collaborative environment for interactions among legal professionals and the public for drafting and research.

GOALS:

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
Measurable	Can you measure your progress and achievements
Attainable	Set goals with milestones that are reasonable and within reach
Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

The Law Library has several goals for fiscal year 2026, with many of them already in progress as of 2025. As mentioned, as part of fulfilling our mission, we have three key objectives: Community Engagement and Partnerships, Education, and Modernizing and Enhancing Services and User Experience. There are some misconceptions about the library services. County libraries are much more than a place with books. Law Librarians in County libraries assist patrons who need information, forms, and services that they cannot afford to obtain from an attorney. Access to justice isn't just about criminal law; there are civil matters that need attention. For example, helping someone who is dealing with custody issues, a child who needs financial support, or a couple that needs a divorce to prevent situations from escalating.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL 1: MARKETING: RAISE AWARENESS OF HAYS COUNTY LAW LIBRARY SERVICES.

(Budget Request: Printing Services and Software)

In fiscal year 2025, we submitted a funding request to support our printing services. For fiscal year 2026, we have made an additional request to continue these purchases. Our mission is to enhance access to legal information, starting with ensuring that Hays County residents are aware of the resources we provide to help them find what they need.

Our objective is to distribute marketing materials in public libraries across our County and other County offices. We have created brochures and comprehensive pamphlets and are currently developing newsletters and email communications. Additionally, we aim to place posters and larger signage in more prominent locations throughout the County.

We have already contacted public libraries and identified those that receive requests for legal research. Moreover, we are requesting funding for software such as Canva, Grammarly, and Constant Contact to aid in the creation of marketing and educational materials.

GOAL 2: ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS

(Budget Request: Continuing Education and Memberships)

Beginning in fiscal year 2025, the Law Librarian engaged in conferences and organizations to raise awareness about legal services for low-income patrons in Hays County and develop skills for better visitor assistance. The fiscal year 2026 budget includes requests for continuing education funds to sustain this involvement.

In 2025, the Law Librarian spoke at the Texas Y'all Conference, sharing insights on assisting diverse patrons and promoting library services. Upcoming presentations include the session titled *Beyond the Books: How Public Law Libraries Empower Pro Bono Services for Low-Income Texans* at the State Bar of Texas Pro Bono Coordinator's Retreat and Poverty Law Conference. The Law Librarian also organizes monthly meetings for the Texas County Law Librarians Roundtable and participates in several organizations, including the Access to Justice Network and the American Association of Law Libraries. The Texas Access to Justice Commission invited Texas County Law Libraries to contribute to their strategic plan. The Law Librarian participates in meetings with the Commission, emphasizing the role of solo librarians in delivering justice services.

The Law Librarian seeks to collaborate with public libraries throughout the county to explore options for enhancing support for patrons beyond San Marcos. A primary objective is to identify methods for providing remote services. Additionally, the Librarian aims to partner with other departments, such as the Health Department and the Commissioners' Precinct, to explore collaborative opportunities for delivering services and information across various county facilities. One potential initiative involves researching the implementation of a service similar to [Harris County's LAWPods](#).

Requests for continuing education funding are intended to cover expenses related to attending conferences, such as the 2026 Legal Services Corporation conference in San Antonio and the Access to Justice Network conference. Both conferences will focus on assisting low-income patrons and exploring methods of using technology to enhance access to justice.

EDUCATION

GOAL 3: CREATE INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDES AND RESOURCES TO ASSIST SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS.

Budget Request: Software

As previously emphasized, our objectives encompass more than merely marketing materials; we are equally committed to developing educational resources. To support this initiative, we are creating instructional booklets that include screenshots to help patrons with little to no legal knowledge effectively navigate the software. Utilizing tools such as Canva and Constant Contact enhances the cohesiveness, visual appeal, and professionalism of our user guides, thereby improving readability and comprehension.

In fiscal year 2025, we conducted research on guides created by other counties to assist with common legal issues in Hays County. The Law Library webpages were also updated to include forms and resource forms.

MODERNIZE AND ENHANCE SERVICES AND USER EXPERIENCE

GOAL 4: INCREASE ELECTRONIC RESEARCH DATABASES

(Budget Request: Contract Services)

In fiscal year 2025, we initiated the integration of additional databases into our library system, allowing users to access a diverse range of databases featuring various formats, information, guides, and styles. In fiscal year 2026, we aim to expand our database offerings further.

The library's print collection has been refined to include only those materials available for public use and essential items that are necessary when electronic resources are unavailable. It is essential to recognize that not all legal research databases are the same; each offers unique content and forms.

In 2025, we also introduced remote access to databases, which is vital for patrons located at a distance, such as those in Dripping Springs, who may find it challenging to visit the library during regular hours. Looking ahead to 2026, we plan to introduce a database that provides resources in multiple languages to serve better patrons seeking information in languages other than English.

GOAL 5: INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Law Library has partnered with interns to enhance support for patron inquiries and overall library operations. Currently, the library employs a single staff member who also oversees record management. By engaging interns as volunteers, we have successfully extended our hours of operation in 2025 to include full days from Monday to Thursday, aligning with the preferences expressed by our patrons. Volunteers assist the librarian in fulfilling both roles effectively. A volunteer is scheduled each day to guarantee that assistance is readily available. Additionally, interns are actively involved in developing guides and reference materials, further enriching our resources.



RECORDS PRESERVATION Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT: RECORDS PRESERVATION FUND (RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER)

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Records Management Officer serves the departments of Hays County with the creation, use, maintenance, retention, preservation, and disposal of county records. The goals and objectives of Records Management are to reduce costs, improve efficiency, ensure legal compliance, improve access, capture government history, and protect the rights of Hays County citizens.

GOALS:

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
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Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

ENHANCE RECORDS DESTRUCTION SERVICES – SHREDDING (BUDGET REQUEST – OFFICE EQUIPMENT: SHREDDERS)

Goal 1: Facilitate access to shredding services by providing media and paper shredders in the Government Center that make shredding more convenient.

The Records Management Officer assists departments countywide with organizing secure documents shredding of records. The fiscal year 2026 budget includes a request for three shredders. The department uses two shredders daily. One of the two shredders broke and needs replacement. The second shredder is functional, but parts are starting to show signs of damage. After speaking with the manufacturer, they are no longer producing replacement parts for that shredder. Therefore, next year, when those parts are no longer functional, we will need to replace them. The third shredder is for media.

Government Center – Industrial Paper Shredder

The request is for a paper shredder to be made accessible in the Government Center for all departments, reducing the need to pay for shredding events and facilitating the shredding process by offering a year-round method. The shredder is easy to use and requires only paper dumping, eliminating the need for manual paper shredding. Currently, departments must find a space to store documents in boxes ready for shredding and wait until a shred event. Over the past two years, we've spent over \$11,165 on paper shred events.

Records Management – Departmental Shredder

The departmental shredder is used daily by the records management staff. Some projects, such as those done for the Health Department, are shredded once scanning is done and not in shred events. If these records are shredded in a shred event, a Business Associates Agreement that covers HIPAA is required. We must obtain a contractual agreement that documents how the vendor handles medical information. It is much easier and faster to shred those records in-house.

Government Center – Media Shredder

There is an increase in media that needs to be shredded by multiple offices. The request is for funds to purchase a media shredder for use by various offices in the Government Center. The media shredder would destroy CDs, DVDs, external drives, and hard drives. When offices such as the District Clerk or District Attorney must destroy media records for expunctions, they must hold the item until our annual media shred event. The cost of shredding media is at least \$1,500 per shredding event. The shredder purchase is a worthwhile investment, enabling us to shred these items more efficiently.

RECORDS RESERVATION – ARCHIVING RECORDS

Goal 2: Archiving Transportation Records

(Budget Request: Supplies, Software, & Temporary Staff/Interns)

The Transportation Department currently has around 70 boxes and several cabinets filled with records that require archiving. These transportation records are retained for a long duration due to their permanent value or their connection to federal funding and bonds. However, the records are in paper format and are deteriorating due to poor storage conditions. Our objective is to scan and convert these records into an electronic format. For the fiscal year 2026 budget, we are requesting supplies to facilitate the preparation of these records for archiving. Moreover, software upgrades will enhance the scanning process by providing staff with access to features unavailable in the free software versions that accompany the scanners. Without these features, staff often must adjust settings frequently and rescan documents. Additionally, we require extra assistance for this project. Although we are currently utilizing interns, funding for temporary or paid interns for one year would greatly benefit us in ensuring the project's completion by the end of the next fiscal year. Interns conducted a trial using sample boxes, leading to the conclusion that managing the project in-house would be the most cost-effective solution, given the preparation and scanning required for these records.

Goal 3: Assessing Archiving Needs Across County Departments

Several departments have reached out seeking assistance with their archiving projects. Our goal is to assist these departments in identifying the most suitable solutions for their records, including document scanning services and archival storage options. I have completed numerous projects for different departments and am actively working throughout the county to provide support.

Goal 4: Updating Records Retention Schedules and TSLAC Records

It has been several years since all departments have been updated regarding paperwork and retention schedules. With numerous staff changes in offices held by elected officials over the past year, I aim to assist those departments with necessary updates. I regularly check in or complete archiving projects for department heads, and I will also reach out to our elected officials to see if they require assistance and to update any required documentation.



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Mission Statement



HAYS COUNTY

FY 2026 BUDGET PLANNING

DEPARTMENT:

Please provide a brief mission statement for your department. The following guidelines can be used to assist in developing a mission statement if needed:

MISSION STATEMENT	
Step 1	Identify the core values of your department
Step 2	Identify who you serve
Step 3	What do you aspire to achieve and provide to those you serve
Step 4	Create a draft statement
Step 5	Confirm that your draft reflects your purpose, edit if needed and finalize

MISSION STATEMENT:

To promote, protect, and enhance the health and quality of life for residents and visitors of Hays County through a dedicated workforce, strong community partnerships, and innovative public health initiatives.

Please set goals for the upcoming budget year that will assist your department with meeting your mission statement. How will your goals benefit the public and your department? Please outline any new staff, and one-time or additional operating expenditures that are needed to assist you in meeting your goals. The following guidelines can be used to assist with establishing goals:

SMART GOALS	
Specific	Goals should be written specifically, with a clear intended achievement
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Realistic	Ensure you have the tools to achieve your goals
Timely	Do you have a clear time frame driving you to attain your goals

GOALS:

1. **Operate a full service Sexually Transmitted Infection Clinic**
 - a. Hire a qualified healthcare provider to supervise the department's clinical operations by end Q2 of FY 2025-2026
 - b. Develop STI Clinic Standard Operating Procedures by end of Q1 of FY 2025-2026.
 - c. Target 30% of testing to vulnerable populations (women, lgtbq+, and non-English proficient speaking communities)
 - d. Offer disease specific time appropriate treatment for
 - e. Offer testing treatment for Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and Syphilis by end of Q3

- 2. Improve Health Hays Coalition Membership and Participation**
 - a. Hold at least one meeting quarterly**
 - b. Hold at least one bi-monthly luncheon**
 - c. Host at least two coalition events semiannually**
- 3. Prepare for Project Public Health Readiness and Public Health Accreditation**
 - a. Complete an audit of PPHR and PHAB requirements by the end of Q1**
 - b. Complete preparations for applications to PPHR and PHAB by end of Q3 of Fiscal Year 2025-2026**
- 4. Improve revenue generation of the health department**
 - a. Identify fees and services applicable to the services rendered by the health department for approval by the Commissioners' Court by Q2.**
 - b. Enrolling in Medicaid and Insurance plans to accept revenue from third-party payers by the beginning of Q3.**
 - c. Generate at least \$5,000 by the end of Q4**
- 5. Complete a Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan by the end of FY 2025.**