

- J. Reynolds, Chair
- W. Baxter, Vice-Chair
- D. Wu
- C. Ellinger
- T. Morton
- S. Lynch
- T. Eblen
- L. Higgins-Hord
- J. Hale
- A. Beasley



Social Services and Public Safety (SSPS) Committee

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

1:00 P.M.

AGENDA

- | | | | |
|------|--|----------------------------|---------------|
| I. | Approval of January 13, 2026 Committee Summary | [Reynolds] | (1-3) |
| II. | National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Update | [Curtis/Milligan, Tackett] | (4-20) |
| III. | Items Referred to Committee | [Reynolds] | (21) |

[sponsor/presenter]

2026 Meeting Schedule

January 13	May 5
February 17	June 9
March 17	August 11
April 14	October 20

“Social Services and Public Safety Committee, to which shall be referred matters relating to the department of social services and its divisions, the department of public safety and its divisions, any related partner agencies, and matters relating to capital improvement projects.” - Council Rules & Procedures of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council, Section 4.102 (1)



Social Services and Public Safety Committee

January 13, 2026

Summary and Motions

Chair Jennifer Reynolds called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Committee Members Vice Mayor Dan Wu, Council Members Chuck Ellinger, Tyler Morton, Shayla Lynch, Lisa Higgins-Hord, Joseph Hale, Amy Beasley, Whitney Elliott Baxter, and Hilary Boone were present. Council Members Emma Curtis and Dave Sevigny were present as non-voting members.

I. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 14, 2025 COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Motion by Ellinger for approval of the October 14, 2025 Committee Meeting Summary. Seconded by Higgins-Hord. Motion passed without dissent.

II. CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTION REQUIREMENTS

Chair Reynolds introduced the item and explained that this work stemmed from a fatal carbon monoxide poisoning incident in her district that resulted in one death and eleven hospitalizations, prompting a review of local regulations. She said a cross-departmental working group, including Fire, Public Safety, Code Enforcement, Housing, and Law, was convened to evaluate potential regulatory changes, and this presentation reflected the outcome of that work.

Battalion Chief and Fire Marshal Jeff Johnson noted that carbon monoxide (CO) is a long-recognized life-safety hazard, with more than 400 deaths and 100,000 emergency room visits nationwide in 2025. Locally, Lexington reported approximately 30 cases and one fatality last year. Chief Johnson explained that since 2011, building codes have required CO detection in new construction and major remodels, but existing structures built before 2011 are not covered, creating a regulatory gap. The proposed approach adopts International Fire Code (IFC) Section 1103.9, which requires CO detection in existing structures.

Two ordinances were presented:

- Section 9-2.1 establishes safety standards for CO detection, including the installation of CO detectors in existing commercial structures.
- Amendment to Section 12-1(C) establishes the required standards for CO detection, including the installation of CO detectors in existing single and two-family dwellings.

The purpose of these requirements is to reduce preventable injuries and deaths from CO poisoning by requiring CO detection in existing residential and commercial buildings where CO sources are present (fuel-burning fireplaces, space heaters, furnaces, stoves, water heaters, or attached garages). These ordinances close a safety gap for older buildings, align Lexington with International Fire Code standards, and address a documented, preventable public health risk with a low-cost, high-impact solution.

Enforcement would follow existing processes:

- The Fire Marshal's office would enforce Section 9-2.1, which includes receiving notice through an order to remedy and a fire marshal order. The section also outlines an appeal process.
- Code Enforcement will identify CO hazards during routine inspections when invited in by a resident. Failure to comply results in punitive citations

During the discussion, members clarified the applicability to specific occupancies, placement guidance, homeowner responsibility, and coordination with existing smoke and CO alarm assistance programs. Chief Johnson noted that the Fire Department can currently provide limited CO alarms upon request, subject to funding availability.

Motion by Morton to approve the draft language for Sections 9-2.1 and 12-1(C) [as presented to the Social Services & Public Safety Committee on January 13, 2026]. Seconded by Hale. Motion passed without dissent. [Note from Law Department: Language was cleaned up in Section 12-1(C) under PM-705.1, removing a reference to the International Residential Code, as the Kentucky Residential Code establishes building code requirements for single-family and two-family dwelling units in Kentucky – this is a non-material change.]

III. STREET OUTREACH AND HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT RESPONSE

Jeff Herron, Homelessness Prevention Manager, delivered the presentation. Herron explained that street outreach provides mobile, community-based services for individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, particularly those least likely to seek help on their own. Street outreach is a core component of effective homeless response systems, providing mobile, trauma-informed engagement to connect unsheltered individuals with shelter, housing, healthcare, treatment, basic needs, employment, education, and benefits—particularly for those least likely to seek help independently.

He outlined the evolution of Lexington’s outreach program:

- 2016-2019 Hope Center Pilot: First-touch outreach model (\$75,000 annually).
- 2019-2023 Community Action Council Assertive Outreach: Expanded case management and pandemic response (\$280,000 annually),
- 2023-Present Hope Center Progressive Outreach: Expanded hours and clinical support (approximately \$316,000 annually).

Since August 1, 2023, the Hope Center has made over 800 unique contacts, with nearly 30% resulting in positive housing outcomes. Approximately 32% of participants enrolled in intensive case management, and 63% of those exited to permanent housing. The addition of an Encampment Coordinator (hired in September) has improved coordination, efficiency, oversight, and case-specific responses.

Looking ahead, the downtown outreach team will include weekend coverage and enhanced clinical support. The Hope Center contract expires in July 2026, and an RFP will be issued in spring 2026 to rebid services, informed by the Encampment Coordinator and downtown expansion data. A Mayor’s Task Force on homelessness is also developing recommendations for continued system improvements.

In response to questions, Herron stated that an ideal future model would include 24/7 outreach coverage, which would require approximately four additional full-time staff and increase annual costs from roughly \$500,000 to \$800,000. The initial downtown service area will cover the downtown entertainment district and surrounding blocks, with flexible boundaries extending roughly to Third Street, the north end of UK’s campus, and toward the convention center. Council members acknowledged successful interdepartmental coordination, including the cleanup of the Russell Cave Road encampment. The Chair noted the item may be returned for future discussion. No action was taken on this item.

IV. AUDREY GREVIOUS CENTER UPDATE

Felicia Lindsay, Principal of Audrey Grevious Center (AGC), provided the update. Principal Lindsay explained that AGC is a public-school treatment and education program serving Fayette County youth

ages 12–18 (up to 21 for qualifying special education services). It is designed for young people involved in the juvenile justice system and with significant social/emotional needs, enabling them to remain in the community. AGC provides individualized and group counseling, clinical assessments, treatment planning, and collaborative treatment team meetings that include families, as well as academic instruction aligned with Board of Education guidelines. The treatment model emphasizes trauma-informed and cognitive/behavioral therapies, with students receiving daily group therapy and individual support. Grant funding supported the creation of a calming room, and a \$10,000 grant was used to update the school library.

The presentation highlighted extensive community partnerships supporting employment, mentoring, literacy, and enrichment, as well as student and parent testimonials demonstrating improved attendance, behavior, academic progress, and successful transitions back to A1 district schools, with continued support from a transition specialist. Enrollment and outcome data showed that students with IEPs, 504 plans, English language learners, and gifted/talented students have recovered multiple credits toward graduation since August. Discipline data reflected a reduction in incidents through therapeutic interventions and alternatives to suspension, and academic data showed growth in reading and math.

Kacy Allen-Bryant, Commissioner of Social Services, provided historical context, noting the program's origins as a day treatment model and its evolution into the current partnership, in which FCPS provides education and therapeutic services while LFUCG provides infrastructure and operational support. Principal Lindsay emphasized that AGC is open to additional community partnerships and welcomes mentors and organizations interested in supporting students. No action was taken on this item.

V. ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS

No items were removed from the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 2:14 p.m.



FAYETTE MENTAL HEALTH DIVERSION COURT 2025 – A RECORD YEAR

Beating The Odds With A Great Return On Investment

Connie Milligan, Clinical Director, Fayette Mental Health Court

John Tackett, Fayette County District Court Judge

Social Services and Public Safety Committee

February 17, 2026

STABLE HOUSING

Average of 50% Enter Program
UNHOUSED

97% MAINTAIN STABLE HOUSING
AFTER 1 YEAR

The RATE OF POVERTY On Entry Is
More Than 6 Times Greater Than
Fayette County Residents As A Whole

INTERSECTION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION

90% of incoming participants:

**Severe Mental Illness
and
Substance Use Disorder**

**32% of Those with SUDs:
MORE THAN ONE SUBSTANCE**

Success after a year in the program

MAINTAINING SOBRIETY

60% have
maintained
complete sobriety
at 1 year in the
program

Compare to the
national average of
20% (National
Institute on Drug
Abuse, 2023)



RECIDIVISM
Before
Program
54%



FMHC
RECIDIVISM
After
Program
17%



ALUMNI
PROGRAM
RECIDIVISM
Rate **7%**

ALUMNI PROGRAM

**PARTICIPANTS
SERVED:
25**

TWICE-WEEKLY GROUPS

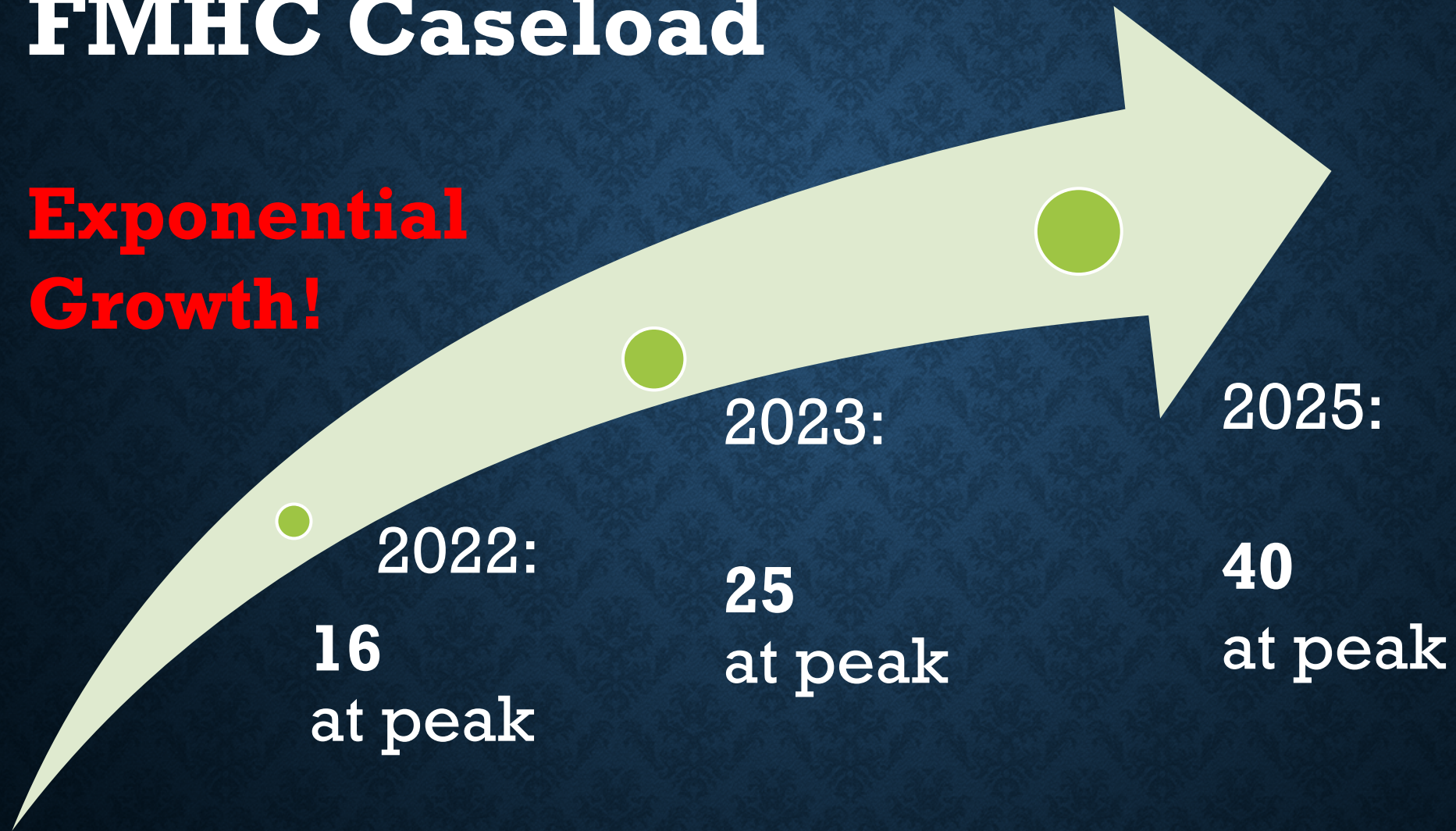
Continuation of engagement with peers,
socialization, meetings and community
navigation services

ALUMNI GROUP IMPACT

- Recidivism rates lowered
- Over 80% retention of participants
- Support from peers and staff validates the recovery journey with no pressure mentoring
- The positive improvements send a ripple of wellness through families and the community

FMHC Caseload

**Exponential
Growth!**



SETTING RECORDS IN 2025

25 new participants – 210 to date

25 participants graduated – 105 to date

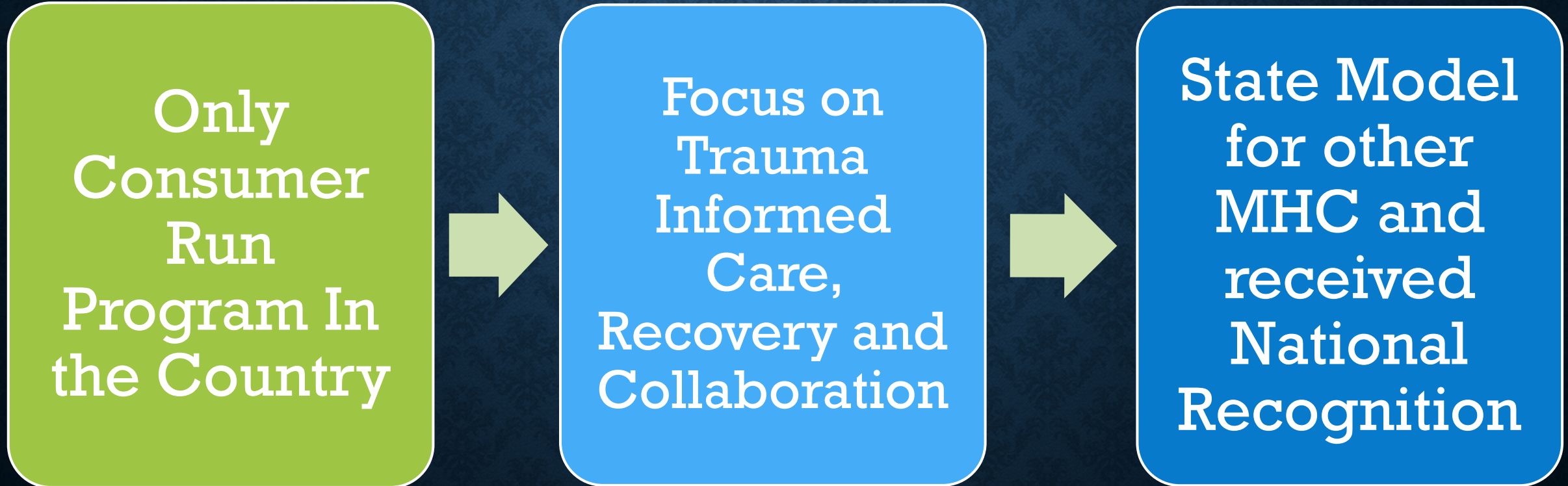
40 participants at peak enrollment

**121 mental health evaluations completed
for the court system - 623 since inception**

**Recommendations sent to referring
parties for all referrals**

FAYETTE COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COURT

Secret of our Success



SAVINGS

Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2025
25 Graduates



FCDC Savings

SMI inmates require 60% more resources

25,450 days of incarceration diverted X \$115 /day

\$2,926,750

Law Enforcement Savings

Based on national average expenditure

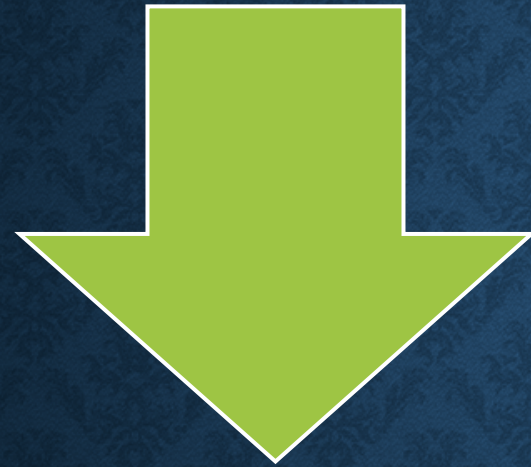
42 post-graduate quarters X \$5,716 /quarter

\$240,072

FCDC plus Law Enforcement

= \$3,166,822.

2025 RETURN ON INVESTMENT



\$270,000
Investment

1,073% ROI



\$3,166,822

ROI

In One Year



A MAJOR BENEFIT TO THE COURT SYSTEM AND COMMUNITY:



- **Timely And Detailed Mental Health Assessments For All Referrals By A Qualified Mental Health Professional**
- **623 To Date**
- **Recommendations based on clinical findings made to all referring parties –**
- **Judges, Prosecutors, Attorneys – *Even If Not Eligible For Mental Health Court***
- **Serve as a role model for other courts interested in a MHC**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
TIME AND CONTINUED SUPPORT!**



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
22ND JUDICIAL DISTRICT
ROBERT F. STEPHENS DISTRICT COURTHOUSE
150 NORTH LIMESTONE, SUITE 531
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY 40507
PHONE 859-246-2247 OPTION 9

JUDGES CHAMBERS

FAYETTE DISTRICT COURT

February 9, 2026

Dear Mayor Gorton and Members of Council:

We are pleased to offer our continued and unwavering support for the Fayette Mental Health Court (FMHC). Because this Court continues its proven exceptional performance, measurable outcomes, and profound impact on both participants and the broader community, we believe it must continue in our county. The FMHC's results in 2025 alone demonstrate a level of effectiveness, fiscal responsibility, and public safety benefit that warrants recognition and continued support.

Over the life of the program, FMHC has served 623 individuals. This includes 105 successful graduates. Moreover, the program's overall recidivism rate of 17.7% underscores its effectiveness in reducing repeat involvement with the justice system, particularly among individuals with complex behavioral health needs.

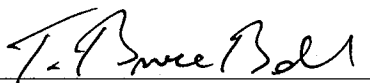
In 2025, a banner year for FMHC, 25 participants successfully graduated from the program, generating an estimated \$3,166,462 in total savings to the community. This figure includes \$2,926,750 in avoided incarceration costs as well as an additional \$239,712 in savings related to reduced policing and court expenditures. These numbers reflect not only cost avoidance, but meaningful system-level efficiency.

Also in 2025, FMHC served 40 participants, with 25 new individuals entering the program. FMHC's impact on participant stability is particularly noteworthy. Nearly half of participants entered the program unhoused. After one year of participation, 97% were considered safely housed. Additionally, approximately 90% of participants entered the program with co-occurring diagnoses of serious mental illness and substance use disorder. Among those individuals, 60% maintained complete abstinence from mood- or mind-altering substances after one year in the program.

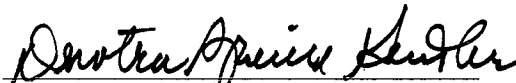
These tremendous outcomes reflect a program that is rigorous, humane, fiscally responsible, and grounded in evidence-based practice. FMHC continues to exemplify how alternative, problem-solving courts can improve individual lives while strengthening community safety and stewarding public resources wisely.

We continue our strong support of the Fayette Mental Health Court without reservation and commend its leadership in Judge John Lindsay Tackett, staff, and partners for their dedication and results.

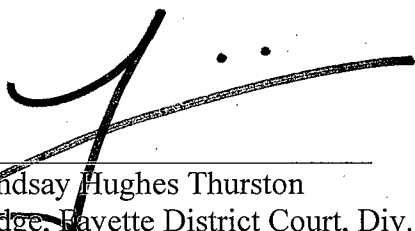
Respectfully submitted,



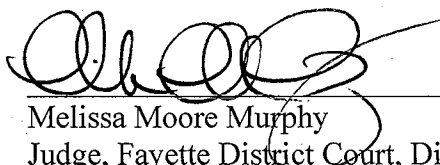
T. Bruce Bell
Chief Judge, Fayette District Court, Div. 2



Denotra Spruill Gunther
Judge, Fayette District Court, Div. 1



Lindsay Hughes Thurston
Judge, Fayette District Court, Div. 3



Melissa Moore Murphy
Judge, Fayette District Court, Div. 4



Administrative Office of the Courts

Debra Hembree Lambert
Chief Justice of the
Commonwealth

1001 Vandalay Drive
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
502-573-2350 or 800-928-2350
kycourts.gov

Zach Ramsey
Director

Office of Urban County Council
Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government
200 East Main Street
Lexington, Kentucky 40507

January 22, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is proud to express support for the Fayette Mental Health Treatment Court and its request for continued local funding. AOC also recognizes that establishing a second Mental Health Court in Fayette County would be a valuable expansion, allowing the courts to increase capacity and serve more justice-involved individuals affected by serious mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders.

The Fayette Mental Health Treatment Court has played a vital role in reducing recidivism among justice-involved individuals living with serious mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders. It served as a model mental health court during the statewide expansion overseen by the Administrative Office of the Courts, providing invaluable assistance and guidance in the successful implementation of new mental health courts across several counties in Kentucky.

The Administrative Office of the Courts fully supports this continued local funding request and the collaboration necessary to ensure that justice-involved individuals in Fayette County have access to essential treatment, resources, and services. The investment represents a meaningful step toward improved outcomes for individuals, the justice system, and the broader community.

Sincerely,

Zachary Ramsey

Zach Ramsey, Director
Administrative Office of the Courts
1001 Vandalay Drive
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
502-573-2350

2026 SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY (SSPS) COMMITTEE REFERRAL LIST

ITEMS REFERRED	SPONSOR(S)	REFERRED	LAST HEARD	AGENDA DATE	FILE ID
1) Public Safety Technology	W. Baxter	September 21, 2021	May 2, 2023		1065-22
2) Eviction Diversion & Right to Counsel	D. Wu	January 24, 2023	July 2, 2024	May 5, 2026	0702-24
3) Comprehensive Review of Code Enforcement	S. Lynch	June 29, 2023	August 26, 2025	May 5, 2026	0204-25
4) Coordinated Victim Response Plan	L. Sheehan	May 2, 2023			
5) A Caring Place (Villages Model Initiatives for Lexington)	S. Lynch	August 20, 2024	October 14, 2025	October 20, 2026	1008-24
6) Youth Council	A. Beasley	August 20, 2024		October 20, 2026	
7) Homeless Encampment Response and Street Outreach Services for OHPI	J. Reynolds	September 17, 2024	January 13, 2026		0203-25
8) Mobile Market Update	J. Reynolds	March 4, 2025		April 14, 2026	
9) Strategic Growth Plan for Lexington Fire Department	J. Hale/T. Morton	March 18, 2025	August 26, 2025		0811-25
10) Emergency Winter Shelter Program	T. Morton	June 3, 2025			
11) Audrey Grevious Center Update	J. Reynolds	June 26, 2025	January 13, 2026		0035-26
12) Animal Care and Control Ordinance Update	E. Curtis	October 23, 2025			
13) STREEET Task Force: Bike Lane Ordinance	D. Sevigny	December 4, 2025		June 9, 2026	
ANNUAL/PERIODIC ITEMS	SPONSOR(S)	REFERRED	LAST HEARD	AGENDA DATE	FILE ID
14) Review of Recovery Residences (Sober Living Homes) Ordinance	T. Morton	February 11, 2025	October 14, 2025		0350-25
15) Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention Coalition	T. Morton	March 4, 2025	April 15, 2025	April 14, 2026	0239-24
16) Substance Use Disorder Intervention (SUDI) Program Update	J. Reynolds	January 12, 2022	June 3, 2025	June 9, 2026	0532-24
17) Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention (OHPI) Update	J. Reynolds	June 7, 2022	October 14, 2025	October 20, 2026	0901-22
18) National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Update	E. Curtis	February 20, 2018	September 17, 2024	February 17, 2026	0360-22
19) Office of Affordable Housing Initiatives and Projects Update	J. Reynolds	August 10, 2021	November 12, 2024	April 14, 2026	1026-21
20) Recruitment, Retirement, and Retention for Public Safety Update	J. Reynolds/ W. Baxter	September 22, 2020	July 3, 2025	August 11, 2026	0450-21
21) Community Paramedicine Program Update	J. Reynolds	July 6, 2021	January 28, 2025		0300-23
22) Periodic Code Enforcement Update	J. Reynolds	October 8, 2019	June 13, 2023	May 5, 2026	0814-22
23) Lexington Global Engagement Center (Global Lex) Update	J. Reynolds		January 16, 2024	June 9, 2026	0058-24
24) ONE Lexington Programs Update	J. Reynolds	September 25, 2020	2025-01-21 (WS)	March 17, 2026	0080-23
25) Family Services Program Update	J. Reynolds	January 16, 2025	January 28, 2025	May 5, 2026	0109-25
26) Partners for Youth Program Update	J. Reynolds	January 16, 2025	January 28, 2025	March 17, 2026	0110-25
Updated 01.13.26					