

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI



JIM HOOD
ATTORNEY GENERAL



August 23, 2017

Dr. Joy Hogge, Executive Director
Families as Allies
840 E. River Place, Suite 500
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

RE: Attorney General's Mental Health Task Force

Dear Dr. Hogge:

I would like to extend an invitation to you to serve as a member of a mental health task force that I will be convening. The purpose of the task force will be to address a variety of issues including the availability and accessibility of mental health and drug/alcohol treatment services on the state and community levels, the opioid crisis, and the current state of the civil commitment laws, policies and procedures. Through our collaborative efforts, I believe we can effect positive changes in how mental health and treatment services are provided and accessed by the public.

Specifically, I anticipate that the work of the Mental Health Task Force will include: (1) the drafting of proposed legislation to make the commitment process easier for parents and those similarly situated to communicate with treatment professionals about their loved ones without written consent; (2) identifying methods to alleviate cost concerns for lower income families seeking services; (3) drafting standardized commitment orders for outpatient treatment after release and establishing an implementation plan for the courts; (4) creating procedures to address record sharing between drug and alcohol commitments and mental health commitments; and (5) establishing a state-wide prevention strategy to address Mississippi's growing opioid crisis.


I appreciate your consideration of this invitation to serve on the task force. If you are unable to serve, please feel free to designate a representative from your organization. If you would like to designate more than one person, please do so. I am attaching a list of agencies and/or groups we are inviting to participate and I am happy to add to this list should you identify an agency/group or specific person you would like to include.

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The first Mental Health Task Force meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2017, at 1:00 p.m. in the 13th floor press room of the Walter E. Sillers Building, 550 High Street, Jackson, MS. At the initial meeting, we will set our primary goals and objectives and establish sub-committees to focus on particular objectives. This format should insure that everyone's time and particular expertise is utilized as efficiently as possible. I know how busy all of you are and I appreciate your commitment to this process. To accept this invitation, please notify Paula Broome at (601) 359-3004 or pbroo@ago.state.ms.us or Ta'Shia Gordon at (601) 359-3070 or tgord@ago.state.ms.us. For those who are unable to attend but would like to call in, please let us know and we will provide you with the call-in information prior to the meeting date.

Again, I thank you for the work you have been doing on these very important issues and look forward to our future collaboration as we strive to make our mental health system better for those we serve.

Sincerely,



Jim Hood
Attorney General