

Andrews Behavioral Health to open diversion center in Tyler

New resource offers a better way to respond to behavioral health crisis

TYLER, Texas — Andrews Behavioral Health will host a community open house for its new Behavioral Health Diversion Center at 10 a.m. Wednesday, September 30, at 3111 North Northwest Loop 323 in Tyler. A ribbon-cutting will be held at 10:15 with tours offered throughout the day.

The Andrews Diversion Center represents a smarter, more compassionate response to behavioral health crisis, according to Andrews Chief Executive Officer Becki Mangum. Too often, families, law enforcement officers, and other first responders are left with only two immediate options when someone is in crisis: the emergency room or jail. At times, neither is the right fit.

“The Andrews Diversion Center creates a new and better path,” Mangum added. “It is designed to provide timely screening, observation, short-term stabilization, and connection to the care and support that fit the person and the moment.” She added that the center is available to residents in the Andrews service area: Henderson, Rains, Smith, Wood, and Van Zandt counties.

Keisha Morris, executive director of operations, will lead the Andrews Behavioral Health Diversion Center: “This center gives individuals, families, law enforcement officers, and other first responders a better option in difficult moments,” Morris said. “Our goal is to help people get screened, understand what support they need next, and move forward with dignity and a clearer path to care.”

The new center will support individuals experiencing behavioral health crisis while also helping families, law enforcement, hospital emergency departments, and other community partners navigate difficult moments with greater clarity and compassion.

The Diversion Center provides individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis with a safe place to receive support and stabilization for up to 23 hours. When additional care is needed, staff will help determine the most appropriate next step and connect the individual with the services and resources they need.

The adjoining Hope House Crisis Respite Facility will offer short-term residential support for people who need additional time (up to 10 days) to prepare for the next step in their recovery process.

“This center exists because East Texas partners recognized that we can respond to behavioral health crisis in a better way,” Mangum said. “We are deeply grateful for the leadership and support of local law enforcement, the judicial system, hospitals, and community partners who helped make this resource

possible.”

Smith County Judge Neal Franklin said the Diversion Center will strengthen the community’s response to crisis: “The Diversion Center will be an important resource for Smith and neighboring counties,” Franklin said. “It gives our community a practical alternative when someone is experiencing a behavioral health crisis and helps ensure people can be connected with the care and support they need. It will lighten the load on ERs and the jail system, while providing appropriate care for those in mental distress.”

Guests at the open house will have an opportunity to tour the facility, meet members of the Andrews Behavioral Health team, and learn more about how the Diversion Center will serve East Texas. Residents, partners, elected officials, first responders, and media are invited to attend.

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