



U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Public Briefing:
***Mental Health in Juvenile Justice Facilities: Civil Rights Implications,
Access, and Racial Disparities***

Friday, June 12, 2026 | Washington, DC

Expert Panels: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm EDT
Public Comment Period: 3:30 – 3:40 pm EDT*

AGENDA

Introductory Remarks: 9:00 am - 9:10 am

Panel 1: Research, Legal, and Policy Experts: 9:10 – 10:15 am

- Dr. Elizabeth Barnert, Associate Professor, School of Medicine, University of California Los Angeles
- Dr. Diane Terry, Director, Psychology Applied Research Center, Loyola Marymount University
- Christina Buttons, Investigative Reporter, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research
- Oliva Peña, Co-Director, Child Advocate Program, Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights
- Dr. Matthew C. Aalsma, Jonathan and Jennifer Simmons Professor of Pediatrics, Indiana University School of Medicine
- Matthew Cavedon, Director of the Project on Criminal Justice, Cato Institute

Break: 10:15 – 10:25 am

Panel 2: Federal, State, and Local Juvenile Justice Officials: 10:25 – 11:30 am

- Judge Renee Rodriguez-Betancourt, 449th Judicial District Court, Hidalgo County, Texas
- Jamie Gavett, Director, Minnehaha County Regional Juvenile Detention Center, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- Mark Jordan, Former Executive Director, Office of Independent Juvenile Justice Facilities Oversight, Washington, D.C.

- Joe Gutierrez, Commander, Western South Dakota Juvenile Services Center, Rapid City, South Dakota
- Judge Katherine Lucero (ret.), Director, California Office of Youth and Community Restoration

Lunch: 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

Panel 3: Directly Impacted Persons and Families: 12:30 - 1:35 pm

- Amnistry Freelen, Joshua Beasley’s Mother
- Lester Young, Executive Director, Path2Redemption Training and Consulting
- Samuel Quiles, Program Coordinator, Newark Community Street Team
- John Bunn, Founder, A Voice for the Unheard
- Dieter Cantu, Director, Juvenile Rights

Break: 1:35 pm - 1:45 pm

Panel 4: Community Advocates and System Stakeholders: 1:45 pm - 2:50 pm

- Abd’Allah Lateef, Deputy Director, Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth
- Dr. Janelle Ridley, National Vice Chair, Coalition for Juvenile Justice
- Andrea Harrell, LICSW, Child & Youth Division at The Assessment Center, Department of Behavioral Health, Washington, D.C.
- Vincent Schiraldi, Visiting Fellow, Pinkerton Foundation
- Dr. Jennifer Parker, Director, Center for Resilient Schools and Communities, Spartanburg Academic Movement
- Joshua Rovner, Senior Research Analyst, The Sentencing Project

Closing Remarks: 2:50 – 3:00 pm

Public Comment Session

Introductory Remarks: 3:30 – 3:40 pm

Public Comment Period: 3:40 – 4:40 pm

Closing Remarks: 4:40 – 4:50 pm

Adjourn Meeting.*

** End time subject to change*

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 56 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For information about the Commission, please visit www.usccr.gov, and on [X](#) and [Facebook](#).