



PRESS RELEASE
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**Nevada Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
Releases Report on Mental Health Implications for
Policing Practices and the Administration of Justice**

The Nevada Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights issued a [report](#) on implications for the administration of justice of policing practices impacting communities of color, veterans, and individuals with mental and behavioral health issues. The Committee took into consideration best practices outlined in the [report](#) of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing focused on community policing and crime reduction to learn from state law enforcement agencies if these practices are being implemented.

The report is based on testimony received during a public [briefing](#) on August 9, 2018 in Las Vegas, and a [community forum](#) on May 3, 2019 in Carson City. The Committee identified a number of concerns, including:

- State detention centers are serving as the de facto mental health facilities for individuals who are seriously and chronically mentally ill;
- Nevada has a severe shortage of behavioral health providers;
- Diversionary programs such as specialty courts are less available in rural areas – forcing impacted individuals to travel many miles to receive services;
- There is an urgent need for crisis intervention training among law enforcement in order to address individuals with mental health conditions.

The Committee also developed recommendations directed to the Department of Justice, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Congress, and various state actors, with a goal of helping remedy the above concerns.

Committee Vice Chair Sondra Cosgrove said: “Nevadans are currently engaged in deep discussions on policing practices and criminal justice reforms to ensure every person is treated with compassion and in ways that protect civil rights. This report and the associated recommendations will help all involved to continue this important dialog that will hopefully lead to decisive actions.”

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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 51 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 follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).