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Mental Health Collaboration Task Force Seeks Public Comment *Draft Report and Recommendations now available*

SAN FRANCISCO—The Task Force for Criminal Justice Collaboration on Mental Health Issues today announced that it is seeking public comment on a comprehensive set of recommendations to improve outcomes for individuals with mental illness in the criminal justice system.

The draft report with its recommendations is now available for comment on the California Courts at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/invitationstocomment.

The task force will also receive comments at two public hearings in August. The hearings are in Los Angeles on August 4, 2010, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Ronald Reagan State Office Building and in Sacramento on August 5, 2010, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Secretary of State Building.

The task force was created in 2007 to improve practices and procedures in cases involving adult and juvenile offenders with mental illness, ensure the fair and expeditious administration of justice, and promote improved access to treatment for litigants in the criminal justice system. The draft report contains 135 recommendations that address issues and strategies related to prevention, early intervention, diversion, court responses, incarcerations, probation and parole, community reentry, juvenile offenders and education, training, and research.

The 35-member task force is chaired by Associate Justice Brad R. Hill of the Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District. Task force members include representatives from all three branches of government as well as criminal justice and mental health partners. The task force is expected to forward its final report and recommendations to the Judicial Council in spring 2011.

All comments must be received by 5 p.m. on September 17, 2010. For additional information or to register to make a public comment at one of the hearings, please contact Karen Moen, Senior Court Services Analyst, at mentalhealthtaskforce@jud.ca.gov.

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