



## U.S. Department of Justice

### Civil Rights Division

*Assistant Attorney General  
950 Pennsylvania Ave, NW - RFK  
Washington, DC 20530*

August 1, 2024

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Governor  
State of Texas  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711

**Re: Notice Regarding Investigation of Texas Juvenile Justice Department  
Facilities**

Dear Governor Abbott:

The Civil Rights Division and the United States Attorney's Offices for the Western, Northern, Southern, and Eastern Districts of Texas have conducted an investigation of conditions in the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)'s five secure facilities under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act (CRIPA), 42 U.S.C. § 1997, and the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, 34 U.S.C. § 12601. The facilities included are the Evins Regional Juvenile Center, Gainesville State School, Giddings State School, McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility, and Ron Jackson State Juvenile Correctional Complex.

After carefully reviewing the evidence, we conclude that there is reasonable cause to believe that conditions for children in the five secure facilities violate the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400-1482, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. § 12132. These violations are pursuant to a pattern or practice of resistance to the full enjoyment of rights protected by the Constitution and federal law. Specifically, we find that TJJD routinely violates the constitutional rights of children by using excessive force and isolation, failing to keep children reasonably safe from sexual abuse, and providing inadequate mental health services. We also find that TJJD violates the IDEA by failing to provide adequate special education and related services to children with disabilities. Finally, we find that TJJD violates the ADA by failing to provide children with disabilities reasonable modifications to complete programs required for release and denying them an equal opportunity to benefit from education. The attached report details the supporting facts giving rise to those violations and the minimum remedial measures that we believe may remedy those alleged conditions.

We thank the State and TJJD officials for cooperating with our investigation. We hope to resolve this matter through a cooperative approach and look forward to working with the State and TJJD leadership to address the violations of law we have identified. The lawyers assigned to this investigation will contact counsel for the State for such discussions.

Please note that in the event we are unable to reach a resolution regarding our concerns, CRIPA authorizes the Attorney General to initiate a lawsuit 49 days after issuance of this notice letter to correct the alleged conditions we have identified. 42 U.S.C. § 1997b(a)(1). Please also note that this notice letter and accompanying report are public documents. They will be posted on the Civil Rights Division's website.

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please call Steven H. Rosenbaum, Chief of the Special Litigation Section, at (202) 616-3244.

Sincerely,



Kristen Clarke  
Assistant Attorney General  
Civil Rights Division

cc:

Ken Paxton  
Attorney General  
Texas

James P. Sullivan  
General Counsel  
Office of the Texas Governor

Shandra Carter  
Executive Director  
Texas Juvenile Justice Department

Eduardo Garza  
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Evins Regional Juvenile Center

Darryl Anderson  
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Gainesville State School

William Parks  
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Giddings State School

Antonio Houston  
Superintendent  
McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility

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United States Attorney  
Southern District of Texas

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United States Attorney  
Northern District of Texas

Attachment: Report of Investigation of Texas Juvenile Justice Department