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## NEWS RELEASE

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April 23, 2010

### **EOIR Expands Immigration Judge Benchbook** *Releases New Section on Mental Health Issues*

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) announced today that it has added to the Immigration Judge Benchbook (Benchbook) a section on Mental Health Issues.

The Mental Health Issues section of the Benchbook provides an overview of competency issues in a variety of legal contexts, a guide for addressing competency issues in removal proceedings, some sample orders for immigration judges to reference, and a resource guide including links to resources that are available online. This new section is intended to inform an immigration judge's decision-making process by highlighting relevant authority and persuasive references, suggesting best practices, and offering links to external reference tools.

EOIR's immigration judges initially generated the Benchbook in 1985 to assist in the adjudication of immigration cases. In 2007, EOIR revamped the Benchbook in an innovative attempt to merge solid legal reasoning with the latest technology available. On June 4, 2009, EOIR posted the Benchbook online, as part of the agency's ongoing efforts to serve the information needs of EOIR's interested parties and to promote greater transparency of agency operations.

The new Mental Health Issues section of the Benchbook is available at <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/vll/benchbook/tools/MHI/index.html>. The Benchbook complements the Immigration Court Practice Manual [http://www.justice.gov/eoir/vll/OCIJPracManual/ocij\\_page1.htm](http://www.justice.gov/eoir/vll/OCIJPracManual/ocij_page1.htm)) and the Board of Immigration Appeals Practice Manual (<http://www.justice.gov/eoir/vll/qapracmanual/apptmtn4.htm>).

*The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) is an agency within the Department of Justice. Under delegated authority from the Attorney General, immigration judges and the Board of Immigration Appeals interpret and adjudicate immigration cases according to United States immigration laws. EOIR's immigration judges conduct administrative court proceedings in immigration courts located throughout the nation. They determine whether foreign-born individuals—whom the Department of Homeland Security charges with violating immigration law—should be ordered removed from the United States or should be granted relief from removal and be permitted to remain in this country. The Board of Immigration Appeals primarily reviews appeals of decisions by immigration judges. EOIR's Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer adjudicates immigration-related employment cases. EOIR is committed to ensuring fairness in all of the cases it adjudicates.*