

From: "Lina Hidalgo, Harris County Judge" <judge.hidalgo@cjo.hctx.net>

Date: August 7, 2023 at 2:28:08 PM CDT



Letter from Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo

Dear People of Harris County:

I am writing to share with you that I am one of the over 21 million American adults that is suffering from clinical depression. For some time, I have been coping with this challenge, and it was undiagnosed until last month. Based on my doctor's recommendation, I checked myself into an out of state facility to receive inpatient treatment in late July. It is important for me personally and professionally to confront this issue swiftly, so I will be taking temporary leave from the office while I am receiving treatment. My medical care team and I are hopeful that I will be able to resume my normal schedule by early September. I remain passionate about Harris County and its people and look forward to returning at full strength.

From the beginning of my tenure as County Judge, I have stressed the importance of mental health services. Depression and other mental health illnesses are part of the human condition, and mental health illnesses should be treated just like any other health condition. I feel so strongly that we should be open and forthright about mental health issues, which historically have been tarred with stigma that have prevented people from seeking the treatment they need.

My experience has been difficult, but I am taking it as an opportunity to be open about my own struggle, my own challenges, and to encourage others, who need help, to seek treatment. All of us know someone - a friend, a coworker, or a family member - who suffers from depression. I encourage every person that is struggling with mental health challenges to look for support in your community, your loved ones, and your doctor. If you need help finding support in Harris County, the Department of Public Health maintains a list of mental health resources that residents can find [here](#) or you can call 9-8-8. Remember to prioritize your own health and that you are not alone.

I will remain available in the event of an emergency, and the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management remains fully engaged and prepared to respond to any potential incident or disaster during this time, and I will continue to remain available to staff. Since Commissioners Court rules indicate that the senior (longest standing) member of the court shall preside in my absence, Commissioner Rodney Ellis has graciously agreed to preside over Commissioners Court in my absence. Additionally, my chief of staff will continue to manage the day-to-day operations in my office.

I am grateful for your understanding, as well as the support of my colleagues, friends, and family. I hope to share more about my experience upon my return.

Sincerely,



Lina Hidalgo
Harris County Judge



About Judge Hidalgo

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo is the head of Harris County's governing body and Director of the Harris County's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Judge Hidalgo, alongside four County Precinct Commissioners, oversees a budget of approximately \$5 billion that funds services and institutions for the third-largest county in the nation, home to nearly 5 million people.

For more information about Harris County and the Office of the County Judge, click [here](#).

Join Our
Mailing List



Sign Up Via Text!
Text LINA to 22828