



News for Immediate Release

Nov. 13, 2025

## **Pennsylvania Courts Host Fifth Regional Summit to Address Growing Behavioral Health Crisis**

**HARRISBURG** — Focused on combatting the growing behavioral health crisis sweeping Pennsylvania and the nation, the Pennsylvania Courts together with Supreme Court Justice Kevin M. Dougherty and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, today held its fifth summit in Lehigh County.

Spearheaded by Justice Dougherty, these events are part of the Court's Behavioral Health in the Courts initiative and are designed to strengthen partnerships between the judiciary, system partners, behavioral health providers, and community stakeholders to improve outcomes for individuals with behavioral health challenges who come into contact with the justice system.

"Rising behavioral and mental health needs are placing unprecedented strain on families and communities across our state," said Justice Dougherty. "This crisis touches every corner of society, and meeting these needs will require a collective commitment to care and support at every level."

"These summits are a recognition that true justice extends far beyond the courtroom. By working together across systems, we can help break cycles of crisis and build safer, healthier communities for all Pennsylvanians."

Today's summit in Lehigh County is the fifth of seven planned statewide meetings, bringing together judges, court staff, behavioral health professionals, county and state officials, law enforcement, and others working at the intersection of justice and behavioral health.

The goal is to share best practices, address challenges, and continue building a coordinated approach that prioritizes treatment and support over cyclical court involvement and incarceration.

"These regional summits are an invaluable opportunity to learn from one another and strengthen the networks that connect our courts, service providers, and community partners," said Court Administrator of Pennsylvania Andrea Tuominen.

"By fostering these connections and building a shared understanding across systems, we can

close critical service gaps, expand access to care, and develop more coordinated, compassionate responses that truly meet the needs of our communities.”

The Behavioral Health in the Courts initiative supports court-led strategies to better connect individuals with services and reduce the cycle of crisis, arrest, and recidivism. The regional summits focus on practical strategies for collaboration, diversion programs, crisis response, and access to person-centered care.

More information about the summits and the Behavioral Health in the Courts initiative is available through the Pennsylvania Courts website and social media ([Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#)).

# # #

**Media contact:** [Casey Scheffler](#), 610-425-1712