Jailing People With Mental Illness

In a mental health crisis, people are more likely to encounter police than get medical help. As a result, 2 million people with mental illness are booked into jails each year. Nearly 15% of men and 30% of women booked into jails have a serious mental health condition.

The vast majority of the individuals are not violent criminals—most people in jails are have not yet gone to trial, so they are not yet convicted of a crime. The rest are serving short sentences for minor crimes.

Once in jail, many individuals don’t receive the treatment they need and end up getting worse, not better. They stay longer than their counterparts without mental illness. They are at risk of victimization and often their mental health conditions get worse.

After leaving jail, many no longer have access to needed healthcare and benefits. A criminal record often makes it hard for individuals to get a job or housing. Many individuals, especially without access to mental health services and supports, wind up homeless, in emergency rooms and often re-arrested. At least 83% of jail inmates with a mental illness did not have access to needed treatment.

Jailing people with mental illness creates huge burdens on law enforcement, corrections and state and local budgets. It does not protect public safety. And people who could be helped are being ignored.

Where NAMI Stands

Helping people get out of jail and into treatment is a top priority for us. NAMI believes that everyone should have access to a full array of mental health services and supports in their communities to help prevent interactions with police. These supports should include treatment for drug and alcohol use conditions, and supports like housing, education, supported employment and peer and family support.

If individuals do come to the attention of law enforcement, communities should create options to divert them to treatment and services—before arrest, after arrest and at all points in the justice system. When individuals are in jail, they should have access to needed medication and support,
should be signed up for health coverage if possible and should get help planning their release to ensure they get back on track.

**What NAMI Is Doing**

NAMI believes that by partnering with criminal justice leaders, county and state leaders and mental health professionals we can help people with mental illness get the support and services they need to stay out of jail.

**The Stepping Up Initiative**

NAMI is a partner in [The Stepping Up Initiative](https://www.nami.org/About-NAMI/National-Partners/The-Stepping-Up-Initiative), an exciting national campaign to challenge counties to reduce the number of people with mental illness in jails. NAMI joins other national organizations calling on counties and communities nationwide to address this problem.

**Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) And Other Local Programs**

NAMI Affiliates around the country partner with local law enforcement on crisis intervention team (CIT) programs to help police recognize a mental health problem and get people to treatment. We also work on a variety of jail diversion programs, re-entry programs, and provide education and support to individuals and families at risk of involvement in the justice system.

**Support To Families**

NAMI's [Helpline](https://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=search.summary&orgid=4827) responds to more calls from worried families about a loved one in jail than any other issue. We provide resources and referrals to legal services.

**Take Action Now**


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**Contact Us**

**Main** 703-524-7600

**Member Services** 888-999-6264

**HelpLine** 800-950-6264

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Copyright © 2018 NAMI. All Rights Reserved.
November 7, 2018
Via Electronic Mail Only

Ingham County Human Resources Department
Attention: Ms. Imelda Maloney

Re: Mark Blumer

Dear Ms. Maloney:

I am writing this letter in recommendation of Mark Blumer.

I have known Mr. Blumer professionally as an attorney since his days in the Jackson County Prosecutor’s Office.

I have appeared in cases where he has prosecuted clients that were defendants that I represented, as well as appearing before him while he has served as Magistrate to the 55th District Court in Mason, Michigan.

He is extremely well liked by staff. He has always been well organized, soft spoken, and respectful of both the attorneys and the litigants who have appeared before him.

Mark exemplifies what I would call an exceptional “Judicial Temperament.”

Mark is a highly qualified person in my opinion that would serve well the Public Defender’s Office as a leader and administrator.

I am the Past President of the Ingham County Bar Association and the Ingham County Bar Foundation, the Diocese of Lansing Catholic Lawyers Guild, the Thomas M. Cooley Chapter of the American Inns of Court, and most recently the Past President of the State Bar of Michigan (2016-2017) I have served on the Board of Directors of Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School for the past 35 years and have been Chair of the Board of Directors for the past 7 years.
In my opinion, Mark Blumer would be exceptionally well qualified. I have no reservation in giving my highest recommendation to you for the position you seek to fill.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to call me for any further information or recommendation.

Sincerely,

Lawrence P. Nolan

LPN/pjw
Members Present: Crenshaw, Schafer, Slaughter, Maiville, Banas, Nolan

Members Absent: Naeyaert and Morgan

Others Present: Judge Joyce Draganchuck, Judge Hugh Clark, Judge Richard Ball, Judge Hugh Clark, Judge Donald Allen, Mark Blumer, Russel Church, Henry Etheridge, Fredric Aboo, Carolyn Koenig, Cassandra Green, Maureen McMullin, Erin Schroder, Sue Graham, Teri Morton, Becky Bennett, Lindsey LaForte and others.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Crenshaw at 12:32 p.m. in the Conference Room “A” of the Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan.

Limited Public Comment

Maureen McMullin, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), read a statement, which is provided in the minutes as Attachment A.

Chairperson Crenshaw explained the interview and ranking process.

Discussion.

Chairperson Crenshaw called the meeting at ease at 12:39 p.m.

Chairperson Crenshaw called the meeting back to order at 12:44 p.m.

Interviews

Mark Blumer interviewed for the Chief Public Defender position.

Russel Church interviewed for the Chief Public Defender position.

Henry Etheridge interviewed for the Chief Public Defender position.

Fredric Aboo interviewed for the Chief Public Defender position.

Carolyn Koenig interviewed for the Chief Public Defender position.

Cassandra Green interviewed for the Chief Public Defender position.

Chairperson Crenshaw called the meeting at ease at 5:24 p.m.

Chairperson Crenshaw called the meeting back to order at 5:35 p.m.
Discussion and Selection Process

Chairperson Crenshaw stated that the Caucus would rank the candidates. He further stated that three points should be given to the top choice, two points to the second choice, and one point to the third choice.

Russel Church was ranked with 20 points.
Carolyn Koenig was ranked with 18 points.
Henry Etheridge was ranked with 8 points.
Cassandra Green was ranked with 7 points.
Fredric Abood was ranked with 5 points.
Mark Blumer was ranked with 2 points.

Discussion.

MOVED BY COMM. SCHAFER, SUPPORTED BY COMM. SLAUGHTER, TO RECOMMEND RUSSELL CHURCH AS THE SELECTION FOR THE CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Commissioners Naeyaert and Morgan.

Public Comment

Erin Schroder, Ingham County Court-Appointed Lawyer, stated that she had a vested interest in this panel. She further stated that she had worked with Russel Church and found him to be an ethical individual.

Ms. Schroder stated that Mr. Church worked to do the right thing for the defendant and he did his job but not to the detriment of what was right. She further stated that of the opinion that you made a wise decision.

Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner Schafer stated that he appreciated the way this process went. He further stated that he appreciated having the Judge’s participate in the panel and that he valued their opinions.

Commissioner Schafer stated that he wanted to thank Chairperson Crenshaw for chairing the panel and his leadership on this issue.
Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:24 p.m.