

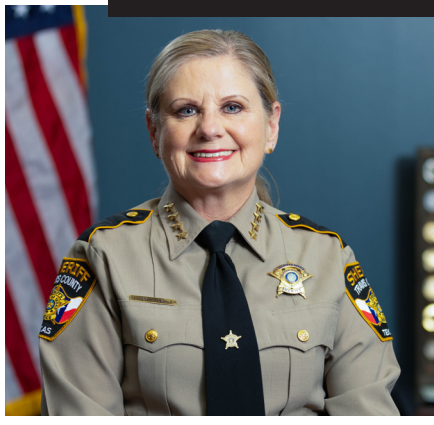


DECEMBER 2025

TRAVIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

NEWSLETTER

WORDS FROM THE SHERIFF



I hope you and your family are enjoying the holiday season. I love the way my home looks with twinkling lights and decorations. I like it even better when it's filled with people I love. The ornaments remind me of years gone by, and I reflect on the memories of loved ones and cherished moments.

This year is bittersweet because of the recent passing of former Travis County Sheriff Doyne Bailey. He served as sheriff from 1981 – 1992 and returned to serve as Chief Deputy from 2002 – 2006.

I had the distinct honor of having lunch with Sheriff Bailey and (now former) Hays County Sheriff Gary Cutler regularly, for many years. It always did my heart good to listen and laugh at his stories of the good ole days. He would marvel at how much TCSO is growing and the ways in which technology continually changes the work we do in law enforcement and corrections.

Oftentimes, changes bring challenges and one of the things I love most about the men and women of TCSO is their ability to rise to a challenge and conquer it. Absolutely incredible service to Travis County happened in 2025 thanks to perseverance and innovative thinking.

We continue to make strides in staffing. At its height, the vacancy rate for corrections officers was 35%. Today, that number is down to 18% and falling. We've also seen marked improvement in the vacancy rates of law enforcement, medical and counseling staff.

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BROWN SANTA

This year, [Travis County Brown Santa](#) once again brought holiday cheer to thousands of local families. Through the generosity and dedication of more than 5,200 volunteers, the program served over 2,000 families and 8,600 children, ensuring they experienced the joy and magic of the holiday season. From donations and gift wrapping to deliveries and smiles, this incredible community effort reflects the true spirit of giving and compassion that defines Travis County. Thank you to everyone who made this year's Brown Santa a remarkable success.

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SHOP WITH A COP

TCSO joined the Austin Police Department's [Amigos en Azul](#) and Elgin Police Department for their annual Shop with a Cop events. During the shopping sprees, each child was paired with an officer or deputy who accompanied them through local stores in the Austin and Elgin area to purchase Christmas gifts using a provided gift card. TCSO always looks forward to participating in this meaningful tradition, which brings joy and smiles to so many families during the holiday season.

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COBRA 117 GRADUATION



The TCSO Training Academy offers a Corrections Officers Basic Recruit Academy (COBRA) and all new-hire Corrections Officers attend the required course while on duty within their first year of employment. They receive 360 hours of education designed to fully prepare them for the role of Corrections Officer, and earn their Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) Jailer License.

Congratulations to the following officers of COBRA Class 117 who graduated on December 16: Syed Ahmed, Daniel Alaniz, David Balcazar, Jeremy Bell, Jeremiah Bretches, Tylinda Brown, Branden Concepcion, Angello Gonzales, Travion Hall, Quincy Hines, Blake Hodges, Pierre Laplante, Shaun McDougall, Micah Norris, James Paniagua, Alexis Pleasant, Tasa Robinson, Jaqueline Rodriguez, Julian Rodriguez, Isadel Saldivar, Matthew Small, David Vasquez-Ruiz, Jose Vega Morales and Ashley Washington.



FTO APPRECIATION

Earlier this month, TCSO's Corrections Bureau hosted its Field Training Officer (FTO) Fourth Quarter Appreciation Training somewhere special – [McKinney Roughs Nature Park](#)! The title of FTO requires responsibility and commitment. This team-building event served as a fun way to reward their hard work and dedication. The day of adventure was filled with team bonding activities through zipline, paintball, archery, ropes courses and more. Special thanks goes to TCSO Lt. Darnell Dail for preparing lunch for everyone.

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CHOIR PERFORMANCE

On December 19, the Grammy Award-winning Conspirare choir returned to the Travis County Correctional Complex to share their extraordinary voices with the women housed there during a special winter concert. The performance was filled with fantastic harmonies, moments of reflection and heartfelt words of encouragement that brought joy, comfort and inspiration to everyone in attendance. Their generosity of spirit and commitment to using music as a bridge for connection made the experience truly unforgettable. We extend our warmest holiday wishes and sincere gratitude to the members and staff of this remarkable group for sharing such a meaningful gift this season.



HONORARY DEPUTY

[Operation Heroes Unite](#) makes it their mission to provide spectacular birthday parties to kids battling cancer and other life threatening illnesses. Members of TCSO's Community Outreach and K9 Units were invited to Jaxson Zimmerman's law enforcement themed 6th birthday celebration and had a blast.

Upon learning about his big dreams of becoming a deputy someday, Sheriff Hernandez took things one giant step further and invited Jaxson to be sworn in as an Honorary Deputy. On December 18, Jaxson and his family were greeted by dozens of TCSO employees who offered high fives and cheer. Jaxson couldn't have been more excited or more polite and grateful. He truly has the heart of a deputy!

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There are plenty of options such as ride-shares, holiday public transportation programs and designated drivers, so there's no excuse for getting behind the wheel while intoxicated. Please protect yourself and others by planning ahead for a safe ride home. We hope you have a happy – and safe – New Year!



TCSO was excited to spread holiday cheer for local senior citizens by hosting Cocoa & Cookies with Cops at the Conservatory at North Austin as well as a festive Chili Cook-Off and caroling alongside the Round Rock Police Department at Affinity at Wells Branch. These joyful gatherings were filled with warm conversations, shared laughter and meaningful connections, celebrating the season while honoring the seniors who are such an important part of our community.

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