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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Texas Association of Counties Recognizes 11 County Programs With Best Practices Awards

AUSTIN — The Texas Association of Counties has announced the recipients of its 2026 County Best Practices Awards, recognizing 11 programs from 10 counties for creative, practical approaches to local government challenges and improved county services.

Presented every two years, the awards highlight effective county initiatives and achievements while encouraging counties to build on one another's successes.

"Counties are the government closest to the people. They are constitutionally created to provide essential services and do so in a transparent, fiscally responsible way," TAC Executive Director Susan M. Redford said. "This year's award recipients show how counties are meeting their responsibilities with creativity and a strong commitment to their communities. We're proud to recognize their accomplishments and share their ideas with counties across Texas."

Each recipient will be formally recognized at an upcoming commissioners court meeting.

2026 County Best Practices Award Recipients

Bell County: Preventative Jail Maintenance Plan

A proactive, team-based approach to jail maintenance and compliance.

Brazos County: DA in a Day

An interactive program giving residents an inside look at how cases are reviewed, charged and prosecuted.

Cameron County: South Texas Ecotourism Center

A community-driven model connecting conservation, education and sustainable tourism.



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Comal County: Hire to Retire

A workforce strategy focused on recruitment, retention and employee engagement.

Denton County: Creation of a Countywide Fire Response System

A coordinated approach improving fire and EMS response efficiency.

Jim Hogg County: Children's Afterschool Meal Program

An expanding meal program helping close gaps in food access for children and families.

Kendall County: Closing Daytime Emergency Response Gaps in a Rural Volunteer Fire System

A staffing model providing 24/7 station-based emergency response.

Refugio County: Horizon Refugio 2036

A countywide vision aligning infrastructure, economic development and historic preservation for long-term growth.

Travis County: AI-Enhanced Continuous Audit Process for Court-Appointed Attorney Payments

A data-driven system using advanced analytics to strengthen oversight of attorney payments and protect public funds.

Travis County: Professional Officer Wellness Reset

A confidential wellness program expanding access to mental health and other services for public safety professionals.

Wise County: Constable Central

A centralized model using shared resources and strategic staffing to improve court and law enforcement services.

For more information about TAC's County Best Practices Awards program and the 2026 award recipients, visit county.org/bestpractices.

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