

Austin State Hospital

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission celebrated the opening of the new \$305 million Austin State Hospital in May 2024. The hospital will start accepting patients in the summer of 2024.

The new hospital replaces the old Austin State Hospital which has been in operation since 1861 and is the oldest psychiatric hospital in Texas. Construction on the new facility began in October 2019. The three floor, 381,687-square-foot facility features 240 single-person rooms, common activity areas, outdoor courtyards, and recreational options like a gym, salon, barber shop, chapel, general store, and more.

The Austin State Hospital serves more than 75 counties in Central Texas. Treatment at the hospital focuses on stabilizing patients' acute psychiatric illnesses and eventually returning to them the community to continue to heal through community-based options. The hospital is expected to serve more than 600 people a year, including criminal competency and civil commitment cases when space allows.

Since 2017, Texas leaders have invested more than \$2.5 billion to replace, renovate, and rebuild state hospitals across the state. Today, state hospitals treat mostly forensic patients, meaning people transferred from county jails or the state prison system because they were determined to be incompetent to stand trial or because a jury found them not guilty by reason of insanity.

In 2023, a little more than 60% of adults treated inside state hospitals came from the criminal justice system, either from county jails or the prison system.

HHSC partnered with Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin to construct the new hospital; more than 100 mental health advocates and organizations assisted with its design.



Photos by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission

Sources used: [Texas HHSC](#), [KXAN](#), [The Texas Tribune](#)