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**COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO CO-SPONSOR THE 1ST
MENTAL HEALTH LAW CONFERENCE**

**Training will help local private attorneys and case workers improve their
services to individuals with mental health issues in our community**

The El Paso County Attorney's Office, along with the District Attorney and Public Defender Offices will be organizing the 1st Annual El Paso County Mental Health Law Conference on Friday September 26, 2008 at the County Courthouse.

The conference provides an opportunity for local lawyers, case workers, and interested citizens to learn more about legal issues surrounding mental health patients.

Participants will have the opportunity to learn from experts on a wide variety of topics including Criminal Incompetency, Involuntary Commitments, and Ethics representing the mentally ill. They will also have the opportunity to participate in a panel discussion with several local judges, law enforcement representatives and Garry Larcenaire, CEO of the agency Mental Health Mental Retardation.

Attending attorneys will be eligible to receive 5 free credit-hours of Continuing Legal Education (CLE) and 1 free credit-hour of Ethics.

First Assistant County Attorney JoAnne Bernal explained this conference will allow participants to become more proficient in dealing with legal issues regarding the mentally ill, thus providing better services to this particular segment of the population.

“Mental Health law is a very specialized field, and our community needs competent attorneys who can protect the rights and integrity of individuals with mental illnesses. We believe offering this type of training in our community at no cost is the way we can contribute to improve the quality of life of our residents,” Bernal said.

WHO: County Attorney, District Attorney and Public Defender Offices.

WHAT: 1st Annual El Paso County Mental Health Conference

WHEN: Friday September 26, 2008 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

WHERE: Commissioner’s Courtroom, Room 300

El Paso County Courthouse (500 E. San Antonio)

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For more information, please contact Anne Emmer at 546-2050 Ext. 3667