

# Office of the Sheriff

## Grayson County, Texas

**TOM WATT**  
Sheriff



200 SOUTH CROCKETT STREET  
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(903) 893-4388 • FAX (903) 870-9074

My name is Tom Watt and I have been the Sheriff of Grayson County for the last 8 years. Before that, I was with the Sherman Police for 31 years, with the last 8 ½ as the Chief.

Throughout my career, I've seen the vicious cycle of an offender being arrested for drugs or/and or alcohol, or some other mental health related issue, then being processed through the Criminal Justice System and once again being released. Before long, the same offender would be re-arrested and start the whole process over again. There was no hope of any kind of intervention as well as the complete lack of viable resources. I came to see this as nothing but insanity.

About a year and half ago, I was introduced to and met with Capt. Jeff Davis of the Denton County Sheriff's Office and Scott Wisenbaker, the Founder of "The Solution of North Texas (SONTX) Addiction Recovery and Reintegration Program". Until these two people explained their program to me, I assumed my career would end with no real hope for the addicted inmates in our jail. That is not the case.

This letter serves as an endorsement for SONTX, and I urge my colleagues to take a good look at the program. It has proven to be an amazing and transformative resource in addressing the prevalent impact of substance use. I have observed, first hand, how this program has supported our addicted inmates in rehabilitation and reintegration back into society and I believe this program serves as an exemplary model for facilities across Texas and beyond.

SONTX offers a vigorous 12-week curriculum with 120 hours of both factual and practical programming focused on addiction recovery, social and emotional skill building, along with reintegration strategies that work for the inmates. The founders have developed their curriculum, over decades of nonprofit and criminal justice experience and the program fits seamlessly into our jail operations; requiring no additional infrastructure. Without this benefit, it is clear we would be unable to sustain this program.

The Grayson County Jail has experienced many positive outcomes since the implementation of SONTX. Some of those positive outcomes include, a reduction of inmate violence, increased staff morale, and improved retention rates. Participants benefit from a structured, guided program while staff experience a safer, more stable work environment. By providing inmates with proven pathways to recovery and reentry, we are providing them an opportunity to return to society as productive members.

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SONTX provides far more than addiction treatment. The program also focuses on accountability, emotional health, financial literacy, and job-seeking skills. As I've watched inmates go through the program, it is clear to see the participants are being equipped for genuine, sustainable life changes. Our inmates report and our staff regularly observe significant increases in well-being, hope, and self-confidence in the program participants. One recent participant reflected, "For the first time in my adult life, I know I can make it outside and never come back to jail again." Such testimonials come regularly now and highlight the program's powerful role in breaking cycles of addiction-driven recidivism.

With most crimes linked to addiction of some sort and 90% of county-level detainees eventually returning to their communities, I see SONTX as an indispensable tool for creating a positive impact on our inmates and society as a whole.

Some of the more positive aspects of The Solution are that it is scalable, affordable, and flexible which allows it to be adapted to the needs of any facility, making it an ideal model for the transitory nature of county jails populations in Texas. I strongly believe the State of Texas should take a strong interest in the program and consider making State Mental Health funds available to support the program in each Texas County Jail.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Watt".

Tom Watt, Sheriff  
Grayson County, TX