

# JUDGE STEVEN LEIFMAN

## Biography

From 2007 to 2010, Miami-Dade County Judge Steven Leifman served as Special Advisor on Criminal Justice and Mental Health for the Supreme Court of Florida. In this capacity, Judge Leifman was responsible for chairing the Court's Mental Health Subcommittee which authored a ground-breaking report entitled, *Transforming Florida's Mental Health System*.<sup>1</sup> This report outlines recommendations with the goal of decreasing inappropriate and costly involvement of people with mental illnesses in the justice system. Currently, Judge Leifman Chairs the Florida Supreme Court's Task Force on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Issues in the Court.

Due to his expertise in the areas of criminal justice and mental health, Judge Leifman has been appointed to serve in a variety of capacities on local, state, and national bodies, including Co-Chair of the Council of State Governments/TAPA Center for Jail Diversion Judges' Criminal Justice/Mental Health Leadership Initiative, Board of Directors of the American Psychiatric Foundation, Fellow - Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, member of the National Leadership Forum for Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Services, member of the American Bar Association Task Force on Criminal Justice Mental Health Standards, member of the American Bar Association Commission on Homelessness and Poverty, Co-Chair of the Miami-Dade County Mayor's Mental Health Task Force and Voluntary Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Miami School of Medicine. In addition, Judge Leifman serves as Chair of the South Florida Behavioral Health Network and Finance Chair of the Miami-Dade Homeless Trust. He is the past Chair of Florida Partners in Crisis.

In recognition of his tireless efforts, Judge Leifman has received numerous awards and acknowledgements including; the Dade County Bar Association 2013 Criminal Justice Award, the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation 2012 Productive Lives Award, the Society of Biological Psychiatry 2012 Humanitarian Award, the American Psychiatric Association 2012 Advocacy Award, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce 2012 Miami's Leaders Award, the 2011 Miami-Dade State Attorney Katherine Fernandez-Rundle Award, the 2010 Florida International University (FIU) Cal Kovens Distinguished Community Service Medallion, the 2010 Leadership Florida Distinguished Member Award, the 2009 International Community Corrections Association (ICCA) Judicial Award, the 2009 Dade County Bar Association Sookie Williams Award, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) 2008 Distinguished Service Award (NAMI National's Highest Honor), the 2008 Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers Miami Chapter Honorable Gerald Kogan Judicial Distinction Award and the 2007 Greater Miami Jewish Federation Judicial Community Service Award.

Judge Leifman has also been featured in many national and local television and radio programs regarding mental health and the criminal justice system including, CNN: Anderson Cooper Special Report; NBC Nightly News; CNN: Special Investigations Unit, The Criminally Insane; PBS, Minds on the Edge: Facing Mental Illness; CBS4, The Forgotten Floor; National Public Radio (NPR) All Things Considered; the Miami Herald and Miami Today. He has also authored and published many articles on mental illness and the criminal justice system.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: [http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/pub\\_info/documents/11-14-2007\\_Mental\\_Health\\_Report.pdf](http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/pub_info/documents/11-14-2007_Mental_Health_Report.pdf)