Collin County
Going the **E**xtra **M**ile (**GEM**) Recognition Form

Honoree's Name: William D. Vest
First Name Middle Initial Last Name

Honoree's Job Title: Bailiff

Department: Collin County Court at Law #2

Years of Service with the County: 20 years

Why the Honoree is receiving a GEM Award including dates:

On approximately 1 Sept 2025, my bailiff informed me that he had taken it upon himself to look into what he noticed was a growing number of criminal cases assigned to this court in which the defendants were being held in the Collin County jail longer than usual. He discovered that indigent defendants were routinely waiting two weeks or longer to learn if their application for a court-appointed attorney was approved or denied. This type of delay not only has a direct impact on a defendant's rights, it is counter to the Collin County Indigent Defense Plan, contributes to jail overcrowding, officer overtime, and creates an unnecessary financial burden to Collin County. This information lead to an emergency meeting that was attended by District and County Judges and the Indigent Defense Coordinator and her staff. During that meeting it was determined that the delays stemmed from a manning crisis within that department and that these delays had been going on since at least January 2025. Surprisingly, none of the 14 District and County Judges with criminal jurisdiction were ever made aware of these delays. But for the proactive efforts of Bailiff Vest going above and beyond his assigned duties this unacceptable situation would have continued. His outstanding attention to detail and desire to find ways to make the court system operate more efficiently were directly responsible for bringing this issue to the attention of the judiciary where a plan was developed to decrease the waiting period.

Approved by elected official or department head on the 18th day of Sept. ,20 25

Judge Barnett O. Walker Jr.
Signature of Elected Official
Or Department Head

Barnett O. Walker Jr.
Printed Name