

# Speaker Bio | Marie Williams

Williams oversees and leads the state department of health in its role as the state's public mental health and substance abuse authority. She provides leadership and oversight aimed at helping individuals secure treatment and recovery services for serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbances, and substance abuse disorders. Williams' work includes collaborating with state and community agencies to educate the community about mental health and substance abuse services. She oversees community mental health and substance abuse programs, the operation

of four regional mental health institutes, and contracts with three private psychiatric hospitals. In all, the department annually serves about 350,000 Tennesseans who are struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues. In her time as commissioner, Williams has led efforts to address issues such as the state's opioid crisis, emergency psychiatric services, and criminal justice reform.