



Interagency Coordinating Group

2023 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

PREPARED BY

The Interagency Coordinating Group (ICG)

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SUBMITTED TO

Office of the Lieutenant Governor

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I. Executive Summary

Background

In 2009 through House Bill (H.B.) 492, 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Texas became the first state in the country to pass legislation specifically to improve the relationship between the state government and faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) seeking to partner with the state to help meet health and human service needs. Subsequent legislation passed in the 82nd Legislature, Regular Session, expanded this initiative through House Bill (H.B.) 1965, by adding additional state agencies in its charge. Both Acts directed the chief administrative officer of the named state agencies to appoint, in consultation with the Governor, a faith and community liaison in each agency. These liaisons serve on the Interagency Coordinating Group (ICG) chaired by the CEO of the State Commission on National and Community Service (OneStar), also a named member of the ICG.

The first bill, H.B. 492, directed agency liaisons to work within their respective agencies to:

- identify and remove unnecessary barriers to partnerships between the state agency the liaison represents and faith-based and community organizations;
- provide information and training, if necessary, for employees of the state agency the liaison represents regarding equal opportunity standards for faith-based and community organizations seeking to partner with state government;
- facilitate the identification of practices with demonstrated effectiveness for faith-based and community organizations that partner with the state agency the liaison represents; and
- work with the appropriate departments and programs of the state agency the liaison represents to conduct outreach efforts to inform and welcome faith-based and community organizations that have not traditionally formed partnerships with the agency.

Subsequently, H.B. 1965 directed agency liaisons to:

- develop and implement a plan for improving contracting relationships between state agencies and faith-based and community organizations;
- develop best practices for cooperating and collaborating with faith-based and community organizations;
- identify and address duplication of services provided by the state and faith-based and community organizations; and
- identify and address gaps in state services that faith-based and community organizations could fill.

2023 Interagency Coordinating Group Activities

The Interagency Coordinating Group (ICG) met in May, September, and October of 2023. Additionally, ICG members were invited to participate in a stakeholder meeting hosted by the Texas Nonprofit Council in January and to attend the Texas Nonprofit Summit hosted by OneStar in Austin at the UT Commons Conference Center in February. The stakeholder meeting helped the Texas Nonprofit Council gather feedback from various viewpoints across the state on how to provide better support to the nonprofit sector and advance the connection between faith-based and community organizations and state government. More than 350 people attended the Summit which included over 20 learning sessions and networking opportunities to create lasting collaborative relationships.

ICG meetings provide members with a chance to share upcoming events and activities, success stories as well as challenges. Meetings also include ongoing updates throughout the year on the Texas Nonprofit Council, OneStar (Texas State Commission on National and Community Service) organization initiatives – AmeriCorps Texas, Together Texas,

Volunteer Texas, and Rebuild Texas; and Texas Nonprofit Strong, a collaborative initiative led by OneStar and United Ways of Texas to strengthen connections within the Texas nonprofit sector. A special highlight for members was a breakdown of data from the newest report from Texas Nonprofit Strong conducted in partnership with the Center for Nonprofits & Philanthropy at Texas A&M. The 2023 edition of the Built for Texas report offers an in-depth analysis of the current state of nonprofits in Texas and the need for stronger community collaboration.

State agency spotlights during meetings this year were the **Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)** and the **Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)**.

HHSC provided a deep dive into their work with and for the community, including:

- The Community Access (CA) program which connects people to services and supports collaborations with nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and public and private entities. The CA program seeks to strengthen individuals and families by providing information, resources, benefits, and services.
- The Community Partner Program (CPP), a statewide network of certified community-based organizations, which helps Texans apply for, renew, and manage their HHSC benefits online.
- Overview of the Supplemental Nutrition Program (SNAP) and networks they partner with and strategies to provide better assistance.

DFPS provided an overview of their work and impact through the Faith-Based and Community Engagement Department including:

- Promoting safe and healthy families and protecting children and vulnerable adults by fostering key partnerships, promoting community awareness, strengthening volunteer and intern engagement, effectively managing resources, and developing a faith-based and community engagement workforce.
- Working with volunteers for awareness events and campaigns, such as Child Abuse Prevention Month and Elder Abuse Awareness Month and providing resource rooms for caseworkers in child and family services and adult protective services.
- Over 1,500 events were attended by over 128,000 people, and over 5,800 clients served.

As presiding officer of the Interagency Coordinating Group, I respectfully submit this year's report on the goals, activities, and progress of the ICG from January through December 2023. Previous reports submitted outline specific actions taken since the passage of the initial legislation in 2009. These reports and additional information about the ICG can be found on the OneStar website at onestarfoundation.org.

II. Duties & Responsibilities

Duties & Responsibilities (see Appendix A)

- Sec. 535.053. (c)(1) — Meet periodically at the call of the presiding officer.
- Sec. 535.053. (c)(2) — Work across state agencies and with the State Commission on National and Community Service to facilitate the removal of unnecessary interagency barriers to partnerships between state agencies and faith and community-based organizations.
- Sec. 535.053. (c)(3) — Operate in a manner that promotes effective partnerships between those agencies and organizations to serve residents of this state who need assistance.

Additional Duties & Responsibilities (see Appendix B)

- Sec. 535.055. (c) — In addition to the Interagency Coordinating Group's other duties, the Interagency Coordinating Group, in coordination with the Texas Nonprofit Council (per S.B. 993 83R) shall:
 - Develop and implement a plan for improving contracting relationships between state agencies and faith and community-based organizations;
 - Develop best practices for cooperating and collaborating with faith and community-based organizations;
 - Identify and address duplication of services provided by the state and faith and community-based organizations; and
 - Identify and address gaps in state services that faith and community-based organizations could fill.

Reporting Duties

- Sec. 535.054. (a) — No later than December 1 of each year, the Interagency Coordinating Group shall submit a report to the legislature that describes in detail the activities, goals, and progress of the Interagency Coordinating Group.
- Sec. 535.054. (b) — The report made under Subsection (a) must be made available to the public through posting on the Office of the Governor's website.

III. Goals, Activities & Progress (January-December 2023)

Goal 1: Continue implementation of the plan for improving contracting relationships between state agencies and faith-based and community organizations.

ACTIVITY & PROGRESS

The Texas Nonprofit Council (TNC) met with representatives from the Comptroller's Office in 2022 for an in-depth overview of current portals and systems for state contracts/bids, and how to provide access for nonprofits. TNC provided an update to ICG members in 2023 and discussions continue to eliminate barriers nonprofits face to access opportunities so they can furnish materials, equipment, supplies, and/or services to the state of Texas.

In 2012, the ICG finalized an RFP Template for Client Services Procurements. The template provides a standardized format for the requested information. Several ICG member agencies use this template which is available on the Comptroller's website. ICG reviewed this template in 2020 and made no changes to it. ICG continues to gather feedback from within their respective agencies to assess the template's pertinence and usage rate.

Goal 2: Develop best practices for cooperating and collaborating with faith-based and community organizations.

ACTIVITY & PROGRESS

The following pages provide a snapshot of state agency activities relating to cooperation and collaboration with faith-based and community organizations. Submissions were cleared through each agency's internal review process and compiled by OneStar, chair of the ICG.

In a rapidly evolving Central Texas area, the higher education sector continued to partner with community organizations at the local, state, national, and international levels to ensure that higher education met the priorities of our vibrant communities. In 2023, The University of Texas at Austin Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) leveraged its position as a resource to the entire university to foster mutually beneficial partnerships with the communities of Austin and beyond, particularly those that have been underserved, to support innovative partnerships through the 18 colleges, schools, and units across the campus, and to elevate the collaborative partnerships of the entire university. In doing so, the DDCE and its units supported all three pillars—People, Place, and Pursuits—of the university’s strategic plan.

The Center for Community Engagement (CCE) in the DDCE serves to connect the resources of the university with the communities of Central Texas, the state, and the nation. Through its student-, faculty-, and community-facing programs, as well as the Texas Grant Resource Center, the CCE connects the university to community-based organizations and faith-based organizations. The CCE is also a resource hub for the university, keeping abreast of partnerships across the campus and leading campus-wide community-focused assessments, including the application for the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, and a volunteer management database. As of this report, the CCE’s VolunteerUT database counted 284 community partners among its registered users. All students, faculty, and staff may connect with any of these community partners.

Student highlights across the university include The Project, UT’s student-led community building initiative and largest day of service, which this past year partnered with Austin Voices for Education and Youth St. John Regular Baptist Association, Keep Austin Beautiful, Austin Parks Foundation, and the Austin Parks and Recreation Department, as well as seven schools in Austin’s independent School District. UT’s student-led Alternative Breaks program partnered with nonprofits out of state, in New Orleans, including Hands On New Orleans, Molly’s House, and Trinity Episcopal Church New Orleans, as well as three community-based organizations in Mexico City, thereby expanding students’ global perspectives. The Community Engagement Collective, a network of students and student organizations, has built partnerships and events around civic involvement, service, and community organizing. They have co-sponsored events with other service-focused student organizations, like Alpha Phi Omega and Lions Club, and community organizations like Austin Justice Coalition, Brave Communities, and the Asian-American Resource Center. Students also serve on the executive committees of Nueces Mosque, the Texas Hillel, and the University Catholic Center.

In partnership with Texas Athletics, the LEAD Initiative gives student-athletes the opportunity to engage in impactful collaborations with nonprofit organizations in Texas that serve underrepresented populations with resources in the following areas: education services, recreation activities, basic needs and/or emergency services. Moreover, 327 registered student organizations on campus have service listed in their mission, partnering with nonprofits across central Texas including Best Buddies, SAFE Austin, Casa Marianella, Inside Books, Austin Partners in Education, Médecins Sans Frontières, Habitat for Humanity, and We Are Blood. In 2023, the sponsorships program of the DDCE expanded to provide not only small financial support to nonprofits, including the Austin NAACP, LULAC, and the Austin Area Urban League, but also to ensure that student, faculty, and staff resources were connected to any nonprofit that sought capacity-building from the university.

Faculty-led initiatives at UT partner with organizations in their efforts to provide service-learning and undertake engaged scholarship. While there are too many partner institutions to list in this space, these are examples of faculty-focused sustainable partnerships with organizations and faith-based groups:

- The office of population health in Dell Medical School partnered with EcoRise as part of the Planet Texas 2050 challenge around climate and ecological change.

- Faculty in liberal arts and law convened a number of nonprofits, including the Austin Justice Coalition, for listening sessions.
- Social work students in fieldwork partner with hundreds of domestic and international nonprofit organizations, including the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services and the American Red Cross.
- Geosciences faculty seek to diversify their faculty pipeline through partnerships with K-12 nonprofits and school districts.
- The exemplar program, Projects in Underserved Communities, enables engineering and social work students to work with community-based organizations abroad, and students in community and regional planning, sustainable design, and landscape architecture work with community partners through coursework.

As it relates to community-driven programming, the CCE's Community Classroom series partnered with AMEN (African American Mental Health and Wellness Program), itself in partnership with Mt. Zion Baptist Church and Rehoboth Baptist Church of Austin. In addition, leaders of the DDCE serve on nonprofit boards and committees, including of the Austin Economic Development Corporation, the Community Advancement Network of Austin, Preservation Austin, Travis County Historical Commission, Interfaith Action of Central Texas, Travis County- African American Heritage Council, and The Contemporary Austin/Jones Center Contemporary Advisory Board to ensure that the university is engaged in providing resources across the region.

Staff have also worked closely with the following to bolster capacity through student volunteers and faculty support: Austin Asian Family Support Services, the African American Youth Harvest Foundation, the Austin Area Urban League, and Six Square. They also serve on coalitions working alongside leaders of nonprofits and nonprofit collectives, including the United Way, Any Baby Can, Austin Child Guidance Center, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, the Central Texas Food Bank, the Austin Revitalization Authority, the Children's Haven Association, and Future Front Texas. In this way, UT remains aware of the priorities of the constituents of these area nonprofits.

Also within the DDCE, the UT Charter School System partners with 23 facilities around the state, including nonprofit entities like Helping Hand Home. The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health works with communities to strengthen conditions that support mental health and eliminate conditions that harm mental health. Among their partners are Windsor Village United Methodist Church, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, and Wheeler Avenue Inner City Visions, Inc.

For more than 60 years, the Texas Grants Resource Center (TGRC) has served as a bridge between the grant-seeking and the grant-making communities. The TGRC is the fifth-oldest Candid Funding Information Network partner. The Candid Foundation Information Network maintains the Foundation Directory, which houses information on 140,000 funders and over 12 million grants. The TGRC regularly offers How to Search for Nonprofit Grant Opportunities, offering the training 12 times in the last year, with 550 people participating. The TGRC also offered "Introduction to Proposal Writing" twice with 30 participants, as well as training on "Telling Your Nonprofit Story" with 40 participants. The TGRC also fulfilled over 300 requests for grant information statewide and had 115 people visit the TGRC to conduct searches in person. Relatedly, TGRC staff now represent UT on the boards of the Nonprofit Management Alliance of Texas and Mission Capital.

Whether through the direct service of UT-affiliated individuals or collaborative partnerships, UT seeks to deliver upon its public service mission.

OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY

First Lady Abbott Recognizes Our Volunteers

The First Lady shared her appreciation for volunteers during National Volunteer Month in April and wrote these words of encouragement to the volunteer community:

"I am thrilled to recognize the 14 outstanding winners of this year's Governor's Volunteer Awards for their selfless dedication to Texans across the state. The true strength of Texas is found in our people, and this year's award winners are a moving testament to the character of the Lone Star State."

The Governor's Commission for Women

For more than 50 years, the Governor's Commission for Women has served as a resource and champion for women throughout the Lone Star State, working to benefit all Texans by supporting the endeavors and well-being of women across the state. The commission currently operates with a one-person staff and modest biennial budget, creatively utilizing interns, volunteers, and nonprofit funds to advance women-owned businesses, prevent human trafficking, and provide leadership to women and girls through outreach and education.

The Governor's Commission for Women and the State Agency Council have sponsored the Holiday Wishes Project since 2019 in coordination with Partnerships for Children to fulfill Christmas gift wish lists for children in our foster care system. The Holiday Wishes Project creates happy memories for children connected to Child Protective Services by fulfilling a child's wish list for Christmas gifts. The gifts on these lists may be the only gifts that some of them receive, but we know this small act of kindness can bring great joy.

The Holiday Wishes Project primarily serves the Central Texas community, which consists of 20 different counties. In 2020, the Governor's Commission for Women worked with various regions outside Central Texas under the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to fulfill wish lists throughout the State of Texas. In 2021, 46 state agencies participated in the project, and thanks to the generosity of the participating agency employees, the wish lists of over 3,100 children in Central Texas were fulfilled, and an additional 32 children in other regions were served. Due to this incredible response, and for the second year in a row, Partnerships for Children was able to serve 6,800 children in foster care in Central Texas.

Beacon State Fund

The Beacon State Fund is a nonprofit organization established in 1996 to educate and improve Texans' civic participation by promoting community leadership and volunteerism. The board of directors consists of no fewer than three officers, and all serve without salary. The organization funds many of the commission's important projects.

Adoption and the Heart Gallery

Together with the First Lady of Texas, the Governor's Commission for Women is proud to support the foster and adoption outreach programs of the Heart Gallery.

TEXAS FILM COMMISSION

The Texas Film Commission (TFC) was created in 1971 by Governor Preston Smith, who found that it was, "in the social, economic and educational interest of Texas to encourage the development of the film-communication industry." Since then, the TFC has expanded to include the television, commercial, video game, animation, visual effects, and extended reality (augmented reality, virtual reality, and mixed reality) industries.

Over the years, the TFC has been the link between industry professionals spread across the state, creating a community interested in expanding the local media environment. In 1972, the first edition of Film Texas magazine was published by the TFC to inform constituents about what was currently filming in Texas and about its filmmakers. Today, the TFC offers a comprehensive website as the resource of Texas-specific information for local and worldwide filmmakers alike.

The TFC has been involved with a number of faith-based and community-based film and television projects, such as:

- *47 Days*, an independent feature film produced by Reel Big Studios and filmed in Poolville;
- *Everywhere the Signs*, an independent feature film produced by Garage Dweller Studios and filmed in Austin;
- *Paralleled: The Triad*, an independent film produced by The Triad Series, LLC, and filmed in The Woodlands and Spring;
- *The Chosen*, a television series airing on network, cable, and digital produced by Out of Order Studios and filmed in Midlothian and Dallas; and
- *The Short Game*, an independent film produced by Green Jacket Productions and filmed in Bonham, Dallas, Denison, Sherman, and Texoma.

In addition to these large projects, the TFC had the following engagement with a number of Faith- and Community-Based organizations regarding the media production industries:

- Continuing engagement with a video gaming nonprofit operated as a veteran-run organization dedicated to providing education regarding video gaming that created UnKnighTedxP (<https://uknightedxp.org>)
- Consulted with TBN Network leadership regarding Texas locations and provided Media Production Development Zone program (MPDZ) and Texas Moving Image Industry Incentive Program (TMIIP) information;
- Discussed infrastructure development and the MPDZ program with Out of Order Studios regarding the production company for *The Chosen* television;
- Hosted a one-week teacher externship about media production careers for Workforce Solutions as an annual community engagement popular externship WS; and
- TFC staff spoke to the American Legion Boys State conference at the University of Texas at Austin.

TEXAS MUSIC OFFICE

The Texas Music Office in the Governor's Economic Development and Tourism Division is constantly expanding its Music Friendly Community program to provide Texas communities with a network for fostering music industry development and to send a clear message to industry professionals that certified communities are serious about attracting and developing music industry growth.

The Music Education and Community Grant Program seeks to provide opportunities for the next generation of Texas musicians and to provide support for music programming in under-served and under-resourced communities. \$22 of the \$30 fee from the purchase of every Texas music specialty license plate goes directly toward providing music instruments and lessons to Texas school children in need around the state. In addition, this fund can partner with nonprofit organizations to create experiences featuring Texas music in under-served communities statewide, working hand in hand with Texas 501(c)3 nonprofits to foster the development of young musicians throughout the state so that they can continue developing their craft, regardless of financial challenges.

The office has been at the forefront of informing the music industry of concert safety resources through the Texas Task Force on Concert Safety to provide resource referrals to the creative industries, focusing on crowd control strategies and security measures to develop meaningful safety solutions.

APPOINTMENTS DIVISION

The authority to make governmental appointments is one of the powers given to the Governor of Texas by the Texas Constitution. During a four-year term, the Governor will make about 1,500 appointments. Most appointments are

members of state boards, commissions, and councils that carry out the laws and direct the policies of state government activities. Other appointments are for members of task forces that advise the Governor or executive agencies on specific issues and policies. Finally, some appointments are for state elected and judicial offices when vacancies occur by resignation or death of the office holder.

The Office of the Governor appoints well-qualified applicants across a broad range of backgrounds, including faith-based and community-oriented organizations. To apply for an appointed position, potential applicants may read about the Appointment Process prior to completing the Appointment Application at:

gov.texas.gov/organization/appointments/process

Most of these appointments are volunteer positions, representative of our citizen government. Most appointees are entitled to standard travel expenses, per diem, or both to attend meetings and conduct business of the board or commission.

The list of current appointments may be found at gov.texas.gov/organization/appointments/positions.

Applicants may download the application form at gov.texas.gov/organization/appointments/application.

One example of the key role appointments play in state government is the appointment by the Governor of the Texas Nonprofit Council. The council makes recommendations for improving contracting relationships, develops best practices, and identifies and addresses gaps in services provided by—and which could be filled by—faith-based organizations.

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICE

The mission of the Public Safety Office (PSO) is to promote strategies that improve public safety, support victims of crime, prevent terrorism, and prepare communities for the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risks to Texans.

Community-based organizations (CBOs) and faith-based organizations (FBOs) are eligible grant recipients within several of the fund sources that the PSO administers, including the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP), and others. In fiscal year 2023, the PSO provided grant funding to 375 CBO projects totaling more than \$172 million and to 101 FBO projects totaling just under \$21 million.

Of the \$193 million going to CBOs and FBOs in fiscal year 2023, 96 percent was awarded within the following three grant programs:

General Victim Assistance Program

267 organizations received \$169 million in grant funding, including \$9.3 million to FBOs to provide services and assistance directly to victims of crime in order to speed their recovery and aid them through the criminal justice process.

STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program

19 organizations received \$6 million in grant funding for projects that promoted a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to improve the justice system's response to violent crimes against women, including domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.

Nonprofit Security Grant Program

73 organizations, of which 72 were FBOs, received more than \$10 million in grant funds to support security enhancements as well as to address identified risks, including threat and vulnerability, to the physical location of the organization. This program integrates the preparedness activities of nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of a terrorist attack with broader state and local preparedness efforts while also promoting emergency preparedness coordination and collaboration activities between public and private entities.

In addition to these grant programs, the Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team, in collaboration with the First Lady's Office and the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), has supported the **Governor's Response Against**

Child Exploitation (GRACE) initiative since its inception in 2019. This initiative includes a diverse group of Texas’ faith leaders that work to raise awareness and to prevent human trafficking in their communities. Every January, GRACE hosts a Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking. During the Week of Prayer, communities across Texas are encouraged to unite in prayer, become better educated about human trafficking, and discern opportunities to prevent exploitation and support survivors.

TEXAS COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Texas Talent Connection Grant Program

Governor Abbott’s initiative for working Texans makes clear his intention to create “an environment where entrepreneurs and workers have the freedom to aspire, to innovate, to grow, and to prosper.” This grant program seeks applications that support innovation in workforce development and that address the primary focus of this fund, which is to:

- Support exemplary workforce training projects that lead to job placement, increased wages, and job retention;
- Deliver workforce services in more efficient and innovative ways; and
- Provide services to workforce populations with special needs.

The Texas Talent Connection grant program is funded by Wagner–Peyser 7(b) federal funds, which are allocated to each State Office of the Governor on July 1 of each year for grants to fund workforce training and job placement services.

On behalf of the Office of Governor Greg Abbott, the Texas Workforce Investment Council facilitates the call for applications and competitive selection processes for the Texas Talent Connection grant program. The Texas Workforce Commission is responsible for processes related to Texas Talent Connection grant award negotiation, funding, management, and monitoring.

For the purposes of this grant program, the term “community-based organization” is defined as a private nonprofit organization (which may include a faith-based organization) that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and that has demonstrated expertise and effectiveness in the field of workforce development. Additional supporting information as to why the organization meets this definition of a community-based organization would need to be provided with the application, including how the organization (1) is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and (2) demonstrates expertise and effectiveness in the field of workforce development.

Eligible partnerships for Texas Talent Connection grants for workforce training and services may include various combinations of local workforce boards, employers or employer organizations, institutions of higher education, faith-based organizations, local school districts, and not-for-profit community-based organizations.

Key parameters associated with eligibility for this funding program include the following:

- Applicants may apply for funding for 12 months only.
- Applicants must reapply each year for additional funding consideration. There is no guarantee of an award in any year.
- Funding is generally limited to no more than \$350,000 for any year.
- Successful applicants are eligible for additional annual awards for up to three years maximum, consecutive or otherwise, for essentially similar grant activities that demonstrate successful outcomes.
- All applications are subject to the general terms and conditions of this funding program, if awarded. Submission of an application confirms agreement with these terms.
- For any application that is to continue a project for a second or third year of grant funding, successful performance on the intended outcomes of the previous contract(s) will be taken into consideration.

- If a project has received three years of funding for similar grant activities and outcomes, the project is no longer eligible for funding.

Additional guidance can be found at gov.texas.gov/organization/twic/wagner_peyser_7b_program.

Office of the Secretary of State (SOS)

The Office of the Secretary of State continues to publicize information regarding nonprofits located [here](#). Other useful links include:

- [Corporations Section Forms](#)
- [Business and Nonprofit Forms](#)
- [Nonprofit Organizations FAQs](#)
- [Texas Business Organizations Code: Doing Business with the SOS on and after January 1, 2010: A Guide for Texas Nonprofit Corporations \(PDF\)](#)
- [Forming a Nonprofit Tax-Exempt Corporation in Texas](#) (2018 Texas C-BAR publication)
- [Search for Charities on the IRS Web Site](#)

TAX ISSUES FOR NONPROFITS

Neither a nonprofit corporation nor an unincorporated nonprofit association is automatically exempt from federal or state taxes. To become exempt, a nonprofit organization must meet certain requirements and apply with both the Internal Revenue Service and the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

Federal Taxes

To attain a federal tax exemption as a charitable organization, your certificate of formation must contain a required purpose clause and a dissolution of assets provision.

- [IRS Charities & Nonprofits page](#)
- [IRS Stay Exempt](#): tax information for 501(c)(3) organizations
- [IRS Publication 557](#), Tax Exempt Status for our Organization
- [Life Cycle of a Public Charity](#): sample organizational documents and IRS filings
- [IRS Form 1023 \(PDF\)](#) Application for Recognition of Exemption and [instructions \(PDF\)](#)
- [Information about Form 990-N reporting requirements](#) for small tax-exempt organizations

Questions about federal tax-exempt status? Contact the IRS Exempt Organizations Section at 877-829-5500.

State Taxes

- [Comptroller of Public Accounts Tax Exemptions for Qualified Organizations](#)
- [Comptroller Guidelines to Texas Tax Exemptions](#)
- [Texas Applications for Tax Exemption \(forms\)](#)

Questions about state tax-exempt status? Review the comptroller's [FAQs](#) or contact the comptroller's Exempt Organizations Section by phone at (800) 531-5441 or (512) 463-4600 or by email at exempt.orgs@cpa.texas.gov.

TEXAS NONPROFIT RESOURCES

- [Proceedings Involving a Charitable Trust](#) Section of the Office of the Attorney General
- [Texas CBAR](#): Texas Community Building with Attorney Resources provides free legal assistance to Texas nonprofits
- [OneStar](#) - OneStar promotes service and volunteerism, forges effective public and private partnerships, and works to increase the performance of nonprofit organizations

Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT)

The Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) continues to look for innovative ways to assist Texas customers in navigating the complex issues in the areas of electricity, telecommunications, and water.

For 2023 the PUCT has created a new division known as the Office of Public Engagement, its purpose is to provide a point of contact for customers, to address their issues and concerns, while providing a level of customer education, and when needed face-to-face interaction in the office and out in the communities.

The PUCT also typically participates in events by providing area residents with resource information regarding electric choice, energy conservation, and customer assistance programs. Numerous police departments, senior activity centers, and faith and community-based organizations contacted the PUCT throughout the year to request the agency's durable brochure-on-a-stick (hand fan) that provides customers with energy conservation tips. The PUCT looks forward to continuing our partnerships with faith and community-based organizations in the next year.

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) administers 12 federal nutrition programs that provide balanced nutrition and promote healthy habits in communities across the Lone Star State. TDA extends the beneficial impact of these programs through partnerships with state agencies, community organizations, and local nonprofits. These relationships are vital to achieving the TDA Food and Nutrition Division mission – to advance compliant USDA nutrition programs through effective partnerships and educational resources. The following examples illustrate how TDA increases the effectiveness of federal nutrition programs through collaboration.

Partnerships Make a Difference

TDA has developed a strong relationship with Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) and its affiliate in Texas. The Texas affiliate promotes TDA's Summer Meal Programs in its newsletters and hosted a booth at the 2023 TDA MegaCon conference for program partners. They have also worked with TDA to build awareness of TDA's Health Ambassadors for a Ready Texas, a student-engagement effort that recruits campus leaders to increase participation in school nutrition programs.

Nationally, AFHK's cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides other opportunities to enhance TDA efforts in Texas through USDA's Healthy Meals Incentives. AFHK collaborated with USDA to award school nutrition grants from USDA's Healthy Meals Incentives to schools across the country, including nearly \$2 million for 18 small and/or rural Texas school food authorities (SFA). TDA is also collaborating with AFHK and USDA in efforts to provide Healthy Meals Incentives awards that recognize SFAs that have made significant improvements to the nutritional quality of their school meals.

Over the next three years, TDA will partner with Texas A&M AgriLife to train approximately 150 student MyPlate Ambassadors to promote MyPlate messaging and curricula. The ambassadors will encourage healthy eating habits for school-aged children, parents/caregivers, and school staff through the coordination and implementation of MyPlate nutrition education connected to the nutritious meals and snacks offered through USDA Child Nutrition Programs.

TDA collaborated with No Kid Hungry, a national campaign run by the nonprofit Share Our Strength, to increase awareness of reduced-price school breakfasts becoming free in Texas. This benefit became available when the 88th Texas Legislature's budget included offering free breakfast to students eligible for reduced-price breakfasts. No Kid Hungry used social media to encourage schools to take advantage of the program and contacted local officials to ensure they were aware of the availability of this benefit.

TDA and Culinary Institute of America Texas in San Antonio (CIA) worked together to develop three original recipes that feature Texas products and meet National School Lunch Program standards. CIA chefs participated in recipe development, nutrition analysis, taste testing, and training for school staff on how to make the three entrees. A CIA chef also appears in videos demonstrating how to use the recipes in a school nutrition kitchen. The collaboration was funded by a USDA Team Nutrition grant.

TDA continued its longstanding partnership with WIC in 2023 to offer the Summer Meal Programs at 40 WIC offices through a limited USDA pilot program. TDA collaborates with all WIC clinics by encouraging them to promote the Summer Meal Programs and directing them to TDA resources at SquareMeals.org. TDA also shares and promotes SNAP-funded WIC materials during Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Week and at CACFP conferences.

Other TDA efforts to improve the health of our youngest Texans include participating in Outdoor Living Environment (OLE!), a statewide initiative from the Texas Education Agency that promotes healthy, nature-based outdoor spaces at early childcare and education programs. TDA is working with Children at Risk in the development of resources to encourage interested CACFP childcare sites to join TDA programs.

TDA's work with the Baylor Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty (BCHP) includes information sharing about TDA Food and Nutrition initiatives and promotion of the BCHP support available to meal program operations. TDA's Assistant Commissioner for Food and Nutrition was a panelist at BCHP's Together at the Table: Hunger and Poverty Summit in 2023.

Other efforts include communicating directly with local elected leaders through TDA's Healthy Community Network (HCN). A newsletter keeps HCN participants apprised of the impact federal nutrition programs have on their communities.

TDA offers a range of resources that partners and stakeholders can use to advertise the availability of good nutrition and education through federal nutrition programs. The value of these resources goes up exponentially when used locally and promoted by a trusted advocate for community health. TDA will continue implementing a variety of tactics to increase the effectiveness of these partnerships.

Collaboration Advances Technology

TDA is committed to using the latest technology in its collaboration with nonprofits and state agencies. Collaborating with Texas food banks was instrumental as TDA implemented Web-Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) for ordering and monitoring USDA Foods. Food banks were the pilot recipient agencies and paved the way for implementation of WBSCM for schools and other contracting entities.

Growing Relationships for Nutrition

To promote Texas agriculture and agricultural producers, TDA provides resources that support the Austin-based nonprofit Sustainable Food Center's (SFC) Texas Farm to School Learning Collaborative.

TDA produces the monthly E-Harvest newsletter for subscribers interested in receiving news and information designed to increase the availability of fresh and local foods in nutrition programs and for all Texans. It highlights available TDA resources and relevant stakeholder initiatives and resources.

TDA continues exploring opportunities for collaboration that cultivate stronger local and regional food systems and support the purchase of local and minimally processed foods for nutrition programs.

TRADE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Trade & Business Development division houses the Grant Office which works directly with FBCOs on the Texans Feeding Texans Home Delivered Meal grant (Program). The Program was established to help supplement and extend current home-delivered meal program for seniors and/or disabled Texans. Governmental and nonprofit agencies are

eligible for this grant program. There are several FBCOs that utilize this program to help feed more seniors in their community. In fiscal year 2023, TDA awarded more than \$9.1M to nonprofit feeding organizations across the state.

The Grants office has also launched the Texas Local Purchasing Food Assistance program (TxLFPA) with the support of funding from USDA. The purpose of the program is to maintain and improve Texas' food and agricultural supply chain resiliency. The goal of this program is to foster in-state, long-term relationships and build sustainable market opportunities for State of Texas producers, with an emphasis on supporting local or regional and socially disadvantaged producers to increase the amount of products distributed to underserved communities in the State of Texas. In addition, TDA aims to tailor food distribution for unique local challenges to serve the State's population and feeding programs, including food banks and other organizations that target underserved communities. TxLFPA program supports food banks and nonprofits to secure feeding sites, which may include the potential of FBCOs to distribute food procured through this process.

In the summer of 2023, TDA received funding for the Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI). The purpose of the RFSI program is to build resilience across the middle of the state's food supply chain for food crops. For this program, "middle of the food supply chain" refers to activities and operations that occur between post-harvesting of food crops and before food goods are sold at a store or market, excluding the marketing of food products or services.

The RFSI program will offer two grant types, "Equipment-Only" and "Infrastructure" grants, to eligible entities to support the expanded capacity for the aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, and distribution of locally and regionally produced food products, including specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, aquaculture, and other food products, excluding meat and poultry.

Eligible entities include:

- Agricultural producers or processors or groups of producers/processors
- Nonprofit organizations operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities
- Local government entities operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities
- Tribal government entities operating middle-of-the-supply-chain activities
- Institutions such as schools, universities, or hospitals bringing producers together to establish cooperative or shared infrastructure or invest in equipment that will benefit multiple producers.

TEXAS STATE FOOD SECURITY AND RESILIENCY PLANNING COUNCIL

During the 88th Regular Session, HB 3323 established the Food Security and Resiliency Planning Council (Council) within the Texas Department of Agriculture. The Council is made up of appointees from the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker, Commissioner of Agriculture, Texas A&M AgriLife, and the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission. Appointees may come from a variety of organizations involved in agriculture and food security, including nonprofits. The Council is responsible for developing the State Food System Security Plan. The rules for the council have been adopted, and meetings will begin once all members have been appointed. In developing the State Food System Security Plan, we anticipate that the Council will interact with numerous nonprofits throughout the state. However, the process through which nonprofits will be consulted will not be established until the Council is formed.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) partners with faith-based and community organizations to provide an individual, whether they are incarcerated or serving their sentence in the community, with a multitude of resources with a goal of successful reentry and reducing recidivism. TDCJ is committed to utilizing and partnering with approved volunteers to assist and facilitate services essential to the rehabilitation process. These volunteers represent a broad spectrum of faith-based and community organizations that administer programs which help strengthen the ties between

individuals, their families, and their communities. The life skills gained in these programs help to prevent recidivism and promote successful reentry and reintegration as productive citizens.

For incarcerated individuals, TDCJ utilizes approved volunteers to assist and facilitate services and essential programs. As of August 31, 2023, there were 27,552 approved volunteers. During Fiscal Year 2023, these volunteers made 58,301 volunteer visits for a total of 203,826 hours spent supporting inmates. A total of 8,007 volunteers were trained or retrained online this fiscal year. In addition, there were 947 attending in-person training. In January 2022, the volunteer application was converted to online submission. During FY2023 there were a total of 10,727 volunteer applications received and 9,567 of those were submitted online.

These volunteers represent a broad spectrum of faith-based and community organizations that administer programs that provide valuable skills to the inmate population to help them not recidivate. Life Changes Curriculum is utilized in Specialized Programs (i.e. Mentor Programs, Family Programs, Rehabilitation Programs, Reentry Programs, Spiritual Growth Programs, and Non-Religious Programs). The efforts of these volunteers are recognized each year during the Governor's Criminal Justice Volunteer Service Awards Ceremony.

Programs such as the Prison Fellowship Academy and the Field Ministry Program offer restorative justice values and illustrate the strong partnerships between the TDCJ and faith-based organizations. The Field Ministry Program is designed to support an inmate's religious faith and develop their potential for religious leadership. There are 191 active male field ministers on 41 units. These field ministers serve to boost the morale of the incarcerated by offering inspirational correspondence, prayer sharing, and one-on-one encouragement to impact inmate behavior and promote positive change. As of August 31, 2023, the field ministers have received 246,337 prayer and correspondence requests.

The Heart of Texas Foundation College of Ministry at the Hobby Unit

The Heart of Texas Foundation College of Ministry located at the Hobby Unit (female) began in August 2021. As of August 31, 2023, there are 27 female students currently enrolled in the program. The Heart of Texas Foundation College of Ministry offers a four-and-a-half-year program for participants to receive a fully accredited Bachelor of Arts in Applied Ministry degree at no expense to the inmates. The purpose of this program is to promote moral rehabilitation and ministry to other inmates.

Prison Fellowship Academy

Prison Fellowship Academy offers a 12–14-month non-parole voted program to help men and women in prison become good citizens in the communities they live in today and the communities they will return to tomorrow. The Academy achieves this goal by focusing on its six core values: productivity, responsibility, integrity, community, affirmation, restoration and by offering program participants the opportunity to apply the skills they have learned. As they live out the core values, Academy participants and graduates have a prosocial influence on their peers and communities, resulting in positive social impacts and enhanced community safety. Graduates of the Academy who remain incarcerated can continue to practice these values by participating in Prison Fellowship's graduate component, where they practice peer leadership skills by exhibiting the six core values and making positive contributions in their current community. Graduates who are released will have the tools and experience to make positive life decisions that are beneficial to themselves, their families, and their communities as they re-enter society.

In addition, Prison Fellowship offers resume writing, mock interviews, Story Book Project where volunteers/staff use digital recording devices to record mothers and fathers reading to their children and the recordings are delivered on CD's, and Crosswalk Center which helps the inmate reenter into society. Prison Fellowship is located on the Vance Unit, Polunsky Unit, Crain Unit, and Clements Unit, with a total capacity of 342 beds. Since September 1, 2017, there have been 739 inmates enrolled in the program and over 600 successful program completions.

GO KIDS

The GO KIDS initiative was established to identify resources that offer basic, fundamental services to inmates and their children. Recognizing that solid family ties impact the success of individuals under criminal justice supervision, various units offer family-inclusive programs and/or programs focused on strengthening parenting and relational skills. These programs help inmates maintain constructive focus during their incarceration, allow families to remain connected, and positively impact the future of their children.

Numerous volunteer organizations sponsor and facilitate Day with Dad/Day with Mom events to provide a unique family bonding experience for inmates and their children to reconnect. The events often include a meal for the inmate and their children to share together and a day of family activities such as games, arts and crafts, and face painting. Additionally, volunteer organizations provide Marriage Seminars to help inmates maintain their relationship with their spouse while incarcerated. Marriage Seminar events typically include a shared meal and group counseling.

The Sisterhood of RUTH

The Sisterhood of RUTH (Restoration, Unity, and Transformation through the Holy Spirit) is a volunteer-provided program managed through collaboration between Prison Fellowship Ministries, TDCJ-Rehabilitation Programs Division, and the Carole Young Medical Facility. RUTH offers academic, emotional, cultural, social, and spiritual enrichment to the female inmates, as well as their families.

Truth-be-Told

Truth-be-Told (TBT) offers female inmates the opportunity to provide an honest recount of the events that led them to prison to an attentive and respectful audience of invited guests. Before sharing their story with an audience, the inmate must participate in an eight-week series of classes in which they share their story with their peers. TBT is a unique program staffed by volunteers that have experienced both literal and metaphorical “prisons” in their own lives and are willing and able to learn and grow alongside the women they serve. TBT provides opportunities for personal growth and healing from past trauma through telling in safe communities.

Houston reVision

Houston reVision works with every youth (age 14-17) in the state of Texas who has been certified to stand trial as an adult or is currently serving an adult prison sentence in the TDCJ. The youth are matched with mentors who write them letters and send them birthday cards. On the first Friday of every month, Houston reVision provides the youthful inmates lunch and connects through art, music, and dance projects. Houston reVision has hundreds of volunteers whose mission is to see the inherent potential of disconnected youth and work to empower them to revision, create, and choose hopeful pathways.

Celebrate Recovery

Celebrate Recovery is a program designed to deal with the hurts, habits, and hang-ups that adversely affect inmate’s lives and are a roadblock to developing good relationships. Volunteers bring the good news of the gospel to the inmates through those who have walked the road and can relate to their condition and feelings. Celebrate Recovery also gets inmates involved in ongoing Christ-based 12-step groups when they leave prison and integrate into society.

Prison ministry programs such as Kairos, Jubilee, and Kolbe are provided by volunteer groups. The volunteers host a three-and-a-half-day weekend that consists of talks, discussions, and Chapel meditations so that inmates learn that they are worthy of God’s love, light and grace. That no matter who they are or what they have done, God forgives them. The volunteer groups follow up with weekly Prayer and Share sessions to continue to keep the inmates involved in continuing ministry.

STRIVE Reentry Center

The STRIVE (Strength Through Restoration, Independence, Vision, and Empowerment) Reentry Center was launched in August 2019 at the Mountain View Unit. Spanning 12 weeks, the program integrates a trauma-informed care methodology to address a range of issues. These encompass domestic violence, sexual assault, traumas from both childhood and adulthood, gender socialization, parenting, and substance abuse. Through the knowledge and skill-building activities offered, participants can embark on a journey of self-discovery, enlightenment, and empowerment. The diverse STRIVE curriculum is centered on themes related to trauma and abuse. The Windham School District offers educational programming that encompasses goal setting, wellness, financial literacy, employment skills, and the chance to obtain recognized certifications such as Southwest Airlines Professional Communications, ServSafe, OSHA-10, and Forklift training. Volunteer group Discipleship Unlimited, a faith-based organization, provides services such as financial classes, relationship classes to include trauma-based programming, and life skills classes. Trae Kendrick, women's ministry director and mission's coordinator with the First Baptist Church of Crawford, works as a volunteer mentor for the participants focusing on overcoming trauma. Each participant, drawing from both previous and TDCJ work experiences, crafts a resume. This resume is utilized during career expositions where participants, dressed in professional attire, interact with potential employers aligned with STRIVE. These interviews, held both in-person and virtually, often result in job offers before participants are released. If not selected immediately, participants are assured another interview opportunity. Since its commencement in August 2019, STRIVE has successfully graduated 568 participants, with 161 participants completing the program successfully in 2023.

The TDCJ Veterans Coordinator collaborates with multiple agencies and organizations to provide services for incarcerated veterans. The agency's services for veterans include volunteer-provided unit programming and housing dedicated to veterans, assistance with veterans benefit applications, access to education benefits, and continuity of care coordination with veteran peer groups for post-release assistance. The Samaritan Center's Hope for Heroes staff provide programming at the Travis State Jail, a state-legislated veterans reentry program, that provides educational classes on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), substance use disorders, communication, leadership, and coping mechanisms, and post-release support. In addition, volunteer program Animum Irae Militum (AIMVETS), a veteran-specific ministry focused on recovery, provides Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT) in units across the state. Most recently, the Success Through Restoration, Independence, Perseverance, Excellence and Service (STRIPES) Veterans Dorms for males and females have opened. AIMVETS, other volunteer groups, and multiple TDCJ divisions collaborated on the STRIPES Veterans Dorms to provide a peer support program designed to equip veterans with the necessary tools to enhance their wellbeing and reintegration into society.

TDCJ maintains contact with our volunteers via the Volunteer Services Newsletter and email services. These provide information for volunteers and volunteer groups beneficial for their services. The Volunteer Services Newsletter is used to recognize volunteers for their time, recruit volunteers, churches, and organizations and to provide important changes or reminders on volunteer guidelines. The GovDelivery Email system is utilized to notify subscribers of unit lockdowns, the Volunteer Newsletter, recruit volunteers for programming at specific units, and provide important updates or reminders and volunteer approval, training, and retraining requirements.

To benefit those individuals reentering their communities or releasing to parole supervision, TDCJ has built relationships and partnerships with local Workforce Solutions, faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations, such as Goodwill of Central Texas, Catholic Charities of San Antonio, 7More, One Man's Treasure, City of Houston Community Reentry Network Program, Alvin Community College Reentry Program, and Unlocking DOORS. These organizations assist in a variety of ways to include co-hosting second chance job fairs, providing education and job skills training, offering cognitive and peer support groups, providing professional sets of clothing, coordinating supportive engagement at the bus station, and educating the public and employers on the impact community collaboration has in reducing recidivism. Parole regional chaplains and Reentry Community Case Managers assist in establishing resources for clients for things such as food, clothing, and shelter. The chaplains also assist in recruiting and maintaining information for volunteers.

Volunteers within the regions facilitate various classes for the clients to assist in successful reintegration which includes recovery support programs such as Overcomers and Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous.

The TDCJ-Reentry and Integration Division (TDCJ-RID) has agreements with the Social Security Administration, Texas Health, and Human Services-Vital Statistics, and the Department of Public Safety to request, process, and provide valid forms of identification to individuals upon release, thereby paving a smoother road to successful reentry. The TDCJ-RID in collaboration with the TDCJ Texas Correctional Office for Offenders with Medical and Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI) holds contracts with the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and all the Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) across the state. The DSHS contract provides services to persons living with HIV who are released from custody by engaging them with the Texas HIV Medication Program, local community AIDS Service Organizations, and community clinics. Contracts are held with all LMHAs to provide a network of mental health continuity of care providers for adults and juveniles released from custody to community supervision. Additionally, TDCJ's Reentry Special Needs Case Managers and TCOOMMI Human Service Specialists work together with community providers and resources to build successful reentry plans and linkages for continuity of care for those releasing with special needs.

For those individuals sentenced to probation, there are 122 Community Supervision and Corrections Departments (CSCDs) that directly supervise individuals on community supervision across the state. TDCJ acts as an oversight entity for the CSCDs in Texas' decentralized system, providing funding distribution, standards, auditing, statewide data, training, program evaluation, and fiscal monitoring. Providing day-to-day supervision, CSCD programs and services vary according to the resources available in each corresponding community. CSCDs rely on local community and faith-based organizations such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and local churches to assist in providing services that facilitate positive change in probationer behavior. All local programs have the goal of enhancing outcomes and reducing recidivism, but each program is individually developed based on the relationships, resources, and unique needs of the communities they serve.

Additionally, TDCJ has collaborated with the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) for over 20 years, including working with Battering Intervention and Prevention Programs (BIPPs) and CSCDs on issues relating to domestic violence. TDCJ has granted probationary accreditation or accredited 137 BIPPs, of which TCFV provides technical assistance, program evaluation, and training to the providers to ensure they are equipped to educate batterers. TDCJ provides 26 grants to qualified BIPPs to support their local community programs. TDCJ and TCFV continue to support community initiatives across the state that promote victim safety.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) collaborates with faith communities to help meet the needs and improve outcomes for children, families, and vulnerable adults, and to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DIVISION (FBCE)

The Faith-Based and Community Engagement Division (FBCE) engages faith-based, community partners, and individuals to assist vulnerable children, adults, and families. FBCE has five overarching objectives:

- Foster key partnerships
- Promote community awareness
- Strengthen volunteer and intern engagement
- Effectively manage resources
- Develop and maintain the Faith-Based and Community Engagement workforce

FBCE staff support partnership efforts with Child Protective Investigations, Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, Statewide Intake, and the Youth and Parent Helpline. FBCE partners with the faith community, foundations, advocates, and volunteers to improve service delivery for children, families, and vulnerable adults. DFPS encourages each faith community to develop supportive services for their local children and families. Congregations assist in many ways such as providing meal trains, hosting parties for special occasions, and holding drives for resource rooms. Congregation members have become respite care providers, babysitters, foster parents, and adoptive parents. DFPS is proud to partner with a variety of faith and community partners to meet the needs of the children, families, and vulnerable adults we serve.

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS)

June is Elder Abuse Awareness month and faith partners collaborate with APS staff around the state to pray for and bring awareness about, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults.

The Purple Sunday Day of Prayer serves as a call to action across the state of Texas to raise awareness about elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Purple Sunday was created in 2012 to unify faith-based communities through prayers during Elder Abuse Awareness Month. This year, Purple Sunday was observed on June 11 and APS joined forces with faith partners across the state to acknowledge the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue.

World Elder Abuse Day (WEAAD) was launched on June 15, 2006, by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the World Health Organization at the United Nations. The purpose of WEAAD is to provide an opportunity for communities around the world to promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older persons by raising awareness of the cultural, social, economic, and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect. The world is encouraged to wear purple on this date to raise awareness for elder abuse prevention. In 2023, WEAAD was recognized on June 15 and faith partners around the state wore purple, prayed, and held community awareness events in recognition of the day.

CHILD PROTECTIVE INVESTIGATIONS AND CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPI/CPS)

Rock Faith Center and Pastor Hallback in El Paso leads his community in meeting the needs of children and families in crisis. Pastor Hallback is passionate about preventing abuse and neglect as well as permanency for children who become orphaned due to abuse and/or neglect. Pastor Hallback is a former member of the Advisory Committee on Promoting Adoption of Minority Children (ACPAMC), as well as the state board for Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).

Harvest Family Life Ministries in Dallas County collaborates with various churches and nonprofits to assist with DFPS needs from prevention, preservation, and reunification to assist youth who age out of care. The ministry provided pastoral care to DFPS staff who were affected by second-hand trauma from the tragic loss of children's lives in Italy, Texas.

Lakeland Baptist Church in Denton partners with DFPS to donate luggage and duffle bags for children who are removed from their homes. The church is also renovating two visitation rooms located at the DFPS office in Lewisville.

Fellowship of The Parks (FOTP) in Tarrant County continues to support DFPS by providing hundreds of beds across Texas. The church serves DFPS children and families in under-resourced areas by providing essential items such as bedding, beds, clothes, car seats, and other items provided to families in crisis. FOTP supports other ministries in rural counties by funding their work with DFPS. FOTP provides foster adoption recruitment, support and training, and kinship support to strengthen families and build capacity.

Mobberly Baptist Church in Gregg County, through its Thrive Ministry, has been actively involved in providing support for various events and activities yearly. They have provided meals for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and graduation events for youth in care as well as organized self-care days for DFPS staff in Gregg County including massages, yoga, and facials.

Mobberly Baptist Church also shows staff appreciation throughout the year by providing lunch and treats as well as free meeting space for staff meetings and community events.

North End Baptist Church in Beaumont hosts the Santa Store providing gifts for DFPS children and as well as providing meals for families involved in DFPS. North End Baptist Church also participates in Clergy in the Court for Kids and they support families through preservation and reunification efforts.

The Champion Project provides support to residential treatment centers and shelters in the form of back-to-school programs, reading programs, and supports youth attending college and summer camps. The Champion Project is also funding a Mentoring Coordinator position within DFPS as part of Rider 39. The Mentor Coordinator will be a resource for DFPS caseworkers to match youth in care with a mentoring program.

Live the Life Church in San Antonio recently became a new faith partner with DFPS. After learning about the Rainbow Room, they decided to support a holiday wish project providing gifts for children and families. In one weekend, the church members contributed funds to purchase gifts for 400 children who were in the care of DFPS. Since that time, church members have volunteered in a variety of ways with a primary focus on keeping shelves stocked in the Rainbow Room.

CAREPORTAL

The Global Orphan (GO) Project, Inc. out of Kansas City, Missouri is the nonprofit that operates the CarePortal technology platform which provides services to Texas and other states serving children and families that become involved in the child welfare system. CarePortal, in partnership with DFPS, empowers local faith communities to establish a culture of helping to meet the needs of children and families where they live. CarePortal provides an electronic portal that caseworkers can access to make requests for concrete goods and limited other supports for youth and families involved in DFPS. CarePortal recruits, trains, and develops a network of churches or faith organizations that are willing to fulfill the caseworker's requests. Examples of goods and supports are beds, clothing, utility or rent payments, mentorship, tutoring, and daycare. When DFPS caseworkers identify needs of local children and families, they make a request via the CarePortal website. The faith community then has the option to respond to meet the need. CarePortal is currently active in 53 counties in Texas and is planning to expand to additional counties in the future. In fiscal year 2022, resources through the CarePortal helped serve over 5,100 children with an economic impact over \$1,806,595.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING (HT)

For the children and youth served by DFPS, the Human Trafficking (HT) Division serves all 254 counties, and all child welfare stages to improve DFPS's capacity to identify, report, recover and support victims of trafficking in their restoration journey. To accomplish this work, DFPS fosters a collaborative multidisciplinary approach in the prevention of human trafficking, in concert with our partners, and has well-functioning ties to law enforcement, local city and county governments, state agencies, advocacy agencies, and faith-based organizations to leverage resources and coordinate efforts.

GOVERNOR'S RESPONSE AGAINST CHILD EXPLOITATION (GRACE)

DFPS continued partnership with GRACE, a collaboration between the Office of the Texas First Lady, Office of the Texas Governor Child Sex Trafficking Team, DFPS, and a diverse group of faith leaders across Texas that work together to develop effective strategies to end human trafficking. GRACE empowers communities of faith to improve awareness and increase service capacity and prevention efforts across Texas.

2023 HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH – FAITH-BASED EFFORTS

- The 2023 *Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking*, a GRACE initiative, coincides with Human Trafficking Prevention Month in the state of Texas and serves as a call to action to the faith-based community to unite in prayer, learn more about human trafficking, and discern opportunities to prevent exploitation and support survivors. Held January 9th – 15th, this year marked the 3rd consecutive year of a Week of Prayer. It launched via a virtual interfaith event on January 9 and included remarks from First Lady Cecilia Abbott and DFPS Commissioner Stephanie Muth, as well as prayer, and a panel discussion with faith leaders.
- DFPS released the second annual *Light the Way End Human Trafficking – Human Trafficking Prevention Month Participation Guide* (Guide). The Guide was disseminated to over 98,400 stakeholders, of which over 2,000 were faith-based partners. The Guide provided a variety of activities hosted by DFPS and highlights efforts and information from the Governor’s Office and the Office of the Attorney General, as well as the Blue Campaign to support anyone’s participation. The Guide invited faith and secular communities to stand with Texas in the fight against humans to improve awareness, services, and prevention efforts and help eradicate trafficking in Texas.
- DFPS hosted the 2023 *Light the Way End Human Trafficking Virtual Learning Series* weekly webinars with subject matter experts during the lunch hour to speak about various human trafficking intersections and topics. All faith-based partners and the community at large are invited to join DFPS staff and anti-trafficking partners in these opportunities.

Also, in January 2023 a dedicated webinar for faith-based communities was held. The panel of Faith-Based Champions, panel of *Anti-Trafficking Champions: Freedom Church Alliance, No Trafficking Zone, Shared Hope International, and Southern Grit Advocacy* discussed the power of faith-based efforts in communities across the State of Texas and how their organizations work to eradicate trafficking. These faith-based champions imparted their unique lens in combating human trafficking, their beliefs and commitment to serving survivors, and developing resources that foster unwavering hope.

LIGHT THE WAY END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Faith IN Action continues to partner with Shared Hope International to marry the DFPS Light the Way End Human Trafficking campaign with Shared Hope's Faith IN Action toolkits to equip faith leaders with tools to educate men, women, youth, and help protect children in communities everywhere from the threat of trafficking. This comprehensive training tool is equipped with videos, discussion questions, Human Trafficking Fact Sheets, and a 30-Day Prayer booklet. In partnership, HT Division’s goal is to create survivor-informed congregations committed to combatting human trafficking in their communities and offers the Faith IN Action Kit to any ministry or congregation seeking to initiate its use.

Light the Way End Human Trafficking 2023 Summit

In August 2023, Sophia Strother Lewis, Restoration Strategist presented at the DFPS’s fourth annual Light the Way to End Human Trafficking Summit on *The Complete Recipe Includes the Faith Community*, which highlighted Greater St. John COGIC and Empowerment Driven by Knowledge who joined forces to secure a grant through the Hogg Foundation to impact mental health in black and brown communities. This session highlighted ways faith communities could leverage resources within a community to facilitate innovative ways to engage a community. This summit is open to individuals from all disciplines and seeks to elevate the understanding and knowledge of staff and key partners on the complexities and impact of human trafficking on children and youth. Over 1,100 DFPS staff and partners from all over Texas and out-of-state were in attendance.

PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION (PEI)

The Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Division assists communities in identifying, developing, and delivering high-quality prevention and early intervention programs. These programs promote opportunities for partnerships with

families that capitalize on the strengths of parents and children together to build healthy families and resilient communities upstream from crisis and the need for intensive interventions.

PEI leadership continues to lead the **Texas Prevention Framework Workgroup**, an interagency collaborative focused on advancing and enhancing prevention efforts in Texas. In 2020, the workgroup produced the prevention framework foundations to exemplify how the supports of strong communities intertwine to wrap around a family and promote their success. Within this framework, the faith community is identified as a critical component of the fabric that makes up a community. This fiscal year, PEI finalized a public facing [toolkit](#) designed to bring the framework to life, and assist Texas communities and prevention stakeholders to identify where they can fit in prevention efforts.

During Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23), PEI continued to provide leadership and support to the **Early Childhood Interagency Work Group**. This collaboration of Texas state agencies works together to identify, coordinate, and implement cross-sector initiatives for young children.

Additionally, during this fiscal year, the federal government awarded the state of Texas \$16 million a year for the Preschool Development Grant Birth Through 5 (PDG B-5). The funds are from January 2023 through December 2025. As part of this grant, PEI was awarded \$5.5 Million to support efforts related to **Early Childhood Systems Building**. To receive funding PEI grantees had to agree to become a Help Me Grow (HMG) affiliate or engage in HMG-aligned activities, family engagement and systems building. Help me Grow helps states and communities, including faith communities, leverage existing resources. The model is made up of four core components that work together to promote optimal child development.

With the model, communities can:

- Identify vulnerable children;
- Link families to community-based services; and
- Empower families to support their child's optimal development.

Further, PEI developed a new series of videos on [GetParentingTips.com](#) that take a deep dive into how featured parents deal with parenting challenges as they work to build strong families. Parents and community members, including faith communities, are encouraged to watch and share these videos to learn behaviors and techniques that parents can use that reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect. For more, visit [Three Families Get Real About Parenting](#).

COMMUNITY-BASED CARE (CBC)

Community-Based Care (CBC) is the new Texas foster care model. It allows local communities to meet children's and their families' unique and individual needs by tapping into the strengths and resources of each community. The goal is to expand CBC to all of Texas by 2029. Most Child Protective Services' duties will transition to local service networks, each operated by a Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC). The SSCC is responsible for finding foster homes or other living arrangements for children in state care and providing a full range of services, including case management. The SSCC's also build relationships with faith and community partners to help meet the needs of the families they serve.

St. Francis, Single Source Continuum Contractor in the Panhandle Community

- St. Francis continues to work closely with our faith-based community, and we now have 17 churches in the Panhandle that are available to host our supervised visitations at their spaces. Three of these visitation spaces are houses/parsonages which provide more of a homelike setting for our children and families where they can play outside in the backyard, have a meal together, or play games in a family-friendly atmosphere.
- Many of our churches continue to support our foster homes, kinship placements, and families moving toward reunification. Our churches provide many essentials including clothing, toiletries, school supplies, backpacks, and furniture just to name a few. They are quick to provide gift cards for gasoline and assistance with electric bills. These include churches such as Broadway Church of Christ, Southcrest Baptist, Church on the Rock, and so many more.

- St. Francis continues to have a very strong relationship with the Lubbock church coalition “One Heart” as well as the church ministry of First Baptist Church of Amarillo “Fostering Hope”. They continue to provide volunteers at our events and show appreciation to our staff through appreciation lunches/events and by providing snacks for our staff.
- Trinity Church of Lubbock showed our St. Francis staff some love by hosting an appreciation breakfast for staff and a guest.
- Our faith-based organizations continue to support and meet the needs of our children and families we serve, and our partnership with our faith-based organizations remains strong. One of our churches, Highland Baptist Church, is working on a bed ministry to provide beds for our families in need. For the second year, St. Francis participated in the Trunk-or-Treat at the Washington Ave Christian Church of Amarillo this year.

2INgage, Single Source Continuum Contractor in the Big Country and Texoma Community

- 2INgage has partnered with local churches throughout the region to begin conversations about foster care within the community. Numerous churches have offered their meeting spaces for 2INgage to facilitate local Town Hall meetings and a Fatherhood Forum.
- 2INgage collaborated with Harvest Family Ministries in September 2023 to host a luncheon event for churches within the Brown County community. We were able to plan for future partnerships for the Heart Gallery and CarePortal.
- Big Country CASA, 2INgage, Beltway Park Church/Foster 325, River Crest Hospital, New Horizons, DFPS, Region 14 Education Service Center, and Methodist Children’s Home partnered to bring the second Foster Care Simulation to the Big Country area.
- Foster325 officially launched in February 2022, from the vision of elders at Beltway Baptist Church. The mission of Foster325 is to equip local churches to support a foster family within their congregation. Foster325 provides sermon notes, resource materials, and expertise to create wraparound families for one foster family.
- 2INgage has collaborated numerous times with Phased In for Foster Parent Appreciation events, Judge’s Lunch and Learns, and the first Fatherhood Forum. Phased In was started by the Evangel Temple church and has since grown to other communities and locations.

Our Community Our Kids (OCOK), Single Source Continuum Contractor in the Metroplex West Community

- Partnering with Hope Local, OCOK has hosted and will continue to host foster parent recruitment events in Tarrant, Parker, Johnson, Hood, and Palo Pinto Counties. BRAVE events help prospective families learn more about fostering and how they can best contribute. Each event draws close to 100 prospective families where they can partner with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) and other community organizations to offer them support if they would like to get involved with supporting youth in care.
- OCOK works with CarePortal to support caregivers and successful reunification through the provision of tangible items that contribute to the wellbeing of the child/ren in their care.
- OCOK will serve on a panel with Christ Chapel Church in Fort Worth and Parker County to bring awareness about fostering and adopting during Orphan Sunday.
- Also partnering with Hope Local, OCOK advocates for legally free youth through the Hope Now program. Hope Now creates quality videos of youth, representing their true personality. Videos are shown at churches at the beginning of the month, and children are advocated for throughout the month with the hopes of finding adoptive placements.
- Work is being done in Hood County with representatives from a collaborative of large churches to create a wraparound foster parent recruitment program and community closet.

EMPOWER, Single Source Continuum Contractor in the Metroplex East Community:

EMPOWER, as the Community-Based Care (CBC) contractor in Metroplex East, a nine-county area that includes Dallas, Grayson, Fannin, Collin, Hunt, Rockwall, Kaufman, Ellis, and Navarro counties, entered into a contract with the State of Texas. Commencing Stage 1 on September 1, 2023, EMPOWER's primary responsibility is to locate placements for referred children. Furthermore, EMPOWER is expected to assume case management duties from DFPS on March 1,

2024, dependent on readiness certification. As the region undergoes the transition to CBC, EMPOWER is actively fostering relationships with the faith-based community to collaborate in serving the children of our Metroplex East communities. Notably, EMPOWER has engaged in various initiatives with faith-based organizations in recent months:

- EMPOWER, Child-Placing Agencies (CPAs), and General Residential Operations (GROs) have been able to come together for monthly meetings thanks to the generous hosting of Watermark Community Church in Dallas. This collaboration among youth service providers has allowed for a focused approach to addressing the distinct needs of children in our community.
- EMPOWER has established a partnership with Embrace, a faith-based organization in Collin County. Embrace provides support to families caring for children from the foster care system in North Texas. Their services include organizing match events for children awaiting permanent homes, hosting graduation parties, facilitating support groups, and organizing events for families.
- EMPOWER has initiated a collaboration with Bishop Blake from Freedom Church in Dallas County. Together, we are exploring strategies to recruit local citizens who are willing to foster children, thereby ensuring that these vulnerable individuals remain within their local communities.
- EMPOWER has also met with Authentic Life Fellowship in Greenville, Texas. This meeting aimed to foster a partnership between DFPS, the community, and EMPOWER to address existing gaps in services in Hunt County and to garner community support for foster families.
- Additionally, EMPOWER has engaged with Love Looks Like This, a faith-based mentorship, education, and self-advocacy program for youth aging out of foster care.
- Leadership from EMPOWER recently participated in a panel discussion hosted by the Lighthouse Church in Dallas County. The objective of the panel was to raise awareness and educate the community about the challenges of disproportionality and disparities faced by minority children in the foster care system. The panel consisted of a former foster youth, DFPS, EMPOWER, a Dallas County Judge, Dallas CASA and Dallas County Disproportionality and Disparity Council. Additionally, Senator Royce West of the 23rd Senatorial District delivered a distinguished speech during the event.

EMPOWER is enthusiastic about further cultivating relationships with faith-based partners in the community who share a common goal of enhancing the well-being of our children and families.

4Kids4Families, Single Source Continuum Contractor in the Piney Woods Community:

4Kids4Families (4Kids) has been engaged with the Region 4 faith community since before its inception. Arrow Child & Family Ministries, of which 4Kids is a subsidiary, has been closely connected with faith-based partners for its entire 25 years of service in the Piney Woods. When Arrow Child & Family Ministries began preparing to apply to become the Region 4 Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC), we worked closely with the faith community. Our first community town hall was held at Grace Community Church in Tyler, a church with a long history of foster care ministry. Our second meeting was a provider meeting, held at Central Baptist Church in Tyler, which has also been a faith community committed to serving children in foster care. Our third meeting was at CASA for Kids of East Texas, and one of the speakers was Pastor Chris Harrison of Athens First Methodist Church, who is also a foster and adoptive parent. Through the process of hosting in-person and virtual town halls, 4Kids further developed relationships with a variety of faith-based partners, including Christian youth camps, faith-based nonprofits, and churches. Recently, 4Kids has partnered with the Fostering Collective to help collect the data needed for their “Be the Light” Campaign that stretches to over 50 churches in the Piney Woods. You can watch the video here: [Be The Light Video Project \(vimeo.com\)](https://vimeo.com/BeTheLightVideoProject). We have also connected with a Christ-centered organization called Fostering Bridges. They are providing Journey bags for children in the Piney Woods, which include a letter from the church to each child. 4Kids has visited and connected with over 51 churches in the Piney Woods, many of which are committed to partnering with 4Kids to serve children and families in foster care.

Belong, Single Source Continuum Contractor in the South Central and Hill Country Community:

- Belong partners with the Frio County Translational Advisory Board (TAB) interagency coalition and Methodist Healthcare Ministries in Pearsall, Texas to provide wraparound services and resources to our families in the area. The collaboration with the Frio County TAB interagency coalition and Methodist Healthcare Ministries not only enriches the support available but also creates an opportunity to connect with other organizations and churches in the South Region.
- Belong's partnership with the Christ Coalition organization initiative aims to bring together various sectors, including the state, church, and community, to enhance the collective capacity and support available for those in need in the child welfare space. By providing networking opportunities, resources, cross-collaboration trainings, and team building, they are fostering a collaborative and supportive environment.
- Belong's partnership with the First United Methodist Church of Carrizo Springs continues. Their ongoing support for families in need through the free clothing closet is helpful. Their commitment to standing with Belong for Blue Sunday and Stand Sunday highlights their dedication to raising awareness about the local community's needs and available resources.
- Belong partners with the South Texas Alliance for Orphans (STAFO). A part of their mission is to create stronger support networks for our foster, adoptive, and kinship families. The Alliance hosts Pastors Gatherings, Babysitting Collaboratives, and they mobilize churches and congregation to play their part by assigning each congregation a church engagement specialist. The involvement looks different for everyone, but everyone can get involved. This year so far approximately 100 churches have become involved.
- Belong partnered with Home of Living Faith Church in Crystal City for several of their monthly food distribution outreaches. During outreach, we distribute information regarding the needs in the area and the opportunities to connect and serve. We also serve our kinship, adoptive, and foster families in the area. Home of Living is also planning to host parent supervised visits, and unit and staff meetings. We plan to start those conversations in 2024.
- Belong partners with CAMAL House Cuero in Cuero, Texas for several of their monthly food distributions. We distribute information to the families in the area and we also serve our kinship, foster, and adoptive families in the area. The Food Bank is an outreach of the Cuero Ministerial Alliance.
- Belong partners with the New Braunfels United Methodist Women Group. In May of this year, they chose us as their benefactor for their monthly fundraisers. They also made hygiene baskets for our kinship families and some of them signed up to provide respite care for our foster and kinship families in their area.
- Belong's Partnership with Grace Bible Church continues. The Ministerial Alliance for the area has started and works along with the collaborative which includes Wilson County Cares, Floresville Independent School District (ISD), Lavenia ISD, and STAFO. They have provided car seats, school supplies, and Equine Therapy services were made available for our children through one of the participants.
- Belong partnered with First Baptist Church of Castroville for the Vacation Bible School (VBS) back in June 2023. The focus was on service to the community, supporting children and families. The youth attendees hosted a book drive and gift card donations throughout the week to benefit Belong.
- Belong is partnering with several churches for the upcoming Holiday season to provide gifts for families. Collaborative efforts like these can make a significant difference in the lives of those in need, especially during the holidays. Partnering with Place for Life, Victory Worship Center, The Rock San Antonio, True Vine, Kingdom Life Christian Ministry, and Family Life International Ministries shows a strong commitment to helping the community and spreading holiday cheer.
- Belong partnered with the United Hearts Musical Festival to serve the community in Victoria. This collaborative event had a significant positive impact on the local community. The outreach involved seven churches and several community businesses. Such initiatives help strengthen community bonds, promote unity, and provide families with a fun and engaging day out.
- Belong completed a presentation at 1st Presbyterian in Karnes City and is working to secure a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for training and meetings. This partnership could have a significant positive impact. The

church is interested in hosting foster training and meetings and they want to provide Christmas presents for the children and families in care. Collaborations like these are essential for addressing the needs of foster, kinship, and adoptive families and ensuring they receive the support and resources necessary to thrive.

- Belong partnered with the Baptist Church of Stockdale in Wilson County. They came together and Belong staff volunteered at the food pantry. Food pantries play a crucial role in aiding children and families in need, especially during challenging times. Partnerships like these demonstrate a commitment to serving the local community and addressing issues related to food insecurity.
- In Frio County, which is a part of Belong's South Region, the establishment of a support group for Texas Grandparents Raising Grandchildren at Pearsall United Methodist Church is in the making. This support group can provide essential assistance, information, and emotional support to grandparents who are taking on the responsibility of raising their grandchildren. This is often a challenging and important role and having a support network is crucial. A partnership like this is a great opportunity for those in the community to come together and share their experiences and concerns.
- In Atascosa County, Belong is working with Resurrected Life Church to accomplish capacity building and is setting up a support group to help supply foster families in the county with their needs, including organizing a car seat drive. The car seat drive is a practical and important initiative, as safety and well-being are paramount for children in foster care.

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) is committed to expanding fair housing choice and opportunities for Texans through the administration and funding of affordable housing and homeownership opportunities, weatherization, and community-based services with the help of for-profits, nonprofits, and local governments. Many of TDHCA's programs rely heavily on nonprofit organizations as sub-recipients such as the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), Community Service Block Grants (CSBG), Comprehensive Energy Assistance and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance programs' subrecipients (CEAP). In March of 2023, TDHCA was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the amount of \$124,913 for what is called the 'Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP): Education & Outreach Component'. The general purpose of this grant is to develop and bolster capacity for outreach and education to developers, apartment owners, apartment managers, relevant trade and advocacy organizations, potential homeowners and tenants of programs and properties that TDHCA operates and manages. This outreach and education will allow stakeholders to be more informed of their responsibilities and rights when it comes to fair housing in the State of Texas.

Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR)

The Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) serves the Texas government by leading the state's technology strategy, protecting state technology infrastructure, and offering innovative and cost-effective solutions for all levels of government. DIR enables innovative technology that is scalable, secure, and delivers the best value and service to the people of Texas.

DIR supports the information technology (IT) needs of faith and community-based organizations (FCBOs) by providing access to competitive technology procurement for eligible organizations, serving as a resource for technology best practices and guidance, and encouraging DIR staff to give back to the community.

TECHNOLOGY PROCUREMENT

DIR's Cooperative Contracts Program offers IT products (such as laptops and software) and services (such as network

connectivity and training) to eligible customers, including state agencies, institutions of higher education, K-12 independent school districts, quasi-government organizations, counties, municipalities, and assistance organizations registered with the Texas Facilities Commission or the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

Government Code Section 2054.0565 authorizes assistance organizations (including FCBOs) to use DIR’s Cooperative Contracts, enabling them to leverage the state’s buying power to obtain the best value for technology products and services. DIR proactively promotes the Cooperative Contracts Program through newsletters, webinars, and social media to eligible customers, including FCBOs, to bring awareness of recently completed procurements, contracting updates, and purchasing opportunities.

In fiscal year 2023, 55 FCBOs from across the state purchased approximately \$4.8 million in technology commodity items through DIR’s Cooperative Contracts Program.

TECHNOLOGY BEST PRACTICES AND GUIDANCE

DIR guides Texas government with technology policy, planning, and standards that help promote consistent and effective technology usage across the state. In addition, DIR protects the state’s technology infrastructure and Texans’ personal data from cyberattacks by promoting cybersecurity best practices, providing guidance and consultation on technology issues, and offering immediate assistance to government entities during a cybersecurity event.

Like other public entities, FCBOs can use DIR as a resource for their IT policy and planning through the technology-related reports, policies, standards, and guidelines available at: <https://dir.texas.gov/> and by calling 1-855-ASK-DIR1 (1-855-275-3471).

DIR EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

In addition to serving as a resource for IT procurements and technology guidance, DIR supports FBCOs through fundraising and volunteerism. Each year, DIR encourages staff to participate in the State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC). During the 2022 SECC, DIR staff raised approximately \$35,817— a 22.5 percent increase over 2021 contributions. DIR’s total pledges ranked sixth among the 76 participating agencies. Additionally, DIR’s employees organize holiday food and toy drives to give back to the community. DIR looks forward to supporting FCBOs through these activities in the coming years.

See Government Code Section 2175.001 for the definition of assistance organization.

Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)

SOCIAL MEDIA: PUBLIC SAFETY MESSAGING OUTREACH

January 2023

1/11/2023	National Human Trafficking Awareness Day: Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery, and the reality is it happens every day. National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is a chance to shed light on and bring awareness to this crime. There are victims of human trafficking right here in Texas. Every day, DPS works to combat this crime and take predators off our streets, along with providing resources and support for the victims of human trafficking.
1/20/2023	Spotlight on DPS’ Human Trafficking Program Shared information about how this program works to combat this crime in Texas, as well as information about how to report signs of human trafficking.

1/24/2023	Winter Weather Safety Message
1/25/2023	National Human Trafficking Prevention Month Shared additional tips to raise awareness about this heinous crime and how to recognize the indicators of human trafficking
1/30-2/3/2023	Winter Storm, Safety and Preparedness Messaging Throughout the week, DPS shared important driving safety tips, messages from partner agencies related to winter storm and public safety, office closure/delay notices and more.
1/31/2023	National Human Trafficking Prevention Month Continued our month-long efforts to raise awareness and share important resources to detect and report this crime.

Human Trafficking Awareness Month

January is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month, and throughout the month, DPS worked to raise awareness about this heinous crime and how Texans can recognize the indicators that an individual may be the victim of human trafficking.

Public awareness is an important component of preventing and combating this crime. To that end, DPS also shared the many ways individuals can report this crime — from iWatchTexas to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. DPS also joined First Lady Cecilia Abbott as she relaunched the statewide “Can You See Me?” human trafficking awareness campaign. DPS is proud to partner in this effort to raise awareness about human trafficking. This campaign seeks to highlight the realities of human trafficking through a series of billboards displayed in public spaces and transportation hubs across more than 70 Texas cities throughout this year.

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign

DPS continues to promote the importance of safe gun storage for everyone who owns a firearm. This awareness campaign promotes the 1-2-3s of safe gun storage, facts about how to safely store a firearm, what safe storage options are available, how to talk to family, friends and children about safe storage and guns, and so much more. Each month, DPS features safe gun storage-related safety messages on our social media channels.

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: January Messaging

- 1/20/2023: Make safe gun storage a priority this year
- 1/26/2023: Keep the guns out of the hands of criminals

February 2023

02/01-02/03/2023	Ice Storm Safety Messaging Shared key safety messages for the public during the ice/winter storm, echoed partner agency messages and provided office closure notices throughout the week for those impacted.
02/28/2023	iWatchTexas Suspicious Activity Reporting Reminder; Texans encouraged to report suspicious activity to law enforcement

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: February Messaging

- 02/03/2023: Safe gun storage reduces the risks of firearm suicide.
- 02/08/2023: Unsafe gun storage and alcohol don't mix
- 02/15/2023: Safe gun storage keeps your loved ones safe
- 02/23/2023: You can still quickly access your gun while keeping it stored safely
- 02/28/2023: A hidden gun does not mean its safely stored

Winter Weather Safe Driving Tips

During January and February, Texas was impacted by winter weather, and DPS shared key safety messages, as well as winter weather notices in real-time, to keep Texans up to date on the latest closures related to the storm.

March 2023

03/01-03/02/2023	Severe Weather Safety Messages: During a severe weather outbreak, DPS shared weather information to help Texans prepare and stay alert.
03/07-03/12/2023	National Vehicle Safety Recalls Week Shared safety messages throughout the week and encouraged Texans to check their vehicles for open recalls and provided information on how to do just that
03/13/2023	LATEST NEWS: DPS Offers Safety Reminders for Spring Break
03/15/2023	Spring Break Safety Tips
03/22/2023	Springtime Safety Tips: Wildflower Edition
03/23/2023	Severe Weather Safety Message: Shared information from the Texas Division of Emergency Management on forecasted severe weather impacting Texas.

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: March Messaging

- 03/07/2023: Having the safe gun storage conversation can save lives
- 03/14/2023: Store your guns safely this spring break
- 03/22/2023: Remember to follow the 1-2-3s of safe gun storage
- 03/31/2023: There is a safe gun storage option for every budget and need

One Pill Kills

Every week, DPS shares messages related to the *One Pill Kills* campaign and raising awareness about the dangers of fentanyl. This has occurred throughout 2023. Our messaging highlights the dangers of fentanyl and resources to help spread awareness to save the lives of Texans. DPS also created a *One Pill Kills* page on our website to further promote this messaging and educate Texas. You can find this page at dps.texas.gov/onepillkills.

April 2023

04/07/2023	Safety Message: Weekend Travel Tips
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04/14/2023	iWatchTexas Suspicious Activity Reporting Reminder
04/19/2023	Spotlight: National Work Zone Awareness Week

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: April Messaging

- 04/05/2023: Make Safe Gun Storage Part of Your Spring Cleaning
- 04/07/2023: Kids are good at finding hidden things
- 04/13/2023: Gun storage, theft protection
- 04/19/2023: Keep visitors safe from your firearms
- 04/27/2023: Save gun storage saves lives, partnership with Texas Parks and Wildlife

May 2023

05/08/2023	Traffic Tip: Move Over, Slow Down
05/09/2023	Traffic Tip: School Buses
5/10/2023	Weather Aware, Safety Message with Potential for Flooding Rains Across the State
05/16/2023	LATEST NEWS: DPS Launches Vehicle Safety Awareness Campaign
05/22/2023	LATEST NEWS: DPS Reminds Drivers to Buckle Up, Drive Safely as Increased Enforcement Begins
05/26/2023	THP Memorial Day Holiday Enforcement Reminder: Shared information reiterating the dates of the enforcement period, as well as safety tips for all Texas drivers.

Vehicle Safety Awareness Campaign: In May, DPS launched a social media vehicle safety awareness campaign. The new *DID YOU KNOW? Vehicle Safety Spotlight* series focused on sharing vital vehicle safety tips, along with information about the corresponding and applicable laws, with DPS' social media following to increase public awareness and help make Texas roadways safe.

Vehicle Safety Awareness Campaign: May Messaging

- 05/17/2023: Window Tinting
- 05/19/2023: License Plates
- 05/22/2023: Window Tinting
- 05/25/2023: Vehicle Height
- 5/30/2023: Vehicle Lighting

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: May Messaging

- 05/03/2023: Store Ammunition Safely

June 2023

06/05/2023	Summer Travel Safety Message
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06/14/2023	Check to Protect: Vehicle Recall Safety Message
06/19/2023	Summer Heat Safety Message, Travel Focused
06/2023	Summer Heat Safety Series: Throughout the summer, DPS shared tips to stay safe in the summer heat. This remained ongoing throughout the hot summer months.

Vehicle Safety Awareness Campaign: June Messaging

- 06/01/2023: Left Lane, Passing Only
- 06/05/2023: Vehicle Lighting
- 06/07/2023: Move Over, Slow Down
- 06/13/2023: Window Tinting
- 06/15/2023: Steer It, Clear It
- 06/19/2023: Window Tint Application
- 06/21/2023: Roadside Assistance
- 06/23/2023: Cell Phone Use
- 06/27/2023: Vehicle Lighting
- 06/29/2023: Radar Interference Devices

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: June Messaging

- 06/01/2023: Does your child know what to do if they see a gun?
- 06/07/2023: Did You Know? Firearms are the leading cause of death for children and teens.
- 06/12/2023: Ask about firearm storage before a play date
- 06/16/2023: Talking to other parents about safe gun storage
- 06/20/2023: It's not enough to just hid a gun
- 06/23/2023: Kids play with things they shouldn't
- 06/28/2023: A hidden gun is not a safely stored gun

July 2023

7/3/2023	Fourth of July Safety Message: Reminder about THP enforcement initiative and safety tips for traveling on Texas roads
07/05/2023	Check to Protect: Airbag Recall Safety Message
07/14/2023	iWatchTexas: Suspicious Activity Reporting Reminder to all Texans to report suspicious activity using iWatchTexas, also provided the various methods to submit a report using iWatchTexas
07/28/2023	Safety Reminder: Weekend Travel Shared safety tips with our followers to prioritize during summer travel season

Vehicle Safety Awareness Campaign: July Messaging

- 07/05/2023: Child Safety Seats
- 07/07/2023: Railroad Crossings

- 07/11/2023: License Plates
- 07/13/2023: Reckless Driving
- 07/18/2023: Open Beds
- 07/20/2023: Passing a School Bus
- 07/27/2023: Fire Trucks and Ambulances
- 07/31/2023: School Buses

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: July Messaging

- 07/27/2023: Practice safe gun storage this summer

August 2023

08/03/2023	School Bus Safety Highlight , featuring DPS' Central Texas Region and South San ISD
08/08/2023	Shared Wildfire Safety Tips from the Texas Division of Emergency Management
08/11/2023	LATEST NEWS: DPS Issues Reminders for Drivers, Offers Resources Ahead of New School Year
08/11/2023	Summer Travel Safety Tips
08/14-08/23/2023	Back to School Safety Series: Throughout the month of August, DPS shared helpful safety tips for drivers as kids headed back to school across the state.
08/29/2023	Shared Labor Day Safety Tips

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: August Messaging

- 08/02/2023: Make safe gun storage part of your safety talks

September 2023

09/01/2023	LATEST NEWS: DPS Increases Enforcement for Labor Day Holiday
09/04/2023	Shared Safe Driving Tips for Labor Day Holiday
09/07/2023	iWatchTexas, Suspicious Activity Reporting Reminder
09/18/2023	Child Passenger Safety Week
09/22/2023	TxDOT, Safe Driving Partner Messaging , featuring DPS' Lt. and the <i>Drive Sober. No Regrets.</i> marketing campaign
09/25/2023	Spotlight on "If You See Something, Say Something®" Awareness Day, also known as #SeeSayDay: Shared information and resources about human trafficking and how to report this crime.

09/28/2023	iWatch Texas Suspicious Activity Reporting Reminder , tied in with “ <i>If You See Something, Say Something</i> ®” Awareness Day from earlier in the week
09/29/2023	Move Over, Slow Down Safety Video

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: September Messaging

- 09/20/2023: Quickly access your guns while keeping them out of the wrong hands
- 09/27/2023: Unsafely stored guns can end up being used in crimes

October 2023

10/02/2023	October is Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month: DPS highlighted Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month throughout October, as part of Governor Abbott’s initiative to raise awareness about the dangers of fentanyl
10/09/2023	Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month Post: Highlighted DPS’ efforts to raise awareness alongside Gov. Abbott to educate Texans about the dangers of this drug.
10/10/2023	Shared Video from Gov. Abbott, highlighting Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month
10/13/2023	Dangers of Fentanyl, Informational Video #1
10/17/2023	iWatchTexas: Suspicious Activity Reporting Reminder to all Texans to report suspicious activity using iWatchTexas, also provided the various methods to submit a report using iWatchTexas
10/19/2023	Fentanyl Awareness Video: Featuring DPS Sgt. and helping to spread the word about the dangers of fentanyl
10/24/2023	Dangers of Fentanyl, Informational Video #2
10/27-10/31/2023	Halloween Safety Tips Series: Shared tips to keep kids safe while trick-or-treating, as well as related to driver and roadway safety

October: Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month

To highlight *Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month*, DPS increased the number of posts — including creating and sharing several videos — related to fentanyl and *One Pill Kills* throughout the month. We continued to share vital information, update graphics and more to spread the word about fentanyl and its dangers.

Safe Gun Storage Awareness Campaign: October/November Messaging

- 10/10/2023: Talk to parents about safe gun storage
- 10/26/2023: Prevent accidents on Halloween and every day

PRESS RELEASES: PUBLIC SAFETY MESSAGING OUTREACH TO MEDIA, COMMUNITY PARTNERS

1/17/2023	DPS Encourages Vigilance During National Human Trafficking Prevention Month DPS promoted the iWatch Texas program, as well as what ways people can stay vigilant against human trafficking in their communities.	DPS Encourages Vigilance During National Human Trafficking Prevention Month
2/10/2023	DPS Reminds Everyone to Make Safety Their Priority on Game Day DPS offers safety tips and reminders for a safe Super Bowl Sunday.	DPS Reminds Everyone to Make Safety Their Priority on Game Day
3/10/2023	DPS Urges Texans to Avoid Spring Break Travel to Mexico Amid growing violence towards Americans, DPS issued a travel warning ahead of the busy spring break travel season for Texans to reconsider plans to travel to Mexico, as well as safety tips for those still planning to travel to the country.	DPS Urges Texans to Avoid Spring Break Travel to Mexico
3/13/2023	DPS Offers Safety Reminders for Spring Break DPS increased patrols for the Spring Break time period to help crackdown on people violating traffic laws like speeding and not wearing a seat belt.	DPS Offers Safety Reminders for Spring Break
5/16/2023	DPS Launches Vehicle Safety Awareness Campaign DPS announces a new vehicle safety campaign for social media.	DPS Launches Vehicle Safety Awareness Campaign
5/22/2023	DPS Reminds Drivers to Buckle Up, Drive Safely as Increased Enforcement Begins DPS announced enforcement efforts through Click It or Ticket and Operation CARE for the long Memorial Day weekend.	DPS Reminds Drivers to Buckle Up, Drive Safely as Increased Enforcement Begins
6/16/2023	Texas License to Carry Handgun Cards No issued with 2D Barcode DPS announces changes to LTC cards for increased security.	Texas License To Carry Handgun Cards Now Issued With 2D Barcode
6/30/2023	New Law Makes Changes to AMBER Alert System DPS announces changes made to the AMBER Alert system that impact when law enforcement can request the alert. The announcement was an effort to help clear up some confusion and erroneous media reporting on the subject.	New Law Makes Changes to AMBER Alert System
7/3/2023	DPS Increases Enforcement for July Fourth Holiday DPS encouraged drivers to be safe on the roads for the July Fourth holiday and shared information about two enforcement campaigns that would be underway.	DPS Increases Enforcement for July Fourth Holiday

8/11/2023	DPS Issues Reminders for Drivers, Offers Resources Ahead of New School Year DPS offers safety tips and resources for parents, educators and students as schools get back in session.	DPS Issues Reminders for Drivers, Offers Resources Ahead of New School Year
8/31/2023	DPS Increases Enforcement for Labor Day Holiday DPS conducted an enforcement campaign for the Labor Day holiday, helping ensure roads were safe.	DPS Increases Enforcement for Labor Day Holiday
10/10/2023	DPS Urges Texans to Report Suspicious Activity After Recent Attacks Against Israel DPS issued a reminder for citizens to be aware of their surroundings and report suspicious activity through the iWatchTexas program after attacks overseas.	DPS Urges Texans to Report Suspicious Activity After Recent Attacks Against Israel
10/11/2023	DPS Reminds Texans About Dangers of Fentanyl During Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month As part of the first ever Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month, DPS worked to increase awareness about its One Pill Kills fentanyl awareness presentations and other efforts.	DPS Reminds Texans About Dangers of Fentanyl During Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) participates in numerous activities and programs with faith- and community-based organizations with the focus to promote a healthy Texas. This report highlights major initiatives for fiscal year (FY) 2023. While this listing is not exhaustive, it provides a high-level description of DSHS initiatives with faith and community-based organizations.

CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY AND PRACTICE (CPHPP)

DSHS works to strengthen the public health system to improve the health of Texans by linking policy, academia, and workforce to public health practice.

The DSHS Medical & Research Library (MRL) maintained the webpage of the [Health Ministry Faith Community Nursing Bibliography](#) for many years for the Texas Health Ministries Network (THMN). In September 2022, MRL discontinued maintaining the THMN webpage because THMN launched its own [website](#). While MRL no longer maintains the THMN website, it continues to highlight trainings and bibliographic information for faith-based ministries on its [webpage](#).

In June 2021, DSHS received a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to address health disparities highlighted by COVID-19. Through this grant, DSHS has funded dozens of Texas partners to conduct Community Conversations on Health (CCOH) in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. CCOH's primary goals are to listen, learn, and develop community-driven plans that leverage the community's strengths while addressing their needs. The aim is to lay the foundation to strengthen community capacity and resiliency to face future public health emergencies.

As of September 2023, our funded partners reported 162 entries from faith-based organizations (FBOs) and 156 entries from community-based or civic organizations (CBOs) in the CCOH Partnership Directory.

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT (CHI)

DSHS promotes improved Texas community health outcomes through various initiatives focusing on maternal and child health, child safety, chronic disease prevention, tobacco use prevention, and epidemiological surveillance. DSHS partners with a variety of stakeholders to make a positive health impact, including collaboration with faith and community-based organizations.

The **Healthy Texas Mothers and Babies (HTMB)** initiative helps Texas communities decrease maternal and infant mortality. HTMB collaborates with community coalitions to create a network of local systems that focus on improving maternal and infant mortality, as well as maternal, perinatal, and infant health. The nine coalitions bring together health professionals, local health departments (LHDs), hospitals, community-based organizations (CBOs), and stakeholders to create a collaborative network of partners to lend resources and expertise to local communities. Coalitions convene periodically, coordinate health assessments, and conduct training and outreach activities.

Additionally, HTMB engages CBOs and employers to promote maternal and child health and breastfeeding initiatives. The program uses stakeholder input to identify gaps in services and opportunities for improving breastfeeding support in local communities. This work includes the support of the Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite program, which partners with employers to develop best practices to support nursing mothers. There were 3,560 Mother-Friendly Worksites in FY 2023.

Help Me Grow Texas is a statewide network of communities that strives to strengthen early childhood systems to promote healthy development. The network enhances capacity for early detection of developmental concerns and connects those in need of community resources, services, and supports to families with young children. In FY 2023, Help Me Grow Texas supported nine CBOs by convening state and local early childhood stakeholders, coordinating a cohort learning experience for regional communities, and identifying sustainable best practices for a high impact early childhood system.

The **Children with Special Health Care Needs - Systems Development Group (CSHCN SDG)** worked with 16 CBOs to provide case management, family support, and community resources to over 6,000 Texas children and youth with special health care needs and their families during FY 2023. This group provides information on upcoming initiatives, training opportunities, and special interest events for professionals to share with CSHCN families.

The **Safe Riders Child Passenger Safety Program** collaborates with CBOs to provide resources and support to parents, child passenger safety technicians, and safety advocates. The program works with 48 CBOs to provide car seats, seat inspections, and seat checkups for families. Staff also provided presentations and educational materials to multiple community organizations. The Safe Riders Child Passenger Safety program distributed 5,516 car seats from October 2022 through August 2023.

The **Obesity Prevention Program** works with Feeding Texas, food banks, FBOs, and local health entities (LHEs). This program encourages partners to promote healthy eating and implement healthy food policies. It also operates to increase the availability of healthy food selections at food pantries and the number of mobile food distribution sites. While partnering with 16 Texas food distribution sites, the program enhances the access to healthy food options in target communities and provides prompts and assistance to food pantries when ordering food from participating food banks.

The **Tobacco Prevention and Control Program** connects with CBOs to implement comprehensive tobacco prevention and control efforts. These partnerships aim to reduce the toll of tobacco on the health, safety, and well-being of Texans. The DSHS-funded Tobacco Prevention and Control Coalitions' purpose is to prevent and reduce harmful tobacco product use, particularly among youth. Coalitions, which include parents, teachers, youth, law enforcement, businesses, religious leaders, health care providers, and other community members, work at the local level to make their communities safer,

healthier, and tobacco-free. In FY 2023, Tobacco Coalitions provided education on tobacco use dangers to over 11,047 youth and adult Texans.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREVENTION (IDP)

DSHS improves the health of Texans by using strategies to control emerging and ongoing disease threats. DSHS partners with immunization coalitions, CBOs, and LHEs to improve immunization rates by promoting the importance of childhood, adolescent, and adult immunizations.

Immunization coalitions also partner with Public Health Regions (PHRs), LHEs, and health care providers enrolled in the **Texas Vaccines for Children** and **Adult Safety Net** programs to host vaccination clinics and administer vaccinations to community health fair participants.

DSHS works to monitor, prevent, test, and treat or link patients diagnosed with Tuberculosis (TB), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD), or Hepatitis C to treatment. Long-standing partnerships with FBOs have helped to link people between community-based and clinical **TB/HIV/STD services**. In 2022, regional and local TB programs partnered with 29 community-based programs, such as homeless shelters and substance abuse centers, to perform targeted TB testing.

The HIV Care Services Program contracts with six Texas administrative agencies, who partner directly with FBOs and CBOs. These partnerships promote HIV/STD awareness, provide resources for community HIV/STD prevention and care education, and develop local health promotion initiatives in their respective regions.

The administrative agencies established regional HIV Planning Councils, and other advisory groups comprised of local community leaders, stakeholders, and work directly with faith and community-based organizations to develop **integrated HIV prevention and care plans**.

REGIONAL & LOCAL HEALTH OPERATIONS (RLHO)

DSHS serves the public health needs of Texas through direct provision of essential public health services, support to local public health agencies, and leadership and coordination for public health emergency preparedness and response.

The core functions of RLHO are to coordinate public health services at the local, regional, and state level, promote public health programs and operations partnerships, and to provide core public health services responsive to local needs across the state.

Public Health Regions (PHRs)

DSHS administers many of its public health programs and services through its eight **Public Health Regions (PHRs)**. All regions partner with faith and community-based organizations to improve and enhance public and population health. PHRs collaborate with local community coalitions, FBOs, community leaders, and school districts to promote injury prevention messages and participate in activities. These activities are focused on suicide prevention, infant safe sleep education, childhood obesity prevention, and water, car, and bicycle safety. PHRs partner with faith and community-based groups to host back-to-school immunization events and health fairs that provide vision and hearing exams and emergency preparedness information.

PHRs participate with local school health advisory councils to conduct tobacco awareness presentations and with community health worker associations to provide train-the-trainer classes on tobacco cessation resources. PHRs partner with public housing authorities to train staff and tenants on secondhand smoke and cessation resources. PHRs joined with LHEs and merchants to host an annual health fair and 5K walk/run for FBOs with a high prevalence of chronic disease.

PHRs collaborate with FBOs, rape crisis centers, law enforcement, and other victim services to educate and inform the public about human trafficking and outreach to possible victims.

Table 1: Number of Activities in Public Health Regions (PHRs), September 2022 – September 2023

Quarter/Calendar Year to Date	Public Health Fairs	Human Trafficking Education Participants	Community Meetings
CY 2022 Q1: Sept. – Nov.	196	104	534
CY 2022/2023 Q2: Dec. – Feb.	140	258	638
CY 2023 Q3: March – May	233	67	778
CY 2023 Q4: June - August	171	66	955
2023 total to date	740	495	2905

Texas Center for Infectious Disease (TCID)

TCID is a DSHS public health in-patient and out-patient hospital in San Antonio that treats TB and Hansen’s disease. Several church organizations provide spiritual support, discussions, and bible study opportunities to TCID patients. TCID also partners with the San Antonio Public Library, which teaches classes to patients, and other organizations like Dress for Success, which helps with job searching for patients. Additionally, a CBO provides animal-assisted therapy. In 2022, there were eight churches from the community and five volunteer community groups providing support to patients. Additionally, animal-assisted therapy and vocational/educational support was available for the first time in 2023.

Table 2: Number of Events in Texas Center for Infectious Diseases (TCID), September 2022 – September 2023

Quarter/Calendar Year to Date	Events with Community-Based Organizations
CY 2022 Q1: Sept. – Nov.	8 churches from the community total 5 volunteer community groups
CY 2022/2023 Q2: Dec. – Feb.	8 church communities 1 animal-assisted therapy 3 volunteer community groups
CY 2023 Q3: March – May	11 church communities 1 animal-assisted therapy
CY 2023 Q4: June - August	12 church communities 1 animal-assisted therapy 2 community resources for vocational/educational support
2023 total to date	12 church organizations 1 animal-assisted therapy 3 volunteer community groups 2 community resources for vocational/educational support

Office of Border Public Health (OBPH)

OBPH partners with faith and community-based organizations in communities with poor health outcomes to improve the population's health and well-being. In collaboration with these organizations, OBPH holds events and activities that focus on health promotion and health education. These events include health fairs, community health worker (CHW) trainings, and health professional trainings. OBPH partnered with CHW training centers, area health education centers, regional hospitals, community health clinics, nonprofit organizations, border collaboratives, and the eight Binational Health Councils. The Binational Health Councils, which exist along the Texas-Mexico borders, work to develop work plans and sustainability goals to promote unity and collaboration between health officials of sister cities.

In 2023, OBPH worked to increase its CHW capacity across the three border PHRs and in central office. CHW staff were trained and developed various new public health-themed curriculums. CHWs are currently delivering these updated and new trainings and conducting fieldwork and technical support for disease surveillance and management in the border PHRs.

Table 3: Number of Community Health Workers (CHWs) Trained, September 2022 – September 2023

Quarter/Calendar Year to Date	CHWs Trained	New Trainings Offered
CY 2022 Q1: Sept. – Nov.	25	Preventing Lead Poisoning in Children
CY 2022/2023 Q2: Dec. – Feb.	8	CHW COVID-19 Guidelines Refresher Training and Human Trafficking: La Trata de Personas - Presentación de Alcance Comunitario
CY 2023 Q3: March – May	89	Aliados en la Lucha Contra la Tuberculosis: Un Foro para Promotoras, Mental Health First Aid
CY 2023 Q4: June - August	314	CHWs Educating and Promoting Pediatric and Adult Immunizations, Sextortion Prevention, School-Based Sex Ed in Texas
2023 total to date	436	Please see above for a comprehensive list.

Center for Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (CHEPR)

CHEPR along with preparedness staff in each PHR, engage with faith and community-based organizations to help meet health and human service needs before, during, and after a disaster or emergency event. Staff attend meetings with community coalitions and faith-based ministry initiatives to coordinate with local emergency management, Red Cross, and similar organizations.

Additionally, **TexasReady** program engages organizations across the state to provide education regarding personal disaster preparedness, including making and practicing an emergency plan and building an emergency kit. TexasReady provides education and outreach to families and individuals through faith-based groups, childcare facilities, and community organizations.

Table 4: Number of Activities for Health Emergency Preparedness, Center for Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (CHEPR), September 2022 – September 2023

Quarter/Calendar Year to Date	Coordination Meetings	TexasReady Education Participants
CY 2022 Q1: Sept. – Nov.	0	0
CY 2022/2023 Q2: Dec. – Feb.	0	0
CY 2023 Q3: March – May	1	29
CY 2023 Q4: June - August	1	32
2023 total to date	2	61

ACRONYMS

- CBO – Community-based organization
- CCOH - Community Conversations on Health
- CDC - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- CHEPR - Center for Health Emergency Preparedness and Response
- CHI - Community Health Improvement
- CHW - Community Health Worker
- COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019
- CPHPP - Center for Public Health Policy and Practice
- CSHCN SDG - Children with Special Health Care Needs - Systems Development Group
- CY – Calendar Year
- DSHS – Department of State Health Services
- FBO – Faith-based organization
- FCH - Family and Community Health
- FY - Fiscal Year
- HTMB - Healthy Texas Mothers and Babies
- IDP – Infectious Disease Prevention
- LHE - Local Health Entity (including local health departments)
- MRL – Medical & Research Library
- OBPH - Office of Border Public Health
- PHR - Public Health Region
- Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 – Quarter 1, Quarter 2, Quarter 3, Quarter 4
- RLHO - Regional & Local Health Operations

■ TB/HIV/STD - Tuberculosis/Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Sexually Transmitted Disease

■ TCID - Texas Center for Infectious Disease
■ THMN - Texas Health Ministries Network

Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM)

The Texas Division of Emergency Management and Incident Support Task Force (formally known as the Disaster Recovery Task Force) recognizes the vital role Texas' faith-based and community organizations play within our communities before, during, and after disasters. It is essential that TDEM continues to collaborate with faith-based and community organizations, including disaster nonprofits and voluntary organizations active in disaster (VOAD), to better prepare for disasters, build local networks for recovery, and strengthen resiliency within Texas communities.

FIELD STAFF AND INCIDENT SUPPORT TASK FORCE (ISTF)

The complexities of emergencies and disasters require constant change and adaptation. As the population of Texas grows and changes, the threats to Texas communities become more challenging. TDEM continues to adjust and expand to address these changing community needs across the state.

As of September 1, 2023, TDEM has realigned from 6 regions statewide to 8 regions to reflect and address our commitment to service delivery at the local level for emergencies and disasters. This added capacity and physical presence allow TDEM to better support local partners more directly by leveraging resources and enhancing engagement amongst stakeholders for and with Texas communities.

Collaboration with various community stakeholders, including local emergency management officials, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations, is a critical aspect of TDEM's operations. These partnerships provide a better understanding of our community's needs, which is essential in cultivating relationships and developing customized plans to address those needs more effectively.

The Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management is a strategy embraced by TDEM to successfully achieve this objective. This approach focuses on promoting coordination across all levels of government, involving local businesses, encouraging residents to take action, and engaging with all members of the community as critical partners. As they collectively increase their community's understanding and assess their needs, they can work together to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interests to build community resilience.

TDEM remains committed to furthering this initiative. Within the ISTF and Voluntary Agency Liaison Program, TDEM has specialized personnel stationed across the state dedicated to cultivating and nurturing relationships between government agencies, faith-based organizations, voluntary organizations, and community partners. This function is vital in ensuring these essential stakeholders are integrated and empowered within the broader emergency management framework.

ONGOING INITIATIVES

Development, promotion, and mentorship of Long-Term Recovery Groups

A Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) is a cooperative body that is made up of representatives from faith-based, nonprofit, government, business, and other organizations working within a community to assist individuals and families as they recover from disaster.

In the aftermath of a disaster, immediate life safety and rescue operations are, understandably, the primary focus. However, the journey towards recovery extends far beyond the initial response phase. It involves rebuilding not just homes and infrastructure, but also lives, livelihoods, and the very fabric of the affected community. TDEM ISTF personnel and members are available to convene and support local stakeholders (government agencies, faith-based

organizations, voluntary organizations, and community partners) in identifying the appropriate long-term recovery group structure and offer technical assistance, education, and ongoing mentorship for long-term community recovery efforts.

The work of an LTRG ranges from rebuilding homes and providing financial assistance to offering emotional support and helping survivors navigate the complex recovery process. A strong, well-organized LTRG can ensure no one is left behind in the long community recovery journey and the impacted residents can emerge stronger and more resilient.

Acknowledging the high-pressure nature of LTRG Leaders' work, ISTF is partnering with local leaders to establish a peer network to provide a forum to exchange ideas, share experiences, and gain valuable insights from each other. This approach is aimed at promoting collaboration, enhancing problem-solving skills, and fostering best practices. Furthermore, this network can provide emotional support and resilience, which are vital in the stressful context of disaster recovery efforts.

Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) – Ex Officio Board Member

Texas VOAD is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, membership-based association that brings together more than 50 voluntary organizations that respond to disasters as a part of their overall mission. Their mission is to serve as a convening and supportive body for membership, which is comprised of Texas organizations and local representatives of National organizations, all of whom adhere to the 4 Cs: Cooperation, Communication, Coordination, and Collaboration. Texas VOAD is a member of the Texas Emergency Management Council and serves as the Texas affiliate of National VOAD.

TDEM is proud to be represented as an ex officio board member and offer valuable guidance to local communities and governments on how to effectively engage and collaborate with VOAD Chapters and affiliated organizations throughout Texas.

Texas Strong: Strengthening Nonprofit Disaster Networks Series – Host, Facilitator

The purpose of this TDEM-hosted series and quarterly gatherings is to provide an opportunity for local disaster resilience and recovery partners and networks (e.g., VOADs, COADs, LTRGs) from across Texas to come together to: discuss current activities and unmet needs, participate in facilitated conversation, learn from presenters, share lessons learned and successes, and connect with other partners and networks. Previous topics of discussion have included: philanthropic giving, case management, faith-based engagement, volunteers and donations management, disaster housing, the role of advocacy, and policy.

Speaking Engagements & Educational Opportunities

TDEM actively participates in local community educational opportunities with Faith-Based and Community Organizations providing insight on how to best support disaster recovery efforts and engagement with emergency management; including resiliency, preparedness, and capacity building.

HIGHLIGHT ACTIVITIES

- The **Texas Panhandle VOAD** is a coalition of voluntary organizations that operate in the 26 northernmost counties in the Texas Panhandle, providing disaster assistance to individuals and communities impacted by disasters. In January 2023, TDEM facilitated a tabletop exercise for VOAD member organizations and stakeholders to test and improve coordination, communication, and collaboration amongst stakeholders in disaster response and recovery. Soon after, the Texas Panhandle experienced an unprecedented range of disasters.
 - On May 27, 2023, severe storms and flooding commenced in the Texas Panhandle, High Plains, and South Plains regions. This had a devastating impact on the region, causing damage to homes, businesses, and the agriculture industry.
 - On June 15, 2023, a tornado struck the city of Perryton, resulting in loss of life, injuring dozens of community members, and causing significant damage to residential and commercial property.

- Subsequently, on June 22, 2023, a tornado hit Matador, a small town in northwest Texas, resulting in the loss of life, extensive damage to homes and businesses, and a significant impact on the community.

The Texas Panhandle VOAD with great support from the **United Way of Amarillo and Canyon, Amarillo Area Foundation**, and **Panhandle Regional Planning Commission** worked closely with TDEM personnel throughout each response to coordinate resources and ensure the aid distribution was both efficient and equitable. This included facilitating multiple disaster assistance centers while also establishing long-term recovery groups in the communities of Hereford, Perryton and Matador.

- On January 24, 2023, a powerful tornado with wind speeds ranging between 86 to upwards of 135 mph wreaked havoc in **Pasadena and Deer Park**, causing extensive damage to homes and businesses in the area. In the aftermath, TDEM personnel quickly responded and collaborated with local faith-based organizations, voluntary organizations, and community partners to assess community efforts and identify unmet needs or gaps in services. The joint efforts of local government and emergency management, with the generous support of the **Pasadena Chamber of Commerce**, led to the opening of a Disaster Assistance Center. This center provided a centralized hub of resources for individuals, families, and businesses impacted by the tornado, with over 20 organizations offering their assistance and expertise. This successful collaboration later led to TDEM personnel being invited to present to the Pasadena Private-Nonprofit Network on engagement in times of disaster.
- The **Austin Disaster Relief Network (ADRN)** is a network comprised of over 200 Greater Austin churches and thousands of trained volunteers bringing hope into crisis through providing physical, emotional, and spiritual support to disaster survivors to meet short and long-term needs. ADRN's network enables and empowers church members to organize, prepare, mobilize, and respond quickly in the event of a disaster, great or small. In the aftermath of **Winter Storm Mara**, local government officials, ADRN staff, and TDEM personnel teamed up to help Central Texas community members in need of disaster cleanup aid. This effort led to the identification of affected individuals and the provision of critical disaster services to support recovery efforts.
- The OneStar Foundation's **Texas Nonprofit Summit** is a key event for networking and training in the nonprofit sector. In April 2023, TDEM sent a delegation of personnel to attend this momentous event. The occasion allowed personnel to take part in training sessions and gain valuable insights through networking with a variety of nonprofit and community-based organizations from across the state. Leading up to the summit, TDEM was honored to have a representative chosen to serve on the summit advisory committee.
- Following **Hurricane Ian** in September 2022, TDEM deployed a team of subject matter experts to Florida for several weeks to provide technical assistance as Voluntary Agency Liaisons and Mass Care Specialists. Thanks to the established relationships with disaster nonprofits and VOAD networks coordination, collaboration, and communication were seamless. At the **2023 Texas Emergency Management Conference**, TDEM and **Team Rubicon** presented a session together to share insights on how Texas relationships were employed to provide effective, coordinated support to EOCs and communities across Florida.
- TDEM had representation at the **2023 National VOAD Conference** hosted in St. Louis, Missouri. Attending this annual gathering was essential in establishing relationships with National VOAD member organizations and gaining further insight into potential disaster assistance resources for communities in Texas. National VOAD is an association of organizations that mitigate and alleviate the impact of disasters, provides a forum promoting cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration; and fosters more effective delivery of services to communities affected by disaster.
- Local faith-based organizations, voluntary organizations, and community partners play a vital role in our communities every day, especially during times of disasters. Earlier this year, TDEM presented to the **Coastal Bend United Way network** on the significance of Nonprofit Disaster Preparedness. The webinar emphasized that disaster preparedness plans should include both internal and external plans. This level of preparedness is especially critical for nonprofits and community partners since it allows them to be better equipped and continue serving our communities during and after disasters.

- The **Center for Disaster Philanthropy** recently invited TDEM to participate in a webinar on "Funding Low-Attention Disasters: from Preparedness to Long-Term Recovery." In this role, TDEM had the opportunity to raise awareness about the important efforts of local long-term recovery groups and community recovery efforts, as well as highlight the unique challenges faced in low-attention disasters.

The Texas Division of Emergency Management is committed to building stronger and more resilient communities by fostering genuine partnerships between disaster nonprofit organizations, government entities, and faith-based and community organizations. By working together, we can better prepare for and respond to disasters and emergencies, minimizing their impact on the communities in which we serve.

Texas Education Agency (TEA)

The Texas Education Agency continues to work closely with nonprofit and community-based organizations with a focus on providing parents and community members with information and resources that can lead to improved outcomes for all students. Some examples of this work in 2023 include:

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS (CIS)

- The mission of Communities in Schools (CIS) in Texas is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.
- CIS works in collaboration with school personnel to develop and provide a comprehensive Integrated Student Support (ISS) program uniquely tailored to address unmet academic and non-academic barriers to student success. In partnership with community providers, professional CIS staff provide and coordinate a range of intentionally targeted services that are provided to all students on campus and to a cohort of "case-managed" students to ensure all students consistently come to school ready to learn and remain on the path to graduation.
- The agency awards grants to CIS affiliate nonprofits across the state to run the CIS programs in their community.

EARLY LEARNING

- The agency works with private nonprofit childcare providers to support partnerships with school districts to share funding and expand access for parents.
- The agency works with early childhood advocacy groups, including Texans Care for Children, United Ways of Texas, PBS of Texas, Children at Risk, Child-Care Associates and Children's Learning Institute.
- The agency works to develop family engagement activities to support home visiting programs and decrease the school readiness gap.

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS (CCLC)/TEXAS AFTERSCHOOL CENTERS ON EDUCATION (ACE)

- Texas ACE programs aim to improve student attendance, behavior, and academics while providing a safe learning space while school is not in session. These grant-funded programs provide high-quality supplemental enrichment activities that support the regular academic program; programs are encouraged to deliver those activities in creative, hands-on, and exploratory ways.
- TEA's grant program currently funds 13 grants to 13 nonprofit organizations operating 111 learning centers across the state. Organizations include local subsidiaries of national nonprofits such as the Boys and Girls Clubs, Communities in Schools, as well as local and regional organizations like Clayton Youth Enrichment Services and Greater San Antonio After-School All-Stars. All these organizations partner with the school districts to achieve their common goal of increasing student academic success.

- Within all the current 96 grants are partnerships with more than 100 nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and foundations providing meals, physical fitness, leadership, mentoring, learning materials, career training, arts programs, basic needs, and a wide variety of enrichment programs.

MENTAL HEALTH AND T-CHATT

- The agency works with Texas Child Mental Health Consortium and its Child Health Access Through Telemedicine (TCHATT) program to expand school district partnerships for access to TCHATT service providers, located in 12 Texas university-based health research institutions (HRIs), so families and students can easily receive no-cost mental health care via tele-health at school with parent consent and engagement.
- After initial TCHATT referral, assessment, and services, which are designed as short-term services, families and students may be connected with community service providers to continue delivering mental health and wellness support to the students and families.
- Through August 31, 2023, a total of 690 school districts and open enrollment charter schools are “active” TCHATT participants with an agreement between the school system and designated HRI. Participation includes onboarding training for each school offering TCHATT service access. Currently access to TCHATT services is available in 5,546 public schools. Currently 3,529,555 students can now access TCHATT mental health services at school when referred to the service by the school with parent consent.
- TCHATT mental health services are funded by the Texas Legislature and are offered to all Texas public schools this year.
- The public may access a map of the TCHATT roll-out status information by regional education service center, public school system, and school [here](#).

MENTAL HEALTH COORDINATION (OTHER)

- The agency was awarded Project AWARE Texas (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) grants from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to place mental health professionals in high-need school systems, and to help the agency build statewide infrastructure to support school systems with mental health best practices and programs through September 2026.
- The agency coordinates with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs) to identify and publish research-based programs and evidence-based practices for schools pursuant to Texas Education Code (TEC) 38.351 [here](#).
- The agency coordinates with a list of statewide agencies and organizations pursuant to TEC 38.351-353 to identify regional and statewide mental health resources that are available to school districts. The agency and ESCs publish the resources identified for school districts [here](#).
- The agency is implementing a Statewide Plan for Student Mental Health pursuant to TEC 38.254 [here](#). The agency’s plan is designed to support the Safe and Supportive School Program.
- The agency serves on the Texas Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council with 22 state agencies to develop and implement the Texas Behavioral Health Strategic Plan. In 2023, the agency is collaborating to develop the Texas Statewide Plan for Children’s Mental Health. Both initiatives are facilitated by HHSC. This coordination scope includes a statutory MOU for Community Resource Coordination Groups and Texas System of Care. Resources related to the Coordinating Council are maintained by HHSC [here](#).

The agency supports the Collaborative Task Force for Public School Mental Health Services pursuant to TEC 38.301-312. Reports of the Task Force to the legislature are [here](#).

The public may access a map of the T-CHATT roll-out status information by regional education service center, public school system, and school [here](#).

SNAP OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Texas SNAP Outreach Program's overall goal is to reach Texas communities to bring awareness about the SNAP program and provide potentially eligible individuals assistance when applying for benefits. The SNAP Outreach Program partners with community organizations to perform outreach activities to inform low-income households about the availability, eligibility requirements, and application procedures for SNAP benefits, focusing on increasing the utilization of self-service tools. The mission is to create opportunities to inform low-income households about SNAP's eligibility requirements, application procedures, and benefits. The vision is to establish a statewide network of community organizations supporting Texans in pursuing economic and personal self-sufficiency.

Community connections are the key to ensuring Texans in all 254 counties receive outreach. The Texas SNAP Outreach Team accomplishes the mission through two integrated systems of community connections: The SNAP Outreach Program partnership with the Feeding Texas Network and Texas Health and Human Services Commission's (HHSC's) Community Partner Program.

One goal of the SNAP Outreach program is to assist SNAP applicants in all 254 Texas counties with comprehensive application guidance, program information, and resources. The objective is to ensure the successful submission of "process-ready" online applications and encourage individuals to use HHSC's self-service portals effectively.

From October 2022 through June 2023, the combined effort of all community partners assisted with 72,306 applications and redeterminations. Of this total, Feeding Texas submitted 39,900 applications, with 92.73% of them submitted through YourTexasBenefits.com.

SNAP Outreach also seeks to increase Texan's awareness and knowledge of SNAP benefits and self-service resources by developing and disseminating targeted messaging.

- SNAP Outreach contractors translated educational materials, social media ads, web pages, and videos into Vietnamese.
- There were 5,111 post reactions (likes and shares), and 192,792 video plays in the social media campaign.

Another component of the SNAP Outreach Program is the Referral Partner Program (RPP). This program assists applicants in progressing toward economic and personal self-sufficiency by connecting SNAP applicants with supplemental services to address needs other than food security. These services include health, housing, childcare, and transportation assistance.

- From October 2022 to June 2023, approximately 41,561 clients received wrap-around support through the RPP's partnering organizations.
- Approximately 4,068 community organizations have partnered with the RPP to offer comprehensive services to clients as of June 2023.

Organization Type	# of partnering organizations	% of partnering organizations
Food/Nutrition services	1128	27.7%
Healthcare	716	17.6%
Housing/Shelter	612	15%
Income/Expenses	293	7.2%
Childcare/Education	241	5.9%
Employment	176	4.3%
Crisis Emergency	150	3.7%
Aging/Disability	139	3.4%
Legal Aid/Victims Services	125	3.1%
Veterans Benefits	60	1.5%
Criminal Justice	18	0.4%
Other Services	410	10.1%

COMMUNITY PARTNER PROGRAM

The Community Partner Program (CPP) is a collaboration HHSC and a statewide network of over 600 community and faith-based organizations. Because some of these partners have multiple locations, there are a total of 1,655 access points throughout the state. CPP establishes partnerships with community and faith-based organizations that promote self-service and self-sufficiency by helping individuals apply for and manage their Medicaid, CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits through YourTexasBenefits.com and the Your Texas Benefits mobile app.

Community Partner by Type

Organization Type	Examples	% of partnering organizations
Nonprofits	Social services, food pantries, shelters	49.14%
Local Governments	Housing authorities, health departments, council of governments	10.02%
Medical	Community Health Centers, federally qualified health clinics, hospitals, mental health	21.75%
Education and Literacy	School districts, libraries, head starts, colleges, universities	10.64%
Faith-Based	Churches, religious organizations	5.63%
Case Assistance Affiliate Program (CAA)	MCO/DC organizations	2.82%

In fiscal year 2023, the CPP participated in over 65 statewide events and facilitated 12 monthly webinar trainings to 3,828 participants. These webinars included HHS benefit and policy updates, CPP updates, pilot program trainings, YourTexasBenefits.com changes, Forums, the unwinding of continuous Medicaid coverage, and general partner information. CPP hosted four Community Partner Education and Information Virtual events with 1,499 participants. During this time, 1,973 virtual and in-person site visits were also conducted by regional staff, providing ongoing support with best-in-class customer service.

Since May, the CPP has organized a series of eight renewal assistance events across Texas. These initiatives assist families in need during these challenging times and support their well-being. CPP collaborated with Feeding Texas, local food banks, and eligibility workers for these activities.

The redetermination events guide clients through the renewal of their benefits, offering on-the-ground support and assistance in their communities. They serve as a direct resource for individuals seeking to apply for or renew their benefits while addressing any questions they may have about the process. The renewal assistance events also ensure Texans have access to the resources they need during uncertain times. In addition to addressing benefit renewals, these events promote community well-being and health awareness.

Renewal Assistance Events Highlights:

- **Number of people served:** Over 1,160 attendees participated in the events.

- **Total events and cities visited:** We conducted eight events in various cities, including Dallas, San Antonio, Denton, Mission, Houston, and El Paso.
- **Applications and renewals:** Many Texans received assistance via YourTexasBenefits.com application assistance, application/renewals processed, and submitting missing information by teams across AES.
- **Future events:** More events are planned for 2024, to occur once a quarter.
- **Additional resources:** Attendees accessed other resources via vendors at events, including back-to-school supplies, haircuts, food boxes, phones/tablets, HHSC employment opportunities, health screenings, free flu shots, breast cancer screenings, and a health and resource fair.

TEXAS WORKS PATHS TO SUCCESS PROGRAM

Texas Works Paths to Success (TWPS) empowers individuals to become self-sufficient, enabling them to create a better future for themselves, their family, and their communities. In collaboration with strategically selected community organizations, TWPS offers a unique training experience that provides the knowledge and skill set needed to become a Texas Works Advisor (TWA) I. This position is responsible for determining eligibility for social services programs. Upon completing the program, individuals are guaranteed job placement in a local benefits office where they can begin a career with HHSC and learn invaluable skills to improve their lives.

In 2023, TWPS completed year three with the current program partners, Houston Independent School District, Texas CAN Academies Houston Southwest, and The Houston HAY Center. HHSC has provided over 9,500 training hours to administer an innovative career training curriculum that has produced 87 graduates. Graduates have served over 250,000 families through their eligibility casework and issued over \$25 million in benefits to Texans. More than 20 graduates have been promoted in the Texas Works Advisor career ladder.

Through strategic planning and effective collaboration and promotion, AES has expansion agreements with Rio Grande City Independent School District and Texans CAN Academy Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin campuses.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATION

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) offers nutrition education and obesity prevention services for SNAP participants, individuals, and families who are eligible for SNAP or other means-tested federal assistance programs, and for individuals residing in communities with significant low-income populations. The goal is to increase fruit and vegetable consumption as well as physical activity. HHSC contracts with community-based providers, such as nonprofits, academic institutions, and other governmental entities in HHS to provide these services.

Between January 2023 and June 2023, SNAP-Ed implementing agencies facilitated 30,719 direct education classes both virtually and in-person to 123,536 SNAP-Ed eligible participants. SNAP-Ed eligible participants spent an estimated 6,761 minutes engaged, on average, in direct education interventions both virtually and in-person. Participants attending direct education classes learn about healthy eating, food safety, cooking skills, food resource management, and obesity prevention. Implementing agencies reported a total of 422,514 impressions across 12 different social marketing channels. Impressions represent the total number of times content is displayed to an audience during a given period.

A total of 1,414 policy, systems, and/or environmental (PSE) changes were either adopted or maintained by implementing agencies during the last reporting period. There were 319 unique sites and approximately 1,755,736 unique individuals were reached across all PSE changes. Implementing agencies collaborated with 295 active partners. Active partners include “individuals or organizations who regularly meet, exchange information, and identify and implement mutually reinforcing activities with SNAP-Ed to contribute to the adoption of one or more PSE changes”.

2-1-1 TEXAS INFORMATION AND REFERRAL NETWORK

The 2-1-1 Texas Information and Referral Network (2-1-1 TIRN) connects Texans with services they need through comprehensive information and referral services. 2-1-1 TIRN collects organizes and maintains information on over 27,000 state and local agencies and their services. This information is provided to the public online and via web-based

chat at 211Texas.org and by phone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. 2-1-1 TIRN maintains information on the top caller needs from September 1, 2022, to August 29, 2023, including electric service payment assistance, rent payment assistance, food pantries, housing authorities, food stamps or SNAP applications, low income/subsidized private rental housing, water service payment assistance, Area Agencies on Aging, homeless shelters, and gas service payment assistance. HHSC administers 2-1-1 TIRN through 25 area information center operations contracts which include United Way agencies, councils of government, community action networks, and a municipality.

2-1-1 TIRN answered 2,077,777 calls, 31,926 web-based chat sessions, and had 2,032,720 website pageviews at 211Texas.org from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2023.

Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)

Within any of Texas' seven juvenile probation regions, a region's juvenile probation departments provide various community programs and services, operated by the departments, or through service provider contracts. Community programs or services vary greatly within departments and regions and may include specialized treatment for substance use disorder treatment, mental health treatment, and sexual behavior treatment, and programs for female offenders, violent offenders, and various psychoeducational and skills building services for general offenders.

To keep youth closer to their home communities, juvenile probation departments have been charged with the task of pairing youth with appropriate community-based resources, services, and programming. In the fiscal year 2022, juvenile probation departments offered 1,196 community-based programs to youth under their jurisdiction, at-risk youth, and the families of these youth. Programs offered by juvenile probation departments are designed to meet the needs of a wide array of youth. Of program participants in fiscal year 2022, 38% participated in a treatment-based program, 31% participated in a skill-building/activity-based program, and 31% participated in a surveillance-based program.

The source of this information is the Annual Rider Report to the Governor and LBB located [here](#).

TJJD has also established formal partnerships for re-entry, counseling, residential, education, and model training services with the following faith and community-based organizations and nonprofit organizations.

- AMIkids
- K16 Ready Society, Inc. (dba Texas Initiative Program)
- Lena Pope Counseling Services
- Pegasus Schools
- Southwest Key Program
- 3Strands Global Foundation
- Casa Garcia dba Trinity Charter School

For youth committed to the State by local courts, TJJD also procures and provides services via volunteers. Here are statistics related to TJJD the secure facilities, halfway houses, and parole district offices for FY 2022:

Number of Active Volunteers: 332

Total Volunteer Hours: 11,030

- Chaplaincy Hours: 6,633
 - General Chaplaincy Services: 1,479 hours
 - Epiphany Ministry of Texas: 2,895 hours
 - Kairos of Texas: 2,259 hours
- Holiday & Birthday Celebrations: 701 hours

- Mentoring Hours: 2,869
 - *Mentors (Basic): 617.5 hours*
 - *Mentors (Faith-Based): 2,251.5 hours*
- Power of Harmony (Gainesville State School): 118 hours
- Professional Services & Special Projects: 374 hours
- Volunteer Training Hours: 303
- Other (Misc.) Hours: 32
- Number of Interns: 30
- Intern Total Hours: 6,232

Texas State Commission on National and Community Service (OneStar)

OneStar was created by the Office of the Governor to support the State of Texas by strengthening the nonprofit sector, encouraging civic engagement through service and volunteering, promoting innovative strategies to address local issues, and facilitating public-private partnerships to expand the reach of the sector.

- **AmeriCorps Texas** | Administer AmeriCorps funding throughout Texas and advance national service as an effective solution to our state's toughest social challenges.
- **Together Texas** | Build a strong nonprofit sector to ensure that organizations have the knowledge, resources, and networks to effectively address priority issues for local communities.
- **Volunteer Texas** | Strengthen the statewide volunteer infrastructure, making it easy and accessible for all Texans to take action and make a difference in their communities.
- **Rebuild Texas** | Equip Texas communities with expertise, resources, and tools to be more resilient during all phases of disaster.

OneStar believes we are One Texas, in which we are united in building resilient and thriving communities. OneStar will continue to strengthen Texas communities by creating pathways for individuals and organizations to engage, connect, and accelerate their impact.

The updates below highlight major milestones and accomplishments of programs and initiatives.

AMERICORPS

As the Texas State Service Commission, OneStar is charged with advancing and supporting AmeriCorps throughout the state of Texas. OneStar administers federal AmeriCorps grant funds to address systemic challenges and engage Texans through the power of service. AmeriCorps members commit their time to serve with nonprofits, government agencies, and faith and community-based organizations to tackle some of our state's toughest challenges with hands-on solutions. OneStar administers a portfolio of AmeriCorps Texas programs operating solely in Texas as part of the [AmeriCorps State and National](#) program.

OneStar will have a 2023-2024 portfolio of 41 AmeriCorps programs, that will support over 3,500 AmeriCorps members. The total portfolio will be **\$33.5 million in federal funding**. The full press release that includes the 41 sites can be found [here](#).

The **AmeriCorps Texas Program Success Guide** was launched this year. The one-stop hub with on-demand training materials supports AmeriCorps Texas programs in running compliant and impactful AmeriCorps programs. Current modules include an overview of applicable grant requirements, short-format training videos, templates, policy and procedure best practices, flow charts, and more. Additional modules will be created based on feedback from host sites on the most pressing topics.

AMERICORPS VISTA

[AmeriCorps VISTA \(Volunteers in Service to America\)](#) is a national service program designed to build capacity and infrastructure within organizations to fight poverty. OneStar serves as a sponsor organization for AmeriCorps VISTA, placing AmeriCorps VISTA members with host site organizations throughout the state of Texas. Managing an AmeriCorps VISTA Project allows OneStar to leverage additional AmeriCorps resources in creating pathways for individuals to engage and support organizations in accelerating their impact.

OneStar was selected for a pilot multi-year funding opportunity for an AmeriCorps VISTA grant. The grant, approved for \$1.8 million over a three-year grant period starting in September 2023, will support 20 VISTA members each year serving with host sites throughout the state to build capacity at organizations working to alleviate poverty in their community.

GOVERNOR'S VOLUNTEER AWARDS

During National Volunteer Week on April 19, OneStar hosted an awards ceremony at the Texas Governor's Mansion to recognize winners of the 39th annual [Governor's Volunteer Awards \(GVA\)](#). The GVA program honors the exemplary service and volunteerism of individuals and organizations making a significant impact in communities across Texas. In conjunction with Texas Governor Greg Abbott and First Lady Cecilia Abbott, OneStar prepares and administers the Governor's Volunteer Awards each year.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of GVA and in honor of the anniversary, we renamed and realigned several award categories to increase accessibility and eligibility to more individuals and organizations across the state. Categories for the 40th annual GVA are as follows:

- Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award
- First Lady's Rising Star Award
- Volunteer of the Year Award
- Volunteer Family of the Year Award
- Corporate Champion Award
- Community Champion Award
- Education Champion Award
- Rebuild Texas Disaster Impact Award
- AmeriCorps Legacy of Service Award

For the second year, the GVA Review Committee included members of OneStar's networks in addition to staff and board. Members from the Texas Association of Volunteer Centers, Nonprofit Management Alliance of Texas, Academic Affinity Group, and the Texas Nonprofit Council were invited to participate. Awardees will be announced in early 2024 by the Governor's office, and they will also be recognized at a ceremony to be held at the Governor's Mansion in April 2024.

TEXAS NONPROFIT STRONG | 2023 BUILT FOR TEXAS REPORT

In partnership with OneStar and United Ways of Texas, Texas Nonprofit Strong is an initiative created to elevate the power and impact of Texas nonprofits, including their benefit to local communities, value to the state's economy, and critical role in civil society. Texas Nonprofit Strong is focused on building a collaborative, connected, and more unified nonprofit sector. This fall, the 2023 edition of the [Built for Texas report](#) was released with research partner, the Center for Nonprofits and Philanthropy at the Bush School at Texas A&M University. The report, *Built for Texas: Creating a More Connected & Resourced Future for our Nonprofit Sector*, offers new data on the state of the Texas nonprofit sector and its critical role in our state. The report highlighted the continued growth of the state's nonprofit sector and the importance of collaboration and partnership. A toolkit has been developed to showcase and leverage data from the report, and a webinar was held to delve deeper into report findings.

TEXAS NONPROFIT SUMMIT

After a three-year hiatus, OneStar hosted the **Texas Nonprofit Summit** on February 27 - March 1 in Austin. More than 350 people attended the conference and networking event that brought together social sector agencies, faith-based organizations, businesses, foundations, and state agencies to create lasting collaborative relationships. The event focused on inspiring participants to take bold action to move the nonprofit sector forward together and included over 20 workshops and sessions. The Summit wrapped up with the inaugural Texas Nonprofit Strong Day at the Capitol hosted by OneStar and United Ways of Texas. Attendees had an opportunity to learn about the Texas Nonprofit Strong initiative, receive guided tours of the Capitol, observe committee hearings, and ensure all legislative members received important information on the power and impact of the nonprofit sector.

Some of the results and feedback:

- **93%** of attendees stated the overall Summit as very positive and/or positive.
- **85%** of attendees felt more connected to others because of the experience.

Quotes from participants:

"This summit was such a great networking opportunity. It is important that we are able to learn and share with others. It definitely assisted me in seeing the big picture and how important each nonprofit is in the lives of our citizens."

"Many of the challenges I face in my nonprofit are similar to others, so I am not alone in facing the challenges. I have taken away a lot of resources to refer back to in terms of sessions, books, and people."

REBUILD TEXAS FUND

OneStar serves as the organization designated by the Office of the Governor to receive private donations following a disaster. Through the Rebuild Texas Fund, OneStar strategically collects and distributes funding and additional resources to eligible organizations in impacted areas to build resilience. Working with local leaders to identify community-driven priorities, unmet needs, and funding gaps in affected regions, OneStar provides local leaders and organizations with the financial and technical expertise needed to recover stronger than before.

In 2023, a new and improved program design was rolled out. The new program will provide four distinct philanthropy support pathways to disaster-impacted communities that include short-term and long-term fundraising and grantmaking options, an innovative modular philanthropy program, and blue-sky preparedness and mitigation investments for Texas communities.

The new program design has been supported and reviewed by partners in the nonprofit, government, and private sectors including Texas Mutual, Texas Legal Aid, and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to ensure all products are meeting statewide unmet needs in both urban and rural communities without duplicating existing services. In addition, OneStar staff led a workshop at the Association of Fundraising Professionals Greater Austin Chapter's annual conference in September on *Responding to Statewide Disasters: Lessons Learned and the Future Ahead* that summarizes our latest insights on disaster philanthropy.

OneStar also partnered with TDEM to co-teach the G-288: Disaster Donations Management Course in San Antonio, educating over 80 new TDEM and Regional staff on successful donations management practices including best practices and lessons learned from previous deployments.

The following is an update regarding the most recent progress made in the Texas Veterans Commission Veteran Mental Health Department on mental health services for Texas veterans.

Over the past year, we have witnessed a significant rise in our engagement with veterans, leading to the successful completion of two crucial endeavors: the Homeless Veteran Initiative and the Veteran Suicide Prevention Program. To strengthen our collaboration with the Community & Faith-Based Program, Military Veteran Peer Network, Veteran Provider, and Justice-Involved Veteran Program, we have expanded our team one and half years ago with a skilled and competent group of providers. Our community's faith-based groups and nonprofits have been offered multiple outreach and training opportunities through these initiatives, resulting in enhanced confidence for them.

However, there have been certain modifications made to the program recently. We bid a sincere farewell to our esteemed colleague, John Wilson, who has served as the manager for VMHD's faith-based program. After a well-deserved retirement party, John gracefully wrapped up his time in office. He displayed unwavering support for VMHD's faith-based initiative. Don Hipp, the Training Manager at the Texas Veterans Commission VMHD, has taken over the position and responsibilities that John used to hold. Despite the temporary disruption caused by this transition, we view it as an opportunity for growth. VMHD is seizing this opportunity to reassess the objectives of the faith and initiative program.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Areas of concentration for the years 2023 and 2024 include the Texas Veterans Commission's Veterans Mental Health Department's commitment to addressing the alarmingly high rate of veteran suicide, with approximately 17 veterans taking their own lives daily. The department focuses on suicide prevention by providing training to government, nonprofit organizations, and faith-based groups.

In the past year, the Austin Mayors Challenge has expanded its scope, moving beyond Austin, and encompassing multiple regions and counties in Central Texas. It has been renamed as the Central Texas Challenge through a vote led by committee members. This initiative comprises three key committees: Connections, Safety and Screening, and Lethal Means. These committees are dedicated to preventing veteran suicide by collaborating with government, faith-based, and nonprofits, working towards the development and implementation of various initiatives.

Additionally, the Central Texas Challenge is collaborating with the Houston SPARC suicide prevention group, formerly known as the Houston Mayors Challenge, on various projects aimed at reducing veteran suicide. An example of one such initiative is the Texans ASK, "Did you Serve Campaign," formerly known as "Ask the Question, Did You Serve?" The name was changed to "Texans Ask, Did You Serve?" to highlight the focus on Texas veterans. The final phase of approval for the Texans Ask the Question toolkit is currently underway, facilitated by the Central Texas Challenge and Houston SPARC group. Once approved, these toolkits will be made accessible and promoted on TVC's VMHD website, and they will also be integrated into upcoming training sessions for government, faith, and nonprofit organizations.

MORAL INJURY

Veteran providers often overlook and fail to fully grasp the significance of moral injury. In the medical field, moral injury is not officially recognized as a distinct diagnostic category, and the Veterans Affairs (VA) follows suit by including moral injury within the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Unfortunately, this approach often falls short in adequately acknowledging the presence of moral injury.

For many individuals, especially veterans, seeking assistance for moral injury tends to lean more towards faith leaders rather than medical professionals or therapists. Faith communities play a pivotal role in offering support for individuals on their path to healing. Pastors and clergy can provide guidance and aid individuals when they feel they have transgressed their faith or committed acts with spiritual implications.

In the past year, a workshop focused on moral injury was organized, with faith communities taking center stage, thanks to the collaboration of multiple organizations. Some of these organizations included: Texas Veterans Commission, CAREFORCE, Memorial Christian Counseling Great Oaks Recovery Center, The Harris Center HERO, PTSD Foundation of America VET Center.

FAITH CHAMPIONS

Currently, VMHD is improving its "Faith Champion" program as part of its evaluation process. The aim of this program is for individuals from faith-based organizations to be assigned the duty of actively connecting and helping service members within their respective organizations. The Faith Champion and the peer service coordinator at VMHD will work together closely to provide tailored services that address the individual requirements of veterans. What truly excites us about this program is its ability to bring together peer service coordinators with more faith-based and nonprofits, enabling them to connect with individuals they were previously unable to reach. At present, the initial phase of this expansion is underway, with its primary objective being the development of a training program designed for individuals who will be referred to as "Faith Champions." Following the completion of this training, it will be made available to faith-based organizations to enhance our capacity in providing support to veterans in need.

PEER SERVICE COORDINATORS

TVC VMHD currently has oversight for around 50 peer service coordinators stationed across the State of Texas. Their primary role is to serve as points of contact and resource experts assisting veterans in both rural and non-rural areas through collaboration with Local Mental Health Authorities.

Lately, this group of peer service coordinators has expressed the desire for additional training to enhance their ability to engage with faith communities in support of veterans. VMHD is actively developing a specialized training program to meet this specific need.

VMHD Engagement with Community & Faith-Based Organizations in FY23

Organization	Activity	Occurrences
Community Partners	Connections to SMVF	2,646
Community and faith-based organizations	Training on how to better serve SMVF	17
Community and faith-based organizations	Technical assistance	372
Community Partnerships and local stakeholders	Interagency collaborations, initiatives, & coalitions	1,452

As part of TWC's ongoing efforts to improve customer interactions and experience, TWC has made improvements to the agency's website and is also working on a comprehensive "Main Door" approach to customer service.

On October 1, 2023, TWC completed its effort to re-design the agency's website (www.TWC.texas.gov) that receives over 30 million visits each year. The re-designed website utilizes modern design principles and provides customers with an improved experience that is mobile and tablet responsive, provides easier navigation, and includes real-time language translation. TWC's re-designed website also offers improved accessibility features to streamline functionality for visitors of all abilities.

TWC is working to improve public interactions with the agency and its partners, as well as the ability to effectively track those interactions, by implementing a "Main Door" approach. The "Main Door" concept will allow TWC to meet the customer where they want to be when doing business with TWC and the local workforce boards. The project will improve our IVR systems, allow customers to receive services through texting, chatbots, and online portals that are interconnected into a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

During the 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, the Texas Legislature provided TWC with Capital Budget Authority to spend \$3.2 million in TWC's federal funding on this effort that will serve approximately 900,000 customers annually. TWC expects that this effort will deploy in 2024.

Goal 3: Identify and address duplication of services provided by the state and faith-based and community organizations.

Goal 4: Identify and address gaps in state services that faith-based and community organizations could fill.

ACTIVITY & PROGRESS FOR GOALS 3 & 4

The ICG began discussions on activities it could engage in towards further progress on achieving these goals and is excited to take actions in partnership with the Texas Nonprofit Council in 2024. One activity of note is the stakeholder meeting the Texas Nonprofit Council held in January. More than 40 sector stakeholders from across the state, including ICG members, participated in a scenario planning and strategic thinking exercise to guide the next phase of work.

In 2021, OneStar completed the full transfer of agreements and assets related to the Texas Connector mapping tool to the University of Texas. State agency access to the tool continued throughout the transition. The tool continues to provide information helpful in identifying gaps and duplication of services across the state and can be accessed at texasconnects.org.

IV. Next Steps for 2024

In accordance with the recommendations from the Texas Nonprofit Council, 2024 is slated to be an active year for the ICG to improve state agency partnerships with faith-based and community organizations in Texas. ICG is reestablishing relationships with the Council, and work will focus on aligning efforts to make renewed progress toward goals for the benefit of Texas communities.

Important activities anticipated for 2024 include:

- The ICG will
 - Review progress and advance activities to continue movement toward achieving all ICG goals.
 - Continue to work within respective agencies to improve cooperation with faith-based and community organizations.
 - Ensure agency information and resources on the OneStar website are accurate and up to date.
 - Support and collaborate with the Texas Nonprofit Council as it reengages in related activities.
- OneStar will
 - Audit ICG resources on the OneStar website and recommend enhancements that will support the ICG and Council efforts.
 - Support and facilitate ICG meetings and other key activities.
 - Support and facilitate ICG and Texas Nonprofit Council collaboration.

For questions related to this report or to obtain more information on the work of the Interagency Coordinating Group, please contact Chris Bugbee, President/CEO of OneStar, at (512) 287-2018 or chris@onestarfoundation.org.

V. Appendices

Appendix A: House Bill No. 492

AN ACT

relating to the expansion of faith- and community-based health and human services and social services initiatives.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. (a) Subtitle I, Title 4, Government Code, is amended by adding Chapter 535 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 535. PROVISION OF HUMAN SERVICES AND OTHER

SOCIAL SERVICES THROUGH FAITH AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 535.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Community-based initiative" includes a social, health, human services, or volunteer income tax assistance initiative operated by a community-based organization.

(2) "Community-based organization" means a nonprofit corporation or association that is located in close proximity to the population the organization serves.

(3) "Faith-based initiative" means a social, health, or human services initiative operated by a faith-based organization.

(4) "Faith-based organization" means a nonprofit corporation or association that:

(A) is operated through a religious or denominational organization, including an organization that is operated for religious, educational, or charitable purposes and that is operated, supervised, or controlled, wholly or partly, by or in connection with a religious organization; or

(B) clearly demonstrates through the organization's mission statement, policies, or practices that the organization is guided or motivated by religion.

(5) "State Commission on National and Community Service" means the entity used as authorized by 42 U.S.C. Section 12638(a) to carry out the duties of a state commission under the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Section 12501 et seq.).

Sec. 535.002. PURPOSE. The purpose of this chapter is to strengthen the capacity of faith- and community-based organizations and to forge stronger partnerships between those organizations and state government for the legitimate public purpose of providing charitable and social services to persons in this state.

Sec. 535.003. CONSTRUCTION. This chapter may not be construed to:

(1) exempt a faith or community-based organization from any applicable state or federal law; or

(2) be an endorsement or sponsorship by this state of the religious character, expression, beliefs, doctrines, or practices of a faith-based organization.

Sec. 535.004. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN FEDERAL LAW. A power authorized or duty imposed under this chapter must be performed in a manner that is consistent with 42 U.S.C. Section 604a.

[Sections 535.005-535.050 reserved for expansion]

SUBCHAPTER B. GOVERNMENTAL LIAISONS FOR FAITH- AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Sec. 535.051. DESIGNATION OF FAITH AND COMMUNITY-BASED LIAISONS. (a) The executive commissioner, in consultation with the governor, shall designate one employee from the commission and from each health and human services agency to serve as a liaison for faith and community-based organizations.

(b) The chief administrative officer of each of the following state agencies, in consultation with the governor, shall designate one employee from the agency to serve as a liaison for faith- and community-based organizations:

- (1) the Office of Rural Community Affairs;
- (2) the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality;
- (3) the Texas Department of Criminal Justice;
- (4) the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs;
- (5) the Texas Education Agency;
- (6) the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission;
- (7) the Texas Veterans Commission;
- (8) the Texas Workforce Commission;
- (9) the Texas Youth Commission; and
- (10) other state agencies as determined by the governor.

Sec. 535.052. GENERAL DUTIES OF LIAISONS. (a) A faith and community-based liaison designated under Section 535.051 shall:

- (1) identify and remove unnecessary barriers to partnerships between the state agency the liaison represents and faith and community-based organizations;
- (2) provide information and training, if necessary, for employees of the state agency the liaison represents regarding equal opportunity standards for faith and community-based organizations seeking to partner with state government;
- (3) facilitate the identification of practices with demonstrated effectiveness for faith- and community-based organizations that partner with the state agency the liaison represents;
- (4) work with the appropriate departments and programs of the state agency the liaison represents to conduct outreach efforts to inform and welcome faith- and community-based organizations that have not traditionally formed partnerships with the agency;
- (5) coordinate all efforts with the governor's office of faith-based and community initiatives and provide information, support, and assistance to that office as requested to the extent permitted by law and as feasible; and
- (6) attend conferences sponsored by federal agencies and offices and other relevant entities to become and remain informed of issues and developments regarding faith and community-based initiatives.

(b) A faith and community-based liaison designated under Section 535.051 may coordinate and interact with statewide organizations that represent faith or community-based organizations as necessary to accomplish the purposes of this chapter.

Sec. 535.053. INTERAGENCY COORDINATING GROUP. (a) The interagency coordinating group for faith and community-based initiatives is composed of each faith and community-based liaison designated under Section 535.051 and a liaison from the State Commission on National and Community Service.

(b) The commission employee designated as a liaison under Section 535.051 is the presiding officer of the interagency coordinating group.

(c) The interagency coordinating group shall:

(1) meet periodically at the call of the presiding officer;

(2) work across state agencies and with the State Commission on National and Community Service to facilitate the removal of unnecessary interagency barriers to partnerships between state agencies and faith- and community-based organizations; and

(3) operate in a manner that promotes effective partnerships between those agencies and organizations to serve residents of this state who need assistance.

Sec. 535.054. REPORTS. (a) A liaison designated under Section 535.051 shall:

(1) provide periodic reports to the executive commissioner or other chief executive officer who designated the liaison, as applicable, on a schedule determined by the person who designated the liaison; and

(2) report annually to the governor's office of faith and community-based initiatives and as necessary to the State Commission on National and Community Service regarding the liaison's efforts to comply with the duties imposed under Sections 535.052 and 535.053.

(b) Each report made under Subsection (a)(2) must be made available to the public through posting on the office of the governor's Internet website, and the reports may be aggregated into a single report for that purpose.

Sections 535.055-535.100 reserved for expansion]

SUBCHAPTER C. RENEWING OUR COMMUNITIES ACCOUNT

Sec. 535.101. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "account" means the renewing of our communities account.

Sec. 535.102. PURPOSES OF SUBCHAPTER. Recognizing that faith and community-based organizations provide a range of vital charitable services to persons in this state, the purposes of this subchapter are to:

(1) increase the impact and effectiveness of those organizations;

(2) forge stronger partnerships between those organizations and state government so that communities are empowered to serve persons in need and community capacity for providing services is strengthened; and

(3) create a funding mechanism that builds on the established efforts of those organizations and operates to create new partnerships in local communities for the benefit of this state.

Sec. 535.103. RENEWING OUR COMMUNITIES ACCOUNT. (a) The renewing our communities account is an account in the general revenue fund that may be appropriated only to the commission for the purposes and activities authorized by this subchapter and for reasonable administrative expenses under this subchapter.

b) The account consists of:

- (1) all money appropriated for the purposes of this subchapter;
- (2) any gifts, grants, or donations received for the purposes of this subchapter; and
- (3) interest earned on money in the account.

(c) The account is exempt from the application of Section 403.095.

(d) The purposes of the account are to:

- (1) increase the capacity of faith and community-based organizations to provide charitable services and to manage human resources and funds;
- (2) assist local governmental entities in establishing local offices to promote faith- and community-based initiatives; and
- (3) foster better partnerships between state government and faith- and community-based organizations.

Sec. 535.104. POWERS AND DUTIES REGARDING ACCOUNT. (a) The commission shall:

(1) contract with the State Commission on National and Community Service to administer funds appropriated from the account in a manner that:

(A) consolidates the capacity of and strengthens national service and community and faith- and community-based initiatives; and

(B) leverages public and private funds to benefit this state;

(2) develop a competitive process to be used in awarding grants from account funds that is consistent with state law and includes objective selection criteria;

(3) oversee the delivery of training and other assistance activities under this subchapter;

(4) develop criteria limiting awards of grants under Section 535.105(1)(A) to small and medium-sized faith- and community-based organizations that provide charitable services to persons in this state;

(5) establish general state priorities for the account;

(6) establish and monitor performance and outcome measures for persons to whom grants are awarded under this subchapter; and

(7) establish policies and procedures to ensure that any money appropriated from the account to the commission that is allocated to build the capacity of a faith-based organization or for a faith-based initiative, including money allocated for the establishment of the advisory subgroup under Section 535.108, is not used to advance a sectarian purpose or to engage in any form of proselytization.

(b) Instead of contracting with the State Commission on National and Community Service under Subsection (a)(1), the commission may award account funds appropriated to the commission to the State Commission on National and Community Service in the form of a grant.

(c) Any funds awarded to the State Commission on National and Community Service under a contract or through a grant under this section must be administered in the manner required by this subchapter, including Subsection (a)(1).

(d) The commission or the State Commission on National and Community Service, in accordance with the terms of the contract or grant, as applicable, may:

(1) directly, or through agreements with one or more entities that serve faith- and community-based organizations that provide charitable services to persons in this state:

(A) assist faith- and community-based organizations with:

(i) writing or managing grants through workshops or other forms of guidance;

(ii) obtaining legal assistance related to forming a corporation or obtaining an exemption from taxation under the Internal Revenue Code; and

(iii) obtaining information about or

referrals to entities that provide expertise in accounting, legal, or tax issues, program development matters, or other organizational topics;

(B) provide information or assistance to faith- and community-based organizations related to building the organizations' capacity for providing services;

(C) facilitate the formation of networks, the coordination of services, and the sharing of resources among faith- and community-based organizations;

(D) in cooperation with existing efforts, if possible, conduct needs assessments to identify gaps in services in a community that present a need for developing or expanding services;

(E) work with faith- and community-based organizations to identify the organizations' needs for improvements in their internal capacity for providing services;

(F) provide faith- and community-based organizations with information on and assistance in identifying or using practices with demonstrated effectiveness for delivering charitable services to persons, families, and communities and in replicating charitable services programs that have demonstrated effectiveness; and

(G) encourage research into the impact of

organizational capacity on program delivery for faith and community-based organizations;

(2) assist a local governmental entity in creating a better partnership between government and faith and community-based organizations to provide charitable services to persons in this state; and

(3) use funds appropriated from the account to provide matching money for federal or private grant programs that further the purposes of the account as described by Section 535.103(d).

(e) The commission shall monitor the use of the funds administered by the State Commission on National and Community Service under a contract or through a grant under this section to ensure that the funds are used in a manner consistent with the requirements of this subchapter.

Records relating to the award of a contract or grant to the State Commission on National and Community Service, or to grants awarded by that entity, and records relating to other uses of the funds are public information subject to Chapter 552.

(f) If the commission contracts with or awards a grant to the State Commission on National and Community Service under this section, this subchapter may not be construed to:

(1) release that entity from any regulations or reporting or other requirements applicable to a contractor or grantee of the commission;

(2) impose regulations or reporting or other requirements on that entity that do not apply to other contractors or grantees of the commission solely because of the entity's status;

(3) alter the nonprofit status of that entity or the requirements for maintaining that status; or

(4) convert that entity into a governmental entity because of the receipt of account funds through the contract or grant.

Sec. 535.105. ADMINISTRATION OF ACCOUNT FUNDS. If under Section 535.104 the commission contracts with or awards a grant to the State Commission on National and Community Service, that entity:

(1) may award grants from funds appropriated from the account to:

(A) faith and community-based organizations that provide charitable services to persons in this state for capacity-building purposes; and

(B) local governmental entities to provide seed money for local offices for faith- and community-based initiatives; and

(2) shall monitor performance and outcome measures for persons to whom that entity awards grants using the measures established by the commission under Section 535.104(a)(6).

Sec. 535.106. REPORTS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION. (a) The commission shall provide a link on the commission's Internet website to the Internet website of the State Commission on National and Community Service if the commission contracts with or awards a grant to that entity under Section 535.104. The entity's Internet website must provide:

(1) a list of the names of each person to whom the entity awarded a grant from money appropriated from the account and the amount and purpose of the grant; and

(2) information regarding the methods by which the public may request information about those grants.

(b) If awarded a contract or grant under Section 535.104, the State Commission on National and Community Service must provide to the commission periodic reports on a schedule determined by the executive commissioner. The schedule of periodic reports must include an annual report that includes:

(1) a specific accounting with respect to the use by that entity of money appropriated from the account, including the names of persons to whom grants have been awarded and the purposes of those grants; and

(2) a summary of the efforts of the faith- and

community-based liaisons designated under Section 535.051 to comply with the duties imposed by and the purposes of Sections 535.052 and 535.053.

(c) The commission shall post the annual report made under Subsection (b) on the commission's Internet website and shall provide copies of the report to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the members of the legislature.

Sec. 535.107. TASK FORCE ON STRENGTHENING NONPROFIT CAPACITY. (a) The executive commissioner, in consultation with the governor, shall establish a task force to make recommendations for strengthening the capacity of faith and community-based organizations for managing human resources and funds and providing services. The members of the task force must include:

(1) representatives from state agencies, nonprofit organizations, the academic community, and the foundation community; and

(2) other individuals who have expertise that would be valuable to the task force.

(b) Using money appropriated from the account, the task force shall hold at least three public hearings in various geographic areas of this state, at least one of which must be outside of Central Texas. The task force shall hear testimony at the hearings regarding strengthening the capacity of faith- and community-based organizations to manage human resources and funds and provide services.

(c) The task force is not required to hold a public hearing if the remaining money appropriated from the account to the commission for the state fiscal biennium is

insufficient for the performance of the duties or activities under this subchapter.

(d) The task force shall present a report and legislative recommendations to the House Subgroup on Human Services or its successor, the House Subgroup on Public Health or its successor, and the Senate Health and Human Services Subgroup or its successor not later than September 1, 2010, regarding its recommendations.

(e) This section expires September 1, 2011.

Sec. 535.108. RENEWING OUR COMMUNITIES ACCOUNT ADVISORY SUBGROUP. (a) The executive commissioner shall appoint leaders of faith- and community-based organizations in this state to serve on the renewing our communities account advisory subgroup. The advisory subgroup members must be representative of the religious, cultural, and geographic diversity of this state and the diversity of organization types and sizes in this state.

(b) The advisory subgroup shall make recommendations to the executive commissioner regarding the powers and duties with respect to the account as described by Section 535.104.

(c) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, the advisory subgroup shall meet at least twice each calendar year. The advisory subgroup is not required to meet if the remaining amount appropriated from the account to the commission for the state fiscal biennium is insufficient for the performance of any duties or activities under this subchapter.

(d) Chapter 2110 does not apply to the advisory subgroup.

(e) The advisory subgroup is subject to Chapter 551.

(b) The executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission and the chief executive officers of the Office of Rural Community Affairs, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, the Texas Veterans Commission, the Texas Workforce Commission, the Texas Youth Commission, and any other state agency as determined by the governor shall designate the liaisons for faith- and community-based initiatives as required under Section 535.051, Government Code, as added by this section, not later than December 1, 2009.

(c) The interagency coordinating group established under Section 535.053, Government Code, as added by this section, shall hold its first meeting not later than February 1, 2010.

SECTION 2. This Act does not make an appropriation. A provision in this Act that creates a new governmental program, creates a new entitlement, or imposes a new duty on a governmental entity is not mandatory during a fiscal period for which the legislature has not made a specific appropriation to implement the provision.

SECTION 3. If before implementing any provision of this Act a state agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision, the agency affected by the provision shall request the waiver or authorization and may delay implementing that provision until the waiver or authorization is granted.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 492 was passed by the House on April 24, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 119, Nays 15, 1 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 492 on May 18, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 139, Nays 2, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 492 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 14, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED:

Date

Governor

AN ACT

relating to the expansion of faith- and community-based health and human services initiatives.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 535.051, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

(b) The Chief Administrative Officer of each of the following state agencies, in consultation with the governor, shall designate one employee from the agency to serve as a liaison for faith- and community-based organizations:

- (1) the Texas Department [Office] of Rural [Community] Affairs;
- (2) the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality;
- (3) the Texas Department of Criminal Justice;
- (4) the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs;
- (5) the Texas Education Agency;
- (6) the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission;
- (7) the Texas Veterans Commission;
- (8) the Texas Workforce Commission;
- (9) the Texas Youth Commission;
- (10) the office of the governor;
- (11) the Department of Public Safety;
- (12) the Texas Department of Insurance;
- (13) the Public Utility Commission of Texas;
- (14) the office of the attorney general;
- (15) the Department of Agriculture;
- (16) the office of the comptroller;
- (17) the Department of Information Resources;
- (18) the Office of State-Federal Relations;
- (19) the office of the secretary of state; and
- (20) [(10)] other state agencies as determined by the governor.

(c) The commissioner of higher education, in consultation with the presiding officer of the interagency coordinating group, shall designate one employee from an institution of higher education, as that term is defined under Section 61.003, Education Code, to serve as a liaison for faith- and community-based organizations.

SECTION 2. Sections 535.053(a) and (b), Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) The interagency coordinating group for faith- and community-based initiatives is composed of each faith- and community-based liaison designated under Section 535.051 and a liaison from the State Commission on National and Community Service. The commission shall provide administrative support to the interagency coordinating group.

(b) The liaison from the State Commission on National and Community Service [commission employee designated as a liaison under Section 535.051] is the presiding officer of the interagency coordinating group. If the State Commission on National and Community Service is abolished, the liaison from the governor's office is the presiding officer of the interagency coordinating group.

SECTION 3. Section 535.054, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 535.054. REPORT [REPORTS]. (a) Not later than December 1 of each year, the interagency coordinating group shall submit a report to the legislature that describes in detail the activities, goals, and progress of the

interagency coordinating group. [A liaison designated under Section 535.051 shall:

[(1) provide periodic reports to the executive commissioner or other chief executive officer who designated the liaison, as applicable, on a schedule determined by the person who designated the liaison; and

[(2) report annually to the governor's office of faith- and community-based initiatives and as necessary to the State Commission on National and Community Service regarding the liaison's efforts to comply with the duties imposed under Sections 535.052 and 535.053.]

(b) The [Each] report made under Subsection (a) [(a)(2)] must be made available to the public through posting on the office of the governor's Internet website [and the reports may be aggregated into a single report for that purpose].

SECTION 4. Subchapter B, Chapter 535, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 535.055 to read as follows:

Sec. 535.055. TASK FORCE ON IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH NONPROFITS. (a) The interagency coordinating group task force is established to help direct the interagency coordinating group in carrying out the group's duties under this section. The commission shall provide administrative support to the task force.

(b) The executive commissioner, in consultation with the presiding officer of the interagency coordinating group, shall appoint as members of the task force one representative from each of the following groups and entities:

(1) a statewide nonprofit organization;

(2) local governments;

(3) faith-based groups;

(4) community-based groups;

(5) consultants to nonprofit corporations;

(6) experts in grant writing; and

(7) a statewide association of nonprofit organizations.

(c) In addition to the interagency coordinating group's other duties, the interagency coordinating group, in coordination with the task force, shall:

(1) develop and implement a plan for improving contracting relationships between state agencies and faith- and community-based organizations;

(2) develop best practices for cooperating and collaborating with faith- and community-based organizations;

(3) identify and address duplication of services provided by the state and faith- and community-based organizations; and

(4) identify and address gaps in state services that faith- and community-based organizations could fill.

(d) The task force shall prepare a report describing actions taken or not taken by the interagency coordinating group under this section and include in the report any recommendations relating to legislation necessary to address an issue identified by the group under this section. The task force shall present the report to the House Subgroup on Human Services or its successor, the House Subgroup on Public Health or its successor, and the Senate Health and Human Services Subgroup or its successor not later than September 1, 2012.

(e) This section expires September 1, 2013.

SECTION 5. Not later than October 1, 2011, the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission shall appoint members to the interagency

coordinating group task force in accordance with Section 535.055, Government Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 6. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2011.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1965 was passed by the House on April 19, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 144, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1965 was passed by the Senate on May 19, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED:

Date

Governor

Appendix C: Proposed RFP Template for Client Services Procurement*

Interagency Coordinating Group Subcommittee: Improving Contracting Relationships March 2012

Section I: General

- A. Scope
- B. Terms and Conditions
- C. Compensation
- D. Schedule of Events
- E. Agency Point of Contact
- F. Definitions

Section II: Statement of Work

- A. Service Requirements
- B. Subcontractors
- C. Performance Tracking

Section III: Proposal Information

- A. Revision to Schedule
- B. Pre-Proposal Conference
- C. Proposal Requirements
- D. Inquiries
- E. Proposal Submission
- F. Delivery of Proposals
- G. Proposal Opening
- H. Proposal Evaluation and Award

Section IV: Historically Underutilized Business Participation

Section V: Contract Information Section

Section VI: Attachments

(Additional components may be added as needed)

*Client Services Procurement is defined as the purchase of goods or services that benefit the clients or recipients of a state agency.

Appendix D: ICG Member Agencies

- Institution of Higher Education (The University of Texas at Austin)
- Office of the Texas Attorney General
- Office of the Texas Comptroller
- Office of the Texas Governor
- Office of the Texas Secretary of State
- Public Utility Commission of Texas
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- Texas Department of Agriculture
- Texas Department of Criminal Justice
- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
- Texas Department of Information Resources
- Texas Department of Insurance
- Texas Department of Public Safety
- Texas Department of State Health Services
- Texas Division of Emergency Management
- Texas Education Agency
- Texas Health and Human Services Commission
- Texas Juvenile Justice Department
- Texas Office of State-Federal Relations
- Texas State Commission on National and Community Service (OneStar Foundation)
- Texas Veterans Commission
- Texas Workforce Commission