



Report on HHSC Human Trafficking Grant Program Initiatives

**As Required by
House Bill 2633, 87th Legislature,
Regular Session, 2021**

**Texas Health and Human Services
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TEXAS
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Executive Summary

House Bill (H.B.) 2633, 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021 (codified in [Health and Safety Code, Chapter 50](#)) established the trafficked persons program account and required the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to establish the trafficked persons grant program. Using funding from the account, H.B. 2633 also required HHSC to provide grants to applicants for dedicated housing and treatment facilities provided to youth human trafficking victims.

H.B. 2633 also required HHSC to utilize funds from the account to conduct a study to determine the needs and best practices of establishing permanent, safe, and secure housing for youth survivors of human trafficking, from money appropriated for this Act. Not later than December 1, 2022, HHSC shall develop a written report from the results of the study and provide it to the governor and the standing committees of the Legislature with jurisdiction over HHSC.

Sufficient funds to conduct the study were not available in fiscal year 2022; therefore, this report outlines HHSC's work through its Human Trafficking Resource Center to establish the trafficked persons program account (known as the Stop Human Trafficking donation account), raise awareness regarding the human trafficking and the donation account, and study the needs and best practices of establishing permanent, safe, and secure housing for youth survivors of human trafficking.

Establishment of the Stop Human Trafficking Donation Account

Pursuant to Health and Safety Code, Chapter 50, Subchapter D, the purpose of the trafficked persons program account (known as the Stop Human Trafficking donation account) is to provide money:

1. To substantiate this state's interest in publicly operated and funded shelter and treatment for victims of an offense of trafficking of persons as defined by Article [56B.003](#), Code of Criminal Procedure;
2. To prevent the recruitment of human trafficking victims within mixed-status child, youth, and young adult shelters;
3. For consistent and recurring funding of long-term solutions for providing research-based treatment and safe and secure shelter to child, youth, and young adult victims of human trafficking;
4. For financial stability of local governments, private partners, and medical facilities in planning, building, and maintaining dedicated housing and recovery programs for victims of human trafficking; and
5. To raise awareness of the account among businesses and philanthropists in this state and to strengthen public and private partnerships established to end the practice of human trafficking.

H.B. 2633 designates HHSC as the account administrator and requires HHSC to collaborate with the Department of Information Resources, the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Department of Public Safety, and the Comptroller of Public Accounts to establish a dedicated account from multiple funding streams to support victims of human trafficking.

The account must consist of a mix of revenue from specialty license plates, motor vehicle registration donations, driver license and identification card donations, donations from corporations and private entities, and interest accrued from the account.

The money in the account may only be appropriated to the trafficked persons grant program, sex trafficking prevention and victim treatment programs, and other programs named in Health and Safety Code 50.0153(d). The Legislature may not

use the money in the account to offset any other appropriations designated to the Department of Family and Protective Services or HHSC.

The Stop Human Trafficking donation account launched online on September 1, 2021, using the Fee Pay system on Texas.gov. This site, <https://feepay.txapps.texas.gov/hhsc/stop-human-trafficking-donation-service/>, is open to the public. The donation account is connected to the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Public Safety and is available online to anyone obtaining or renewing a driver’s license, personal identification card or vehicle registration. Additionally, the link to the donation site is featured on the Secretary of State’s *Texas Businesses Against Trafficking* website. Table 1 outlines the donation revenue and expenditures for fiscal year 2022.

Table 1. Donation Information for Fiscal Year 2022

Stop Human Trafficking Donation Account	Fiscal Year 2022 Revenue and Expenditures
Donations Received in Fiscal Year 2022	\$28,232.20
Expenses for License Plate Production	\$8,000.00
Total Revenue for Fiscal Year 2022	\$20,232.20

Efforts to Raise Awareness of the Stop Human Trafficking Donation Account

In addition to establishing the Stop Human Trafficking donation account, HHSC has engaged in initiatives and efforts to raise awareness around human trafficking and the donation account for the grant program. H.B. 2633 required HHSC to establish a Stop Human Trafficking specialty license plate, the proceeds of which are required to be deposited to the account. To increase awareness of the new plate and the issue of human trafficking, HHSC launched a specialty license plate design contest in January 2022. In June 2022, the Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force and the Texas Human Trafficking Survivor Leader Council voted on the winning design of the specialty license plate. The winning design was submitted by a

licensed professional counselor and graphic designer who works at a mental health hospital in Houston.

Figure 1: Winning License Plate Design



Texans will have the opportunity to purchase a specialty license plate from the Department of Motor Vehicles in Spring 2023. Not only will the specialty license plate bring awareness to human trafficking, but it will also direct drivers to report suspicions of human trafficking to the iwatchtx.org website. The iWatch Texas website is a community reporting system where citizens can report suspicious activities or behaviors that may indicate criminal, terroristic, or school-safety-related threats. A portion of all specialty plate sales will go to the human trafficking donation account.

Study on Housing for Young Victims of Human Trafficking

HHSC plans to partner with stakeholders to conduct a needs assessment study on the needs and best practices for serving child and youth sex trafficking victims. Once the donation account reaches a sufficient funding level, HHSC will procure services to fulfill the study requirements as outlined in H.B. 2633. In the meantime, HHSC will continue to promote the Stop Human Trafficking donation account to spread awareness of human trafficking and efforts to provide services to child and youth survivors in the state.

Conclusion

The Texas Human Trafficking Resource Center connects HHSC staff, health care providers, stakeholders, and those who have experienced human trafficking to resources needed to locate services, help prevent trafficking, and recognize and respond to potential trafficking situations. With the enactment of H.B. 2633 and the trafficked persons grant program, HHSC aims to not only act as a resource directory but to also operate as a funding source for grantees who will provide wraparound services for youth sex trafficking survivors, dependent on available funding and donations.

When sufficient donation funding becomes available to the agency, HHSC will enter the next phase of implementation to begin the needs assessment study in the state. A written report from the results of the study will be made available to interested parties and the public on the HHSC website.

HHSC will continue to promote the Stop Human Trafficking donation account and the new specialty license plate to increase awareness of the donation account. With a reliable and steady stream of revenue for direct victim services, HHSC can support the needs of youth sex trafficking victims across the state of Texas.

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
H.B.	House Bill
HHSC	Health and Human Services Commission