



Long-term Care Regulation Provider Letter

Number: PL 2022-05
Title: Implementation of House Bill (HB) 525, 87 th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021
Provider Types: All
Date Issued: February 3, 2022

1.0 Subject and Purpose

This letter describes how HHSC will carry out its regulatory functions under HB 525. [HB 525](#), relating to the protection of religious organizations, was effective on June 18, 2021.

2.0 Policy Details & Provider Responsibilities

2.1 Legislative Mandate

HB 525 designates religious organizations¹ as essential businesses at all times, including during a declared disaster. The law prohibits state agencies, including HHSC, from prohibiting religious organizations from engaging in religious or other related activities or from continuing to operate in the discharge of its foundational faith-based mission and purpose. It also prohibits state agencies from ordering a religious organization to close or otherwise alter its purpose or activities.

2.2 HHSC Survey and Inspection Activities

HHSC is responsible for regulating the Texas facilities that fall under its jurisdiction equally and without regard to whether they are operated by a religious organization.

¹Per Government Code [§2401.001\(4\)](#), a religious organization is an organization open to the public that is a religious organization as defined in the [Civil Practice and Remedies Code §110.011\(b\)](#).

The focus of regulatory activity is on ensuring compliance with applicable state law and regulations governing health and safety. HHSC does not, and will not, intervene in any religious activities being conducted by a facility, regardless of whether the facility is operated by a religious organization.

Under the law, HHSC will continue to conduct applicable application, survey, investigation, and enforcement activities for all regulated providers in accordance with applicable provisions of state law. Accordingly, HHSC will meet its responsibilities to protect the health and safety of individuals in the care of facilities regulated by HHSC, regardless of who operates a facility.

3.0 Background/History

HHSC is issuing this letter to clarify its response to HB 525, 87th Legislature, Regular Session, 2021.

4.0 Contact Information

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact the LTCR Policy and Rules Section by email at LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov or call (512) 438-3161.