Texas Family Violence Program Statewide Report

As Required By
Human Resources Code, Chapter 51

Health and Human Services Commission
November 2016

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Executive Summary

Texas Human Resources Code (HRC), Section 51.006 requires the Family Violence Program (FVP) to publish a report each even-numbered year that summarizes data received from family violence centers under contract with HHSC.

Since the program's inception in 1981, FVP has grown from an original partnership with six local shelters, to a shelter and service network currently featuring 71 24-hour shelter facilities, nine nonresidential centers, and 25 Special Nonresidential Project (SNRP) contracts to provide family violence services. In addition, H.B. 1, 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015 appropriated $3,000,000 in exceptional item funding for capacity building services in fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

This report will highlight the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) funded contractors' success in providing family violence services to positively impact the health and well-being of family violence survivors and their children.

Background

HHSC administers FVP, supporting a network of family violence service providers through contracts with public and nonprofit organizations. Funding provided by HHSC enables FVP contractors to provide emergency support and prevention services to help adult survivors and their children escape the cycle of family violence.

HHSC is responsible for allocating funds, developing rules and policies, monitoring adherence to state and federal policies, providing technical assistance to contractors, and collecting and maintaining program data. Although some survivors may never seek services, it is the intent of the FVP to ensure the availability and accessibility of relevant services to all survivors of family violence.

Residential shelter services include a 24-hour residential shelter, 24-hour hotline, emergency medical services, intervention services, emergency transportation, legal advocacy, educational arrangements, information about employment and job training services, community education, referrals to community services, and coordinated services with law enforcement. Nonresidential centers provide the same support services as the shelter centers, but do not provide residential shelter.

FVP administers 25 SNRP contracts that offer specialized services to survivors of family violence. SNRP contractors also provide child advocacy education and prevention activities in schools, community education, job training, legal advocacy, parenting services, transitional assistance, and outreach to traditionally under-served geographic areas.

The exceptional item funding for capacity building enables 26 FVP contractors to provide capacity building family violence services, including legal representation, primary prevention, and economic stability services that include childcare, rental, or educational assistance. These specialized services provide critical assistance to survivors enabling them to live a life free from family violence.

As required by Texas HRC, Chapter 51, FVP contracts with a statewide family violence coalition, the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV), to provide training and technical assistance to family violence service providers. HHSC collaborates with TCFV on a variety of projects, including program enhancement services, the Family Violence Texas State Plan, rule review, and various workgroups that help improve services to survivors of family violence.

Family Violence Program Expenditure Information

Expenditure information as required by HRC, Chapter 51, includes multiple funding sources that support FVP. Funding is received from the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) to Title XX Transfer Funds, TANF, and State General Revenue.

FVP Annual Budget for Fiscal Years 2015-2016

Method of Finance	Fiscal Year 2015	Fiscal Year 2016
FVPSA	$5,665,332	$5,665,332
State General Revenue	$10,761,274	$10,739,678
TANF to Title XX	$9,506,651	$10,995,636
SSBG (Exceptional Item)	$1,250,000	$1,250,000
TANF (Exceptional Item)	NA	$1,500,000
Total	**$27,183,257**	**$30,150,646**

The FVP provides oversight of funds throughout the contracting lifecycle, including contract development, budget and plan of operation review and approval, technical assistance, programmatic and fiscal onsite monitoring review, and contract close-out.

Contract Effectiveness

FVP service providers deliver vital services to family violence survivors and their children. In 2016, 92% of clients that received services reported that they had an increased knowledge of community resources and safety planning. HHSC funding for these programs is only a small part of the total resources leveraged toward meeting survivor needs. Local funding support also comes from communities, gifts from individuals, corporate grants, city and county governments, private foundations, and other federal resources. Family violence programs cite HHSC funding for helping ensure critical emergency services will be available to as many survivors as possible.

Texas Family Violence Client Statistics

	FY 2015	FY 2016
Clients Served	***69,869***	***72,782***
Adults	44,233	45,985
Children	25,636	26,797
Denied Due to Lack of Space	39%	39%
Family Violence Fatalities in Texas	132	158

Survivor Accomplishments

Funding provided by HHSC has a significant impact on the lives of survivors of family violence and their children. Client success stories assist in providing positive feedback to the efforts of the FVP initiatives. The following is a compilation of stories provided to HHSC through contracted family violence centers:

> A client came into a shelter from a rural part of Texas. Since coming to the shelter center, the client received mental health services through a local mental health agency, was connected to the local health department assisting with needed medications, and is currently on a list to obtain permanent housing. The client continues to receive counseling for current and past abuse. Her quality of life has greatly improved since entering the program.
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> A 31-year-old female was verbally, emotionally, physically and sexually abused by her ex-husband. Even though she had left the abuser, he continued to threaten her with text messages, voice messages, and weapons. The shelter center helped the client obtain a Protective Order and file for child support. The client and her children are still in counseling. They feel that they are safe and are extremely thankful for the shelter center staff for all of their support and assistance.
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> An elderly client entered the shelter center after being abused by her daughter. Through case management services and the assistance of shelter center advocates, the client was able to gain employment, obtain affordable housing, and is well on her way to achieving self-sufficiency.
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> A client came into a shelter seeking safety from a family violence situation. Upon arrival at the shelter, the client set personal goals of attending counseling, securing employment, and saving money. During her time in the shelter, she was able to obtain a full-time job through a local employment agency and attend counseling services regularly which helped with her emotional recovery.

Contractor Accomplishments

FVP service providers are seeking and implementing innovative services that include enhanced staff training to better deal with survivors that are subject to human trafficking, working with local schools to provide teen dating violence education on school campuses, and working with law enforcement and district and county attorneys to enable programs to more effectively communicate with members of the judicial system.

Exceptional Item Funding for Capacity Building Services

Exceptional item funded projects provide for expanded family violence services such as financial assistance, legal representation, primary prevention, and education and employment assistance. In fiscal year (FY) 2016, service providers report positive impacts of these exceptional item funded projects. A few examples include:

Financial Assistance
One of the greatest barriers to safety for survivors in our area is having the financial means to move away from their abuser. Being able to provide rental assistance is life-changing for our clients. Having the security of knowing that they have a safe place to live empowers them to cope with the additional challenges of overcoming financial abuse.

Education and Employment Assistance
We assist clients with increasing their education and job-seeking abilities so they become more financially stable. Our clients are fleeing a family violence relationship and this financial and educational stability makes it safer for them to survive on their own and not have to return to an abusive relationship. Through the benefits of this grant, our clients have a high success rate of achieving self-sufficiency and not returning to their previous abuser.

Legal Representation
We provide legal representation for survivors of family violence, specifically, “working poor” individuals who need quality legal representation in the family courts system. Thanks to generous grant funding, the program has the ability to advocate for clients who often appear to have financial means on paper, but lack access to funds under their abuser’s control.

Primary Prevention
This service has a positive impact on students. Educators reported a gradual change in how the students managed conflicts between themselves. The amount of arguing between students, tattling, and being a bystander to inappropriate behavior decreased, as their willingness to resolve conflicts on their own increased.

Conclusion

For the past three decades, FVP has provided critical support to victims in Texas by working to reduce and prevent family violence. HHSC provides vital funding and support for most of the shelter and nonresidential centers available to survivors in Texas. Without HHSC-funded centers, survivors would have access to only a limited number of family violence centers throughout the state.

HHSC and family violence programs statewide are committed to helping survivors achieve self-sufficiency and live a life free from violence. Some counties lack core emergency services, and in some densely populated urban areas, need exceeds service availability. FVP is dedicated to ongoing collaboration with program stakeholders to balance program expansion and service enhancement. The program strives to support enhanced services to underserved populations.

FVP is also committed to building stronger relationships with FVP service providers through increased communication efforts and provision of technical assistance. The program will continue to improve service quality by enhancing the contract monitoring process, evaluating outcome measures, and requesting more detailed programmatic information from the FVP providers. In addition, the program will explore strategies to promote positive outcomes and ensure funding is utilized in the most effective manner possible. With a focus on the future, FVP will remain proactive in seeking opportunities for continuous improvement.