



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 2

Agenda Date: April 27, 2023

In Control: Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee

DEPARTMENT: Health Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Claude Jacob

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

A briefing by San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health) on a potential approach to promote domestic violence resources through signage in places of public accommodation and presentation of the findings from the community survey.

SUMMARY:

Metro Health will provide a briefing on the efforts to gather information concerning the feasibility and public sentiment related to the Council Consideration Request (CCR) filed by Councilmember Manny Pelaez on October 18, 2021. Based on the feedback gathered, which includes input from key partners and stakeholders, staff will recommend an ordinance that requires signage featuring domestic violence resources be posted in places of public accommodation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Councilmember Manny Pelaez filed a CCR on October 18, 2021, proposing an ordinance to require places of public accommodation to post signage with domestic violence resources. Metro

Health presented background information on this CCR at the Governance Committee meeting on January 11, 2022. The request was directed to the Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee for further review of response recommendations, which occurred on March 8, 2022, and August 25, 2022.

As a part of the Fiscal Year 2022 approved budget, Metro Health received City funding to support an expansion of domestic violence prevention programming. The expansion includes four primary initiatives:

- Crisis Advocates working with Crisis Response Teams
- Case Management
- Evaluation and data-driven strategies
- Community education initiatives

Metro Health conducted a public survey from November 2022 to January 2023 to gather feedback from the business community and residents regarding a potential ordinance to require domestic violence resource signage in places of public accommodation. The survey garnered more than 1,400 responses, representing every Council district, gender, and age group across the City. Seventeen percent of survey respondents identified themselves as being connected to businesses and 83% as community members. Overall, 80% of respondents support an ordinance. When examined by different audience groups, 59% of the business-affiliated respondents and 84% of community members support an ordinance.

Metro Health met with the members of the Collaborative Commission on Domestic Violence (CCDV) on February 21, 2023, to explain the purpose of the CCR. The members of the CCDV support instituting an ordinance to increase awareness of resources for people affected by domestic violence.

Metro Health met with representatives from the West Texas Region of the Texas Restaurant Association on April 14, 2023, to obtain their feedback. The Restaurant Association expressed concerns regarding the burden of additional regulations and potential fines on businesses, particularly following the extended economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, they anticipated the business community would provide a high level of support for and participation in a voluntary campaign.

An ordinance would require the posting of signage, which would be provided to places of public accommodation by Metro Health. Metro Health would coordinate distribution of signage, leveraging Metro Health personnel and City facilities as points of distribution. The ordinance would be enforced passively based on reported complaints. Once a complaint is reported, any authority having jurisdiction to enforce city ordinances would investigate and provide education and resources to the offending place of public accommodation. Metro Health will continue to provide signage as needed. Continued non-compliance with the ordinance will result in a small fine as a penalty.

ISSUE:

The CCR addresses the need for domestic violence resources to be widely disseminated. In response to the City of San Antonio Comprehensive Domestic Violence Prevention Plan, the City of San Antonio developed decals in English and Spanish for placement in bathrooms with resources related to domestic violence. The original effort distributed 10,000 decals to businesses, City facilities, school districts, and community partners interested in providing support. The effort was solely voluntary, and no additional copies were produced.

Domestic violence is also called family violence, domestic battering, spousal abuse, domestic abuse, and intimate partner violence. Regardless of the name, at the heart of domestic violence is the attempt by one person to use power and control over another person in a physical, economic, or emotional way. This power struggle can shape many abusive behaviors, including stalking, physical violence, sexual violence, mental abuse, and emotional abuse. While human trafficking and sex trafficking can be a part of intimate partner violence, they also have unique risks and encompass other forms of abuse and human rights violations. For example, abusive partners may use physical force, coercion, and violence to compel participation in sex work. Abusive partners may also force other forms of labor without pay. Current estimates indicate 1 in 3 women in Texas and 1 in 4 men have experienced domestic violence. Domestic violence is underreported, and most people do not know where to find assistance.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

No additional alternatives will be presented.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends an ordinance requiring signage featuring domestic violence resources to be posted in places of public accommodation.