



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
{{item.tracking_number}}

Agenda Item Number: 5

Agenda Date: January 11, 2022

In Control: Governance Committee Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Health Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Claude Jacob

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Response to Council Consideration Requests filed by Councilman Manny Pelaez, District 8 on the topic of Amplifying Domestic Violence, Family Violence, and Sex Trafficking Awareness Through City and City-Related Touchpoints

SUMMARY:

Metro Health Violence Prevention program staff will present recommendations for responding to the three Council Consideration Requests filed in October 2021 by Councilman Manny Pelaez that relate to requirements for the provision of awareness education and informational resources in the topic areas of domestic violence including child abuse, human trafficking, and intimate partner violence

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In October 2021, Councilmember Manny Pelaez issued three Council Consideration Requests (CCR) for direction to City staff to draft an ordinance related to domestic violence, child abuse and human trafficking topics including:

1. To require that all places of public accommodation display in bathrooms clearly visible signage featuring domestic violence and sex trafficking prevention resources.
2. To amplify domestic violence, sex trafficking, and intimate partner violence awareness campaigns and expand awareness of and access to vital services by activating city department and city-related touchpoints for transmission, including potential requirements to distribute informational resources regarding domestic violence and human trafficking. Suggested conduits for this outreach included City Departments that conduct public outreach, Human Services delegate agencies, San Antonio Food Bank, the Municipal Court, Pre-K 4 SA, Right to Counsel agencies, San Antonio Public Libraries, SAWS and CPS Energy, VIA Transit, and Workforce Solutions Alamo and other workforce-related delegate agencies.
3. To require certain schools, colleges, and universities provide its students with instruction about family violence, child abuse, and human trafficking.

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. In most abusive relationships, partners engage in economic abuse such as controlling bank accounts, money earned and interfering with school or work. It may also extend to denying a partner access to medical care, including reproductive health care or gender-confirming medical services. 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.

Domestic violence, human trafficking, and sex trafficking are underreported and undercounted, with the true scope of the challenge remaining hidden. Current estimates are that 1 in 3 women in Texas and 1 in 4 men in Texas has experienced domestic violence. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, of the more than 50,000 people trafficked in the United States every year, of which 25% has been estimated to pass through Texas. Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking are underreported. Many individuals in need of support do not know where to get assistance. In 2020, the city reported 36 family violence homicides, of which 20 were women murdered by male intimate partners. During that same year, the SAPD Crisis Response Team served 14,542 family violence victims and conducted 2,672 home visits, even as home visits were limited due to COVID-19 protocols. In 2020, SAPD received 80,410 family violence-related calls through September. In 2021, SAPD received 91,521 calls, a 14% increase compared to the same time the previous year.

The proposed ordinances address several topics that were identified as part of the City of San Antonio Comprehensive Domestic Violence Prevention Plan including:

1.1 Promote adoption and implementation of comprehensive, evidence based parenting education programs to reduce the incidence of child abuse, including the Triple P Parenting Program.

- 2.1 Develop a community-wide media campaign across multiple media and communication channels, including large employers, to saturate the San Antonio market.
- 2.2 Expand school-based prevention and engagement of service providers to reduce violence through the implementation of evidence-based violence prevention programming and structured partnerships between schools and community service providers.
- 3.1 Promote opportunities for cross-sector partnerships and coordination to support the implementation of best practices

ISSUE:

Currently, two community coalitions in San Antonio address domestic violence and human trafficking, The Alamo Area Coalition Against Trafficking (AACAT) and the Collaborative Commission on Domestic Violence (CCDV). Communication strategies to the community should be developed in collaboration with existing efforts to maximize message reach and ensure messaging supports broader community efforts. Additionally, school-based programming requires adoption and acceptance by each district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC). Requirements for schools should be developed in close coordination with the Texas Education Association (TEA) and leadership of local Independent School Districts to ensure that any requirements are coherent and congruent with requirements for Texas schools. Working with Colleges and Universities in the area should be more straight forward.

Existing City of San Antonio steps toward topics in the CCRs include:

- Ongoing Love Is...Community Awareness campaign including placement on TV, Radio, print media, social media in coordination with University Health
- Development and placement of 10,000 decals in bathrooms in English and Spanish that include information about domestic violence and how to seek assistance
- Establishment of the Collaborative Commission on Domestic Violence website with information on local resources
- Implementation of a City of San Antonio 24/7 Domestic Violence Hotline
- Community outreach and education presentations, including training provided to Communities in Schools, Region 20, the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, and many school districts

Despite significant communication efforts, Metro Health Violence Prevention Staff identified a capacity gap related to community education and outreach over the past two years. Currently funded domestic violence staffing positions are dedicated to direct victim services, leaving little room for outreach and education. In the FY 2022 City of San Antonio approved budget, four new positions were funded to begin in April 2022 to support domestic violence outreach and education, including an Outreach Manager, two Community Health Workers, and a Management Analyst to provide dedicated support to the Collaborative Commission on Domestic Violence. These additional positions will support a robust outreach and training program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The item is for briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

The item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends referring this item for further in-depth consideration to the Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee.