

RESOLUTION NO. 191-2021

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS, APPROVING THE MENTAL HEALTH/CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING GRANT AND APPROVING THE CREATION OF THE MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE/CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING CARE COORDINATOR FULL TIME POSITION

WHEREAS, the Abilene/Taylor County Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) is required to comply with the Texas Family Code and the Texas Standards for Children's Advocacy Centers. Regarding mental health, the Texas Standards state that evidence-supported, trauma-focused mental health services for children must be consistently available at no charge; and

WHEREAS, currently, these services are being provided by community non-profit agencies, however, the increased need for mental health services has exceeded the capacity of local resources; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Family Code was updated, requiring the CAC to review all Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Statewide Intakes for Abilene/Taylor County and provide case coordination services; and

WHEREAS, in FY21, 2957 DFPS intakes were reviewed and documented by CAC staff. Most CACs in Texas hired a full-time employee in order to comply with the Family Code requirement, but Abilene was able to temporarily absorb these duties with current staffing; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, at the request of the multidisciplinary team, the CAC began working with the Governor's Office to become the Care Coordinator for child sex trafficking cases in Abilene/Taylor County; and

WHEREAS, along with this new initiative came the creation of new protocols, monthly meetings with the Governor's Office, monthly meetings with CACTX, child sex trafficking service provision meetings, and detailed data collection/reporting; and

WHEREAS, during 2021, advocates have become increasingly more involved in supporting the District Attorney's Office with court preparation and court accompaniment for child abuse victims, and the number of children being referred to CAC services has increased 15% in the last year and

WHEREAS, every interview requires the assignment of two staff members out of three and there are times when volunteers must be utilized to provide primary services because staff are committed elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, in order to retain quality CAC employees, mitigate vicarious trauma, and provide excellent service to our community at the current level, the CAC must increase its staffing; and

WHEREAS, the Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc. recognized the increased demands on CAC staff across Texas and secured funding through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC); and

WHEREAS, the Abilene/Taylor County CAC applied for and received this non-competitive MH/CST grant in the amount of \$68,316.67; and

WHEREAS, the existing HHSC and VOCA grants will provide an additional \$11,945.93; and

WHEREAS, these three grants will cover approximately 98% of the costs associated with the new position, with the estimated cost to the City being \$1,234.84 for the new full-time position; and

WHEREAS, staff recommends that the City Council approve the receipt of the grants, and approve the creation of the Mental Health Advocate/Child Sex Trafficking Care Coordinator full time position.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS:

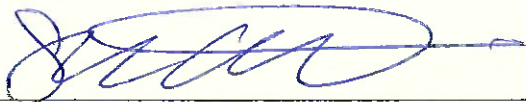
PART 1: That the City Council of the City of Abilene approves the receipt of the Mental Health/Child Sex Trafficking grant in the amount of \$68,316.67.

PART 2: That the City Council approves the creation of the Mental Health Advocate/Child Sex Trafficking Care Coordinator full time position.

PART 3: That this resolution is effective immediately upon adoption.

ADOPTED this 4th day of November, 2021.

ATTEST:

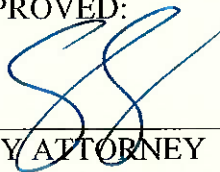


CITY SECRETARY



MAYOR

APPROVED:



CITY ATTORNEY

