

# REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

TO: Mayor via City Secretary

RCA #

**SUBJECT:** A resolution and an ordinance authorizing the Mayor's Office and Director of Human Trafficking to apply, accept and expend for the Direct Services to Victims of Human Trafficking Program

Category #

Page 1 of 1

Agenda Item#

**FROM: (Department or other point of origin):**  
Mayor's Office - Human Trafficking

Origination Date

11/20/2017

Agenda Date

**DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE:**



Council Districts affected:

All

For additional information contact: Minal Patel Davis

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Date and identification of prior authorizing Council Action: N/A, first time before City Council

## RECOMMENDATION: (Summary)

The Mayor's Office recommends City Council approve a resolution and an ordinance authorizing the Mayor's Office and the Director of Human Trafficking to apply, accept and expend grant funds from the Office of the Governor of Texas.

### Amount of Funding:

\$192,480.00 – Fund 5030

\$48,120.00 (cash match provided by third party) – Fund 5040

### FIN Budget:

\$0, no funds required from the City's general fund.

Total Project Cost: **\$240,600.00**

### SOURCE OF FUNDING:

☐ General Fund

☒ Grant Fund

☐ Enterprise Fund

☒ Other (Specify)

### SPECIFIC EXPLANATION:

The grant funds three case managers to establish a systems-level approach to meet the need for comprehensive, victim-centered services including emergency shelter, intensive case management services, and referrals for healthcare and legal services. Front door partners to this system will use an initial screening to identify and coordinate care for victims through the City of Houston Health Department, Ben Taub Hospital, the Harris Health System, and CHI St. Luke's. Studies support that trafficking victims often come in contact with a healthcare provider but go unidentified. Once trafficking victims are identified or trafficking indicators are confirmed via use of a coordinated screening tool, front door agencies would call one of two case managers housed at The Salvation Army (TSA), who will triage for basic needs and conduct a second and deeper Coordinated Assessment for trafficking. Once connected with a case manager at the shelter for residential or non-residential services, the case manager would provide trauma-informed, individualized case management services, which include working with a hospital-based case manager who helps victims navigate Ben Taub, the Harris Health System, and CHI St. Luke's, making referrals and appointments for needed medical and mental health assessments and services. Once immediate needs are met, victims would have access to a full spectrum of culturally- and linguistically- informed services, including those for civil legal needs.

The systems-level approach will bring Houston closer to filling the gap between victims that have been identified through traditional channels and recently published statewide estimates of victims. The exact scope and magnitude of human trafficking is unknown. Traditionally, victims of trafficking were recovered through law enforcement investigations and then referred for services to support prosecutions. There was and is no clear system of identification and referral for those victims who present in a medical setting or in interaction with community organizations. Improving victim identification and service delivery requires use of coordinated screening tools in spheres in which trafficking victims are already present but go unidentified. For example, in healthcare settings, staff often comes across victims of trafficking for short-term treatment of, for example, a broken arm, pelvic pain, or sexually transmitted diseases. Even though such injuries in and of themselves are not proof of trafficking, the use of a screening tool will enable medical staff to assess for trafficking. Cases like these occur again and again, all without the victims being properly identified and referred for restorative services. To address this, the City of Houston has developed a systematic approach to providing direct services to victims who are identified in medical settings and by community organizations. By also ensuring all potential victims have access to emergency shelter the system also addresses the existing difficulties around immediate shelter placement for victims identified by direct outreach agencies. The Salvation Army will provide the required cash match amount of \$48,120.00.

### REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION

FIN Director:

Date:

Originator's Initials

Page 2 of 2