Safety Intervention Services

FY 2017 Community Impact Report

Travis County Health and Human Services

Research & Planning Division

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Travis County Health and Human Services
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County Executive
Sherri E. Fleming

Project Leads
Courtney Bissonnet Lucas
Brittain Ayres

Lead Writers
Anne Fine
Lori Axler Miranda

Research & Planning Division
Lawrence Lyman, Division Director
Korey Darling, Planning Manager
Brittain Ayres
Tara Carmean
Rachel Coff
Anna Lisa Conlin
Anne Fine
Courtney Bissonnet Lucas
Rochelle Olivares
Tonya Pennie

Questions or Comments?

For questions or for more information, please contact the Research & Planning Division at HHS_R&P@traviscountytx.gov.

TRAVIS COUNTY
HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES

PURPOSE

Who we are:

A Department of Travis County that serves the community under the guidance of the Commissioner's Court

What we do:

Address community needs through internal and external investments and services

What we strive to accomplish:

Maximize quality of life for all people in Travis County

- Protect vulnerable populations
- Invest in social and economic well-being
- Promote healthy living: physical, behavioral, and environmental
- Build a shared understanding of our community

VALUES

We value helping people.

- We provide accessible, person-centered services with respect and care.
- We work to empower people through our service to them, always honoring the strengths and differences of the individuals and families of Travis County.

We value the accountability and integrity of our staff.

- We value the diversity of our staff and the experience each of us brings to HHS.
- We honor our collective service to the public, including the careful stewardship of public funds.
- We value the quality services we provide to the community in a spirit of shared responsibility.

We value cooperation and collaboration in the community at large and within HHS.

- We are interdependent and connected.
- We treat one another with respect and value effective communication and teamwork.
- We honor our partners in the community and engage with them to more efficiently and effectively serve our clients.

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Introduction

The Travis County Commissioners Court, through the Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHS), annually invests over $19.5 million in community-based social service programs. These Department investments align with and supplement our direct services to meet the needs of local residents. Community-based organizations are frequently geographically and culturally embedded in the communities they serve and are often best positioned to provide needed services.

Purpose of Report

The annual Community Impact Report provides an overview of HHS investments in health and human services. The *FY 2017 Community Impact Report* offers highlights of community conditions most pertinent to the services purchased, and details investment, programmatic, and performance information on the Department's social service contracts. This information allows policy makers, program managers, and others to better understand these investments, recognize accomplishments, identify areas for improvement, disseminate lessons learned, and highlight areas warranting further research.

Organization of Report

This report addresses nine issue areas—Access to Basic Supports, Behavioral Health, Child and Youth Development, Housing Continuum, Planning and Evaluation, Public Health, Safety Intervention Services, Supportive Services for Community Living, and Workforce Development—as well as a pilot project under Holistic Family Services. The Investment Overview summarizes information from all nine issue areas and the pilot project. Each issue area section begins with community conditions information and then provides performance highlights about the programs within that issue area. Each program is classified into the issue area most closely aligned to its goals and objectives.

Although this report highlights community conditions for individual issue areas separately, each issue area must be considered in a broader context. Community conditions related to a single issue area may have similar or related root causes and broad-level consequences. Current economic conditions also have a global impact on community conditions.

This report provides detailed information about each program covered by an issue area, including an overview of program goals, services provided, eligibility criteria, and funding. Also captured are each program's performance results, compared to its contractual performance goals, and explanations of notable variance (+/- 10%) between the performance results and goals.

Notes on Methodology

Community conditions discussed in this report reflect the most recent information available at the time of writing. The majority of the social service contracts included in the report followed a fiscal year calendar (October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017) unless otherwise noted. Program and performance highlights are drawn from contracts and reports provided by contracted service providers. Estimates from the American Community Survey have been tested at a 90% confidence level for reliability. In some cases, all noted, estimates were unreliable due to small sample sizes.

Considerations When Reading This Report

Performance results provide only a starting point for understanding the impact of these programs. These summary statistics are not necessarily an indication of the programs' overall performance, but rather a snapshot of their performance over a one-year period. Within these reports, service providers offer explanations for variance in performance, which provides context and meaning to summary results.

Performance results do not reflect programs' full value to and impact on the community. Therefore, it is important to keep the following considerations in mind when reviewing program performance.

Readers should use caution when comparing output and outcome results across programs, as participant characteristics can significantly influence a given program's performance goals and results. For example, performance results may be lower for programs with clients who face considerable challenges (e.g., serious mental illness or addiction issues) and have little social support.

Factors beyond the program's control may also impact the program's performance. For example, the relative scarcity or abundance of jobs in the local economy will impact client employment rates for a workforce development program, regardless of the quality of training and support provided. Without controlling for these factors, the true impact or efficacy of the program on outcomes cannot be discerned.

Readers should also use caution when examining outcome results for programs with less than 30 clients, in which the outcome of just a few clients can greatly affect the program's total outcome result. In these instances, examining percentages may be less helpful than examining raw numbers.

Finally, this report captures a selection of performance measures, which may not reflect the program's full impact on participants and their families, peers, and neighborhood. Performance measures may not all be equal in importance or value to the community.

Community Conditions

Safety Intervention Services Goals and Services

Programs and services within this issue area promote the safety and well-being of individuals, families, and communities that have experienced victimization, loss, and/or harm. The focus of these programs/services include: services and interventions for individuals and families who are victims of or committed an act of domestic violence, abuse, and/or neglect of a child; trauma informed services to promote healing and resilience; advocacy for victims of crimes and/or abuse/neglect; restorative justice services; and reintegration services for youth and adult offenders.

Highlights of Community Conditions

The Safety Intervention Services issue area encompasses a spectrum of services for individuals who are impacted or potentially impacted by crime. This includes a variety of services for marginalized populations who are more vulnerable to crime, individuals and families who experience crime, and individuals who commit crime.[a] Travis County's current investment in Safety Intervention Services focuses on services for victims of crime.

Crime and its effects have serious social and economic implications for a community. In addition to increased fear, isolation, and decreased participation in community life, the damaging effects of crime on a community creates conditions that perpetuate more crime.[1] Victimization and offending are often seen as two distinct components of crime, yet research suggests that there is a strong, patterned relationship between victimization and criminal behavior among both males and females.[2,3] In the United States, criminal offenses are disproportionately committed by males—including violent crimes—and young people age 16 to 24 experience the most crime both in terms of victimization and offending.[4] Individuals who experience crime incur loss and often emotional trauma. Community and social services can address the needs of those experiencing crime, as well as in preventing future acts of crime.

a The language used to describe someone who has experienced abuse, neglect, sexual assault, or any other type of violent victimization is complex. Historically, the term "victim" has been used by law enforcement. In the past several decades, social service providers and advocates have pushed for the term "survivor" for those who have not died as a result of abuse or neglect, because it is considered more empowering than "victim." For the purposes of this report, the term "survivor" will be used in all cases except in the following instances: when an individual has died as a result of the abuse or neglect; when "victim" is the term used by the source data; when it is unclear whether fatalities are included within the data point; and when "victim" is part of a source name.

Prevalence and Types of Crime

Family Violence

According to the Texas Family Code, family violence is defined "as an act by a member of a family or household against another member that is intended to result in physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or a threat that reasonably places the member in fear of imminent physical harm." In 2016 there were 196,564 incidents of family violence (a 0.9% increase from 2015), with 214,815 victims (a 1.7% increase from 2015).[5] Texas also saw a 1.8% increase in number of offenders from 2015 to 2016 (205,154 in 2015 to 208,764).[6] Nearly three-quarters (72%) of the victims whose sex was known were female, and there were more victims (both male and female) in the 25-29 year old age group than any other age group.[7] The relationship of the victim to offender varied among these incidents: 39.0% had a marital relationship;b 15.9% had a parental/child relationship, and 45.2% were other family.[8,c] The number of family violence incidents reported in Travis County in 2016 was 7,811 (compared to 8,119 in 2015).[9,10]

The dynamics of family violence can be complicated and may involve multiple or varying types of violence, including physical abuse; sexual abuse; verbal abuse; psychological and emotional abuse, such as stalking or isolation; and homicide. These types of violence are present in all areas of family violence, including intimate partner violence and child maltreatment.

Child Maltreatment

Any type of abuse – including physical, sexual, or emotional – or neglect[d] which results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or custodian, is considered child maltreatment.[11] There are several risk factors associated with increased likelihood of experiencing child abuse and child maltreatment including low socioeconomic status, low parental education levels, high parental stress, and parental history of experiencing abuse.[12] National level data indicates the rate of child abuse in families with low socioeconomic status is five times higher than in families with high socioeconomic status.[13] Younger children are more likely to experience fatal abuse and neglect, whereas older children (14-17 year-olds) are more likely to experience non-fatal abuse and neglect.[14]

In Texas, there were 276,763 reports of alleged abuse/neglect in 2016 (a 0.8% increase in reporting compared to 2015, in which there were 274,448 reports).[15,e] In Travis County, there were 13,680 reports of

b Marital includes husband, wife, common-law husband, common-law wife, ex-husband, ex-wife.

c Other family includes, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, male roommate, female roommate, male in-law, female in-law, other male family member, other female family member.

d Neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs, such as housing, food, access to medical care and education.

e By comparison, the overall child population in Texas increased 2.5% from 2015 to 2016.

abuse or neglect[16] involving 10,338 alleged victims.[17] The total number of reports increased from 2016 to 2015 (13,680 and 13,372 respectively) but the number of alleged victims decreased by 16%. While 10,874 reports of child abuse/neglect were assigned for investigation, 6,356 investigations were completed (down 17% from 7,701 in 2015).[18] Of the completed investigations, 1,348 (21%) were confirmed cases of abuse/neglect, resulting in 2,105 confirmed victims.[19,f] Hispanic children comprised the largest share (61%) of confirmed victims, while slightly less than one-fifth (18%) were African American, and 16% were Anglo.[20,g,h]

Child fatalities are the most catastrophic consequence of abuse and neglect:[21] 222 children died in Texas as a result of abuse and neglect, compared to 171 child fatalities in 2015 (a 29.8% increase).[22] The increase in fatalities specifically occurred in several regions: Arlington, Tyler, Houston, and San Antonio, and is attributed to increases in neglect and maltreatment.[23] However, none of the children who died in 2016 resided in Travis County, compared to 2 children who died in 2015.[24,i,j] Starting in FY 2015, Texas Child Protective Services initiated an Alternative Response program in Amarillo, Dallas, and Laredo to address allegations of child abuse that are considered to be less serious or do not cause an immediate threat of serious harm or death.[25,26] In 2016, Alternative Response expanded to include Austin and Midland areas. Of the 10,874 cases assigned for investigation in Travis County in 2016, 1,201 were assigned to Alternative Response in order to "help families resolve safety issues and reduce future involvement with CPS."[27]

Intimate Partner Violence

The physical, sexual, or psychological harm caused by a current or former partner or spouse is widespread and affects people regardless of socioeconomic status, race, and/or sexual orientation.[28] The nature of intimate partner violence makes it more likely to be a hidden and underreported crime, and makes determining actual prevalence difficult.[29] Based on results from the CDC 2011 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence survey, approximately 35.6% of women and 28.5% of men sampled have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetimek.[30] Within Texas, the CDC survey reported the lifetime prevalence of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner

f The remaining cases were either ruled out, unable to be determined, or unable to be completed.

g As recommended by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to ensure consistency across all HHSC agencies, in 2012, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) adopted the HHSC methodology on how to categorize race and ethnicity. As a result, data by race/ethnicity in and after 2012 is not directly comparable to race/ethnicity data in and before 2011.

h Compared to the general child population in Travis County, where Hispanic children comprise 47%, African American children comprise 9%, and 36% of children are Anglo.

i Includes child fatalities investigated and confirmed by Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, Child Day Care Licensing, and Residential Child Care Licensing.

j Fatality Counts were frozen on 2/1/2016 and does not include corrections or updates, if any, that may subsequently be made to DFPS data.

k Lifetime prevalence refers to the proportion of people within a population who have ever experienced some form of violence.

is 34.5% among women and 35.1% among men.[31]

Sexual Violence

The term "Sexual Violence" encompasses all aspects of crime with a sexual nature, including sexual assault, rape, and sexual abuse.[32] Sexual assault involves sexual contact or behavior that happens without the consent of the victim, including rape, attempted rape, fondling or unwanted sexual touching, or forcing a victim to perform sexual acts they do not want to do.[33] Sexual abuse can be any type of sexual activity, regardless of physical contact, such as exhibitionism, obscene phone calls, and producing or sharing pornographic images. According to the results from the 2010 CDC National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, approximately 18% of women and 1% of men are raped in their lifetime, and 45% of women and 22% of men experience other sexual violence.[34] Of the female respondents, 51% reported being raped by a former or current intimate partner, and 14% reported being raped by a stranger.[35] The CDC categorized sexual violence into two main categories: rape and types of sexual violence other than rape. Sexual violence other than rape includes being made to penetrate someone else, use of sexual coercion to force sex upon an unwilling person, unwanted sexual contact, and non-contact unwanted sexual experiences. In 2016, 846 incidents of rape were reported to law enforcement within Travis County (compared to 598 in 2015). Of those, 17 (2%) resulted in an arrest.[36,l,37]

Stalking

Stalking is repeated and unwanted behavior or contact that makes a person feel afraid, nervous, or in danger.[38] It can include continually contacting a person via phone, mail, or social media; following someone or waiting outside places they frequent; making open or indirect threats; sending unwanted items; or damaging a person's property.[39] Research suggests that 1 in 6 women, and 1 in 19 men, have been stalked during their lifetime.[40] Two-thirds of the female victims reported stalking by a current or former intimate partner and 24% reported stalking by an acquaintancem.[41] According to a national survey conducted by the CDC, of the women sampled in Texas 15.6% reported being stalked at some point in their lifetime.[42]

l In 2014, the Rape definition was redefined by the FBI in the Uniform Crime Reporting program as: "Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim." This redefinition has caused a significant increase in the number of Rapes reported in 2014 and every year after when compared to reports prior to 2014. Statistics reported in this crime category include assaults to commit rape; however, statutory rape (rape against an individual under the age of consent) is excluded.

m Many female victims have been stalked by more than one perpetrator throughout their lifetime, therefore a survey respondent might have been victimized by both an acquaintance and intimate partner.

Human Trafficking

A form of modern slavery, human trafficking occurs when one person exerts control over another person for the specific purpose of exploitation.[43] It includes the recruitment, transporting, harboring or receipt of a person through use of force, deception, or coercion for purposes of exploitation.[44] Typically human trafficking includes two forms: labor trafficking and sex trafficking. Labor trafficking is a form of coercion that forces children and/or adults to work against their will in numerous industries, including farm work, restaurants, construction, and health and beauty services.[45] Sex trafficking involves using force, fraud, or coercion against children and adults to engage in commercial sex acts against their will.

Human trafficking affects people from all backgrounds and demographics, however certain populations are more vulnerable to victimization, such as runaway and homeless youth, victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and foreign-born populations.[46] Human trafficking by nature is a hidden crime and is therefore highly underreported. Current statistics most likely grossly underestimate the gravity of human trafficking. However due to efforts to increase awareness of the issue, reports of human trafficking in the United States are increasing each year, with 35% more reports in 2016 compared to 2015.[47] A recent report estimates that there are approximately 313,000 victims of human trafficking in Texas. The report identifies highly vulnerable populations and estimates that approximately 234,000 workers in Texas are at-risk for victimization of labor trafficking and as many as 79,000 minor and youth are at-risk for victimization of sex trafficking.[48] Minor and youth sex trafficking costs the state of Texas approximately $6.6 billionn, and it is estimated that traffickers exploit roughly $600 million annually from victims of labor trafficking in Texas.[49]

Vulnerable populations

Women

While males disproportionately commit criminal offenses, there are particular crimes, such as intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking, which are predominately committed by males against females.[50] In the United States, more than one-third (35%) of women have already experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner,[51] and one-in-five women will be raped at some

n Reflects the lifetime cost incurred by both the state and individuals for care of victims of minor and youth sex trafficking.

point in their lives.[52] The vast majority (91%) of victims[o] of rape and sexual assault are female,[53] and women are between 90% and 95% more likely to experience domestic violence than men.[54] In 2016, 146 women were killed in Texas by an intimate partner – a 7.6% decrease from 2015.[55,56] Three of the women killed resided in Travis County (in 2015, four Travis County women were killed by an intimate partner).[57]

Females between the ages of 18 and 24 are most commonly abused by an intimate partner,[58] experience the highest prevalence of stalking victimization,[59] and are three to four times more likely than women in general to experience sexual violence.[60] In Travis County, there are more than 56,000 females in this age group, comprising an estimated 9% of the female population.[61]

Children and Youth

Many children and youth are regularly exposed to physical and emotional violence in their homes, schools, and neighborhoods.[62] The CDC reported in 2011 approximately 683,000 children were victims of abuse and neglect, with a rate of 9.2 victims per 1,000 children in the population.[63] The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey found that approximately 43% of the females surveyed were raped before the age of 18 and approximately 28% of males surveyed were raped before the age of 10.[64]

Children and youth exposed to violence are more likely to attempt suicide, abuse drugs and alcohol, have a higher risk for future intimate partner violence, and commit sexual assault crimes.[65] According to the National Center for Victims of Crime, teenagers who experience high levels of assault, maltreatment, and property victimization.[66] Both men and women who are victims of abuse and neglect as children are more likely to be involved in and arrested for violent crimes as adults than children who are not abused.[67]

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Queer Plus Community (LGBTQIA)

It is estimated that anywhere from one-fifth to more than one-third of LGBTQ couples experience domestic violence, and 30% of LGBTQ youth have experience dating violence.[68] Transgender college students are at a higher risk for sexual violence compared to their non-transgendered male peers.[69] According to some statistics, one in two transgender individuals will experience sexual abuse or assault at some point in their lives and up to 66% may experience sexual assault.[70] Despite the prevalence, only one-fifth of LGBTQ individuals who experience intimate partner violence or sexual assault get help from service providers.[71]

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In Texas, members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community are an underserved community.[72] In a recent survey of service providers across Texas, programs noted that despite a willingness to serve the LGBT community, several barriers—such as lack of outreach within the LGBT community, the difficulty of identifying survivors and abusers in same-sex relationships, and homophobia among other shelter clients and within the larger community—precluded service provision.[73] In cases of intimate partner violence, an abuser can use the threat of exposure to exploit and control an individual who wishes to keep his or her sexual orientation or gender identity confidential.[74] Service providers also report that protecting the confidentiality of a survivor's sexual orientation or gender identity is crucial since other clients can discriminate against the survivor, causing further victimization and harm.[75]

Members of the LGBT community are also much more likely than the general population, or any other minority group in the United States, to be victimized by violent hate crime.[76] Often, hate crimes against LGBT individuals are not reported because the survivor doesn't want his or her identity as LGBT to be identified in a police report.[77]

Immigrants

As a group, immigrants tend to be at disproportionately higher risk for certain crimes, including robbery, homicide, human trafficking, and family violence.[78] Immigrant workers, particularly those who are undocumented, are at a higher risk for experiencing wage theft, intimidation, and unsafe working conditions. Recently arrived immigrants are considered at higher risk of victimization from homicide and robbery, and immigrant women in particular are reported to experience high rates of family violence.[79]

The challenges and isolation experienced by survivors of abuse and neglect are often amplified for the immigrant population. Many immigrants are unaware of general laws, types of crime, and resources that may protect and help them.[80] Language barriers, cultural and/or religious beliefs, and a lack of documentation or fear of deportation may also deter or prevent an immigrant survivor from seeking help.[81] The threat of deportation is often a fear tactic used by abusers to exert power and control over an individual.[82] Survivors who are immigrants, particularly those with limited English proficiency, represent a population in Texas that is vastly underserved.[83]

Persons with Disabilities

Compared to the general population, persons with disabilities are victimized by crime at much higher rates.[84] It estimated that people with developmental disabilities are 4 to 10 times more likely to experience crime than the general population.[85] They are also more likely to be re-victimized by the same person, yet more than one-half do not seek assistance from the legal, criminal, or social service systems.[86] Their rate of crime reporting is lower than that of the general population, often because of the nature of the

survivors' disabilities.[87] Some survivors are not aware that a crime was committed against them, or they may be intimidated by the reporting process.[88] When the abuser is an intimate partner or someone close to the individual, seeking help can be very difficult for the survivor.[89] Many survivor-serving providers across the country report low rates of serving survivors with disabilities, which can be attributed to the low levels of reporting and seeking help.[90]

Services

Services that address crime and its effects on individuals, families, and the community fall along a wide spectrum that includes prevention education, healing and basic needs, legal advocacy, restorative justice, and reintegration services. Many service providers are working to prevent and end violence by addressing social factors that influence perpetration and victimization.

Trauma-Informed Services

Exposure to traumatic experiences, such as physical or sexual abuse, neglect, family or community violence, and/or exploitation can place great stress on an individual, as well as lead to further stress, such as separation from family, friends, and community, and uncertainty about what the future holds.[91] Trauma-informed services are rooted in an understanding of the causes and effects of traumatic experiences, utilize practices that support recovery, and treat more than the symptoms of trauma (such as mental health disorders or behavioral problems).[92] Trauma-informed services involve many stakeholders – including caseworkers, service providers, judges, and family members – in the healing process, to increase awareness, reduce barriers and connect resources in order to effectively serve individuals and achieve greater outcomes for those individuals.[93]

Basic Services

Basic services and concrete resources such as rent deposits or childcare services often do not exist or are substantially insufficient for victims experiencing abuse.[94] The inability to meet basic needs is often the primary reason victims stay with or return to their abuser.[95] The void of essential services is even more critical for undocumented immigrants or immigrants with legal status who are no longer eligible for various types of assistance.[96] In a recent survey, family violence service providers across the state indicated that a lack of transportation, housing, shelter, child care, counseling services, funding, and staff are major challenges in effectively serving their communities.[97] The National Network to End Domestic Violence annual census report on domestic violence found that 6,627 victims in Texas were served in one day but 999 requests for services were unmet because programs did not have the resources to provide these services.[98] More than one-half of the unmet requests were for housing services, and the inability to

meet the housing needs of survivors has increased significantly in the last 5 years.[99]

Legal & Advocacy Services

The high demand for legal services, combined with the underfunding of legal aid programs and the complexities of the various legal systems, means that many individuals impacted by crime, particularly those who are most vulnerable, such as immigrant and low-income individuals, are denied access to services due to lack of capacity or affordability.[100] This presents a major barrier to safety for victims experiencing family violence.[101] Advocates are trained professionals who provide assistance to and advocacy for victims of crime so that their interests are represented in determining the best options in the aftermath of a crime.[102] Services include court accompaniment, assistance with victim impact statements and legal forms, referrals to community resources, information sharing regarding systems and cases, as well as acting as liaison between the individual or family and the various systems.[103] Legal representation and advocacy help individuals and families facing barriers to obtaining adequate legal counsel to protect their rights, advance their interests, and ensure their needs are met.[104]

Restorative Justice Services

Restorative Justice frames crime as a violation of people and human relationships, rather than a violation of the law, and seeks to repair the harm that was caused.[105,106] It is an approach to justice that seeks resolution through healing, reparation, reintegration, and prevention of future harm by engaging all parties affected by the crime.[107] It aims to hold the offender accountable for his or her actions while allowing those affected by the crime—the victim(s), offender, family, and community—to identify and address their needs in the wake of the crime.[108] Research shows that restorative justice programs have a positive effect on both the victim and the offender, with both parties expressing a sense of satisfaction with and fairness of the process and outcomes.[109]

Reintegration Services for Youth and Adult Offenders

It is estimated that roughly 70 million Americans are living with a criminal record,[110] and Texas is home to nearly 12 million such individuals.[111,p] In Travis County, an estimated 2,400 individuals are released from prison each year.[112] As prison release rates rise, so does the strain on social, health and housing services within the community.[113] Slightly more than two-thirds of prisoners released are arrested again within three years, and more than three-quarters are arrested within five years.[114] This cycling in and out of the criminal justice system creates high costs for the community, both in terms of economics and safety. Incarceration removes an offender from the community; before returning that individual back to the community, experts recommend the development of an individualized reentry plan or intervention

p This estimate represents distinct individuals with a criminal record in Texas, whether current residents or not.

(other than incarceration), in order for behavioral changes and long-term success to take place.[115]

Connections to Other Issue Areas

Safety Intervention Services if closely connected to behavioral health, public health, and child and youth issue areas. Trauma can lead to mental health conditions including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as unhealthy coping mechanisms like substance abuse or physical violence.[116] Similarly, experiencing any type of abuse can create negative physical health conditions. Individuals who experience sexual violence or stalking by an intimate partner, stranger, or acquaintance, or physical violence by an intimate partner are more likely to experience asthma, irritable bowel syndrome, headaches, difficulty sleeping, and chronic pain than individuals not exposed to these forms of violence.[117] According to research, annual health care costs for women who have been physically abused are 42% higher than for women who have not been physically abused, and it is estimated that $6.3 billion a year are spent on direct medical and mental health services related to interpersonal violence.[118] Abuse negatively impacts a survivors' ability to obtain or maintain employment due to physical and mental health issues, and it can also influence school attendance and persistence, decreasing long-term educational attainment and future earnings.

Emerging Issues

In 2017, the Texas Legislature met for the 85th legislative session, in which several bills and budgetary items related to sexual assault, family violence, and human trafficking survivors. Some highlights include:[119]

- SB1: The state budget includes level funding for the Sexual Assault Prevention and Crisis Services grant program and appropriates more than $20 million from the Sexually Oriented Business Fee for grants to rape crisis centers.
- SB 77: Establish sexual assault by one parent against the other parent as ground for termination of parental rights.
- HB 281: Establishes a new statewide rape kit tracking system, including $1.3 million to implement the system in 2018.
- HB 1808: Amends the Penal Code to define a lack of consent as including acts compelled by "coercion" or "threat of harm" to the victim.

Additionally, there were bills passed that create new mandates on colleges and universities for responding to sexual assault and keeping campuses safer; require training for the recognition and prevention of human trafficking; provide further protections for family violence victims during the court process; and create strategies and policies to improve child protection.[120]

Additional Resources

Below are some selected resources for additional information regarding Safety Intervention Services and related topics.

Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable

www.reentryroundtable.net

The Reentry Roundtable is a community collaboration whose mission is to promote public safety through effective reentry and reintegration of formerly incarcerated persons and individuals with criminal histories.

The Institute on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

http://sites.utexas.edu/idvsa/

The mission of the Institute is to advance knowledge about interpersonal violence through research, education, and service in multidisciplinary, strategic partnerships with researchers, educators, practitioners, policy makers, and other members of the community.

The Institute for Restorative Justice and Restorative Dialogue at the University of Texas at Austin

http://irjrd.org/

The Institute seeks to build a national mindset that embraces restorative justice principles. Its mission is to advance meaningful accountability, victim healing and community safety through the use of restorative justice solutions to repair the harm related to conflict, crime and victimization.

Lambda Legal

https://www.lambdalegal.org/

Lambda Legal is the oldest and largest national legal organization whose mission is to achieve full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and everyone living with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work. Lambda Legal offers tool kits and "Know Your Rights" information available for free on their website.

The National Center for Victims of Crime

www.victimsofcrime.org

The National Center for Victims of Crime advocates for rights, protections, and services for crime victims; provides education, training, and evaluation; and provides current information on victims' issues through collaboration with local, state, and federal partners.

Texas Association Against Sexual Assault

www.taasa.org

Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (TAASA) provides resources for survivors, parents, legal advocates, service providers, teachers, and volunteers that encompass training tools, information on laws and protective orders, toolkits and checklists, and resources for professionals working with survivors of vulnerable populations such as the LGBTQ community, persons with disabilities, immigrants, older adults, and individuals experiencing assault in prison.

Texas Council on Family Violence

www.tcfv.org

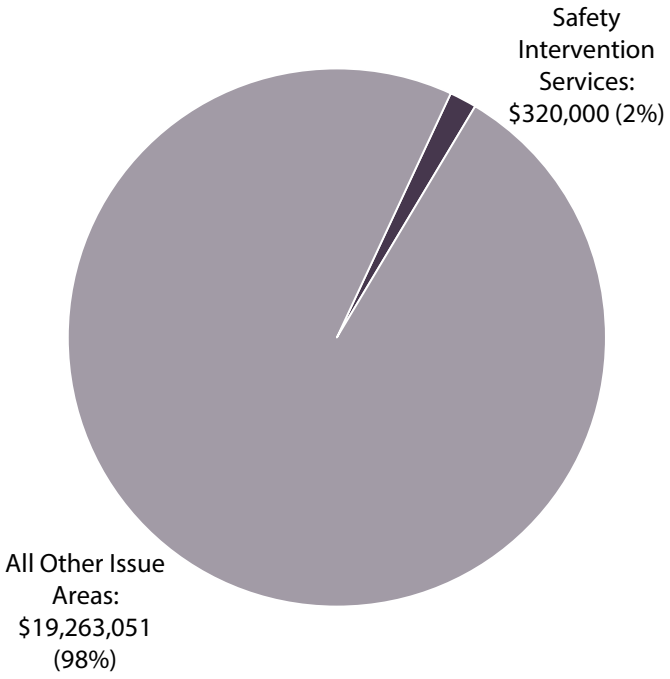
Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) promotes safe and healthy relationships by supporting service providers, facilitating strategic prevention efforts, and creating opportunities for freedom from domestic violence. It is one of the largest domestic violence coalitions in the nation and is comprised of family violence service providers, supportive organizations, survivors of domestic violence, businesses and professionals, communities of faith, and other concerned citizens. As a membership-focused organization, TCFV is committed to serving its members, communities in Texas, and thousands of victims of domestic violence and their families by focusing on three major areas: support to service providers, public policy development, and prevention.

Investment Overview

Our Investment

The full spectrum of the Safety Intervention Services issue area encompasses Crime Prevention, Victim Services, and Community Restoration. Due to funding allocations, services purchased under this issue area fall under the Victim Services category only. HHS has departmental and contracted programs that offer services for adults, children, and families experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and/or neglect. Services include: crisis and transitional housing; counseling; educational/psycho-educational groups; case management; individual and systems advocacy; and information and referral.

Investment in Safety Intervention Services and Other Issue Areas, FY 2017



Funding Summary

The FY 2017 Funding Amount reflects 12–month funding (October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017) unless otherwise noted.

Agency Name	Program Name	FY 2017 Funding Amount
Austin Children's Services	Emergency Shelter Program	$50,000
CASA of Travis County	Child Advocacy	$85,000
SafePlace	Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services	$185,000

Safety Intervention Services Client Demographics

The table below summarizes the demographics for clients served across Safety Intervention Services service providers. Note that clients participating in more than one housing program are counted multiple times.

Gender	Num.	Pct.
Female	2,463	66%
Male	1,240	33%
Transgender	3	0.1%
Other or Not Specified	2	0.1%
Unknown	3	0.1%
Total	*3,711*	*100%*

Ethnicity		
Hispanic or Latino	1,912	52%
Not Hispanic or Latino	1,710	46%
Unknown	89	2%
Total	*3,711*	*100%*

Race		
American Indian and Alaska Native	17	0%
Asian	62	2%
Black or African American	736	20%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	5	0.1%
White	2,225	60%
Some other race	115	3%
Two or more races	265	7%
Unknown	286	8%
Total	*3,711*	*100%*

Age	Num.	Pct.
Under 5	692	19%
5 to 11	952	26%
12 to 14	312	8%
15 to 17	354	10%
18 to 24	293	8%
25 to 39	689	19%
40 to 54	346	9%
55 to 64	56	2%
65 to 74	12	0.3%
Unknown	5	0.1%
Total	*3,711*	*100%*

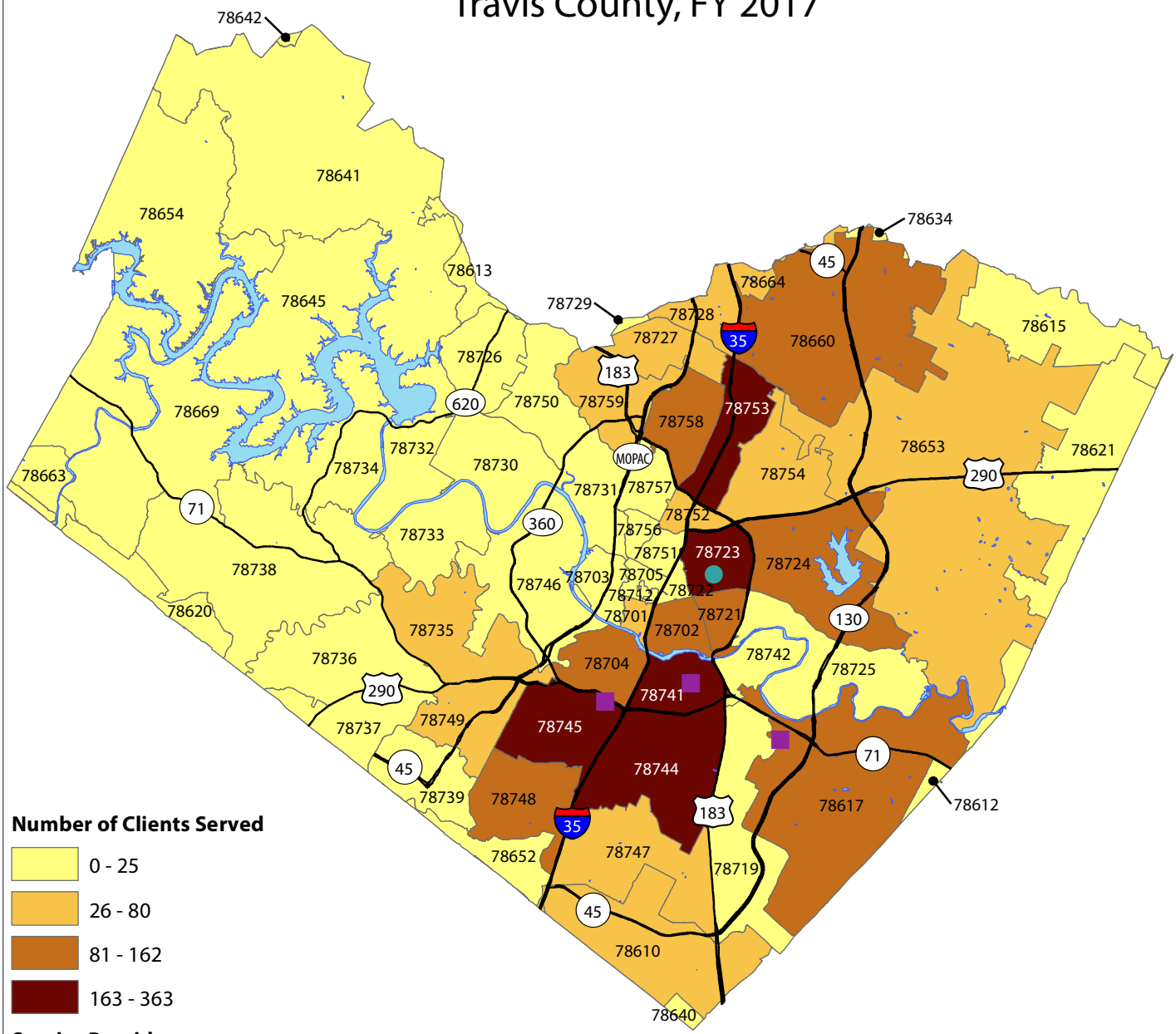
Income		
<50% of FPIG	757	20%
50% to 100%	227	6%
101% to 150%	102	3%
151% to 200%	61	2%
>200%	57	2%
Unknown	2,507	68%
Total	*3,711*	*100%*

Note: Percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding.

See Appendix for specific income guideline levels.

Safety Intervention Services

Service Provision Locations and Clients Served by ZIP Code
Travis County, FY 2017



Number of Clients Served

- 0 - 25
- 26 - 80
- 81 - 162
- 163 - 363

Service Providers

- Austin Children's Shelter
- SafePlace

Service provision locations are not included for CASA of Travis County as services can be accessed anywhere the client is located.

Notes: This map shows 3,294 clients by ZIP code. 417 clients (11% of the total) from all service providers were not included because their ZIP codes were unknown or outside of Travis County boundaries or they were homeless.

Source data: Contracted service providers, FY 2017.
This map was created using ArcGIS Online shapefiles.
Created by: Travis County HHS, Research & Planning Division, 2017.

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Austin Children's Shelter

Emergency Shelter Program

Program Description

The over-arching goal of Austin Children's Shelter's Residential programs and services is to provide victims of child abuse and neglect (ages 0-22) access to immediate, safe housing under the least restrictive supervision and support. Intermediate and long-term goals are to stabilize the children and youth and prepare them for their next placements or for self-sufficiency and independent living, while also helping them to heal from their traumatic histories and establish healthy and supportive relationships with peers and adults. Austin Children's Shelter uses industry best practices to provide a continuum of wraparound services to assist Central Texas victims of child abuse and neglect. Services include the provision of residential programs through Emergency Shelter, case management, advocacy, and medical services for child victims of abuse and neglect. All services involve trauma-informed systems and staff who work to provide immediate safety and to stabilize the health and well-being of child victims of abuse and neglect.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Emergency Shelter Program program from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017 was $50,000. This investment comprised 1.4% of the total program budget.

Eligibility Criteria

Austin Children's Shelter serves youth in and around Travis County, who have suffered trauma and been removed from their homes due to physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, sexual assault, neglect, family violence, and/or substance abuse. Youth receive services through the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and Travis County Juvenile Probation Officers (TCJPO). To be eligible for services, individuals must be between the ages of 0 and 22, in the conservatorship of Child Protective Services unless placed through Integral Care's YES Waiver respite program, and have experienced abuse and/or neglect.

Austin Children's Shelter: Emergency Shelter Program

The Emergency Shelter Program exceeded the performance goals for this program year. Staff report that clients have had longer stays in Emergency Care to accommodate sibling groups, which have been challenging for Department of Family Protective Services to find placements for elsewhere and some clients have stayed longer to avoid unnecessary disruption in school or living (see first and second outputs). The lower number of clients assessed for life functioning and evaluated for trauma adjustment progress is due to an change in client demographics--serving more teen parent clients who move to supervised independent living and younger children not able to complete assessments. The higher rate for the outcomes is related to longer stays in emergency care and to staff receiving weekly training to better equip them to support clients (see first and second outcomes).

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	144	130	111%
Number of shelter bed nights	17,674	9,000	196%
Outcomes			
Percentage of clients making progress in 5 or more areas of life functioning	98% (48/49)	80% (52/65)	122%
Percentage of clients making progress toward their trauma adjustment goals	90% (43/48)	75% (49/65)	119%

Court Appointed Special Advocates of Travis County

Child Advocacy

Program Description

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Travis County's goal is to provide guardian ad litem services and advocate for the best interest of children in Travis County who have experienced abuse and neglect. This is achieved by training and professionally supervising community volunteers to provide free, long-term, individualized support and advocacy in court as well as in educational, medical, and social settings so that these children may live in safe, permanent and loving homes. A CASA volunteer guardian ad litem will spend an average of 20 hours a month getting to know a child or family of children, researching the details of the case, and advocating for the child(ren)'s legal, placement, medical, educational and therapeutic needs in order to present clear, detailed reports to the judge on behalf of the child(ren)'s best interest.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Child Advocacy program from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017 was $85,000. This investment comprised 2.1% of the total program budget.

Eligibility Criteria

CASA is appointed as guardian ad litem to children from birth to age 18 (and older if they are in college or other educational pursuit, as allowed by state law) who have experienced abuse or neglect in Travis County homes and who, as a result, have a legal case in the Travis County child protection courts. Judges within these courts have appointed CASA to serve all of the children within this program. Travis County judges only have jurisdiction over children residing in Austin and Travis County who are involved in Child Protective Services cases .

CASA of Travis County: Child Advocacy

The Child Advocacy program met most of the program goals this year. According to staff, the number of children and youth served was lower than anticipated due to staff turnover. The lower number is also a result of younger children coming into care during the year who do not qualify for automatic appointment (see first output and second outcome). Staff report that they anticipate expanding the automatic appointment criteria to include younger children.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated children and youth served	1,791	2,000	90%
Number of volunteers completing training	208	225	92%
Number of volunteers assigned to a case	733	700	105%
Outcomes			
Percentage of unduplicated children and youth who exit the program into permanent living situations	86% (664/770)	88% (616/700)	98%
Percentage of unduplicated children and youth who have been assigned a volunteer advocate and not paired with a CASA staff member	85% (1,528/1,791)	85% (1,700/2,000)	100%

SafePlace

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services

Program Description

SafePlace's mission is to end sexual assault and exploitation, and domestic violence through prevention, intervention, and advocacy for change. The goals of the proposed program are to provide shelter and counseling services to people in Austin and Travis County who have experienced rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence, and/or trafficking in order to meet their immediate needs for safety, help them heal from trauma, and support their efforts to build a healthy, self-sufficient life free of violence.

The program includes a shelter and counseling services. The shelter assists survivors with basic needs including food, clothing, personal care, and household items. The staff provide around the clock support and assistance to survivors with cooperative living issues and de-escalation and crisis intervention. The program provides 18 hours per week of counseling to clients outside the shelter with individual, group, and family counseling, play therapy, trauma symptom management, assessment and referral for psychiatric services, safety planning, and crisis intervention.

Funding

The total HHS investment in the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services program from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017 was $185,000. This investment comprised 7.2% of the total program budget.

Eligibility Criteria

SafePlace serves adults and children in Austin/Travis County who have been victimized by domestic and/or sexual violence or exploitation (such as human trafficking). SafePlace serves all genders and ages. Clients are eligible for services based on the fact that they or at least one member of the family has experienced domestic violence or sexual assault and currently has safety concerns. Eligibility is not based on income level.

SafePlace: Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services

.The Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services program met most of the performance goals for this year. According to staff, longer than average shelter stays impacted the number of unduplicated clients served. Some reasons for longer than average stays include clients waiting for safe, affordable housing available though the coordinated assessment process; some clients were in dangerous situations and for safety reasons needed to stay in the shelter longer; some clients have experienced chronic homelessness and community housing partners requested that SafePlace grant some of these individuals longer stays to successfully transition to safe, affordable housing (see third output). The program served less counseling clients than anticipated and experienced staff turnover during the year, which resulted in fewer surveys collected (see fourth output and second outcome). The percentage of clients who indicated ability to manage the effects of trauma was higher than anticipated due to counselors completing trauma-specific training, which resulted in the use of modalities that supported work with clients to effectively manage effects of trauma (see second outcome).

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of unduplicated clients served	1,776	1,800	99%
Number of shelter bed nights provided	34,099	34,000	100%
Number of shelter clients served	580	700	83%
Number of counseling clients served	1,279	1,400	91%
Number of counseling hours provided	9,481	10,500	90%
Outcomes			
Percentage of unduplicated clients who exit shelter and complete an exit form who report leaving to a safe and secure location (i.e. permanent housing, permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, other shelter, etc.) that does not include the person who was previously abusive.	98% (476/488)	90% (405/450)	108%
Percentage of unduplicated adult counseling clients surveyed who indicate an increased ability to manage the effects of trauma	100% (213/213)	90% (238/265)	111%

Appendix

2017 Federal Poverty Income Guidelines

Most HHS contracts require programs to serve participants with household incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guideline (FPIG) level. Some programs have chosen to follow a more stringent threshold. The following table presents the federal poverty thresholds by household size and income.

Household Size	Income Limits by Household Size				
	50%	100%	125%	150%	200%
1 person	$6,030	$12,060	$15,075	$18,090	$24,120
2 persons	$8,120	$16,240	$20,300	$24,360	$32,480
3 persons	$10,210	$20,420	$25,525	$30,630	$40,840
4 persons	$12,300	$24,600	$30,750	$36,900	$49,200
5 persons	$14,390	$28,780	$35,975	$43,170	$57,560
6 persons	$16,480	$32,960	$41,200	$49,440	$65,920
7 persons	$18,570	$37,140	$46,425	$55,710	$74,280
8 persons	$20,660	$41,320	$51,650	$61,980	$82,640
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add $4,160 for each additional person.					

Data source: "2017 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia," Office of The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, January 26, 2017, https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines.

2017 Austin Median Family Income Guidelines

Some programs may also use Austin MFI guidelines when measuring client incomes. The following table presents the median family income limits established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Austin-Round Rock, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Household Size	Income Limits by Household Size		
	Extremely Low*	Very Low (50%)	Low (80%)
1 person	$17,100	$28,500	$45,600
2 persons	$19,550	$32,600	$52,100
3 persons	$22,000	$36,650	$58,600
4 persons	$24,600	$40,700	$65,100
5 persons	$28,780	$44,000	$70,350
6 persons	$32,960	$47,250	$75,550
7 persons	$37,140	$50,500	$80,750
8 persons	$41,320	$53,750	$85,950

*The FY 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act changed the definition of extremely low-income to be the greater of 30/50^{ths} (60%) of the Section 8 very low-income limit or the poverty guideline as established by the Department of Health and Human Services, provided that this amount is not greater than the Section 8 50% very low-income limit.

Data source: "Austin-Round Rock, TX MSA FY 2017 Income Limits Summary," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2017/2017summary.odn.

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