



Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office
Criminal Justice Division
Funding Announcement: ***County Innovations
to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation
FY2024***

Purpose

The purpose of this announcement is to solicit applications from counties for innovative projects that prevent, investigate, and/or prosecute commercial sexual exploitation Texas.

Note: Applicants seeking to operate a Commercially Sexually Exploited Persons (CSEP) Specialty Court should refer to funding opportunities specific to a specialty court program.

Available Funding

State funds for these projects are authorized under the Texas General Appropriations Act, Article I for Trusteed Programs within the Office of the Governor. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

Eligible Organizations

Applications may only be submitted by Texas counties.

Application Process

Applicants must access the PSO's eGrants grant management website at <https://eGrants.gov.texas.gov> to register and apply for funding. For more instructions and information, see the OOG's *eGrants User Guide to Creating an Application*, available [here](#).

Key Dates

Action	Date
Funding Announcement Release	12/12/2022
Online System Opening Date	12/12/2022
Final Date to Submit and Certify an Application	02/09/2023 at 5:00pm CST
Earliest Project Start Date	10/01/2023

Project Period

Projects selected for funding must begin on or after 10/1/2023 and expire on or before 9/30/2024. Projects may not exceed a 12-month project period.

Funding Levels

Minimum: \$10,000

Maximum: None

Match Requirement: None

Standards

Grantees must comply with standards applicable to this fund source cited in the Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS), Federal Uniform Grant Guidance, and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines applicable to this funding.

Eligible Activities and Costs

The following list of eligible activities and costs applies generally to all projects under this announcement.

Targeted Investigation and Prosecution (CSEP): The investigation and/or prosecution of crimes related to the commercial sexual exploitation of people, including the use of dedicated personnel such as investigators, analysts, task force coordinators, or prosecutors.

Program Evaluation and Assessment: Evaluation and/or assessment of the effectiveness of targeted criminal justice responses.

Innovative Programs (CSEP): Innovative programs that address commercial sexual exploitation but do not fit neatly into the other eligible activities. This may include a combination of approaches such as addressing risk and protective factors for victimization or perpetration; prevention education; civil enforcement; outreach and service provision to high-risk populations; and other efforts to disrupt the market for commercial sex.

Program Specific Requirements

Please closely review the following requirements for projects under this funding announcement as some instructions are not contained on eGrants. Failure to provide requested information will be considered in the review process and may result in an application being deemed ineligible for funding. Unless otherwise noted, the following requirements may be addressed in whatever section of the Project Narrative that the applicant deems most appropriate.

Requirements for specific purpose areas:

Targeted Investigation and Prosecution (CSEP): Applicants must describe how the proposed strategies will improve local investigations and/or prosecutions of sex buyers, traffickers, and/or other actors benefitting from the commercial sexual exploitation of people. Applicants should also provide baseline data on sex trafficking related arrests for at least one prior year, including (at a minimum): the number of arrests by age, gender, and offense; and a breakdown of case dispositions by offense. Offense data should include (at a minimum); prostitution-buying; prostitution-selling; promotion of prostitution; aggravated promotion of prostitution; compelling prostitution; child sex trafficking; and adult sex trafficking.

Requirements for all projects:

Trauma Informed Response: Each application should include proposed strategies to ensure that individuals experiencing commercial sexual exploitation receive a trauma informed response. A trauma informed response for this population should not be contingent upon a direct outcry of victimization. Funds administered through this grant program may not be used in furtherance of activities to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute individuals for engaging in prostitution under Texas Penal Code § 43.02.

Training & Technical Assistance: Recipients of funding under this announcement may be required to participate in training and technical assistance opportunities recommended by PSO program staff. Grantees must make good-faith efforts to participate in designated trainings as a condition of ongoing funding.

Community Collaboration: Applicants from communities with an existing human trafficking task force or coalition must upload documentation of active membership in the task force or coalition. Applicants are expected to upload letters of support from any partners critical to achieving the proposed objectives. Failure to provide these will affect funding decisions. All documents must be uploaded onto the Upload.Files Tab prior to the submission and certification of the eGrants application.

Performance Management: Each application should clearly identify the goals of the project, including methods for evaluating progress toward those goals. Additionally, recipients of funding under this announcement may be required to participate in a third-party evaluation funded by PSO and in improvement reviews performed by PSO program staff. Grantees must make good-faith efforts to follow recommendations by the evaluator and PSO staff – including recommended project modifications – as a condition of ongoing funding.

Data Collection: All applications are expected to affirm the ability to collect data related to the local response to commercial sexual exploitation; at a minimum, this includes the following individual-level data for sex trafficking-related offenses: System Person Number; Date of Birth; Gender; Race/Ethnicity; Date of Arrest; Charge 1; Charge 2 (if applicable); Date of Final Case Disposition; Case Disposition; and Sentence. Grantees may be required to provide data to PSO or a designated third-party evaluator.

Guiding Principles: The Child Sex Trafficking Team conducts its activities in alignment with its guiding principles. Partners and grantees are expected to adhere to these same guiding principles. The level of commitment to these principles, as indicated by an applicant's proposed strategies, may be considered in the merit review process and ultimately required as a condition of funding. CSTT's guiding principles are:

- a. We treat individuals who have experienced exploitation as victims and survivors, not perpetrators.
- b. We are collaborative.
- c. We are survivor informed.
- d. Our systems and programs prioritize the needs of children and transition-age youth who have experienced exploitation and strive to give equal access to services regardless of system involvement.
- e. We seek to prevent exploitation by educating the public, supporting protective factors for all children and transition-age youth, and by building resiliency among the most vulnerable.
- f. Our approaches, systems and services are trauma-informed, responsive, and include trust-based relationships.
- g. We develop and support community-based, sustainable resources and services.
- h. We are committed to long-term individualized services, including planning for and re-engaging with children and transition-age youth after relapse.

- i. We research the causes of and effective responses to exploitation and we evaluate and continuously improve our activities.
- j. We work to prevent and reduce demand for exploitation and to hold all exploiters, including facilitators, and those who benefit from exploitation accountable.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Local units of governments must comply with the Cybersecurity Training requirements described in Section 772.012 and Section 2054.5191 of the Texas Government Code. Local governments determined to not be in compliance with the cybersecurity requirements required by Section 2054.5191 of the Texas Government Code are ineligible for OOG grant funds until the second anniversary of the date the local government is determined ineligible. Government entities must annually certify their compliance with the training requirements using the [Cybersecurity Training Certification for State and Local Governments](#). A copy of the Training Certification must be uploaded to your eGrants application. For more information or to access available training programs, visit the Texas Department of Information Resources [Statewide Cybersecurity Awareness Training](#) page.

2. Entities receiving funds from PSO must be located in a county that has an average of 90% or above on both adult and juvenile dispositions entered into the computerized criminal history database maintained by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) as directed in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 66. This disposition completeness percentage is defined as the percentage of arrest charges a county reports to DPS for which a disposition has been subsequently reported and entered into the computerized criminal history system.

Counties applying for grant awards from the Office of the Governor must commit that the county will report at least 90% of convictions within five business days to the Criminal Justice Information System at the Department of Public Safety.

3. Eligible applicants operating a law enforcement agency must be current on reporting complete UCR data and the Texas specific reporting mandated by 411.042 TGC, to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) for inclusion in the annual Crime in Texas (CIT) publication. To be considered eligible for funding, applicants must have submitted a full twelve months of accurate data to DPS for the most recent calendar year by the deadline(s) established by DPS. Due to the importance of timely reporting, applicants are required to submit complete and accurate UCR data, as well as the Texas-mandated reporting, on a no less than monthly basis and respond promptly to requests from DPS related to the data submitted.

4. Local units of government, including cities, counties and other general purpose political subdivisions, as appropriate, and institutions of higher education that operate a law enforcement agency, must comply with all aspects of the programs and procedures utilized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") to: (1) notify DHS of all information requested by DHS related to illegal aliens in Agency's custody; and (2) detain such illegal aliens in accordance with requests by DHS. Additionally, counties and municipalities may NOT have in effect, purport to have in effect, or make themselves subject to or bound by, any law, rule, policy, or practice (written or unwritten) that would: (1) require or authorize the public disclosure of federal law enforcement information in order to conceal, harbor, or shield from detection fugitives from justice or aliens illegally in the United States; or (2) impede federal officers from exercising authority under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), § 1226(c), § 1231(a), § 1357(a), § 1366(1), or § 1366(3). Lastly, eligible applicants must comply with all

provisions, policies, and penalties found in Chapter 752, Subchapter C of the Texas Government Code.

Each local unit of government, and institution of higher education that operates a law enforcement agency, must download, complete and then upload into eGrants the [CEO/Law Enforcement Certifications and Assurances Form](#) certifying compliance with federal and state immigration enforcement requirements. This Form is required for each application submitted to OOG and is active until August 31, 2024 or the end of the grant period, whichever is later.

5. Eligible applicants must be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) database located at <https://www.sam.gov/>.

Failure to comply with program or eligibility requirements may cause funds to be withheld and/or suspension or termination of grant funds.

Prohibitions

Grant funds may not be used to support the unallowable costs listed in the [Guide to Grants](#) or any of the following unallowable costs:

1. Investigation, arrest, detainment, or prosecution of individuals for engaging in prostitution selling under Texas Penal Code § 43.02;
2. Construction, renovation, or remodeling;
3. Law enforcement equipment that is standard department issue;
4. Judges;
5. Lobbying or advocacy activities with respect to legislation or to administrative changes to regulations, whether conducted directly or indirectly; or
6. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, state or local law or regulation.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by PSO staff members and/or a review group selected by the executive director. PSO will make all final funding decisions based on eligibility, reasonableness, availability of funding, cost-effectiveness, state priorities and strategies, and other relevant factors.

PSO may not fund all applications or may only award part of the amount requested. In the event that funding requests exceed available funds, PSO may revise projects to address a more limited focus.

Contact Information

For more information, contact the eGrants help desk at egrants@gov.texas.gov or (512) 463-1919.