



**An Update on the
Implementation of the
Workplace Violence
Against Nurses
Prevention Grant
Program**

**As Required by
Texas Health and Safety Code
Section 105.011**



TEXAS
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Services

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Executive Summary

In accordance with Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 105.011, the nursing resource section in the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), to the extent funding is available, shall administer a grant program to fund innovative approaches for reducing verbal and physical violence against nurses in hospitals, freestanding emergency medical care facilities, nursing facilities, and home health agencies.

The fiscal year (FY) 2020 - 2021 Workplace Violence Against Nurses (WVAN) Grant Program, the second iteration of this program, initiated with the release of a Request for Applications in July 2019. The procurement process led to seven grant applicants being selected for award. The seven grant recipients were initially awarded a total of \$666,999 to implement workplace violence strategies to reduce or prevent violence against nurses in their organizations from April 2020 through August 2021.

The grant period began with the execution of grant contracts. All seven contracts were executed between March and May of 2020. The start of the grant period coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic's major impact on Texas. This has had a negative effect on awardees being able to implement the workplace violence programs they proposed undertaking.

At the date of this writing, awardees have made limited progress on their projects and the agency is working to amend contracts for all awardees in two ways:

1. Extend the end of the grant term from August 31, 2021 to April 30, 2022.
2. Adjust award amounts to account for a five percent reduction to the FY 2020 appropriation that resulted from expected budget reductions imposed on state agencies in the summer of 2020.

Once contract amendments are complete, the nursing resource section will provide an update on the grant program and its timelines.

1. Introduction

In accordance with the [Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 105.011](#), the nursing resource section in the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), to the extent funding is available, shall administer a grant program to fund innovative approaches for reducing verbal and physical violence against nurses in hospitals, freestanding emergency medical care facilities, nursing facilities, and home health agencies.

The nursing advisory committee, established by [Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 104.0155](#), serves in an advisory capacity for this grant program. For the 2020-2021 grant cycle, the advisory committee assigned a taskforce to assist with the development of the Request for Applications (RFA) and evaluation of applications.

At least annually, the nursing resource section is required to publish a report that describes the grants awarded through the program, including the amount and purpose of the grant, and the reported outcome of the approach used by the grant recipient.

2. Background

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reports that each year almost two million Americans are victims of violence in the workplace.¹ The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health reports that violence in the workplace has become a serious concern for nurses because they have the highest risk among health professionals to become victims due to having the most interaction with patients.² A 2011 American Nurses Association (ANA) study found that concerns of on-the-job assault among nurses increased from 25 percent in 2001 to 34 percent in 2011.³ Key findings from the ANA in 2016 also found that 25 percent of nurses and nursing students were physically assaulted, and half of nurses claimed they were bullied in some manner in the workplace.⁴ The number of reported incidents may be higher as well because a vast amount of violent incidents are not reported.^{1,5} The effects of workplace violence include minor and serious physical injury, psychological trauma, and even death.² Violence in the workplace also has negative organizational consequences, including low worker morale; increased worker turnover; a hostile working environment; and reduced trust of management and other coworkers.⁵ Research suggests that a comprehensive workplace violence prevention program can effectively reduce workplace violence.⁵

In 2016, the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies (TCNWS) conducted a study on workplace violence that consisted of two surveys: one of individual nurses and their personal experience with workplace violence and one of employers of nurses that included questions related to practices and strategies used by their

¹ Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Safety and Health Topics: Workplace Violence Overview. [osha.gov/SLTC/workplaceviolence/index.html](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/workplaceviolence/index.html). Accessed April 12, 2021.

² National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Violence: Occupational Hazards in Hospitals. 2002. [cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2002-101/pdfs/2002-101.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2002-101/pdfs/2002-101.pdf). Accessed April 12, 2021.

³ American Nurses Association. Health and Safety Survey. 2011. [nursingworld.org/practice-policy/work-environment/health-safety/health-safety-survey/](https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/work-environment/health-safety/health-safety-survey/). Accessed April 12, 2021.

⁴ American Nurses Association. *Health Risk Appraisal (HRA), Executive Summary: Key Findings: October 2013 - October 2016*. [nursingworld.org/~4aeceb/globalassets/practiceandpolicy/work-environment/health-safety/ana-healthriskappraisalsummary_2013-2016.pdf](https://www.nursingworld.org/~4aeceb/globalassets/practiceandpolicy/work-environment/health-safety/ana-healthriskappraisalsummary_2013-2016.pdf). Accessed April 12, 2021.

⁵ Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Workplace Violence in Healthcare: Understanding the Challenge. 2015. [osha.gov/sites/default/files/OSHA3826.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/OSHA3826.pdf). Accessed April 12, 2021.

organizations to prevent workplace violence against nurses. The employer survey was conducted again in 2018.

The individual nurse study found that most nurses had experienced some kind of violent act in the workplace in the past 12 months. Verbal abuse was the most common type of workplace violence experienced by responding nurses, and patients were the most commonly reported group to commit violence.⁶

Results from the employer surveys found that the majority of responding facilities had implemented a program or policy that includes prevention of workplace violence against nurses. Most facilities' policies included workplace violence prevention training, assessment of work areas for risk factors, required reporting of incidents, and investigation of reported incidents.^{6,7}

House Bill 280, 85th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2017 added Section 105.011 to the Health and Safety Code to allow the TCNWS to administer a grant program to fund innovative approaches for reducing verbal and physical violence against nurses in hospitals, freestanding emergency medical care facilities (FECs), nursing facilities, and home health agencies.

The implementation of this new section required the adoption of rules, a contract with the Texas Board of Nursing for the transfer of money to fund the grant program, as well as the development of a Request for Applications (RFA).

In the second round of the grant program, an RFA to stimulate research on the development, evaluation, and adoption of innovative solutions to reduce workplace violence against nurses was released in July 2019.

To be an eligible applicant, a respondent had to be a hospital, long term care facility, home health agency, or freestanding emergency medical center; or a partnership between one of the types of facilities and an institution of higher education; or a partnership between one of the types of facilities and a researcher,

⁶ Department of State Health Services. Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies. Workplace Violence Against Nurses in Texas. 2016. dshs.texas.gov/legislative/2016-Reports/DSHS-Report-HB2696.pdf. Accessed February 4, 2020.

⁷ Department of State Health Services. Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies. Workplace Violence Against Nurses Facility Survey. 2018. dshs.texas.gov/legislative/2018-Reports/DSHS-HB280-Workplace-Violence-Against-Nurses-Grant062718.pdf Accessed April 12, 2021.

consultant, or community entity with relevant expertise in workplace violence prevention.

All applicants had to provide a detailed explanation of their program or plan, document how the program would achieve the goals of reducing verbal and physical violence against nurses in their facility and propose performance metrics for measuring short and long-term outcomes of the program.

Prospective grantees submitted 14 proposals. The department selected seven for grant awards.

3. 2020-2021 Workplace Violence Against Nurses Prevention Grant Program

The fiscal year (FY) 2020 - 2021 Workplace Violence Against Nurses Prevention (WVAN) Grant Program, the second iteration of this program, initiated with the release of a Request for Applications in July 2019. The procurement process led to seven grant applicants being selected for award. The seven grant recipients were initially awarded a total of \$666,999 to implement workplace violence strategies to reduce or prevent violence against nurses in their organizations from April 2020 through August 2021.

The grant period began with the execution of grant contracts. All seven contracts were executed between March and May of 2020. The start of the grant period coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic's major impact on Texas. This has had a negative effect on awardees being able to implement the workplace violence programs they proposed undertaking.

The agency is working on amending contracts to extend the grant term to April 30, 2022. The contracts are also being amended to account for a five percent reduction to the FY 2020-2021 biennial appropriation that was announced as part of expected budget reductions requested from state agencies during the summer of 2020.

As soon as all contracts are amended, the nursing resource section will provide an update on the awards and timeline for the rest of the grant cycle including time frames for the final reports and presentations from the awardees.

Table 1 lists the seven award recipients, amounts awarded, and a high-level overview of their proposed projects.

Table 1. Grant Recipients, Award Amounts, and Overview

Grant Recipient	Award Amount	Overview
Baptist Hospital of Southeast Texas	\$20,000	Baptist Hospitals of Southeast Texas will address Workplace Violence Against Nurses through several initiatives working in concert. These include staff training, public education, and physical changes to prevent violence and create an enhanced healing environment.
Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center	\$143,386	The hospital's new nursing simulation lab will be used to role-play effective ways to reduce incidents of violence and injury. The hospital is also implementing a screening procedure to assess the risk of aggressive behavior on certain units along with specific intervention protocols.
Houston Methodist Hospital	\$130,991	Virtual/augmented reality will be used by nurses to practice de-escalation skills that will help them make decisions in the event of workplace violence. The nurse learner will get real-time feedback on the decisions they make and offer suggestions to improve safety in the multitude of virtual interactive scenarios created by Houston Methodist. Houston Methodist is also embarking on an innovative journey to expand the use of the video monitoring program to medical-surgical patients who screen as "high risk" for violent behavior on a validated assessment tool.
Parkland Health and Hospital System	\$83,400	Parkland will strengthen its comprehensive WPV plan that includes community-based education and training for students in nursing school programs, further enhancements to the Supporting Parkland Staff (SPARKS) Peer Support Program, information technology enhancements to assist in earlier detection of those who may potentially become aggressive and the enhancement of public service announcements beyond the walls of the healthcare facility to assist with informing the community of this public epidemic.
Texas Children's Hospital	\$179,979	Texas Children's will test the efficacy of a monitoring and alert application on staff mobile phones via the organization's communication platform in two units of their facility. Texas Children's will also provide simulation training and support ranging from role-

Grant Recipient	Award Amount	Overview
University of Texas Health Science Center	\$83,399	<p>playing to virtual reality.</p> <p>The project will implement trauma-informed care (TIC) practices on an acute inpatient child/adolescent unit and an adult acute inpatient unit. It is anticipated that with the utilization of trauma informed care interventions, seclusion and restraint events will decrease which will also contribute to a reduction in patient on staff assaults/injuries. Additionally, it is anticipated staff will report less adverse work events post-TIC implementation when compared to pre-TIC implementation.</p>
University of Texas Medical Branch - Galveston	\$25,844	<p>The CEASE program uses communication, emotional and social intelligence, art, and ethics to stop workplace violence and compassion fatigue in healthcare workers.</p>

4. Conclusion

Seven proposals were selected for award in the second cycle of the Workplace Violence Against Nurses Prevention Grant Program. A total of \$666,999 of the \$667,000 available was awarded. As of the date of this report, limited progress has been made by the grant recipients due to COVID-related delays that have impacted hospitals across the state. In an effort to allow more time for awardees to implement their proposed programs, contract amendments are in progress to extend the grant term from August 31, 2021 to April 30, 2022. The grant contract award amounts are also being revised to account for a five percent budget reduction to the FY 2020 - 2021 appropriations that was announced in the summer of 2020. Upon successful completion of the contract amendments, the nursing resource section will provide an update on the timeline for the remainder of the grant program with more information on the final report and project presentations from the awardees as well as updated award amounts.