

**Williamson County Crisis Center d/b/a Hope Alliance Proposal  
for a  
Partnership with Williamson County, TX to Establish a  
Temporary Auxiliary Emergency Shelter**

**WHO:** Hope Alliance & Williamson County, TX  
**WHAT:** Temporary Auxiliary Emergency Shelter  
**WHEN:** April 1, 2023, to September 30, 2023  
**WHERE:** County Owned Facility in Williamson County

**WHY:** **Serve Victims of Family Violence and/or Sexual Assault, to increase public safety and meet an important public purpose**

Hope Alliance is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit agency with Federal Tax I.D. # 74-2277114. Hope Alliance started operations in April 1984 as a rape crisis center. Currently, Hope Alliance operates two facilities in Williamson County, TX for the purpose of breaking the cycles of abuse in which victims of Family Violence and/or Sexual Assault live. Hope Alliance has a history of providing excellent victim services. When exiting our care, clients are asked to complete a survey about their experiences with Hope Alliance. The following survey results are from clients who exited our care in 2022: 1) 97% reported an overall satisfaction rate; 2) 93% reported feeling safer; 3) 94% reported that they felt less alone; 4) 94% reported feeling more hopeful; 5) 94% reported learning more about the abuse dynamic; 6) 95% reported learning more about available resources; 7) 91% reported an increase in awareness of their rights; and 8) 97% showed progress towards their counseling goals.

One facility operated by Hope Alliance is a Counseling and Advocacy Center in 5,900 square feet of rented space in an old strip mall located on Gattis School Rd. in Round Rock, TX. Our 24/7 Hotline and Crisis Chat services along with 30 staff, some of whom are bilingual, work in the Gattis School location. Other services emanating from this facility include Counseling, Case Management, Play Therapy, Legal Advocacy, Court Accompaniments and Hospital Accompaniments.

In 2022, the number of clients served from the Gattis School facility increased by 7.64% compared to the number served in 2021. Using the same year over year comparison, Hope Alliance increased the number of staff-to-client, face-to-face sessions by 26.4%, the number of Hotline Calls answered by 28.0%, the number of Crisis Chats answered by 22.53%, and the number of Hospital Accompaniments by 57.25%. Additionally, Hope Alliance reduced the number of clients placed on our Counseling Waitlist by 73.87% and the average number of days waiting by 58.8%. It is just not a marketing phrase when Hope Alliance states that we help save lives.

Our second facility is an Emergency Shelter where clients in the most dangerous of living conditions are provided Sheltered Nights of Safety from their abuser in a secure, welcoming facility where staff provide comfort, care, case management and help clients

take the next step on their journeys to escape abuse and towards free and hopeful futures. While under our care in our Emergency Shelter with a client to staff ratio of 2 to 1, Hope Alliance also provides food (3 meals and 2 snacks per day), toiletries, clothing, and transportation.

In 2022, Hope Alliance served about the same number of clients (194) in our Emergency Shelter as served in 2021 (196). However, on average, clients stayed a few days longer in 2022 compared to 2021. Thus, the number of Sheltered Nights of Safety provided in 2022 increased by 12.15%. While all these numbers show a phenomenal growth in the services provided, the very sad truth is that it wasn't enough because during 2022, Hope Alliance placed a total of 2,446 people on our Shelter Waitlist which is an increase of 77.25% compared to 2021. Hope Alliance operates its Emergency Shelter with 30 beds at almost full capacity almost all the time. We place people on our Shelter Waitlist because we don't have the bedspace needed to serve the demand.

For those who care about the Family Violence / Sexual Assault issues in Williamson County, TX, the 77.25% increase in the number of people placed on our Emergency Shelter Wait-list serves as irrefutable proof that there is a need for more Emergency Shelter bed-space in Williamson County, TX.

To address this need on a temporary basis, Hope Alliance proposes to use a County-owned facility to increase public safety and meet an important public purpose. Hope Alliance is currently pursuing a permanent solution and is in the Quiet Phase of a \$20.3 million Hope is Building Capital Campaign. The campaign is designed to pay for a new, 43,500 square foot facility in Leander, TX with 96 beds.

The County property would have a senior-level staff member living on-site to provide on-site 24/7 supervision.

Additionally, Hope Alliance would have offices for up to four more staff for on-site provision of case management, advocacy, counseling, etc. Hope Alliance would furnish the facility with beds, thus enabling Hope Alliance to provide Emergency Shelter for an average of 12 clients per night.

With an average of 12 clients staying in Auxiliary Emergency Shelter an average of 36.67 days each, Hope Alliance believes it would produce another 4,400 Sheltered Nights of Safety for another 120 clients in one full year.

In addition to using the county-owned facility, Hope Alliance is requesting funding from the county to operate the Auxiliary Emergency Shelter for six months. The projected cost to operate an Auxiliary Emergency Shelter for one full year including payroll, bank expenses, audit fees, IT services, office supplies, pest control,

maintenance, security, utilities, groceries, insurance, furniture, etc., is \$388,225. One half or six months of that cost would be \$194,112.

If the Commissioners would approve the proposal for Hope Alliance to both use the County property and fund 6 months of operations at \$194,112 starting April 1, 2023, then Hope Alliance will add operational expenses of the Auxiliary Emergency Shelter to our grant request for Victims of Crime (VOCA) funding through the Office of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division and the Capitol Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG), Texas Planning Region 12.

VOCA funding applications are competitive, evaluated and ranked in order of scores received. Funding is awarded to applications with high ranking. An application for VOCA funding to open and operate an Auxiliary Emergency Shelter showing a partnership with Williamson County, TX, falls directly within two or three of CAPCOG's five funding priorities for public safety. Historically, Hope Alliance's applications for funding have never ranked lower than fifth out of 30+, and last year, our application ranked second out of 32 applications submitted. Our VOCA funding request for 2022-2023 victim services expenses increased from \$320,000 in 2020-2021 to \$400,000 for 2022-2023, or by 25%.

Hope Alliance's applications for VOCA funding for 2023-2024 are due by February 9, 2023. If the Commissioner's Court could vote to approve the proposal and to proceed forward with agreements to use the property and provide 6 months of funding to begin on April 1, 2023, during their January 31st meeting, then Hope Alliance will add a funding request to our VOCA grant application to provide funding for the Auxiliary Emergency Shelter for the State's fiscal year starting October 1, 2023. If approved by VOCA, then six months of funding from the county would generate another twelve months of funding from VOCA, and a total of 6,600 Sheltered Nights of Safety for 180 people during the 18-month period.

Coincidentally, Hope Alliance is projecting completion of our new, 96-bed facility towards the end of 2024. If this proves to be the case, then Hope Alliance would be able to provide the demand for Emergency Shelter for Williamson County for ten years starting at the end of 2024 or beginning of 2025 at exactly the time the county would need Hope Alliance to vacate the Hutto property to meet its strategic plans.

We hope all can see this is a WIN, WIN, WIN scenario for all parties involved.

