

DSHS Government Affairs Legislative Update

Department of State Health Services

February 2025



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Texas Department of State
Health Services

Overview

- Dates to Remember
- Legislative Environment
- Exceptional Items and Budget Update
- Bills to Watch

Dates to Remember



Texas House Speaker

- Rep. Burrows beats out Rep. Cook to replace Rep. Phelan as Speaker of the House



Speaker Priorities

- Put taxpayers first.
- Restore fiscal sanity.
- Make Texas the best state for education.
- Secure the border.
- Defeat the regulatory state.
- Fight federal overreach and protect state sovereignty.
- End taxpayer funded lobbying.
- Limit executive emergency powers.
- Defend medical freedom and free market healthcare.
- Strengthen election integrity.
- Stop hostile governments from purchasing Texas farmland.
- Promote Texas exceptionalism.
- Protect civil liberties.

House Committees

Committee Composition Changes

- New house rules prohibit Democrat Chairs and Republican Vice Chairs
- Permanent Standing Subcommittees are Created
- Nine committees abolished
- Committee membership expanded

Permanent Subcommittees

- Juvenile Justice
- Defense and Veterans Affairs
- County and Regional Government
- State-Federal Relations
- Family and Fiduciary Relationships
- Academic and Career Oriented Education
- Disease Prevention and Women's and Children's Health
- Telecommunications and Broadband
- Workforce
- International Relations
- Transportation Fundings
- Property Tax Appraisals

Senate Committees

- No new standing committees were created or abolished
- There were not any significant shakeups in committee memberships related to public health or finance.

Lt. Gov. Priorities

- SB 1 - Budget
- SB 2 - School Choice
- SB 3 - Banning THC in Texas
- SB 4 - Homestead Exemption Increase
- SB 5 - Combating Alzheimer's
- SB 6 - Electric Grid Reliability
- SB 7 - Investing in Water Supply
- SB 8 - Local Law Enforcement Assistance to Federal Deportation Efforts
- SB 9 - Bail Reform
- SB 10 - 10 Commandments in Schools
- SB 11 – Protecting the Freedom to Pray in School
- SB 12 – Establishing a Parental Bill of Rights in Public Education
- SB 13 – Guarding Against Inappropriate Books in Public Schools
- SB 14 – Texas DOGE – Improving Government Efficiency
- SB 15 – Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing

Lt. Gov. Priorities Cont.

- SB 16 – Stopping Non-Citizens from Voting
- SB 17 – Stopping Foreign Adversaries' Land Grabs
- SB 18 – Stopping Drag Time Story Hour
- SB 19 – Stopping Taxpayer Dollars for Lobbyists
- SB 20 – Stopping AI Child Pornography
- SB 21 – Establishing the Texas Bitcoin Reserve
- SB 22 – Establishing Texas as America's Film Capital
- SB 23 – Removing the Cap on the Rainy Day Fund to Secure Texas' Long-term Financial Future
- SB 24 – Educating Texas Students on the Horrors of Communism
- SB 25 – Making Texas Healthy Again

Exceptional Items

Exceptional Item		Biennial GR/GRD	Biennial All Funds	FY 2026 FTEs	FY 2027 FTEs
	DSHS FY 2026 – 2027 Base Request	\$1,102.6 M	\$2,297.8 M	3,369.2	3,369.2
1	Meet Increased Costs for Current Agency Operations	\$7.4 M	\$7.4 M	0.0	0.0
2	Maintain Agency Infrastructure that Serves Texans and Communities	\$22.2 M	\$22.2 M	2.0	2.0
3	Expand Laboratory Capacity and Capability to Detect Risks to Health and Safety	\$328.3 M	\$334.9 M	38.0	38.0
4	Improve Child Mortality and Morbidity Due to Congenital Syphilis	\$13.3 M	\$13.3 M	25.0	25.0
5	Ensure Access to Regional and Local Public Health Services	\$57.2 M	\$72.0 M	82.0	82.0
6	Support Growth in Texas Industries and Career Entry	\$14.6 M	\$14.6 M	11.0	17.0
7	Reduce the Impacts of Tobacco-Related Cancers	\$2.8 M	\$2.8 M	0.0	0.0
8	Improve the Timeliness and Quality of Maternal and Child Health Data	\$11.5 M	\$11.5 M	8.0	8.0
9	Support Business Growth Through Improved Technology Services	\$14.6 M	\$14.6 M	5.0	7.0
	Total, All Exceptional Items	\$472.0 M	\$493.4 M	171.0	179.0
	Total, DSHS Base + Exceptional Items	\$1,574.6 M	\$2,791.2	3,540.2	3,548.2

Budget Update

Included in SB Base

- Exceptional Item 1: Data Center Services
- Exceptional Item 8: 7 FTEs for maternal data systems (unfunded FTEs)

Likely included in Supplemental Bill

- Exceptional Item 1: Vehicles
- Exceptional Item 1: Seat management
- Exceptional Item 3: New laboratory space

EI Details and Bills to Watch



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EI 1: Meet Increased Costs for Current Agency Operations

- **Vehicles, \$2.8 M:** Replace 3 boats and approximately 26 vehicles used for daily DSHS operations and fieldwork.
- **Data Center Services, \$25.1 M (\$9.7 M Federal):** Cover the increased costs of IT infrastructure necessary for agency operations and compliance with DIR standards and agreements.
- **Seat Management, \$2.5 M:** Pay for warranty, lease, and software costs for approximately 3,500 desktops, laptops, and tablets used in daily DSHS business activities.
- **Texas Center for Infectious Disease, \$2.4 M:** Cover cost increase for medications, other medical resources, food, and utilities.

Method of Finance	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennium
GR	\$5.2 M	\$18.0 M	\$23.2 M
All Funds	\$14.9 M	\$18.0 M	\$32.9 M

FTEs	
FY 2026	0
FY 2027	0

Program Data	
Boats for Shellfish Testing Program	3
Vehicles meeting CPA Standards for replacement	26

El 2: Maintain Agency Infrastructure that Serves Texans and Communities

- **Regional Clinic Cost Increases and Space Planning, \$9.4 M, 2 FTEs:** Cover increasing lease costs across the state and a facility assessment contractor to determine the adequacy of approximately 100 DSHS field offices and address critical maintenance needs at regional facilities.
- **Lab Building Maintenance of Critical Infrastructure, \$2.7 M:** Cover increased maintenance costs and required repairs to facilities and testing equipment.
- **TCID Deferred Maintenance, \$6.6 M:** Replace water main lines and a deteriorating walkway, install electronic locking system, construct an ADA-compliant bathroom in a common area, and replace critical room controls.

Method of Finance	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennium
GR	\$16.3 M	\$5.9 M	\$22.3 M
All Funds	\$16.3 M	\$5.9 M	\$22.3 M

FTEs	
FY 2026	2
FY 2027	2

Program Data	
DSHS Field Offices	96
Upcoming Regional Lease Expirations	55

- **Increased Facility Costs, \$3.5 M:** Address increased costs for Austin offices.

El 3: Expand Lab Capacity and Capability to Detect Risks to Health and Safety

- New Laboratory Space, \$328.3 M:*** Build a new laboratory on the DSHS campus to ensure that DSHS can meet changing testing demand. The funding is an estimate based off previous Texas Facilities Commission (TFC) analysis. DSHS will refine it in January 2025 as more information is available.

Method of Finance	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennium
GR	\$328.3 M	\$0.0 M	\$328.3 M
All Funds	\$328.3 M	\$0.0 M	\$328.3 M

FTEs	
FY 2026	0
FY 2027	0

Program Data	
Conditions added to Texas NBS Panel in the Last 20 Years	49
Texas NBS Additions in Progress	5

Note: This amount is a placeholder pending a more refined cost estimate. Construction costs are one-time since most DSHS laboratory testing is self sufficient.

El 4: Improve Child Mortality and Morbidity Due to Congenital Syphilis

- ***Congenital Syphilis Prevention and Treatment, \$13.3 M, 25 FTEs:***

- Increase provider education through community health worker training and a congenital syphilis treatment and referral toolkit for maternal care providers.
- Stand up a congenital syphilis consultation hotline to support maternal and pediatric care providers making complex syphilis diagnoses and treatment decisions and to help connect women to care.
- Establish rapid response regional nurse teams to ensure mothers in all areas of the state can easily access and complete treatment to protect their babies from congenital syphilis.
- Create a congenital syphilis public awareness campaign and online resources for women and families who may be at risk.

Method of Finance	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennium
GR	\$6.8 M	\$6.5 M	\$13.3 M
All Funds	\$6.8 M	\$6.5 M	\$13.3 M

FTEs	
FY 2026	25
FY 2027	25

Program Data	
Congenital Syphilis (CS) Case Growth Since 2019	74%
CS Babies Born with Low Birth Weight, 2022	239
Congenital Syphilis Perinatal Deaths or Stillbirth, 2022	52

El 5: Ensure Access to Regional and Local Public Health Services

- **Sexually Transmitted Disease, \$27.7 M (\$12.7 M Federal), 44 FTEs:** Maintain Disease Intervention Services staff primarily housed in local health departments and DSHS regional offices as federal funding ends.
- **Tuberculosis (TB), \$21.2 M, 16 FTEs:** Provide a 30% increase in LHD contracts for TB care services in the community, 16 DSHS staff for nurse consultation and direct care services, and funds to cover the increased cost of medications.
- **Rabies, \$7.1 M, 14 FTEs:** Support rabies surveillance and testing as well as the border Oral Rabies Vaccine Program’s border maintenance zone. Address increased rabies vaccine, immunoglobulin, and lab costs.
- **Social Services, \$4.1 M:** Increase retention of social services staff who help connect vulnerable Texans with services.

Method of Finance	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennium
GR	\$22.8 M	\$36.5 M	\$59.3 M
All Funds	\$35.5 M	\$36.5 M	\$72.0 M

FTEs	
FY 2026	82
FY 2027	82

Program Data	
Federally Funded STD Intervention Staff	44
State Population Increase Since 2000	40%

- **Immunizations, \$12.0 M, 8 FTEs:** Facilitate vaccine education and administration through a 30% increase in LHD contracts and one additional public health nurse in each public health region.

El 6: Support Growth in Texas Industries and Career Entry

- **Meat Industry, \$5.3 M, 10 FTEs:** Bring 146 meat safety staff salaries to levels more comparable to federal employees. Increase number of employees to assist business owners wishing to enter the industry (4 in FY 26, 10 in FY 27).
- **Retail and Manufactured Foods Industry, \$5.5 M (\$2.5 M Federal):** Increase salaries for 177 staff to stabilize inspection frequencies.
- **Radiation Control, \$2.2 M:** Increase salaries for 98 employees to make them comparable to federal employees and increase retention.
- **Emergency Medical Services Industry, \$0.9 M, 4 FTEs:** Hire regional FTEs to survey, inspect, and investigate EMS personnel, providers, education programs, and first responder organizations.

Method of Finance	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennium
GR	\$5.1 M	\$6.0 M	\$11.1 M
All Funds	\$6.8 M	\$7.8 M	\$14.6 M

FTEs		Program Data	
FY 2026	11	Meat Establishments	380
FY 2027	17	Food & Drug Industry Licenses	46,471

- **Community Health Workers, \$0.7 M, 3 FTEs:** Hire FTEs to review applications for CHWs, CHW instructors, and CHW curricula requests to allow quicker CHW entry into the healthcare workforce.

El 7: Reduce the Impact of Tobacco-Related Cancers

- ***Tobacco Education and Cessation, \$2.8 M:***

- Implement a statewide media campaign aimed at adults ages 30-64 years who use tobacco products to increase awareness of Texas Tobacco Quitline cessation services and reinforce awareness of the harms of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.
- Manage anticipated growth in demand for Quitline services with the launch of a statewide campaign aimed at adults ages 30-64 who use tobacco and vaping products.

Method of Finance	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennium
GR	\$1.4 M	\$1.4 M	\$2.8 M
All Funds	\$1.4 M	\$1.4 M	\$2.8 M

FTEs		Program Data	2023
FY 2026	0	Unique Participants with at Least One Tobacco Quitline Coaching Call	7,331
FY 2027	0	Percentage of Quitline Participants Reporting Quitting At 7-Month Follow Up	~34.8%

EI 8: Improve the Timeliness and Quality of Maternal and Child Health Data

- Modernizing Maternal and Child Health Data, \$9.9 M, 7 FTEs:** Expand the capabilities of both the Maternal Mortality Review System (MMRS) and Maternal and Child Health Quality Improvement (MCHQIS) systems.
- Improve Birth Defects Registry Surveillance Capacity, \$1.6 M, 8 FTEs:** Add one staff in each Public Health Region to review hospital medical records for potential birth defect cases and abstract complex medical information about those cases. The additional staff would allow for faster case identification and enable DSHS to improve the timeliness of registry data.

Method of Finance	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennium
GR	\$5.2 M	\$6.3 M	\$11.5 M
All Funds	\$5.2 M	\$6.3 M	\$11.5 M

FTEs		Program Data	
FY 2026	15	Medical Records Reviewed by Birth Defects Staff, 2023	81,000
FY 2027	15		
		Reported Texas Birth Defects, 2020	Over 25,000

By the Numbers



1,469 bills were filed on the first day, 500 more than previous sessions



As of February 11th, 3,853 bill had been filed

Public Health Bills to Watch



Imported Food Labeling and Food Additives

- Shrimp: HB 749, HB 1200, HB 2343
- Pork/Beef: HB 1374, HB 1385
- Additives: HB 1290, HB 1637, HB 2565



Disaster Preparedness and Response

- Disaster declarations: SB 871/SJR 40
- Local planning requirements: HB 1144



Texas-Mexico Border

- “Border region” definition: HB 1240

Questions?



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Thank you!

Legislative Update

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