

December 7, 2023

Dear Community Partner:

Please accept this request for an investment in the **2024 Missing in Southeast Texas Day (MISSETXD)**. As you know, large-scale multi-agency efforts like Missing in Southeast Texas Day (*formerly Missing in Harris County Day*) require immense investment – both in professional time and resources.

It is our hope that you will make a gift to support the 2024 event. Your generosity would mean so much! Left-behind families of the long-term missing, caring community members, missing persons support service providers, and law enforcement officers participate in this effort to help families of missing persons make connections and access all available resources to bring their loved one(s) home.

The 2024 Missing in Southeast Texas Day will be held on Saturday, April 27, 2024, from 10 AM - 3 PM at the Children's Assessment Center, 2500 Bolsover Street, Houston, TX 77005. The day will include: free refreshments, personal guides, semi-private area to talk with missing persons professionals, forensic professionals performing voluntary DNA cheek swabs, data entry into the National Missing & Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), Families of the Missing roundtable, **Investigator Resource Sharing roundtable**, panel discussions addressing missing persons issues, and more.

Texas Center for the Missing (TCM) is a 501c3 missing persons organization with a **mission to bring hope and healing to the missing and their families through crisis intervention, prevention, and community education**. TCM serves the community through prevention education for all ages; serves law enforcement through Amber Alert, Silver Alert, and missing persons investigation training; and serves families through 24/7 casework assistance for those in crisis. Contrary to popular misconception, TCM receives **NO government funding** in support of the local Amber Alert and Silver Alert Systems. These life-saving programs are exclusively funded by private donations and are solely operated by TCM.

At the request of the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences (HCIFS), TCM has been the coordinating agency of Missing in Southeast Texas Day (MISSETXD) since 2019. MISSETXD is a collaborative effort to resolve long-term missing persons cases. Through partnerships with law enforcement providing investigation expertise and intake services, HCIFS providing voluntary DNA sampling, and TCM providing health and human services for searching families, it is our goal to reunite families by bringing all resources to bear on these heart-wrenching cases.

The Problem. In 2022, 34,828 Texas children and 12,842 Texas adults—including 9,351 children and 4,409 adults from Greater Houston—were reported missing.¹ A missing child is every parent's worst nightmare. A long-term missing loved one is quite simply the worst-case scenario for every left-behind family. With the immense caseload investigating law enforcement agencies must carry, it is imperative that all community resources converge to resolve cases wherever possible. **For example, the Houston Police Department (HPD) worked 8,509 total missing persons cases in 2022. HPD's Missing Persons Unit only has 11 full-time investigators.**

¹ 2022 Annual Report. Texas Department of Public Safety Missing Persons Clearinghouse.

Despite overwhelming numbers, these investigators are dedicated to bringing every missing person home. Often, searching families are unaware of the steps they can take to enhance the investigation and maximize the effectiveness of law enforcement expertise (*e.g., MULTI-family member DNA sampling is critical for cross-matching across ALL available databases*). Missing in Southeast Texas Day is a tool to remove barriers for full family participation in the investigation process.

The Solution/Project Description. The **2024 Missing in Southeast Texas Day** is a unique project targeted to a specific under-served population—families of the missing. Through the application of investigative techniques, scientific forensic principles, and community engagement, **MISETXD** is strategically positioned to provide resolution for families searching for missing loved ones.

**Over the course of its 9-year history,
MIHCD has identified 19 missing persons and found 8 missing persons,
providing closure to those families.
You can be part of this continuing success story!**

TCM regional media partners (*e.g., Clear Channel Outdoor, Fox26 News, etc.*) will highlight event details and missing persons cases to encourage participation and increase awareness. By creating connections between searching families and all the available resources to solve missing persons cases, Missing in Southeast Texas Day will provide every opportunity to reunite families. TCM's Case Manager will be on-hand to provide follow-up services for the families the day of the event and in the weeks and months following.

These services bring the missing home! MISETXD also may, through public awareness, encourage more searching families to access existing resources to find their missing loved ones.

Activity-specific exclusive partnership opportunities with benefit descriptions are available here:
<https://online.centerforthemissing.org/MISETXD-underwriting-opportunities>

Total Project Budget: \$17,240

Contributions are 100% tax deductible. Your gift may be sent to:

**Texas Center for the Missing
Attn: Missing in Southeast Texas Day
2500 Bolsover Street
Houston, TX 77005**

Your support will directly impact families of the missing across Greater Houston and Southeast Texas. Your generosity will allow TCM to provide collaborative solutions to bring missing at-risk children and endangered adults home. If you have questions or prefer a full proposal or customized sponsorship package, please contact me at 713.986.3542 or mturnquist@tcftm.org.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Melissa (Mel) Turnquist, CEO