TEXAS CENTER FOR THE MISSING

Bringing hope and healing to the missing and their families through crisis intervention, prevention, and community education.

January 23, 2026

Dear Community Partner:

Please accept this request for an investment in the **2026 Missing in Southeast Texas Day (MISETXD)**. 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 coordinating efforts and tangible resources.

It is our hope that you will make a gift to support the 2026 event. Your generosity would mean so much! Law enforcement officers, left-behind families of the long-term missing, caring community members, and missing persons support service providers participate in this effort to help searching families make connections and access all available resources to bring their missing loved one(s) home.

The 2026 Missing in Southeast Texas Day will be held on Saturday, May 2, 2026, from 10 AM - 3 PM at the Children's Assessment Center, 2500 Bolsover Street, Houston, TX 77005. MISETXD will feature: free refreshments *(including lunch)*, personal guides, semi-private area to talk with missing persons professionals, forensic professionals performing voluntary DNA cheek swabs, age-progression forensic artwork, data entry into the National Missing & Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), Families of the Missing roundtable, a panel discussion 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 Houston Regional Emergency Alert System Activation and missing persons investigation training; and **serves families** through 24/7 casework assistance for those in crisis. Contrary to popular misconception, TCM **receives ZERO government funding** in support of the local Amber Alert System. This life-saving program is exclusively funded by private donations and 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 since 2019. MISETXD is a collaborative effort to resolve long-term missing persons cases. Through partnerships with law enforcement providing intake services and investigation expertise, 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 2024, 31,864 Texas children and 12,919 Texas adults—including 9,109 children and 4,327 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 worked 8,260 missing person cases in 2024 and the Missing Persons Unit only has 14 investigators. The Harris County Sheriff's Office worked 2,473 missing person cases in 2024 with just 4 investigators!**

[1] *2024 Annual Report. (2025 data not yet reported).* 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 **2026 Missing in Southeast Texas Day** is a unique project targeted to a specific under-served population—families of the missing and the investigators who serve them. 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 11-year history,
MISETXD has identified 20 missing persons and found 11 missing persons,
providing answers for those families.
You can be part of this ongoing 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 support to the families at MISETXD and follow-up services 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 in Greater Houston and across 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 Turnquist

Melissa (Mel) Turnquist, *CEO*