**BILL ANALYSIS**

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| Senate Research Center | H.B. 742 |
| 89R2674 MCF-F | By: Thompson; Plesa (Parker) |
|  | Health & Human Services |
|  | 5/12/2025 |
|  | Engrossed |

**AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Human trafficking remains a serious issue in Texas, with victims often seeking medical attention in hospitals and emergency care facilities without being identified or assisted. First responders and healthcare workers play a crucial role in recognizing the signs of trafficking and connecting victims with resources, yet many lack the necessary training to do so effectively. Additionally, healthcare employees who report suspected trafficking may fear retaliation or disciplinary action, creating a barrier to intervention. Without clear guidelines and protections, opportunities to identify and support trafficking victims are frequently missed, allowing traffickers to continue exploiting vulnerable individuals.

H.B. 742 strengthens human trafficking prevention efforts by requiring first responders to complete approved training on identifying, assisting, and reporting trafficking victims. The bill mandates that hospitals and freestanding emergency medical care facilities display signage with information on recognizing trafficking, reporting procedures, and protections for employees who report suspected cases in good faith. To further safeguard whistleblowers, the bill prohibits hospitals and emergency medical care facilities from retaliating against employees who report suspected human trafficking to law enforcement or other appropriate authorities. By implementing these measures, H.B. 742 enhances awareness, ensures that medical professionals are equipped to identify trafficking victims, and protects those who take action to combat human trafficking.

H.B. 742 amends current law relating to human trafficking prevention, including training for first responders, disclosure of human trafficking information by certain health care facilities, and protection for facility employees who report human trafficking.

**RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 5 of this bill.

**SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subtitle A, Title 9, Health and Safety Code, by adding Chapter 763, as follows:

CHAPTER 763. HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION TRAINING

SUBCHAPTER A. TRAINING FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

Sec. 763.001. DEFINITIONS. Defines "commission," "executive commissioner," "first responder," and "human trafficking."

Sec. 763.002. REQUIRED HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRAINING. Requires a first responder, within the time prescribed by Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) rule, to successfully complete a training course approved by the executive commissioner of HHSC (executive commissioner) on identifying, assisting, and reporting victims of human trafficking.

Sec. 763.003. TRAINING COURSE APPROVAL. (a) Requires the executive commissioner to approve training courses on human trafficking prevention, including at least one course available without charge, and post a list of the approved training courses on HHSC's Internet website.

(b) Requires the executive commissioner to update the list of approved training courses described by Subsection (a) as necessary and consider for approval training courses conducted by health care facilities.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 241.011, Health and Safety Code, as follows:

Sec. 241.011. HUMAN TRAFFICKING SIGNS REQUIRED. (a) Creates this subsection from existing text. Requires an emergency department of a hospital to display a sign meeting certain criteria. Sets forth the language to be included on the sign.

(b) Requires that the sign described by Subsection (a) be posted in a location easily visible to all hospital employees and separately in English, Spanish, and any other primary language spoken by 10 percent or more of the hospital's employees.

Deletes existing text requiring an emergency department of a hospital to display separate signs, in English and Spanish, that comply with Section 245.025 (Human Trafficking Signs Required) as if the hospital is an abortion facility.

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 241, Health and Safety Code, by adding Section 241.0115, as follows:

Sec. 241.0115. DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION PROHIBITED. Prohibits a hospital from disciplining, retaliating against, or otherwise discriminating against a hospital employee who in good faith reports a suspected act of human trafficking to the hospital, a law enforcement agency, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, the attorney general, or any other appropriate authority.

SECTION 4. Amends Subchapter D, Chapter 254, Health and Safety Code, by adding Sections 254.161 and 254.162, as follows:

Sec. 254.161. HUMAN TRAFFICKING SIGNS REQUIRED. (a) Requires a freestanding emergency medical care facility to display a sign meeting certain criteria. Sets forth the language to be included on the sign.

(b) Requires that the sign described by Subsection (a) be posted in a location easily visible to all hospital employees and separately in English, Spanish, and any other primary language spoken by 10 percent or more of the hospital's employees.

Sec. 254.162. DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION PROHIBITED. Prohibits a freestanding emergency medical care facility from disciplining, retaliating against, or otherwise discriminating against a facility employee who in good faith reports a suspected act of human trafficking to the hospital, a law enforcement agency, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, the attorney general, or any other appropriate authority.

SECTION 5. Requires the executive commissioner, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, to approve and post on HHSC's Internet website the list of approved human trafficking prevention training courses and adopt rules necessary to implement Subchapter A, Chapter 763, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 6. Requires the attorney general, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, to design the sign required by Section 241.011, Health and Safety Code, as amended by this Act, and Section 254.161, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 7. Effective date: September 1, 2025.