



# House Committee on Border and International Affairs

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## **HHSC Office of Border Affairs**

August 22, 2006

# Purpose of Border Affairs Office

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- Established to improve the quality of health and human services in the colonias along the Texas-Mexico border by increasing interagency coordination and fostering community participation in the design of service delivery systems
- HHSC maintains border affairs offices in Harlingen (main office), El Paso, Laredo, Del Rio, Eagle Pass and McAllen
- Personnel includes Director, Administrative Assistant and 4 Regional Coordinators (6 FTEs)

# Activities

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- Coordinating services planning and delivery with community based organizations and state, federal and Mexican agencies
- Coordinating training for state agency staff to increase cultural competency and customer service
- Developing new methods to improve outreach to colonias residents

# Colonias Initiative

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## **Background:**

In 2000, HHSC began an initiative to improve colonia residents' access to state-funded programs.

## **Purpose:**

To improve the health and self-sufficiency of persons living in the Texas-Mexico border colonias by maximizing resources and coordination and developing and testing an enterprise model that integrates health and human service delivery in the colonias.

# Colonias Initiative

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## **Program Components:**

- Enhancing collaboration among service providers
- Increasing availability of services
- Developing new models of service delivery

## **Program Goals:**

- Educating colonia residents on health and human services (HHS) agencies and services
- Enhancing access to local and state resources
- Improving customer service and cultural competency

# Promotores

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- Contract with Texas A&M Colonias Program for \$165,000 annually
  - Funding is a mix of HHSC programmatic state and federal funds, including Medicaid, Food Stamp Administration and TANF
- Community based workers provide information and referral services regarding HHS programs and provide assistance with applications for HHSC programs
- Supports 17 part-time positions
- Contract was initiated in FY 2003 and is in process of being renewed for FY 2007

# Accomplishments

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- 2000 – Initiated pilot project in Lower Rio Grande Valley (RGV)
  - Hildago, Cameron, and Willacy counties
- 2002 – Expanded to Laredo and El Paso
  - Added Lasara and San Carlos in RGV
- 2003 – Expanded to Del Rio and Eagle Pass
- 2005 – Added new sites in RGV and Laredo
  - RGV: San Juan, Monte Alto and Alton
  - Laredo: Hwy 359
- Approximately 30,000 colonia residents are served each month

# Service Activities

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## **Service Workplan:**

- Health Fairs
- Local Bilingual HHS Resource Directories
- Scheduling of HHS agencies and partners at A&M community centers
- Training HHS staff on customer service and cultural competency
- Training Promotores on HHS agencies and services
- Data Tracking
- Service Evaluations

## **Types of Services Provided:**

- Information and Referrals
- Health Screenings and Assessments
- HHS Program Applications (Medicaid/CHIP/TANF/Food Stamps)
- Immunizations
- Education Classes (GED/ESL) and Job Skills Training



# Major Service Areas

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- **El Paso:**

- Sparks
- Montana Vista
- Rio Vista
- San Elizario
- Agua Dulce
- West Way

- **Laredo:**

- El Cenizo
- Larga Vista
- Rio Bravo
- Hwy 359

- **Rio Grande Valley:**

- Cameron Park
- Progreso
- Sebastian
- Lasara
- San Carlos
- San Juan
- Monte Alto
- Alton

- **Del Rio:**

- Cienigas Terrace

- **Eagle Pass:**

- Seco Mines

# HHSC Partners

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- Texas Workforce Commission
- Local Workforce Development Boards
- Texas Education Agency and Regional Education Centers
- Texas A&M Center for Housing and Urban Development
- Health Clinics
- School Districts and Local Schools
- Faith-based Organizations