



Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation
920 Colorado St.
Austin, Texas 78701
Phone: (800) 803-9202

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tela Mange

Public Information Officer

Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation

512.463.3208

Report illicit massage businesses, potential human trafficking in salons to TDLR

AUSTIN – Texans who believe that an unlicensed massage business may be operating near them, or who are concerned that nail salon employees may be human trafficking victims, can now report those concerns directly to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation via email: reportHT@tdlr.texas.gov.

The agency's new eight-member Anti-Trafficking Unit (ATU) is working with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as non-governmental agencies, to investigate suspected illicit massage businesses and possible human trafficking at nail salons.

"Human Trafficking Awareness Month is the perfect time to introduce this initiative. Our Anti-Trafficking Unit is ramping up, and the team members are anxious to get to work and help eliminate human trafficking in Texas," said TDLR Executive Director Brian E. Francis. "We are grateful to the Texas Legislature for their confidence in our abilities and for funding new staff positions that concentrate solely on finding and helping potential victims."

Because TDLR regulates massage therapists, massage establishments, cosmetologists and nail salons, the agency has a potential nexus with human trafficking. TDLR employees can be the first ally in contact with potential human trafficking victims, so all TDLR employees receive training on how to recognize and respond to human trafficking situations.

The new ATU will fold into the agency's existing anti-trafficking effort that includes:

- Periodic, unannounced inspections of massage establishments and cosmetology salons by TDLR Field Inspection employees.
- Aggressive prosecution of both licensed and unlicensed service providers by the TDLR Enforcement Division.

Since November 2018, the agency has referred 65 possible human trafficking and criminal cases involving illicit massage businesses to local law enforcement agencies in 32 cities. TDLR also refers cases to the Texas Attorney General's office.

Contact: Tela Mange | Public Information Officer | Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation

512-463-3208 | tela.mange@tdlr.texas.gov | media.inquiries@tdlr.texas.gov | www.tdlr.texas.gov

TDLR Customer Service | (512) 463-6599 | Toll-Free (in Texas) | (800) 803-9202 | Relay Texas-TDD: (800) 735-2989

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Cities where TDLR has referred cases:

Arlington	Friendswood	Midland
Austin	Frisco	Nederland
Brownsville	Garland	Plainview
Cedar Park	Georgetown	Plano
Corpus Christi	Houston	Richardson
Cumby	Humble	Round Rock
Dallas	Katy	San Angelo
Denton	Killeen	San Antonio
El Paso	Kingwood	Spring
Flower Mound	Lewisville	Weatherford
Fort Worth	Lubbock	

“TDLR employees are proud to fight against human trafficking in Texas. Part of that fight is protecting consumers from unregulated activity, and making sure Texans have a safe workplace environment free of these heinous crimes,” Francis said.

To report suspected human trafficking to Federal law enforcement: [1-866-347-2423](tel:1-866-347-2423)

To get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline: [1-888-373-7888](tel:1-888-373-7888) or text **HELP** or **INFO** to **BeFree** (233733)

About TDLR

TDLR provides regulatory oversight for a broad range of occupations, businesses, facilities, and equipment in Texas. The agency protects the health and safety of Texans by ensuring they are served by qualified, licensed professionals. Inspections of individuals, businesses, and equipment are done on a regular basis to safeguard the public. Currently, the agency regulates 38 business and occupational licensing programs with more than 1,000,000 licensees across the state.

Visit TDLR’s [website](#) for more information and resources. You can search the [TDLR licensee database](#), and also find [past violations](#) in which a final order was issued against companies or individuals. TDLR’s Customer Service line is available anytime between 7 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 1-800-803-9202. TDLR representatives are fluent in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Mandarin.

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