

C



TEXAS

2023 Report Card

TIER I

GRADES ARE BASED SOLELY ON AN ANALYSIS OF STATE STATUTES. While we recognize the critical importance of non-legislative responses to propel progress, grading on statutory law provides a clear mechanism for evaluating policy goals across all states while ensuring that survivor-centered reforms are an enduring part of states' responses.

STATE HIGHLIGHTS:

- Between 2021-2023, raised score by 1.5 points.
- Currently ranked 6th in the nation.
- One of only 9 states to achieve full credit for its criminal provisions.
- Requires the Texas Juvenile Justice Department to evaluate the use of screening tools

for purposes of identifying and responding to commercial sexual exploitation.

- Allows trafficking victims to seek ex parte civil orders of protection against their exploiters.
- Mandates statewide, trafficking-specific training for Department of Family and Protective Services personnel and school personnel.

SAFE HARBOR STATUS:

Year after year, Texas has introduced legislation aimed at preventing minors from being criminalized for prostitution. Despite the introduction of Safe Harbor legislation during the 2023 session, Texas remains one of 21 states to permit the criminalization of minors for prostitution offenses, thus allowing commercially sexually exploited minors to be held criminally accountable for their own victimization.

Issue		Grade	Score	Summary
	1. Criminal Provisions	A	<u>17.5</u> 17.5	Policy goals accomplished in all areas, including buyer accountability under the trafficking law, buyer and trafficker accountability under state CSEC laws, mistake of age defenses, decoy defenses, business entity liability under the trafficking law, and financial penalties.
	2. Identification of and Response to Victims	F	<u>7.5</u> 27.5	Policy goals accomplished related to screening through child welfare and the juvenile justice system and child abuse definitions. Gaps remain related to third party control, foreign national victims, non-criminalization for prostitution offenses, expanded non-criminalization, juvenile court jurisdiction, and non-caregiver trafficking cases.
	3. Continuum of Care	C	<u>11.5</u> 15	Policy goals accomplished related to community-based services, services through the juvenile justice system, and appropriations. Gaps remain related to MDT responses, services through child welfare, and extended foster care services.
	4. Access to Justice for Trafficking Survivors	B	<u>12.5</u> 15	Policy goals accomplished related to civil orders of protection, restitution, and civil remedies. Gaps remain related to crime victims' compensation, vacatur, and statutes of limitation.
	5. Tools for a Victim-Centered Criminal Justice Response	D	<u>6.5</u> 10	Policy goal accomplished related to hearsay exceptions. Gaps remain related to alternatives to live, in-court testimony, victim-witness supports, and privileged communications.
	6. Prevention and Training	B	<u>12</u> 15	Policy goals accomplished related to training for child welfare and school personnel. Gaps remain related to training for juvenile justice agencies, law enforcement, and prosecutors as well as prevention education in schools.
EXTRA CREDIT	 Youth		1	Protection related to civil remedies is extended to sex trafficked youth.
	 Child Labor Trafficking		5	Protections related to financial penalties, child abuse definitions, civil orders of protection, restitution, civil remedies, and hearsay exceptions are extended to child labor trafficking victims.

OVERALL GRADE
TIER I

C 73.5