



2026 Statewide Conference | Justification Toolkit

“I’M OK. ARE YOU OK?” CONNECTIONS. CONVERSATIONS. COMMUNITIES.

Professional development is an investment—not only in you, but in the survivors, families, colleagues, and communities you serve.

We know attending a statewide conference often requires making the case for time away from the office, registration, travel, lodging, and other expenses. This toolkit is designed to help you explain the value of attending the 2026 Texas Council on Family Violence Statewide Conference to your supervisor, executive director, board, funder, or other decision-maker.

Use the resources below to connect conference learning opportunities directly to your role, your organization’s priorities, and the needs of your community.

WHAT IS THE TCFV STATEWIDE CONFERENCE?

The Texas Council on Family Violence Statewide Conference is a biennial gathering of advocates, leaders, service providers, partners, and changemakers from across Texas and beyond who share a commitment to safety, healing, and hope for survivors and their families.

The 2026 conference theme, “I’m OK. Are You OK?” connections. conversations. communities., asks us to consider how a simple act of connection can open the door to awareness, empathy, and action.

Over three days, attendees will explore emerging issues, strengthen practice skills, build relationships, and learn from presenters and peers advancing survivor-centered, trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and community-rooted approaches.

Sessions address issues including:

- Survivor-centered and trauma-informed advocacy
- Technology, artificial intelligence (AI), and survivor safety
- Housing stability and homicide prevention
- Economic abuse and coerced debt
- Protective orders and legal advocacy
- Children, youth, and prevention
- Reproductive coercion and survivor health
- Traumatic brain injury and strangulation
- Disability, consent, and survivor centered services
- Culturally specific and community-rooted outreach
- Faith-based partnerships
- Flexible financial assistance
- Advocate wellness and sustainability
- Policy advocacy and systems change
- Healing, resilience, and survivor agency
- Coordinated community response

The goal is not simply to learn new information. It is to return home with practical strategies, stronger connections, renewed energy, and tools that can be applied in your organization and community.

WHY SHOULD I ATTEND?

Because what you learn here can change what happens when you return home.

The challenges facing survivors and the professionals who serve them continue to evolve. New technologies create both opportunities and risks. Housing instability affects safety. Economic abuse can continue long after a relationship ends. Communities are learning more about traumatic brain injuries, strangulation, reproductive coercion, cultural responsiveness, disability, and the long-term effects of trauma.

At the same time, advocates and organizations are being asked to do more while navigating limited resources, changing systems, and increasing demands.

The TCFV Statewide Conference provides dedicated time to learn, think, connect, and bring practical strategies back to your organization.

Attend to strengthen your practice.

Sessions offer concrete tools and approaches that can be incorporated into survivor services, prevention work, community engagement, organizational leadership, and systems advocacy.

Attend to stay current.

Learn about emerging issues affecting the field—from generative AI and technology-facilitated abuse to new legal remedies, research, policy developments, and evolving approaches to survivor safety.

Attend to learn from real-world experience.

Presenters include advocates, researchers, attorneys, organizational leaders, educators, practitioners, and other experts sharing lessons from work happening in Texas and across the country.

Attend to build connections.

No organization can end family violence alone. The conference creates opportunities to connect with colleagues, learn how other communities are approaching similar challenges, identify potential partners, and strengthen relationships across the family violence field.

Attend to bring resources home.

Your conference experience does not have to end when the closing plenary concludes. Sessions are designed to provide strategies, resources, frameworks, and ideas you can share with colleagues and adapt to your own community.

Attend to sustain the people doing the work.

Supporting survivors requires compassion and sustained commitment. Conference programming also recognizes that advocate wellness, organizational culture, resilience, moral injury, and burnout matter. Sustaining the movement requires sustaining the people who make it possible.

CONNECT THE CONFERENCE TO YOUR JOB

One of the strongest ways to justify attendance is to identify conference sessions that address current responsibilities, challenges, or organizational priorities.

Before requesting approval, choose three to five sessions and answer:

- What challenge or responsibility in my current role does this session address?
- What specific knowledge, tool, or strategy could I bring back?
- Who else in my organization could benefit from what I learn?
- How could the information improve services, policy, practice, partnerships, or staff development?

Here are a few examples.

If your work involves housing or economic stability...

Consider sessions such as

Housing Is Homicide Prevention: Intersection of Domestic Violence and Housing

Explore how coercive control can continue after housing placement and how case management can strengthen both housing stability and survivor safety.

Coerced Debt

Learn about coerced debt, screening resources, state and federal remedies, recent Texas law changes, and emerging legal assistance options.

“A Sense of Hope”: Implementing a Community Oriented Flexible Funding Assistance Program for Survivors

Explore implementation strategies, evaluation findings, and survivor- and advocate-informed lessons from a multi-agency flexible funding initiative.

If your work involves direct survivor services...

Consider sessions such as:

Best Practices for Engaging Survivors: Strengths-based, Trauma-informed, Healing-centered

Strengthen approaches for creating psychological and felt safety and incorporating strengths-based, trauma-informed, and healing-centered principles into survivor interactions.

Invisible Injuries: Domestic Violence, Traumatic Brain Injury and Strangulation

Learn to recognize signs and symptoms of brain injury and identify practical accommodations that can make services more accessible and effective.

Reproductive Health is Survivor Health: Addressing Reproductive Coercion in Trauma-Informed IPV Practice

Explore practical strategies for recognizing reproductive coercion and incorporating reproductive health into survivor-centered advocacy.

Rooted in Healing: Harnessing the Power of Nature for Domestic Violence Survivors and Their Children

Identify accessible nature-based approaches that can support survivor and child well-being, resilience, and parent-child connection.

If your work involves children, youth, or prevention...

Consider sessions such as

Me, Myself, and AI: Children, Youth, and Online Risks in the Age of Generative AI

Learn about AI companions, deepfakes, nudification apps, harassment, grooming, misinformation, and other emerging technology risks affecting youth.

The Kids are OK: Let’s Talk About Youth Advisory Council

Explore lessons from developing and maintaining an active youth advisory council, including membership, training, project-based service, and navigating challenges.

Connecting Communities Through Digital Education

Learn how social media, zines, printable materials, collaborative activities, and community toolkits can expand prevention education, including in rural and harder-to-reach communities.

If your work involves law, policy, or systems change...

Consider sessions such as

Protective Orders in Texas: 2025 Statewide Survey of County Policies and Practices

Explore statewide findings on how protective orders are requested, issued, enforced, and supported across Texas and examine systemic barriers affecting survivor access.

Change Really IS Possible: Creating Survivor Centered Systems and Policies

Identify opportunities for policy advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels, understand distinctions among advocacy, education, and lobbying, and learn about TCFV priorities for the 90th Texas Legislative Session.

The Domino Effect and IPV Investigations

Use a high-lethality IPV case study to examine escalation, lethality assessment, trauma responses, safety planning, and trauma-informed investigative practices.

If your work involves community partnerships and outreach...

Consider:

Faith-based Partnerships in Domestic Violence: Promising Practices Beyond the Barriers

Explore strategies for strengthening collaboration among family violence organizations and faith communities while maintaining survivor-centered and trauma-informed approaches.

Two Doors, One House: Culturally Specific Outreach Across Entry Points and What the Field Is Still Missing

Examine cultural specificity as a lived practice and consider how immigration, religion, housing, intergenerational trauma, community belonging, and other factors affect outreach and survivor experiences.

Honoring Our Relatives: The MMIW/MMIP Movement, Barriers to Safety, and the Paths to Healing

Learn about the MMIW/MMIP movement, historical and current barriers to safety, and community-led approaches to advocacy and healing.

THE VALUE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION

When requesting approval, don't focus only on what you will gain. **Explain what your organization will gain.** Attendance can support your organization by helping staff:

Strengthen service quality

Bring current survivor-centered, trauma-informed, evidence-informed, and community-rooted approaches into programs and services.

Identify practical improvements

Return with tools and ideas that can inform policies, procedures, safety planning, training, outreach, supervision, and program design.

Meet professional development needs

Access substantial continuing education opportunities during one statewide event.

Expand organizational knowledge

One attendee can share learning with an entire team through post-conference presentations, resource sharing, staff meetings, or internal training.

Build partnerships

Create relationships with professionals and organizations that may become referral resources, technical assistance partners, collaborators, or sources of new ideas.

Strengthen retention and staff development

Investing in professional development demonstrates a commitment to employee growth while helping advocates build skills, connections, and renewed engagement with their work.

Prepare for emerging challenges

Develop greater organizational understanding of issues such as artificial intelligence, technology-facilitated abuse, coerced debt, housing instability, traumatic brain injury, cultural specificity, reproductive coercion, and other evolving areas of practice.

INVEST IN YOURSELF AND YOUR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Professional development is an important part of maintaining strong, ethical, and effective services.

The 2026 TCFV Statewide Conference is scheduled to offer up to:

13.5 continuing education hours for SW, LMFT, or LPC OR 13.5 continuing education hours for TDCJ-CJAD

Individual sessions identify applicable continuing education categories, including select Ethics, Family Violence, and BIPP hours.

CEU certificates are issued to individual attendees. Participants should attend sessions applicable to their professional or credentialing requirements and follow conference instructions for receiving credit.

MAKE YOUR ATTENDANCE AN ORGANIZATIONAL INVESTMENT

Strengthen your request by proposing a plan to share what you learn.

You might commit to:

- Providing a brief conference recap at a staff meeting.
- Sharing key resources and handouts with colleagues.
- Giving a short presentation on two or three sessions most relevant to your organization.
- Creating a resource folder for your team.
- Identifying three practices your organization could consider implementing.
- Sharing relevant information with community partners.
- Incorporating conference learning into supervision or team discussions.
- Developing a recommendation for improving one policy, practice, program, or outreach effort.
- Sharing relevant legislative or policy information with leadership.
- Connecting colleagues with new statewide partners or resources discovered at the conference.

A simple commitment such as “I will provide a 30-minute staff briefing and identify three actionable ideas from the conference” can help demonstrate that the value of attendance extends beyond one employee.

BUILD YOUR PERSONAL CONFERENCE BUSINESS CASE

Complete these statements before approaching your supervisor.

My primary reason for attending:

Three organizational priorities this conference supports:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The sessions most closely connected to my work are:

1. Session: _____

What I expect to learn:

How our organization could use it:

2. Session: _____

What I expect to learn:

How our organization could use it:

3. Session: _____

What I expect to learn:

How our organization could use it:

After the conference, I will share what I learn by:

EXPENSE PLANNING WORKSHEET
Providing your supervisor with a realistic estimate makes it easier to value your request and shows that you've planned ahead.
Be certain to verify your agency travel policy and specific funding sources allowances or restrictions.

Expense:	Description:	Example Amounts :	Your Estimates:
Conference Registration	\$375 / TCFV Member \$450/ Non-Member	\$375	\$_____
Hotel	\$110/night plus 15% taxes= \$126/night x3 nights = \$379.50	\$379.50	\$_____
Mileage/Airfare	\$237.12 = 312 miles X .76/mile to Kalahari Round Rock OR \$000.00 = estimated coach airfare cost	\$237.12	\$_____
Ground Transportation/ Parking	Rental Car, Uber =\$47.50, Taxi, Lyft, parking. etc.	\$47.50	\$_____
Meal Maximum Rate per day	\$68/day at 100% full day & 75% first & last day	\$238.00	\$_____
Other	Toll cost	\$9.63	\$_____
Estimated Total:		\$1,286.75	\$_____

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL LETTER

Subject: Request to Attend the 2026 TCFV Statewide Conference

Dear [Supervisor/Decision-Maker Name],

I am requesting approval to attend the 2026 Texas Council on Family Violence Statewide Conference, “I’m OK. Are You OK? connections. conversations. communities.”, taking place October 27–29, 2026, at Kalahari Resorts & Conventions in Round Rock, Texas.

The conference brings together advocates, leaders, service providers, partners, researchers, and other professionals to strengthen survivor-centered, trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and community-rooted responses to family violence.

I believe attending would directly support my work in [insert responsibility/program area] and our organization’s goals related to [insert organizational goal or priority].

- In particular, I am interested in attending sessions on:
- [Session title] because [brief connection to your work].
 - [Session title] because [brief connection to your work].
 - [Session title] because [brief connection to your work].

The conference includes training on topics such as survivor engagement, technology and artificial intelligence, housing, economic abuse, legal remedies, traumatic brain injury and strangulation, prevention, cultural responsiveness, advocate wellness, policy and systems change, and coordinated community response.

The conference is also scheduled to offer up to 13.5 hours of continuing education for SW, LMFT, or LPC professionals and 13.5 hours for TDCJ-CJAD, depending on the sessions attended and applicable credential requirements.

My goal is to bring this learning back to the organization rather than have the benefit end with my individual attendance. Following the conference, I propose to [provide a staff briefing/share resources/present key takeaways/develop recommendations—choose one or more].

My estimated cost to attend is:
Registration: \$_____
Travel: \$_____
Lodging: \$_____
Meals/Other: \$_____
Estimated Total: \$_____

I believe the conference would provide a valuable opportunity to strengthen my skills, learn from professionals across Texas and the country, identify resources and strategies relevant to our work, and bring practical information back to our team.

Thank you for considering my request. I would be happy to discuss the conference agenda, the sessions most applicable to my responsibilities, and how I plan to share what I learn with the organization.

Sincerely,

QUESTIONS YOUR SUPERVISOR MAY ASK

“How is this relevant to your job?”

Identify two or three specific sessions and connect each one to a current responsibility, program goal, challenge, or population you serve. Avoid saying only, “It will help me professionally.”

Instead, try:

“One of my responsibilities is _____. The conference includes training on _____, and I expect to bring back strategies we can use to _____.”

“What will the organization get from sending you?”

Explain your post-conference plan.

For example:

“I’ll share key resources with the team, provide a 30-minute staff briefing, and identify three practices or tools we could consider incorporating into our work.”

“Can you get this training somewhere else?”

Emphasize the opportunity to access multiple areas of specialized learning, continuing education, Texas-specific information, national expertise, and peer networking within one three-day event.

The conference also creates opportunities to learn directly from professionals working on related challenges in communities across Texas and beyond.

“Why should this be a priority right now?”

Connect the agenda to current needs.

For example:

“Our organization is currently considering how to address AI and confidentiality, and the conference offers multiple sessions examining AI ethics, organizational policy, and survivor safety.”

Or:

“We have been looking for ways to strengthen staff wellness and retention. The conference includes examples from Texas family violence programs that have made advocate wellness an organizational priority.”

BEFORE YOU ASK FOR APPROVAL

- Use this checklist to prepare a strong request.
- Review the conference agenda.
 - Select three to five sessions directly related to your responsibilities.
 - Connect those sessions to organizational priorities or current challenges.
 - Determine which continuing education opportunities apply to you.
 - Estimate registration, lodging, travel, and other costs.
 - Identify possible ways to reduce costs.
 - Decide how you will share conference learning with colleagues.
 - Personalize the approval request letter.
 - Be prepared to explain the value to survivors, your team, and your community.

AFTER YOU'RE APPROVED

Make the most of the investment.

Before the conference:

- Identify your highest-priority sessions.
- Write down two or three questions you hope the conference will help you answer.
- Ask coworkers what resources or information would be useful to bring back.
- Identify presenters, partners, or organizations you would like to connect with.

After the conference:

- Share key resources with your team.
- Deliver your promised conference recap.
- Identify three actionable takeaways.
- Follow up with new professional connections.

Determine whether any conference learning should inform organizational policies, programs, training, partnerships, or practices.

During the conference:

- Capture practical ideas, not just interesting information.
- Save resources that could benefit colleagues.
- Connect with peers doing similar work.
- Note strategies that may be adaptable to your organization.
- Keep a short list titled “Things We Can Try.”

YOUR CONFERENCE ROI SNAPSHOT

Complete this after the conference and share it with your supervisor.

The three most valuable things I learned were:

1.
2.
3.

One resource I recommend our team use:

One practice we should consider:

One new connection or partnership opportunity:

One topic I recommend we explore further:

My next action as a result of the conference:

CONNECTIONS. CONVERSATIONS. COMMUNITIES.

The question “I’m OK. Are You OK?” is simple, but connection can be powerful.

Every conversation we begin, every relationship we strengthen, and every lesson we carry forward can help build a stronger circle of support for survivors, advocates, and communities across Texas.

The Statewide Conference is an opportunity to step outside the day-to-day demands of the work, learn alongside people who understand its challenges, strengthen your practice, and return to your community with new tools and renewed connections.

Come ready to learn.

Come ready to connect.

Come ready to bring something home.

If you have any questions, please email statewide@tcfv.org.



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