

# SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAMS

SB 476, 87th Texas Legislative Session

**W**ith the passage of [SB 476](#), the 87th Texas Legislature is requiring all Texas counties to form an adult Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) in an effort to create a statewide infrastructure of resources, awareness, connection, and coordination to address sex crimes locally.

Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 351, Subchapter J requires each commissioner's court of a county to establish an Adult Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). A SART is a formalized coordinated response to a sexual assault that allows multi-disciplinary professionals to coordinate and develop inter agency responses to work together to address sexual assault by providing wrap-around support and communication.

Counties smaller than 250,000 residents have the option of partnering with other nearby, small counties to form a regional SART. The commissioner's court must invite all statutory members that provide services within a county to participate.

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## WHO SERVES ON THE SART?

1. The Chief Administrator of a Sexual Assault Program that provides services within the county, or their designee;
2. A prosecutor with jurisdiction over adult sexual assault cases in the county;
3. The Sheriff of the county, or their designee;
4. The chief of the largest municipal law enforcement agency, if one exists, or their designee;
5. A Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, Forensic Examiner that provides exams within the county, or if they do not exist, a representative from the largest healthcare provider in the county;
6. A mental or behavioral health provider within the county, or if they do not exist, a representative from the public health department; and
7. Other persons or professionals the SART considers necessary for the operation of the response team.

*\*The professionals specifically named above are the minimum team membership required by law.*

## WHAT DOES THE SART HAVE TO DO?

- The response team must meet at least quarterly;
- No later than the 90th day after the last day of a regular legislative session, the SART must review and amend any response team protocols, forms, or guidelines required by [Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 351, Subchapter J](#).
- Once the SART has selected their leadership, it must develop a written protocol for responding to adult survivors within the community.
- The SART must present a report to their Commissioners Court no later than December 1 of each odd-numbered year. That report must include a list of active members, a copy of their written protocol, and a summary of report numbers and case dispositions.

## OTHER SART DELIVERABLES

- Quarterly meetings
- Written inter agency protocol
- Cross training
- Evaluation/Case Reviews
- Biennial report of activities



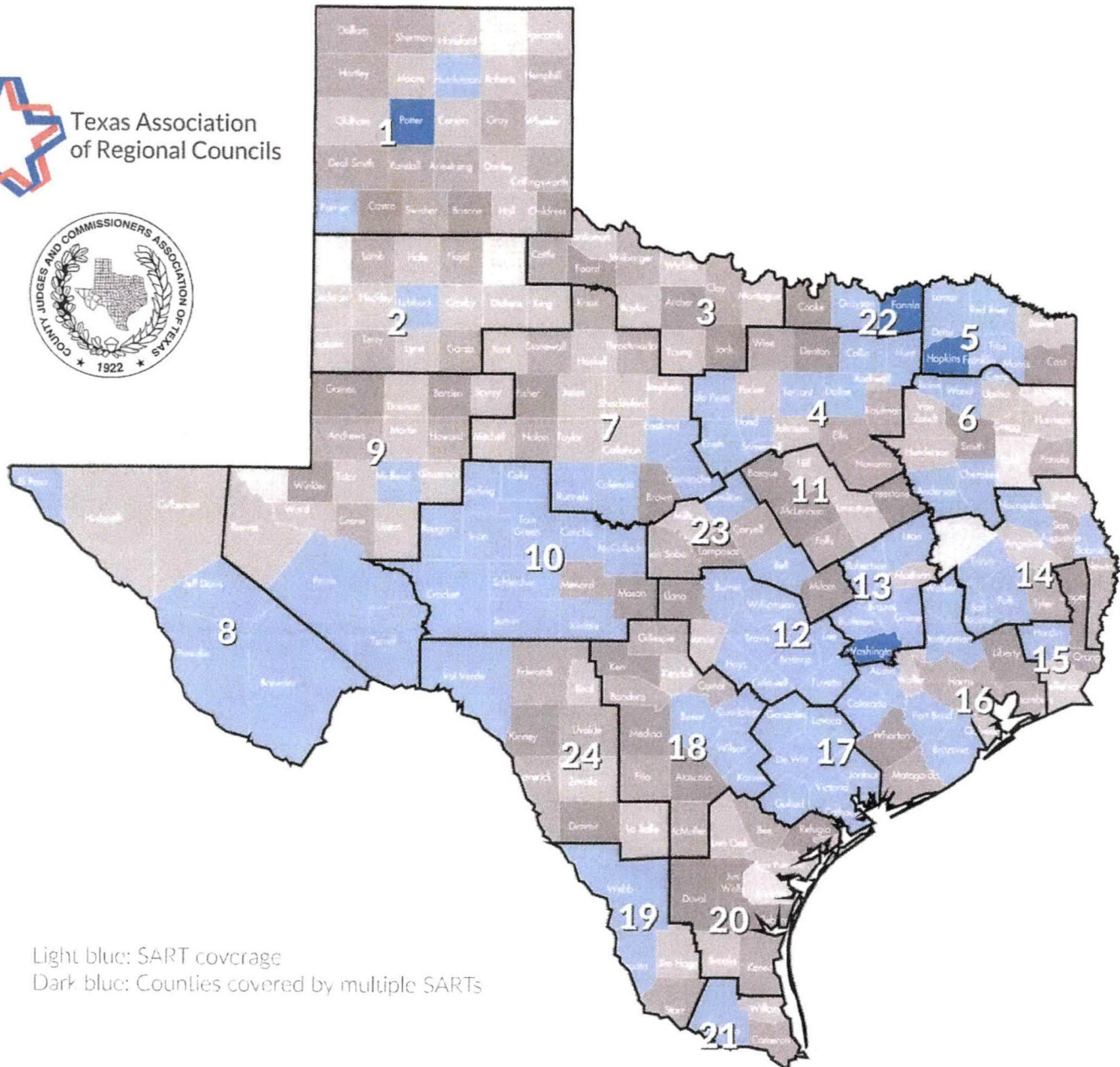
Texas Association  
of Regional Councils



# TEXAS REGIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENTS & LOCATIONS OF EXISTING SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAMS (SARTS)



Texas Association of Regional Councils



Light blue: SART coverage  
 Dark blue: Counties covered by multiple SARTs

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Panhandle Regional Planning Commission     | 13. Brazos Valley Council of Governments          |
| 2. South Plains Association of Governments    | 14. Deep East Texas Council of Governments        |
| 3. Nortex Regional Planning Commission        | 15. South East Texas Regional Planning Commission |
| 4. North Central Texas Council of Governments | 16. Houston-Galveston Area Council                |
| 5. Ark-Tex Council of Governments             | 17. Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission  |
| 6. East Texas Council of Governments          | 18. Alamo Area Council of Governments             |
| 7. West Central Texas Council of Governments  | 19. South Texas Development Council               |
| 8. Rio Grande Council of Governments          | 20. Coastal Bend Council of Governments           |
| 9. Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission | 21. Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council   |
| 10. Concho Valley Council of Governments      | 22. Texoma Council of Governments                 |
| 11. Heart of Texas Council of Governments     | 23. Central Texas Council of Governments          |
| 12. Capital Area Council of Governments       | 24. Middle Rio Grande Development Council         |

# REGIONAL SART

While all counties are **statutorily required** to have a SART, smaller counties may join a regional SART. The regional SART can be made up of two or more counties, each with a population of 250,000 or less, within a contiguous area.

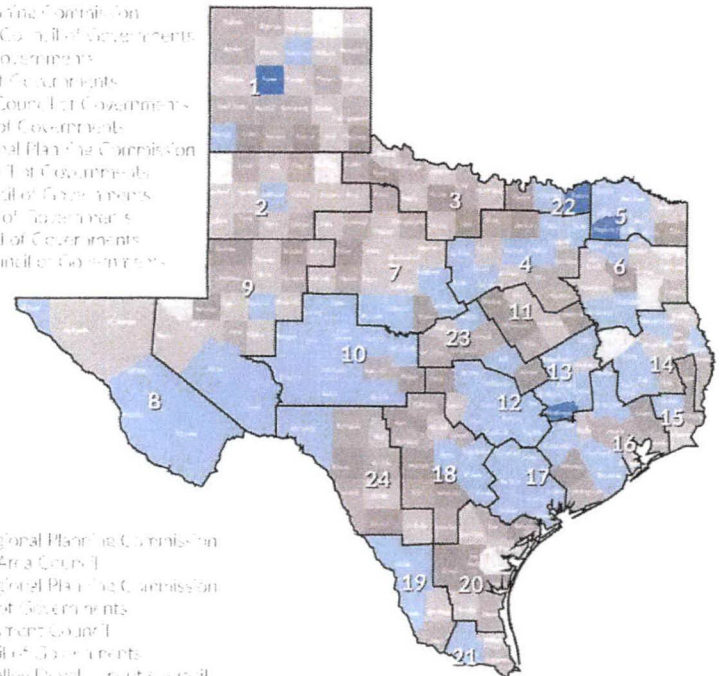
Counties are already familiar with their council of governments (COG) and partner for a number of program areas, including criminal justice and victim services.

COGs can serve as the coordinating entity for regional SARTs to assist smaller counties with meeting this statutory requirement.

Eligible counties can enter into interlocal agreements to form regional SARTs.

## TEXAS REGIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENTS & LOCATIONS OF EXISTING SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAMS (SARTS)

1. Panhandle Regional Planning Commission
2. South Plains Association of Governments
3. North Regional Planning Commission
4. North Central Texas Council of Governments
5. Ark-La-Coinc Council of Governments
6. East Texas Council of Governments
7. West Central Texas Council of Governments
8. High Plains Council of Governments
9. Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission
10. Central Valley Council of Governments
11. Heart of Texas Council of Governments
12. Capital Area Council of Governments
13. Brazos Valley Council of Governments
14. Deep East Texas Council of Governments



15. South East Texas Regional Planning Commission
16. Houston/Galveston Area Council
17. Gulf Coast Regional Planning Commission
18. Alamo Area Council of Governments
19. South Texas Development Council
20. Coastal Bend Council of Governments
21. Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
22. Tarrant Council of Governments
23. Dallas/Fort Worth Council of Governments
24. Austin Council of Governments
25. Central Texas Council of Governments
26. Multiple Regional Councils

Light Blue: SART coverage  
Dark Blue: Counties covered by multiple SARTs

## RESOURCES

Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC)

Find your COG

County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas (CJCAT)

Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (TAASA)

Existing SARTs in Texas

An Introduction to SARTs in Texas

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

To assist counties and COGs as they stand up the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), TARC, CJCAT and TAASA will partner to provide a series of webinars to offer technical assistance. These webinars are open to all county judges, commissioners and COG staff.

### SART Basics - What is a SART?

Thursday, October 21, 10:00 AM CT

[Click here to register](#)

### SART Basics for Large Counties

Tuesday, October 26, 10:00 AM CT

[Click here to register](#)

*(Recommended for counties over 250k pop.)*

### SART Basics for Counties Interested in Regional Response

Thursday, November 11, 10:00 AM CT

[Click here to register](#)

*(Recommended for COGs and counties with 250k pop and smaller)*

To register for the webinars, visit [www.txregionalcouncil.org/](http://www.txregionalcouncil.org/).

10/11/21