

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM
AGENDA SUMMARY FORM**

DEPARTMENT: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

AGENDA DATE: May 23, 2023

CONTACT PERSON NAME AND PHONE NUMBER:

City Representative Aleksandra Annello, 212-0002
City Representative Chris Canales, 212-0008

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: All Districts

STRATEGIC GOAL: Goal 8: Nurture & Promote a Healthy, Sustainable Community

SUBJECT:

APPROVE a resolution / ordinance / lease to do what? OR AUTHORIZE the City Manager to do what? Be descriptive of what we want Council to approve. Include \$ amount if applicable.

Discussion and action to approve a resolution for the City to enhance harm reduction strategies to help mitigate the Opioid crisis in our community.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:

Discussion of the what, why, where, when, and how to enable Council to have reasonably complete description of the contemplated action. This should include attachment of bid tabulation, or ordinance or resolution if appropriate. What are the benefits to the City of this action? What are the citizen concerns?

N/A

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?

N/A

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

How will this item be funded? Has the item been budgeted? If so, identify funding source by account numbers and description of account. Does it require a budget transfer?

N/A

*****REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION*****

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the use of opioids, such as hydrocodone, oxycodone, Fentanyl, carfentanyl, tramadol, methadone, and heroin can be fatal or cause severe side effects; and

WHEREAS, from April 2020 to April 2021 the U.S. Centers of Disease for Control and Prevention reported 100,000 Americans have died of opioid-related causes, resulting in a 28 percent increase from the year before; and

WHEREAS, El Paso County has experienced an upward trend of drug overdose deaths, particularly those resulting from opioids, and the years 2020 to 2021 saw a 126 percent increase from 128 acute drug toxicity deaths in 2020 to 162 deaths in 2021; and

WHEREAS, this year the El Paso County Medical Examiner released the “El Paso County Medical Examiner Annual Report 2021,” which shows that acute drug toxicity is the number one cause of accidental deaths in El Paso County, ahead of blunt force injuries and drowning; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 report shows that overdose deaths in which Fentanyl was detected rose by 260 percent—from 23 during the pandemic confinement year of 2020 to 60 in 2021; and

WHEREAS, previous studies indicate that it is possible to effectively reduce the impact of opioid use disorder through various approaches, including improved syndromic and disease surveillance, community-based outreach and linguistically accessible public education, expanded access to medically assisted treatment, prescription drug take-back and disposal, use of Fentanyl testing strips, and the increased availability and training on the use of Naloxone; and

WHEREAS, lack of access to safe stable housing for people experiencing homelessness risks the health and safety of residents and makes it harder to access life-saving services; and

WHEREAS, Naloxone, a treatment that reverses the effects of a drug overdose, is not widely accessible for use by community members and social service agencies; and

WHEREAS, El Paso’s Harm Reduction Alliance, comprised of organizations such as Punto de Partida, Project Vida, and the Recovery Alliance of El Paso, have identified a gap in the availability of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for patients with opioid use disorder (OUD); and

WHEREAS, patients often experienced a seven-to-ten-day delay between choosing to seek treatment and being able to begin treatment in a MAT program; and

WHEREAS, with the delay comes the guarantee of withdrawal symptoms, which can be a deterrent for those trying to get help and an increased risk of overdose and death; and

WHEREAS, earlier this year, the El Paso Police Department, the Fire Department, and the Public Health’s Public Education teams expressed their intent to increase availability and distribution of Naloxone and other drugs that treat overdoses for first responders caring for

overdose patients, as well as education related to emergency response to overdose cases, and education and training for overdose patients, families, schools, and the general public; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso Police Department has received over 120 donated doses of nasal administered Naloxone and have an alert notification system advising when a particular batch is 6 months from expiration, which is meant to ensure they have enough in stock to replenish the upcoming doses and distribute them as needed; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso City Council supported the City's participation in both the Johnson & Johnson and Distributor Settlements to allow the City to receive its allocation of settlement funds for use in opioid mitigation measures and to participate in other opioid litigation settlements; and

WHEREAS, the City has received its first annual settlement payment allocations totaling approximately \$384,000, which are intended to be used to provide Naloxone to our community as well as provide training for first responders to be able to administer the medication;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

City Council supports the City Manager in current efforts to address the escalating public health crisis caused by drug overdoses and addiction and encourages greater interdepartmental coordination and regional coordination with public safety, healthcare, and service providers, as well as with the El Paso Harm Reduction Alliance and the local mental health consortium to equitably implement harm reduction strategies and promote community health and wellness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to invest in harm reduction strategies utilizing the opioid settlement payments to address the overdose crisis, including the following immediate harm reduction strategies:

- Ensure an adequate supply of Naloxone kits are available on all first responder vehicles.
- Increase access to Naloxone and training through City channels other than the Emergency Medical Services or the El Paso Police Department, including but not limited to El Paso Public Health Department, El Paso Public Libraries, El Paso Parks and Recreation, and Sun Metro/Mass Transit vehicles.
- Increase access to Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), Naloxone, and support services and operations for community partners focused on harm reduction strategies.
- Work on enhancing partnerships with the El Paso Harm Reduction Alliance and the local mental health consortium, and other local resources, including but not limited to organizations such as Project Vida, Punto de Partida, the Recovery Alliance of El Paso, and Emergence Health Network, to facilitate rapid assessment, screening and referral to harm reduction services, medication-assisted therapy, and behavioral health providers.

- Look into creating a City needle exchange program by partnering with other local organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager shall provide a directive to the Public Health Director with the objective to develop a comprehensive local plan of action that develops and prioritizes strategies related to prevention, treatment, and support services for substance use disorders. The Public Health Director should provide biannual reports to Council and include collaboration with harm reduction organizations to identify strategies and action around the following topics:

- Align housing policies to coincide with drug treatment.
- Assess mental and behavioral health access to treatment gaps.
- Assess state and federal grant opportunities for additional funding.
- Evaluate harm reduction strategies and research national best practices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to create a data dashboard to provide continuous sharing of overdose high-level data with other City departments and community partners and improve data collection, integration, and dissemination of information, and tracking inpatient and outpatient treatment availability to ensure clients are linked to necessary services. This should incorporate system-track overdoses by El Paso Emergency Services, the El Paso County Medical Examiner's Office, hospital partners, and other relevant software data and provide additional internal or contracted staffing support to implement within one-year. Data metrics should include, but should not be limited to the following:

- Behavioral health treatment rate for patients with a primary diagnosis of opioid use disorder;
- Doses of Naloxone distributed;
- Doses of Naloxone administered by first responders;
- Fatal overdoses;
- Nonfatal overdoses.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to create a public education campaign within the next year to warn about the dangers of Fentanyl, mental health stigma, and youth education, including:

- The development and implementation of a public awareness campaign including educational materials that focus on the prevention of drug use, risks of substance use and misuse, and community resources available in treatment, recovery, harm reduction, and safe disposal of unused prescription drugs.

- The development and implementation of an education campaign for health care providers about up-to-date and safe prescribing practices for the treatment of pain and pain management and finding other non-opioid pain management options.
- The development and implementation of an initiative to encourage physicians to refer patients to MAT treatment when an opiate use disorder is suspected or identified.
- Support expansion of street-level interventions, educational outreach, and linking clients to the appropriate prevention, treatment, harm reduction, or recovery programs.

APPROVED this ____ day of May, 2023.


THE CITY OF EL PASO

Oscar Leaser
Mayor

ATTEST:

Laura D. Prine
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Javier Macias
Assistant City Attorney

Alliance of Border Collaboratives
"Uniting Border Experts Under an Umbrella of Excellence"

2524 Montana
El Paso, Texas 79903
Tel. (915) 584-2875 / Fax (915) 584-2876



March 6, 2023

Jose Alvarez
Alliance of Border Collaboratives
Senior Director
2524 Montana Ave., El Paso, TX 79903

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of El Paso city funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed at least to the City's First Responders, if not throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's medical examiner on January 26, 2022, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported or which were pending verification.

Narcan retails at around \$141 per dose. Since March of 2022, a local nonprofit opioid crisis center has given out at least 240 doses of Narcan with a retail cost \$16,920 of Narcan to El Paso police officers who have sought the lifesaving medicine due to lack of resources. In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased to 645 in 2022. Each of these doses used represents a live saved. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives. The results from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso. I look forward to City Council member supporting this worthwhile endeavor and helping improve the health of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jose Alvarez", is positioned below the "Sincerely," text.

Jose Alvarez, LMSW, LFMSW, CCM
Senior Director
Alliance of Border Collaboratives



March 6, 2023

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of the City of El Paso funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed at least to the City's First Responders, if not throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's medical examiner on January 26, 2022, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported or which were pending verification.

Narcan retails at around \$141 per dose. Since March of 2022, a local nonprofit opioid crisis center has given out at least 240 doses of Narcan with a retail cost \$16,920 of Narcan to El Paso police officers who have sought the lifesaving medicine due to lack of resources. In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased to 645 in 2022. Each of these doses used represents a live saved. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives. The results from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso. I look forward to City Council members supporting this worthwhile endeavor and helping improve the health of our community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Benjamin Miranda, Jr.".

Benjamin Miranda, Jr., CMSGT (Ret-USAF)
Deputy Senior Director, Operational Business Development
bmiranda@endeavors.org

Mariah Alvarez
UTEP
Students for Public Health (SPH)
President of SPH

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of El Paso city funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed at least to the City's First Responders, if not throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Our city is in great need of Narcan, and the citizens of El Paso should have easy access to Narcan if it is ever needed. Narcan is a lifesaving medication used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's medical examiner on January 26, 2022, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, and 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported or which were pending verification.

Narcan retails at around \$141 per dose. As you may know, \$141 can be a large financial burden for individuals or families who are struggling to meet basic needs. Since March of 2022, a local nonprofit opioid crisis center has given out at least 240 doses of Narcan with a retail cost of \$16,920. El Paso police officers have sought the lifesaving medicine due to a lack of resources and the local nonprofit had to use its own resources to provide for El Paso PD. In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased to 645 in 2022. Each of these doses used represents a life saved. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives. The results from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso. I look forward to City Council members supporting this worthwhile endeavor and helping improve the health of our community.

Sincerely,

Mariah Alvarez



SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL INFORMATICS

7000 Fannin Street | Houston, Texas 77030

March 16, 2023

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor Lesser and Council Members,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of El Paso city funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed to the City's First Responders, various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's Medical Examiner, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported, or which were pending verification.

Narcan retails at around \$141 per dose. Since March of 2022, a local nonprofit opioid crisis center has given out at least 240 doses of Narcan with a retail cost \$16,920 of Narcan to El Paso police officers who have sought the lifesaving medicine due to lack of resources. In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased to 645 in 2022. Each of these doses used represents a live saved. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives. The results from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso. I look forward to City Council member supporting this worthwhile endeavor and helping improve the health of our community.

Sincerely,

Rigoberto I. Delgado, PhD, MBA
Associate Professor – Health Economist
Email: rigoberto.i.delgado@uth.tmc.edu



Mary Ellen Hernandez
Border Substance Abuse Council
Director
9042 Echo St.
El Paso, TX 79904

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of funding by the City of El Paso for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed first to the City's First Responders, and hopefully, throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids.

Based on data provided by the Medical Examiner of El Paso County on January 26, 2022; 107,000 people died in 2021 from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported, or which were pending verification.

This lifesaving medication, Narcan, retails at around \$141 per dose. Since March of 2022, a local nonprofit opioid crisis center has given out approximately 240 doses of Narcan with a retail cost \$16,920. They were provided to El Paso police officers who have sought the lifesaving medication due to lack of resources in our area. In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by the El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased in 2022 to 645. Each of the doses administered represents a life saved in El Paso. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives. The outcomes from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso. I look forward to City Council supporting this worthwhile endeavor and help improve the health of our community.

Sincerely,


Mary Ellen Hernandez



March 6, 2023

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

We are writing to express our support of the City El Paso to fund the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed at a minimum to the City's First Responders, if not throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's medical examiner on January 26, 2022, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported, or which were pending verification.

Narcan retails at around \$141 per dose. Since March 2022, a local nonprofit opioid crisis center has given out at least 240 doses of Narcan with a retail cost \$16,920 of Narcan to El Paso police officers who have sought the lifesaving medicine due to lack of resources. In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased to 645 in 2022. Each of these doses used represents a life saved. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives. The results from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso. I look forward to City Council members supporting this worthwhile endeavor and helping improve the health of our community.

Sincerely,

John W. Martin
Deputy Director



EL PASO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

6044 GATEWAY EAST, SUITE 211

EL PASO, TEXAS 79905

(915) 843-2170

(915) 843-2184 (FAX)

March 27, 2023

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of El Paso city funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed at least to the City's First Responders, if not throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's medical examiner on January 26, 2022, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported or which were pending verification.

Narcan retails at around \$141 per dose. Since March of 2022, a local nonprofit opioid crisis center has given out at least 240 doses of Narcan with a retail cost \$16,920 of Narcan to El Paso police officers who have sought the lifesaving medicine due to lack of resources. In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased to 645 in 2022. Each of these doses used represents a live saved. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives. The results from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso.

I look forward to City Council member supporting this worthwhile endeavor and helping improve the health of our community.

Should you have any questions or need more information regarding this matter, please contact me at 915-843-2170.

Respectfully,

Camille Castillo
Executive Director

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor Lesser and Council Members:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of El Paso city funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed at least to the City's First Responders, if not throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's medical examiner on January 26, 2022, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported or which were pending verification.

Narcan retails at around \$141 per dose. Since March of 2022, a local nonprofit opioid crisis center has given out at least 240 doses of Narcan with a retail cost \$16,920 of Narcan to El Paso police officers who have sought the lifesaving medicine due to lack of resources. In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased to 645 in 2022. Each of these doses used represents a live saved. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives. The results from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso. I look forward to City Council member supporting this worthwhile endeavor and helping improve the health of our community.

Sincerely,

FERNANDO GONZALEZ M

Overdose Rapid Response and Prevention Program
Manager
UT Health Science Center San Antonio/ Project Vida



Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

May 10, 2023

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

Please accept my enthusiastic support of El Paso city funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed to the City's First Responders and to those working to fight the Opioid Epidemic here in El Paso including harm reduction outreach organizations and resource centers.. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids including Fentanyl which has become the primary cause of overdoses here on the US-Mexico border. El Paso has reached a tragic milestone, the El Paso County Coroner's Office reports 162 overdose deaths in 2021, ***more than three times the number of homicides***. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported or which were pending verification.

Narcan retails at around \$14 per dose. Since 2019 our Opioid Walk-In crisis center has distributed at least 7,500 doses of Narcan with a retail cost \$105,000 to communities of people who use drugs and El Paso first responders who have sought the lifesaving medicine due to lack of resources.

In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased to 645 in 2022. Each of these doses used represents a life saved. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives.

Opioid settlement funds should be used to help alleviate the problem the companies that helped create this public health crisis. The results from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso. I look forward to City Council members supporting this worthwhile endeavor and helping improve the health of our community. Please contact me for any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Bass".

Ben G. Bass, CEO
El Paso Alliance, Inc.
3501 Hueco Ave
El Paso, Texas 79903
(915) 775-0505



(A Division of Recovery Alliance)

8500 Dyer St, Suite 34.

El Paso, TX 79904

Johanna Kuehnel
Project Director

Phone: 915-262-0002

Fax: 915-262-0290

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of El Paso city funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed at least to the City's First Responders, if not throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's medical examiner on January 26, 2022, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported or which were pending verification.

Narcan retails at around \$141 per dose. Since March of 2022, a local nonprofit opioid crisis center, Punto De Partida, has given out at least 240 doses of Narcan with a retail cost \$16,920 of Narcan to El Paso police officers who have sought the lifesaving medicine due to lack of resources. In 2021, 531 Narcan kits were used by El Paso Fire Dept alone, the number increased to 645 in 2022. Each of these doses used represents a live saved. We know that Narcan helps to prevent fatal overdoses and saves lives. The results from this funding will contribute a great deal towards helping to save lives in El Paso. I look forward to City Council member supporting this worthwhile endeavor and helping improve the health of our community.

Sincerely,

March 3, 2023

Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of El Paso city funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed at least to the City's First Responders, if not throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's medical examiner on January 26, 2022, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported or which were pending verification.

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Sincerely,



Bill Schlesinger, CEO



Mayor and Council Members
City of El Paso
300 N. Campbell
El Paso, TX 79901

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of El Paso city funding for the lifesaving medication Narcan to be distributed at least to the City's First Responders, if not throughout various shelters, harm reduction outreach organizations, resource centers, and local government agencies. Narcan is the lifesaving medicine used to reverse an overdose caused by opioids. Based on data provided by El Paso's medical examiner on January 26, 2022, in 2021, 107,000 people died from opioid overdose in the United States, 97 of those deaths occurred in El Paso. These deaths do not include those that often go unreported, or which were pending verification.

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Sincerely,

Ivonne Tapia, LPC-S, LCDC, ACPS
Chief Executive Officer
Aliviane, Inc.
El Paso, Texas