

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 05/30/2023**

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**GOVERNOR ABBOTT SIGNS SENATE BILL 855 MANDATING FAMILY VIOLENCE  
TRAINING FOR JUDGES IN TEXAS**

**HOUSTON, TX** – Senate Bill 855 by Senator Carol Alvarado (D-Houston) and sponsored by Representative Lacey Hull (R-Houston), was signed into law by Governor Abbott on Monday, May 29th.

Supported by Houston’s Minaret Foundation and An-Nisa Hope Center, Senate Bill 855, known as the Judicial Awareness and Training Act (JATA), requires training for judges on issues related to family violence.

*“The courtroom is the epicenter of justice for survivors of family violence,” said Senator Alvarado. “The additional training mandated by SB 855 will equip judges with the skillset to better support survivors of domestic violence when they are in their courtrooms. When we ask survivors to re-live their physical and emotional trauma, we must ensure that the justice system is properly equipped to serve them.”*

Currently, judges can opt out of family violence training by signing a legal document stating that they do not see family violence cases. Senate Bill 855 addresses the pervasive nature of family violence by acknowledging that survivors are seen in all court settings.

Under Senate Bill 855, judges will undergo training focused on identifying and responding to family violence cases. The curriculum will be carefully crafted in collaboration with statewide advocacy organizations to ensure that judges are well-versed in the dynamics of family abuse, understand the signs and patterns of violence, and provide appropriate support and resources to survivors.

*“By equipping judges with the knowledge and understanding of the complexities surrounding family violence, we empower them to dispense justice with compassion, discernment, and an unwavering commitment to protecting the most vulnerable among us,” said Noor Saleh, Government Relations Coordinator for Minaret Foundation.*

*“JATA is an enormous milestone not only for advocates of domestic violence and for survivors. This gives survivors a voice in the courtroom and within our legal system,” said Bibi Khan, President of An-Nisa Hope Center.*

More information is available at: <https://minaretfoundation.com/policies/domestic-violence>

About Minaret Foundation:

Minaret Foundation's mission is to leverage our faith beliefs to change the world around us through multi-faith and civic engagement. We are a Texas-based 501(c)3.

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