

HR Bulletin

May

HR

2020

M	T	W	T
		1	2
6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23
27	28		

PHONE

512.245.2557

EMAIL

hr@txstate.edu

LOCATION

JCK 340

WHAT'S IN VIEW

3 New Employee Welcome Updates

HIGHLIGHTS

4 Families First Coronavirus Response Act

6 COVID-19 Benefits Updates

7 COVID-19 Interview Protocols

8 Staff Educational Development Program

9 Summer Paid Class Release Time

10 Summer Enrollment Coming Soon!

11 The Power of Positive Thinking

14 UPPS Updates

15 May Courses/Blood Drive Cancelled

EMPLOYEE FOCUS

16 Welcome, New Employees!

18 Bobcats on the Move

19 Employee Discounts

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

20 Employee of the Month

22 Bobcats Connect: HR Crossword Puzzle

The HR Bulletin keeps you informed on HR topics and news pertaining to Texas State. We would love to hear from you! Please send your suggestions to hr@txstate.edu



New Employee Welcome Updates



As with many processes, we have updated our [New Employee Welcome experience](#) in order to satisfy social distancing requirements. NEW I sessions will be held via Zoom on regularly scheduled days.

NEW I sessions will continue to occur every Monday morning (or Tuesday if Monday is a holiday). New hires will be able to log in to a Zoom meeting with other new hires and NEW staff. We will send NEW packets via email.

- Departments **MUST** register new hires in a timely manner for this Zoom invitation and attendance process to be successful!
- Visit the [HR Forms website](#) and look under “New Hire Support” for all forms including department registration, updated Welcome Letter, and onboarding checklists.
- New hires need to register, too. Their link is in the welcome letter. This step is important to ensure we have a personal email address to send Zoom information to.
- Once the NEW I team receives the required information from department and new hire registration forms, our team will send out emails to supervisors, department contacts, and your new hire with a temporary parking pass, Zoom link, and new hire forms.

For information on our NEW II sessions, please visit our [dedicated website](#) that details important updates. You can also flip to [page 16](#).

Thanks for your help in making this new process work for our new employees!

A background image showing two hands holding a heart shape, with a white text box overlaid.

FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT

New federal legislation was passed on March 18, 2020 authorizing two new paid leave options for employees. The effective dates are April 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020. The paid leave is available to all Texas State employees including part-time faculty, staff, and student workers who are unable to work or telework for one of the stated reasons.

Emergency Paid Sick Leave

Up to two weeks of paid leave for the following reasons:

1.

You are subject to federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order (*this does not include a local stay-at-home ordinance because we are an essential employer*).

2.

You are advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine.

3.

You are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis.

4.

You are caring for someone subject to quarantine order or advised to self-quarantined.

5.

You are caring for your child whose school or place of care is closed.

6.

You are experiencing any other substantially-similar condition by U.S. Department of Homeland Security (there are none yet).

Under Emergency Paid Sick Leave, reasons 1, 2, and 3 are paid at 100% of your salary (max \$511 per day).
Reasons 4, 5, and 6 are paid at 2/3 of your salary (max \$200 per day).

Expanded Family & Medical Leave

- For employees who have been employed at Texas State at least 30 calendar days.
- Provides up to 10 additional weeks if caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed.
- Paid at 2/3 your salary (max \$200 per day).

Keep in mind that you may choose to use your own accrued leave instead of the 2/3 reduced pay option. However, you cannot use your regular accrued sick leave for taking care of your child due to school or childcare closing. In that case, you would need to use your vacation, FLSA overtime, or state compensation time balance.

Leave may be requested through SAP Self-Service. You must attach valid documentation such as the quarantine order or directive from your medical provider. For childcare, you must include the name and age of your children, the name of the provider that is closed and a statement that no other person is available to provide care. To be sure all information is included, please use the support documentation form recently added to our [website](#).

Your request will flow to your supervisor, department head, Dean/AVP, and Human Resources. Once approved, you will be allocated the appropriate number of hours to do your time entry.

Specific instructions are available on the [HR website](#). Please review the [FAQs](#) before submitting your request.

Questions may be directed to hr@txstate.edu or call 5.2557.



COVID-19 Benefits Updates



Many of our providers have made updates and changes to benefits offerings as a result of COVID-19. You can learn about those changes by visiting the [benefits website](#) and clicking on the news slider. We will put more updates here as we find out about them. To find out more about changes to:

- Your Health Insurance
- TexFlex
- Bobcat Balance
- WellCats

visit the [COVID-19 benefits updates website](#).

COVID-19 Interview Safety


In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas State University is currently implementing financial measures that may delay the hiring process for some positions. However, if your position has received presidential approval to be filled, we recommend you follow some protocols and recommendations to keep our community safe.

An [extensive guide](#) is provided on the HR website on conducting virtual interviews and on-campus interviews when absolutely necessary.



Employee Educational Opportunity

STAFF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Are you thinking about going back to school? Did you know that the Staff Educational Development Program provides a wonderful opportunity each fall and spring semester for up to seven full-time benefits-eligible staff who have been part of Texas State for one year to receive special support for degree work?

What are the benefits?

If you meet the requirement for eligibility, you may receive up to 20 hours per week of release time for courses taken at Texas State or other accredited higher education institution. Selected employees can earn nine to 12 credit hours for an undergraduate program, and six to nine hours for the graduate program. And guess what? Fees and tuition are waived! Plus, even though you have the option to work part-time, you will keep your full-time rate of compensation.

Where can I find more information?

For more info, please visit [UPPS 04.04.35 Professional Development and Educational Opportunities](#) for details regarding eligibility and application procedures.

How to apply?

Each semester members of President's Cabinet nominate employees within their division for a chance to participate in this program. Nominations are due to HR by June 15, so it's not too late to apply! You can [apply here!](#)

Who to contact?

Please contact [Organizational Development & Communications](#) at 5.7899 if you have any questions.

Employee Educational Opportunity

Academic Release & Tuition Support for Summer 2020

Are you thinking about taking some credit courses this summer? Our team would like to remind you that if you are a full-time benefits-eligible employee and in good academic standing, you can participate in university credit courses and have certain fees and designated tuition waived. You may receive paid class release time to attend courses, if held during their normal work hours. A new form is available in SAP.

Who should submit the new form?

If you request paid leave, wish to opt-out of the waiver, or request to have tuition and fees paid by your department, you must complete the form available in [SAP](#), under ESS+. Please review the [Employee User Guide](#) and [Supervisor User Guide](#) for more instructions. Please note that you do not need to complete this form to receive fees and designated tuition waivers. Student Business Services (SBS) will identify eligible employees and apply the waivers after grades post.

Form submission deadline for Summer 2020.

All approved forms are due by June 4, which is the 4th class day for the summer term.

Where can I find more information?

For more information, please visit the [Academic Release & Tuition Support website](#). You may also review [UPPS 04.04.35 Professional Development and Educational Opportunities](#) for more details on the requirements and restrictions about this program.

Please contact [Organizational Development & Communications](#) at 5.7899 if you have any questions.



Summer Enrollment is Right Around the Corner!

Recently, [ERS](#) announced the dates for our annual insurance enrollment period. This is your chance to make changes to your insurance benefits without having to experience a qualifying life event. More details will be announced as we receive them, but for now, save the dates:

**June 22, 2020 -
July 24, 2020**

The Power of Positive Thinking

By Jill Zambito, Jane Rha, and Lindsay Luen
*Doctor of Physical Therapy Students
and WellCats Staff*



In times of uncertainty it's easy to let our minds wander into negative thinking. We start pondering all of the possibilities that lie in the future instead of living in the present. Uncertainty can bring up anxiety and fear, and these emotions can have a negative effect on our brain.

According to Barbara Fredrickson, a positive psychology researcher at the University of North Carolina, negative emotions prevent our brain from seeing the other options and choices that surround us. Anxiety, fear, and stress trigger a 'fight or flight' response in the brain, and we become hyper-focused on these negative emotions.

In contrast, when we are experiencing positive emotions like joy, contentment, and love, we see more possibilities in our lives. Positive emotions broaden our sense of possibility and open our mind to more options. Positive thinking can also build our skill set. When we associate a task with a positive emotion, we are more likely to explore and repeat that task.

If positive thinking is so useful for developing valuable skills and appreciating the big picture of life, how do we foster positivity during this uncertain time?

TAKE A DEEP BREATH

Nothing puts us in the present moment like focusing on our breath. One of our favorite breathing techniques is described below.

- Breathe in for 4 seconds
- Hold your breath for 4 seconds
- Exhale for 4 seconds
- Hold your lungs empty for 4 seconds

WRITE ABOUT A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

Write something short and sweet to start or end your day. Make it simple. Write down 3 things you are grateful for. It's amazing how just this short, simple task can start or end your day on a positive note.

PLAY!

Schedule time for play and activity so that you can experience contentment, joy and creativity. Explore and build new skills. Maybe try a new recipe in the kitchen, make a fort with your kids, or walk your dog. Give yourself permission to smile and enjoy the benefits of positive emotions.

Periods of positive emotion allow us to see more possibilities, engage in creative tasks, and build new skills. Positive thinking creates an environment where we can be our best selves. So smile at your neighbor from a 6 foot distance, video call a friend or family member, and stay in the present moment. You are not alone. We are all in this together, even though we are apart.

References

Clear, James. "The Science of Positive Thinking: How Positive Thoughts Build Your Skills, Boost Your Health, and Improve Your Work." *The_Blog*, The Huffington Post, 10 July 2013. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/positive-thinking_b_3512202.

Frederickson, Barbara. *The Pursuit of Happiness*. <https://www.pursuit-of-happiness.org/history-of-happiness/barb-fredrickson/>. Accessed March 25, 2020.



UPPS CORNER

A guide to understanding policy updates and changes approved by President's Cabinet for UPPS's for which HR is the Senior Reviewer.



UPPS 04.04.01 | GENERAL WORKPLACE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and expectations for work schedules, work locations, and other general workplace conditions including:

- Working hours and schedules
- Place of work and telecommuting
- Notification of absence or tardiness
- Children in the workplace
- Dress code
- Disclosure of social security numbers
- Criminal offense reporting obligations
- Publication of employee photos
- Dissemination for this policy

Section 03.03

- Expanded guidance on allowing flexible work schedules.

Section 04.05

- Expanded options, process, and expectations for remote working.
- Changed level of approval for remote work/telecommuting
 - » Remote work requires department head approval
 - » Telecommuting requires VP approval
- Developed a new form to request remote work or telecommuting
 - » New form in SAP Employee Self-Service launched to replace the Adobe form process including an automated workflow.
 - » Departments can run a status report for their employees in SAP (Transaction ZRWT3).

Section 06.01

- Added more guidance regarding children in the workplace.

Next Revision Date

July 1, 2024

MAY

course offerings



Thursday, May 7, 2020

[WellCats Educational Series:](#)
[Understanding Your Credit Score](#) ^{NEW!}

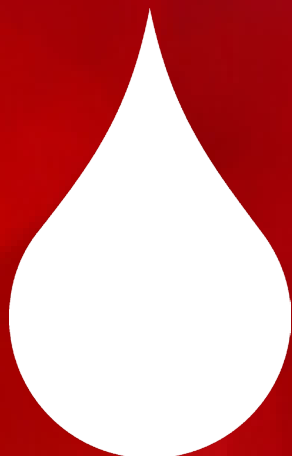
[Texas State Retirement Process](#)

Friday, May 22, 2020

[LGBTQIA Allies Training](#)

[GED PROGRAM](#) | Suspended until Further notice

TEXAS STATE BLOOD DRIVE



To follow CDC social distancing guidelines, this month's on-campus blood drive has been canceled. If you would still like to donate blood, please visit the [We Are Blood website](#) to schedule an appointment at any of their three sites or bloodmobile buses.



We remind all new staff employees hired during the past month that N.E.W. is designed to provide useful information to new staff regarding the resources, benefits, and opportunities associated with employment at Texas State University. For more info and to connect with other new bobcats access the official [new employee website](#).

N.E.W. II

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 2020

In accordance with CDC guidelines of social distancing, monthly N.E.W. II sessions will be held virtually via Zoom from 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. Visit our [updated N.E.W. II website](#) for more information.

Contact the Office of Human Resources with questions at hr_odc@txstate.edu or call 5.7899.

Join us in welcoming our new employee Bobcats!

Employees hired between March 1 – March 31

ADRIANA C. FERSACA BURGUERA

Administrative Assistant II

Department of Health Information Management

BENJAMIN DAVID SMITH

Systems Support Specialist II

Psychology

BRITTANY ASHTON NEEDHAM

Administrative Assistant II

Department of Physical Therapy

CHARLES JAMES FRAZIER

Student Development Specialist II

Student Center

CHRISTINA CASAREZ LUNA

Coordinator, Marketing & Promotions

Department of Engineering Technology

CHRISTOPHER LEE VILLALPANDO

Grounds Maintenance Worker II

Campus Recreation

EDUARDO HERNANDEZ

Academic Advisor I

Applied Arts Academic Advising Center

ELISABETH MARIE MCDERMAID

Cook

Child Development Center

JANEY VALDEZ

Data Entry Operator

Office of Undergraduate Admissions

JENNIFER SIMEON SMITH
Counseling Specialist
Counseling Center

JESSENIA BOBER
Administrative Assistant II
Dean of Students

JIMMY MELVIN HICKS II
Dispatcher
University Police

JOSEPH CHONG PENA
Programmer Analyst I
Texas School Safety Center

KIRA LEONIE WRIGHT
Supervisor, Instructional Media
University Libraries

LAUREN NICOLE PETERSEN
Senior Administrative Assistant
AVP, Academic Services

LINDSEY KAITLYN ROOKER
Coordinator, Testing Lab
Testing Evaluation and Measurement Center

MATTHEW AARON MARTIN
Athletics Intern
Strutters/Ticket/Marketing/Cheer

NADIA GONZALEZ
Accountant IV
Accounting Office

TAMMY ANNE SHARP
Director, Faculty & Academic Resources
Associate Provost, Academic Affairs

TINA LYNN HAYWARD
Administrative Assistant II
St. David's School of Nursing

VALERIE LOUISE TORREZ
Administrative Assistant I
Procurement and Strategic Sourcing

VICTORIA P. MENDIOLA
Financial Aid and Scholarship Advisor
Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships

Welcome, New Employee Bobcats!

BOBCATS ON THE MOVE

Congratulations to the following employees who were promoted or reclassified.

Employees promoted or reclassified between March 1 - March 31

ANTHONY ALLAN MALKOWSKI

Promoted to Senior Systems Administrator
from Systems Administrator II,
Core Systems

ASHLEY A. CARTER

Promoted to Corporal
from Police Officer,
University Police

DAVID DALE NOTEBOOM

Promoted to Field Maintenance Technician
from Grounds Maintenance Worker II,
Strahan

LINDA MARGARET REA

Promoted to Administrative Assistant II
from Administrative Assistant I,
Transportation Services

MATTHEW L. GREENGOLD

Promoted to Manager, Computer Lab
from Coordinator, Microcomputer Lab II,
University Libraries

MICHAEL RAY RODRIGUEZ

Promoted to Corporal
from Police Officer,
University Police

RODRIGO ALFONZO MANZANARES

Promoted to Sergeant
from Corporal,
University Police

XIAOYUAN JIANG

Reclassified to Coordinator, Round Rock
Campus
from Senior Administrative Assistant,
Round Rock Campus



New “SAVE AT HOME” CATEGORY!

The [Texas State University Employee Discount Program](#) now features a “Save @ Home” category that features offers that are intended to assist you during this challenging time.

Samsung | Save up to 40% on Smart TVs, soundbars, phones, laptops, and more.

HP | Save up to 35% when you stock up on computers and supplies for your home and office.

McAfee | Save up to 60% on virus protection for your devices.

Staples | Fill up on your ink and toner cartridges. Get 20% back in rewards when you buy ink and toner and get free next-day delivery.

Cox | Up to \$100 in savings for internet service!



Priscilla Hernandez

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH | APRIL 2020 Priscilla Hernandez

Procurement Specialist, University Libraries

Ms. Priscilla Hernandez, Procurement Specialist, University Libraries, was selected as the Texas State Employee of the Month for April 2020.

Priscilla is the Procurement Specialist for the Alkek Library. There are multiple departments which have varied needs and approximately 100 staff members. Priscilla researches options, gets pricing, sets up vendors, tracks purchases, reconciles spending, processes vendor payments, and coordinates all procurement documents. She is always willing to get multiple quotes and offer excellent alternative suggestions when an item isn't available or out of price range.

As a result of the Alkek Library renovation, Priscilla has had to procure all items for the post-renovation library. This not only included new furniture for the 1st, 3rd, and 4th floors, but also the hundreds of pieces of specialized equipment needed to make the new technology centers in the Alkek Library a success.

Priscilla does more than represent the quality desired by all employees at Texas State University, she embodies it. From the minute Priscilla hits the door each morning she makes it a point to greet her team and check in with her supervisor to give a rundown of what her day is going to look like and how she might need

assistance. Every purchase she makes is carefully thought out ensuring that she is not only meeting the policies and procedures set forth by the University, but that she is meeting the need of the requestor/customer. She has developed a great rapport with Procurement, Information Security, Materials Management, Informational Technology Business Office, and numerous other departments across campus. Time and time again, these departments rave about the customer service and quick response time that Administrative Services has, and this is largely due to Priscilla's tenacity for her job.

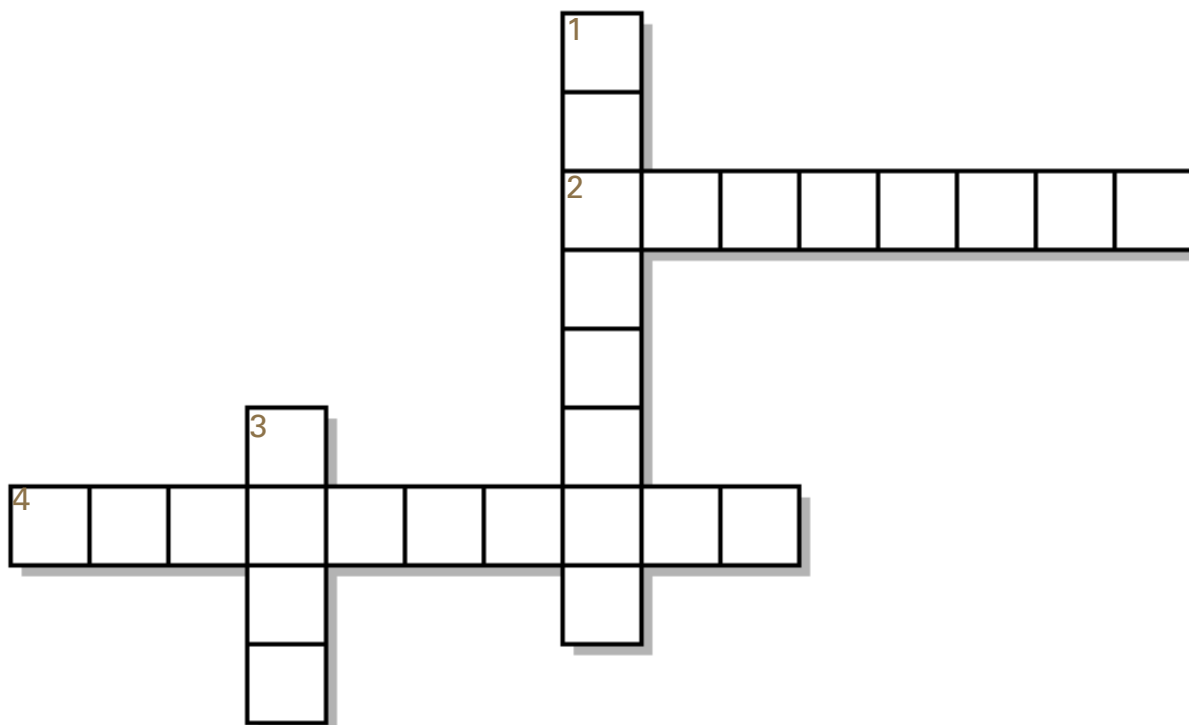
Priscilla has taken the time to develop solid working relationships with outside vendors. The relationships she has forged have proven to be vital especially during the Learning Commons equipment ordering process. Since this equipment is so specialized, Priscilla has had to jump through numerous hoops and hurdles just to get some of these items ordered. These "hurdles" have required additional information from the vendor above and beyond a normal vendor scope request. Most of the vendors have complied with little to no complaints, and some have even stepped up to help us out with providing additional documentation regarding sole-source or propriety equipment descriptions. These additional efforts from the vendors would not have been possible, if it wasn't for the strong working relationship Priscilla has developed. Priscilla's patience and kindness have been incredibly important for building these strong working relationships.

“Priscilla does more than represent the quality desired by all employees at Texas State University, she embodies it.”

Congratulations, Priscilla, on being recognized as the April 2020 Employee of the month!

HR Crossword Puzzle

Our first priority is the safety and well-being of our Bobcat community. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, prizes will not be given out at this time. Thank you for understanding. Readers are still invited to have some fun completing our **HR crossword puzzle**!



DOWN

1 _____ Family & Medical Leave provides up to 10 weeks of leave to employees whose child's school is closed.

3 New Employee Welcome will be held virtually via _____ until further notice.

ACROSS

2 Writing about a _____ experience is a great way to start and end your day!

4 Summer _____ starts June 22.

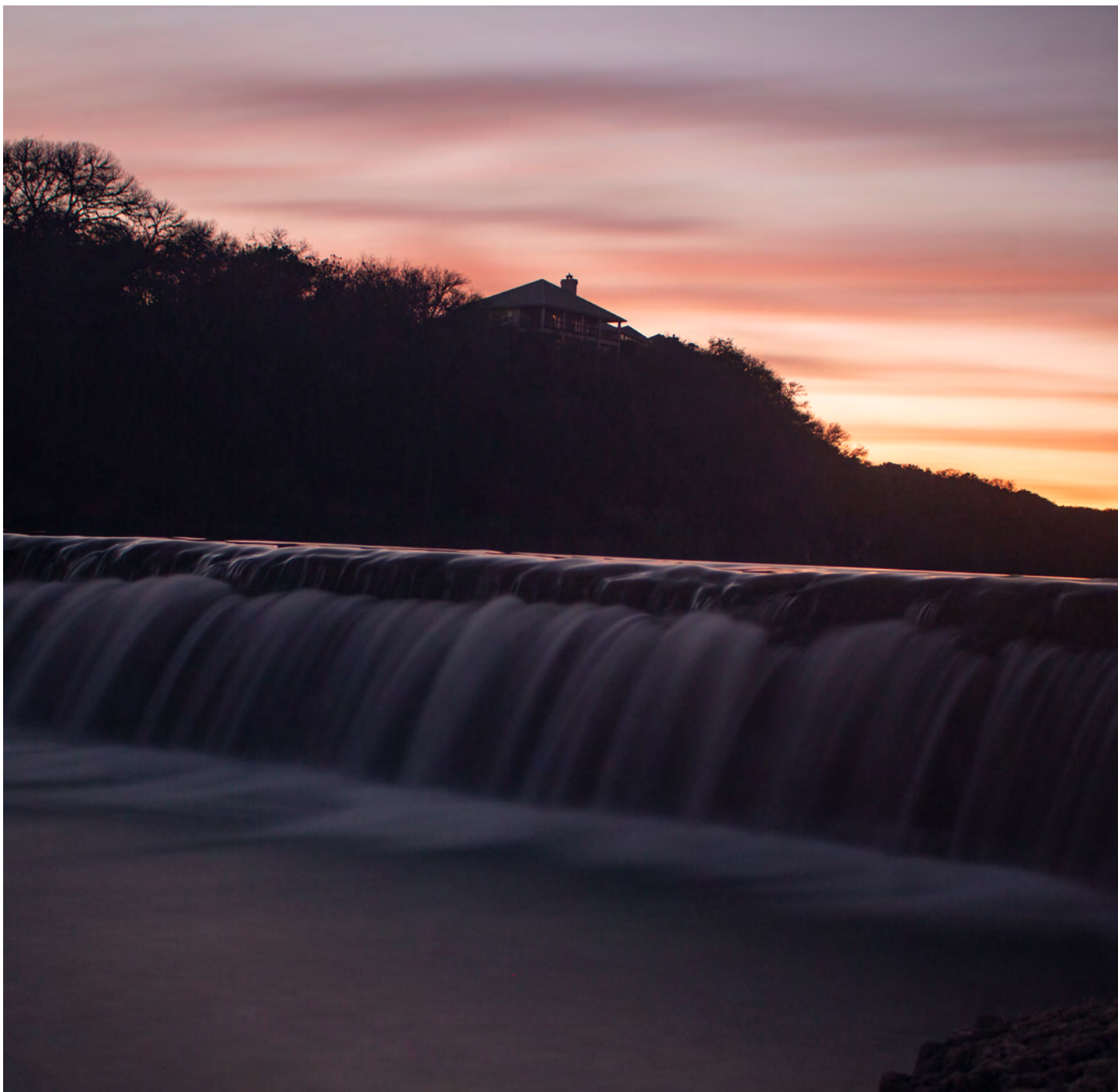


Photo by Jeremy Thomas



This information is available in alternate format upon request from the Office of Disability Services.