

What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking (formerly known as trafficking in persons) is a form of modern-day slavery. It is the illegal trade in human beings through abduction, the use or threat of force, deception, fraud or sale for the purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labor. Victims include women, men and children.



What is the prevalence of human trafficking?

- Between 600,000 and 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders annually.¹
- Between 14,500-17,500 people are trafficked into the U.S annually.²
- Human Trafficking provides organized crime annual profits between \$8-10 billion.³
- The U.S. is ranked as the third largest destination country for Trafficking.⁴
- Hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens are estimated to be trafficked within the U.S.⁵

These are just best estimates. No one really knows the true numbers of trafficking victims.

¹ U.S. Department of State. (2004). Trafficking in Person's Report June 2004 (Publication No. 11150), Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

² Ibid.

³ Ashcroft, 2004

⁴ The Polaris Project. (2004). National Trafficking Alert System Criminal Justice Briefing Materials (Version 6), Washington, DC: The Polaris Project

⁵ Ibid.

How To Identify a Trafficking Victim

- Why and how did the person come into the country? Many victims have come willingly when promised a good job.
- How was the person recruited? Many victims are recruited by acquaintances from the same ethnic group or country of origin.
- Does the person have identification papers? Many times the traffickers have custody of the victim's documents and identification papers.
- Does the person owe money to their "employer?"
- When encountering a group, does a "spokesperson" tend to speak on the group's behalf and not allow anyone else to converse with authorities?
- Does the person seem submissive or fearful?
- Can you detect any physical or psychological abuse?



Is there a state law prohibiting trafficking?

- The 78th Texas State Legislature passed H.B. 2096 (Penal Code Ch. 20A.02), which prohibits trafficking.
- The law became effective Sept. 1, 2003.
- The offense is a second-degree felony, with an enhancement to a first degree felony for involving a child younger than 14 years of age, or of any trafficking offense that results in the death of a trafficked person.



Why don't trafficking victims just go to the police?

1. Most victims do not speak English and do not understand American culture.
2. Most victims do not know what city or state they are in because they are often forced to move.
3. Most victims have a strong sense of distrust of authorities for fear of deportation or from prior experiences with corruption within the system.
4. Most do not identify themselves as a victim.
5. Confidentiality is vital for victims of human trafficking.

Is human trafficking a punishable crime?

Human trafficking is considered a federal crime in the U.S. under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act was reauthorized in 2003 providing an additional \$200 million to be spent on fighting domestic human trafficking.

Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 describes "severe forms of trafficking in persons" as:

- 1) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion or in which the person induced to perform such an act is under 18.
- 2) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion, for the purpose of subjecting that person to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery.

Do human trafficking victims qualify For benefits?

A person who is identified by law enforcement as a victim of 'severe forms of trafficking' may be referred for certification from the Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement.

They may be eligible for:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Medicaid
- Health Screening
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Food Stamps
- Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance
- Refugee Social Services
- Immigration Relief-Protection includes T Visa, U Visa, or Continued Presence Status

For Help and Resources in Texas

Health and Human Services Trafficking Information and Referral
1-888-373-7888

Catholic Social Service Network for Victims
anywhere in US: 202-541-3385

Mosaic Family Services, Inc.
Dallas
214-821-5393
www.mosaicservices.org

YMCA International
Houston
Trafficked Persons Assistance Program
713-339-9015 for victim services
*After 5 p.m. call 713-339-9783
www.ymcahouston.org

Federal Trafficking-Related Links

The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000
www.state.gov/documents/organization/10492.pdf

The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection and Reauthorization Act of 2003
www.state.gov/documents/organization/28255.pdf

Office of Refugee Resettlement Trafficking Efforts
www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/actvict.html

Office for Victims of Crime Trafficking Effort
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/help/tip.html



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Human Trafficking



The voice of sexual violence survivors in Texas.

National Sexual Assault Hotline
Free. Confidential. 24/7.

1-800-656-HOPE