

# ALABAMA UNIFORM HUMAN TRAFFICKING INITIATIVE

OCTOBER 2020





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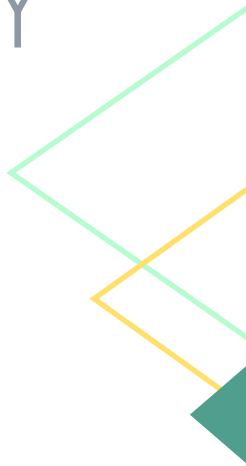


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We need to accurately understand both the number of human trafficking incidences, and the types of human trafficking that are occurring in Alabama.

”

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is incumbent upon us as a community of stakeholders in Alabama to determine to what degree the issue of human trafficking is impacting our state. Understanding this will enable the identification of appropriate resources to mitigate the problem and develop capacity where needed to address this issue in a responsible and sustainable way.

Not every issue that impacts communities in Alabama requires a statewide multilateral coordinated effort. The allocation of finite and often scarce resources demands a careful evaluation to determine the appropriate level of response. When considering the issue of human trafficking in Alabama it is essential to first obtain a basic understanding of its prevalence and scope in the state. The findings from those efforts inform the level of response needed. Clearly a prevalence of human trafficking exists as evidenced, at a minimum, by prosecutions in the state. The question is not simply does human trafficking exist in Alabama, but is it happening at a level or frequency that would indicate an increased means of mitigation is necessary? In addition to the level of prevalence in the state, we must also determine the scope of the issue. If the prevalence is concerned with the number of incidences, the scope is concerned with identifying the types and locations of human trafficking in the state. We need to accurately understand both the number of human trafficking incidences and the types of human trafficking that are occurring in Alabama. Prevalence speaks to the level of response needed, while the scope speaks to the types of resources, investigations, and interventions needed.

## ALABAMA HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESOURCES

- Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force
- North Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force
- End It Alabama Human Trafficking Summit
- Alabama Attorney General
- Lived Experience Experts
- National Children's Advocacy Center
- Jefferson County Children's Policy Center
- West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force
- Alabama Fusion Center, ALEA
- Alabama Department of Human Resources
- Homeland Security
- Well House
- Camille Place
- Trafficking Hope
- The Family Sunshine Center
- Blanket Fort Hope
- The Rose Center
- Safe Harbor

Several resources have been mobilized over the past few years to address human trafficking in the state. The Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force under the leadership of Pat McKay, who has been one of our state's strongest voices for the victims of human trafficking for over a decade, is a tremendous resource to the state of Alabama. In conjunction with the North Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force, they provide training and awareness through the annual End It Alabama Human Trafficking Summit.

The Alabama Attorney General has been a constant voice against offenders of human trafficking and in support of the victims and survivors of human trafficking. Assistant Attorney General Audrey Jordan has been a leading voice through her position on the Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force, and her tireless efforts to train and educate law enforcement and community groups throughout the state. Only with the leadership of The Attorney Generals Office will we continue to grow in our ability to disrupt this crime in our state.

Alabama gains insight from those who have lived experience. We could not do the work we do properly without including the voices of Lived Experience Experts. For this project, we have relied heavily on the input provided by Dixie Shannon. She has contributed to the development of this Initiative, as well as numerous ongoing anti-trafficking efforts in the state. She is an invaluable contributor in the work of fighting human trafficking in Alabama, and her insight has informed and guided our process and research.

The National Children's Advocacy Center (NCAC) is using a powerful co-location model in Huntsville that allows seamless collaboration between law enforcement, mental health, prosecutors and social services to support child victims of human trafficking. Under the leadership of Chris Newlin, they provide guidance and training to Children Advocacy Centers across Alabama and throughout the world. Their numerous online training resources and annual conference are assets to the state.



The prevalence [of human trafficking] speaks to the level of response needed.





The scope  
[of human  
trafficking]  
speaks to  
the types of  
resources,  
investigations,  
& interventions  
needed.



The Jefferson County Children's Policy Council joined forces with the Family Court and Jefferson County Probation Department to create the Child Trafficking Solutions Project. In about two years, because of the tireless efforts of Jan Bell, Carrie Hill and many others, they run a special family court docket for trafficking vulnerable minors, and have developed a proactive multi-disciplinary team (MDT) and conduct trainings in the greater Jefferson County area for both law enforcement and the community.

Also about two years ago, under the leadership of Lt. Darren Beams of the Tuscaloosa Police Department, the West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force was created. They have demonstrated leadership in our law enforcement community with their demand suppression reverse sting operations, John Schools, and community training. They provide a great example of collaborative law enforcement efforts.

Numerous local law enforcement agencies have received human trafficking training from Teresa Collier from the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) who works as the state's human trafficking analyst for the Fusion Center. She has conducted many trainings for our local law enforcement partners around the state and has trained hundreds of local officers in human trafficking identification best practices. In addition, she is the key contact for assistance in trafficking cases for law enforcement in the state.

The leadership of our federal partners is strong. Doug Gilmer, the Special Agent in Charge for Homeland Security Investigations, has been a resource to local, state and federal law enforcement and has provided extensive support to the Child Trafficking Solutions Project and many nonprofit organizations in the state using his expertise and resources to support their efforts. Assistant United States Attorneys Leann White and Hollie Reed are providing leadership with the federal taskforces in their commitment of continuous improvement of the Northern and Middle District Task Forces towards becoming

greater resources to state and local law enforcement, and to become operational task forces.

The prevention, intervention and housing services provided by our nonprofit and faith communities through the WellHouse, Camille Place, Trafficking Hope, The Family Sunshine Center, Blanket Fort Hope, The Rose Center, Safe Harbor, and others has been a critical link between law enforcement and the victims. These combined agencies also provide much of the after care and restorative services needed, especially for our adult victims. The leaders, employees and volunteers of these important organizations

have invested countless hours, around the clock, often at their own expense, to ensure that both our law enforcement partners and survivors are supported.

The Department of Human Resource (DHR), our state child welfare agency, has addressed the significance of the problem by creating their Human Trafficking Protocol. This is the first state agency that has created a protocol addressing this issue, and their leadership in this area has provided inspiration for this effort to examine how human trafficking might be better addressed in the state.

In October of 2017, The University of Alabama School of Social Work was awarded a grant from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to improve outcomes for children and youth who are victims of human trafficking through the development of a statewide, victim-centered, trauma-informed, multidisciplinary system of screening and training. Additionally, the project designed and implemented a searchable and growing database of more than 400 resources that provide services to meet the needs of victims of human trafficking in the state. We completed this through a research and resource program named BEAMS (Bringing the Exploitation of Alabama's Minors to a Stop). The BEAMS name was created by one of our state's anti-human trafficking leaders Carrie Hill, Deputy Probation Officer with the Jefferson County Probation Department. The seminal accomplishment of BEAMS is the Alabama Uniform Human Trafficking Initiative (AUHTI) represented in this document.

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The purpose of this report is to disseminate the findings of our research and to offer recommended next steps towards solutions.

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# PURPOSE



# PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to disseminate the findings of our research and to offer recommended next steps towards solutions. It will be disseminated to all of the agencies and organizations involved in the implementation of the AUHTI processes and protocol, both physically and electronically. Additionally, it will be disseminated through trainings and presentations within the state of Alabama. This report has been written and structured to accomplish those ends. It is not intended to be academic, but rather accessible for the general audience who would be responsible to implement the findings.

The applied research in this report is intended to be applicable to specific entities and agencies in the state of Alabama. Those specific applications are collectively referred to as the Alabama Uniform Human Trafficking Initiative (AUHTI) and it provides the game plan for the implementation of the recommended next steps. Additionally, parts of this AUHTI is prescriptive, especially the sections addressing the Incident Response Protocol (IRP) and the Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT). These sections will require specific training for the agencies and organizations identified as part of these two processes. The processes for the required training and assistance in implementation are addressed in the subsequent sections, and in particular in our recommendations.

“ This report has been written to be accessible for the general audience who would be responsible to implement the findings. ”

# INTRODUCTION



# INTRODUCTION

Working with the various professionals throughout the state who are providing services to victims and survivors of human trafficking in Alabama has been an honor for our team. The findings and recommendations of this initiative document reflect the insight gained from focus groups, meetings, and countless conversations with those professionals. These honest and frank conversations provided a depth of insight that is essential to successful outcomes and to continued growth.

Ironically, perhaps the greatest advantage our team has is that we are not involved in the day-to-day work. Separation from the work has many limitations, but the distinct and necessary advantage it provides is objectivity. Conversely, one of the important limitations is a potential disconnection from experience. To mitigate this, our research team conducted both formal and informal meetings with our partners and engaged in numerous clarifying conversations. Our partners not only provided the essential connection to applied research, but they also participated in crafting the actual language of this initiative. This document has been critiqued and refined by key leaders in law enforcement (local, state and federal), victim service providers, social service partners, and survivors. It is the trust from our partners around the state, and the aggregate of their experience and expertise, that enabled this extensive research, and produced this initiative.

The research conducted to ascertain the number of victims of human trafficking in Alabama was conducted in 2018 and reflects the experience from 2017 of the professionals who participated. We have earnestly attempted to gauge the prevalence of human trafficking in Alabama as a part of our effort to determine the scope of the problem and the needs of this population within the state. Because a database integrating information from relevant entities does not exist, we are unable to provide precise and verifiable data on trafficking victims in the state. Even if that data existed and was available to be analyzed, it would still underestimate the actual number of victims. The challenges of identifying victims still leave a missing segment, a hidden population, that is unknown to any child welfare, social services, or law enforcement personnel in the state and not reflected in any database. This occurs in part, when social service, child welfare, or other entities fail to identify trafficking victims, and from instances when law enforcement file charges other than trafficking, even when trafficking is suspected because other charges

may be easier to build a case for, and have a greater likelihood of successful prosecution.

Based on a weighted model developed using focus group data collected, we are confident in the estimates we are able to provide: **In terms of prevalence, in 2017, approximately 1,167 suspected victims of human trafficking (sex and labor) had contact with a professional in Alabama, of which 665 (57%) were minors.** The nature of these contacts may have been medical provision, counseling, law enforcement, mental health, or other professional services. These individuals may or may not have been identified as victims of human trafficking at that time, and therefore may or may not have engaged in either the criminal justice system or service provision for human trafficking survivors. We have extremely high confidence that our methodology and the resulting estimates responsibly indicate the **minimum** number of potential victims in the state. The reader is encouraged to see Appendix 1, titled "Research Methodology" for a full explanation of how those numbers were derived.

Through our research we heard repeatedly that two overlooked forms of trafficking taking place in Alabama are familial trafficking and labor trafficking. Familial trafficking is especially difficult to identify, as the indicators could be easily misidentified or unidentified by professionals engaged in the minor's life who have not been trained on human trafficking. Labor trafficking was also identified by participants as having a significant presence in agricultural work and animal processing in Alabama, and as potentially including child labor. In short, **in terms of the scope of human trafficking in Alabama, just about every form of both sex and labor trafficking that exists in the world is happening in our state.**

Instances of suspected human trafficking are occurring throughout the entire state. Every region of the state revealed indicators of human trafficking; the concept of the I-20 Superhighway as a primary means of sex trafficking does not provide the complete picture. In fact, according to Polaris, while there are a large number of calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline in and around the greater Birmingham area, a clearer concentration of calls come from along I-85 and across AL-80 through Selma and Demopolis (Polaris, 2018). In the northeast corner of the state, it appears the interstates are avoided completely in favor of state highways connecting Anniston, Gadsden, and Huntsville. **Geographically, trafficking occurs throughout the state, in big cities, small towns, and rural areas, and no county or region is immune to it.**

The individuals involved in human trafficking in Alabama—the traffickers, consumers, and victims—share no singular pattern or characteristics. Traffickers and consumers have been primarily adults, but minors have also been represented as offenders, and there are no racial or ethnic discernible patterns. The victims in the state reflect common national patterns. The racial or ethnic demographics of victims of sex trafficking tend to represent the population wherein they are victimized, and our focus groups revealed that victims of labor trafficking tend to

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVALENCE (ALABAMA, 2017)

**1167**

suspected victims

**57%**

of suspected victims  
were minors

The scope of human trafficking in Alabama includes almost every form of both sex & labor trafficking that exists in the world.



The application of these recommendations to Alabama is, and should remain, an evolving process with planned evaluations and revisions to ensure continuous improvement.



be foreign nationals arriving predominantly from South East Asian, South American and Caribbean countries. **In general, sex trafficking victims in Alabama tend to be domestic, from Alabama and surrounding states, and victims of labor trafficking (or a combination of labor and sex trafficking) are often foreign nationals.**

Alabama has federal, state, county, and local level agencies with varying degrees of capacities and resources. Some regions and communities have non-governmental organizations (NGOs), churches, and civic organizations providing additional services and programs within their areas. As a result, each county or region has different abilities to respond to this issue. This document takes that into consideration and is intended to provide a summary of the current response capacities in the state of Alabama to human trafficking, make recommendations that build on existing strengths, and develop new processes and capacities towards the mitigation of human trafficking in Alabama.

Some of the recommendations in this document are aspirational, while others are directive. Throughout most of the narrative sections we include aspirational recommendations. Some of them might be easily adopted while others might take concentrated effort to employ. Each recommendation would benefit the overall objectives to mitigate human trafficking in the state but might be most effective when implemented in conjunction with another recommendation, or in a later phase in our statewide strategic plan. The recommendations that are directive are found in the Recommendation section where they are explained more precisely.

The recommendations, conclusions and ideas for sustainability outlined herein are intended to be a starting point for a more strategic statewide approach to human trafficking. They are based on research and best practices, but their application to Alabama is, and should remain, an evolving process with planned evaluations and revisions to ensure continuous improvement.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Eliminating human trafficking requires an approach to the issue guided by four principles: comprehensive, collaborative, trauma-informed, and victim-centered/offender-focused. Including only one or two of these principles will not result in justice, or restoration for the victims, but rather small victories in isolation, and often to the detriment, of the others.

## COMPREHENSIVE

A comprehensive approach to human trafficking ensures that our training, investigations, prosecutions, and service provision proactively address all categories of both labor and sex trafficking, for both adults and minors, males and females, and for citizens and foreign nationals regardless of citizenship status. Additionally, a comprehensive approach encourages law enforcement activities that reduce demand and disrupt supply, addressing both consumers and suppliers of human trafficking.

## COLLABORATIVE

A collaborative approach to human trafficking understands that, while each partner has differing, and sometimes opposing goals, perspectives, and responsibilities, each party is necessary and important to the goal of seeking justice and supporting victims/survivors of human trafficking. Moreover, when these parties (individuals or agencies) do not collaborate, they not only limit overall effectiveness, but subvert justice and victim services. Collaboration therefore encourages open and honest dialogue, the sharing of data and resources, and a commitment to shared goals.

## TRAUMA-INFORMED

A trauma-informed approach to human trafficking involves agencies and individuals recognizing the signs and indicators of trauma

in individuals, families, and those who work with them, as it presents to that profession. That knowledge is then broadly integrated into organizational or personal policies, procedures, and practices with careful consideration given to mitigating re-traumatization.

## VICTIM-CENTERED/ OFFENDER-FOCUSED

A victim-centered/offender-focused approach prioritizes the victim's safety and well-being in all matters and procedures. It understands that, because of the trauma experienced from their victimization, victims/survivors of human trafficking often present trauma responses that are disruptive and not conducive to investigation or service provision. Therefore, a victim-centered approach is one where the professional and their agency adapts their processes, protocols, and practices to mitigate additional trauma, and creates an environment most conducive for the victim/survivor during investigation or service provision. Being offender-focused understands that the safety of the victim/survivor and community requires investigative and prosecutorial actions, and that when the likelihood of re-traumatization has been mitigated, every effort to support those functions should be made. An offender-focused approach works to mitigate future victimizations by removing traffickers and johns from the community.



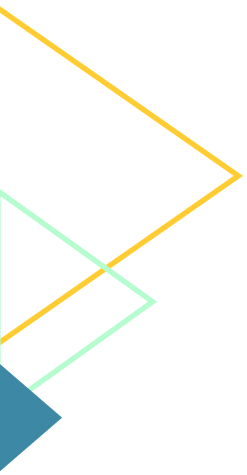
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The guiding principles of our approach are to be comprehensive collaborative, trauma-informed, & victim-centered/offender-focused.

”



# TERMS



# TERMS

A glossary of definitions and terms has been included in this document as Appendix 2, however, a few specific terms are used extensively in this document, and for clarity, are defined here for the reader at the outset. Some of these terms may be used in different ways in different context, however, these are the definitions used for the following terms in this document. The specific terminology used is less important than the application of the concepts.

## ADVOCATE

The Advocate is an IRP team member, and in child trafficking cases, MDT partner providing the voice of the victim/survivor to the MDT. The advocate serves as the bridge of trust providing consistency to the victim/survivor during their continuum of care.

## CARE NAVIGATOR

Each victim/survivor of human trafficking should be assigned a Care Navigator to coordinate the care for the victim/survivor and help them navigate through the necessary processes and systems. In some instances, this role may be a dual role with the Advocate.

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In this document the term human trafficking is inclusive of all forms of human trafficking including sex trafficking and labor trafficking, and all other forms of human trafficking as defined under state and federal law.

## MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS (MDT)

MDTs are regional collaborative teams that may cover one or more counties. The focus of an MDT is to provide for the safety and well-being of child victims/survivors. Though Alabama's existing MDTs have a larger scope than just the issue of human trafficking, the protocol outlined in this document applies only to their response

to those individuals suspected of being victims of human trafficking. Each MDT may have their own protocols that should be followed, such as notifying an MDT Coordinator of new cases. The MDT is an indispensable entity in the work to combat human trafficking and coordinating service provision of the victim/survivor.

## TASK FORCE

A task force is a strategic collaboration focused on one of three primary objectives: statewide oversight, joint operations and investigations, and training. Each of these objectives serve a specific purpose and are addressed more fully later in this document.

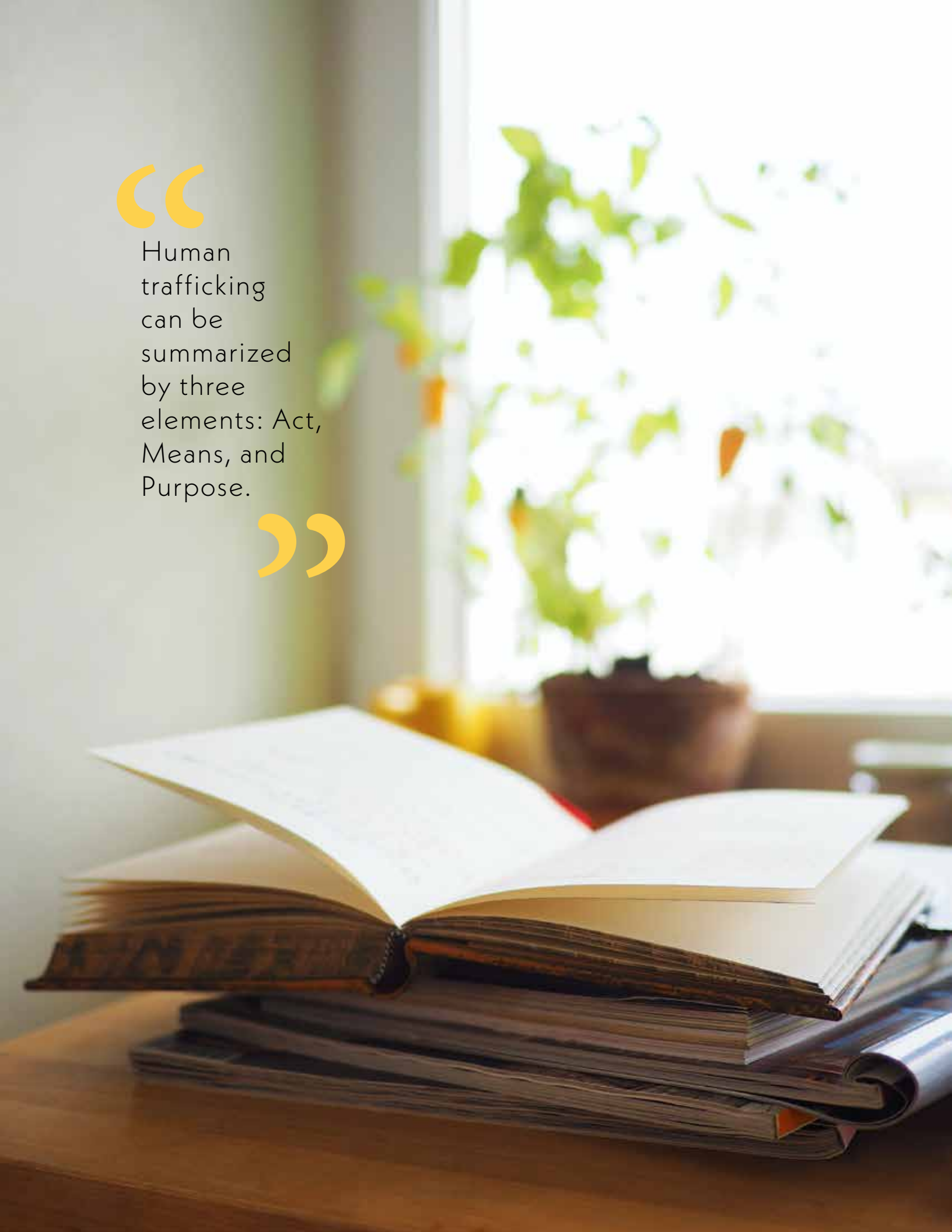
## VICTIM/SURVIVOR

This Initiative uses the terms "victim" and "survivor" to refer to individuals who were trafficked. The terms "victim" and "survivor" of human trafficking have specific, and at times, nuanced implications, legally, sociologically, etc. For simplicity in this document we will use the terms interchangeably or will use the term "victim/survivor" when specifying the differences is not necessary for clarity.

“

Human trafficking can be summarized by three elements: Act, Means, and Purpose.

”



# DEFINITION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING



# DEFINITION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## FEDERAL

Forced labor in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1589 is defined as:

- a. Whoever knowingly provides or obtains the labor or services of a person by any one of, or by any combination of, the following means--
  1. by means of force, threats of force, physical restraint, or threats of physical restraint to that person or another person;
  2. by means of serious harm or threats of serious harm to that person or another person;
  3. by means of the abuse or threatened abuse of law or legal process; or
  4. by means of any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause the person to believe that, if that person did not perform such labor or services, that person or another person would suffer serious harm or physical restraint.
- b. Whoever knowingly benefits, financially or by receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture which has engaged in the providing or obtaining of labor or services by any of the means described in subsection (a), knowing or in reckless disregard of the fact that the venture has engaged in the providing or obtaining of labor or services by any of such means.

Sex trafficking of children or by force, fraud, or coercion, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1591, is defined as:

- a. Whoever knowingly
  1. in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, or within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States, recruits, entices, harbors, transports, provides, obtains, advertises, maintains, patronizes, or solicits by any means a person; or
  2. benefits, financially or by receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture which has engaged in an act described in violation of paragraph (1), knowing, or, except where the act constituting the violation of paragraph (1) is advertising, in reckless disregard of the fact, that means of force, threats of force, fraud, coercion, or any combination of such means will be used to cause the person to engage in a commercial sex act, or that the person has not attained the age of 18 years and will be caused to engage in a commercial sex act.

# STATE

Under Alabama law, an individual commits first-degree human trafficking when:

1. He or she knowingly subjects another person to labor servitude or sexual servitude.
2. He or she knowingly obtains, recruits, entices, solicits, induces, threatens, isolates, harbors, holds, restrains, transports, provides, or maintains any minor for the purpose of causing a minor to engage in sexual servitude.
3. He or she knowingly gives monetary consideration or any other thing of value to engage in any sexual conduct with a minor or an individual he or she believes to be a minor.

An individual commits second-degree human trafficking when:

1. A person knowingly benefits, financially or by receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture or engagement for the purpose of sexual servitude or labor servitude.
2. A person knowingly recruits, entices, solicits, induces, harbors, transports, holds, restrains, provides, maintains, subjects, or obtains by any means another person for the purpose of labor servitude or sexual servitude.

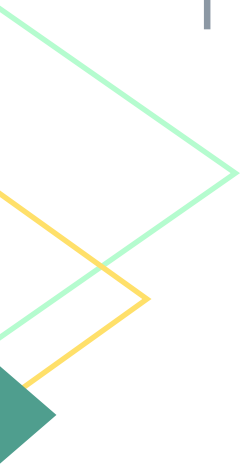
See Ala. Code § 13A-6-152-153 (1975). \* Notably, the element of coercion or deception is not required to establish the trafficking of a minor. Given a minor is defined as an individual who is under the age of 19, the element of coercion or deception is not required when the victim is 18 years or younger. See Ala. Code § 13A-6-151(5) (1975).

## ACT + MEANS + PURPOSE

One consistent concern voiced in our focus groups throughout the state was there are too many definitions of human trafficking. Though there are international, federal, and state legal language for human trafficking, consistency can be found through all three. Human trafficking can be summarized by three elements: Act, Means, and Purpose. The below graph from the United Nations is helpful:



# INCIDENT RESPONSE PROTOCOL





# INCIDENT RESPONSE PROTOCOL

The Incident Response Protocol (IRP) refers to the response and coordinated activities required any time a response is needed to investigate a potential instance of human trafficking. When the incident response includes a potential victim of any age, at least three professionals must respond and work collaboratively to ensure the safety of all parties involved, initiate an investigation, assess the needs of the victim, and promote victim stability.

Concerning the age of the victim, it is the responsibility of the state to provide these services for a minor in every circumstance. In these instances, the IRP team should be members of the MDT. Since Alabama does not currently have a comparable resource for adults, best efforts should be made to provide consistent and comprehensive services to adult victims. However, the rights of adults to make decisions on their own behalf should be respected, and if they refuse services from any of these partners, their wishes should be respected unless doing so is not prudent for their safety or the safety of others. See "Adult Victims" in the MDT section for more information.

The responsibilities of these three parties can be summarized by Protection, Provision, and Presence. The following three entities shall be made aware that a potential victim of human trafficking has been identified and respond accordingly to the IRP:

- Law Enforcement (Protection)
- Appropriate Social Service Agency (Provision)
- Advocate (Presence)\*

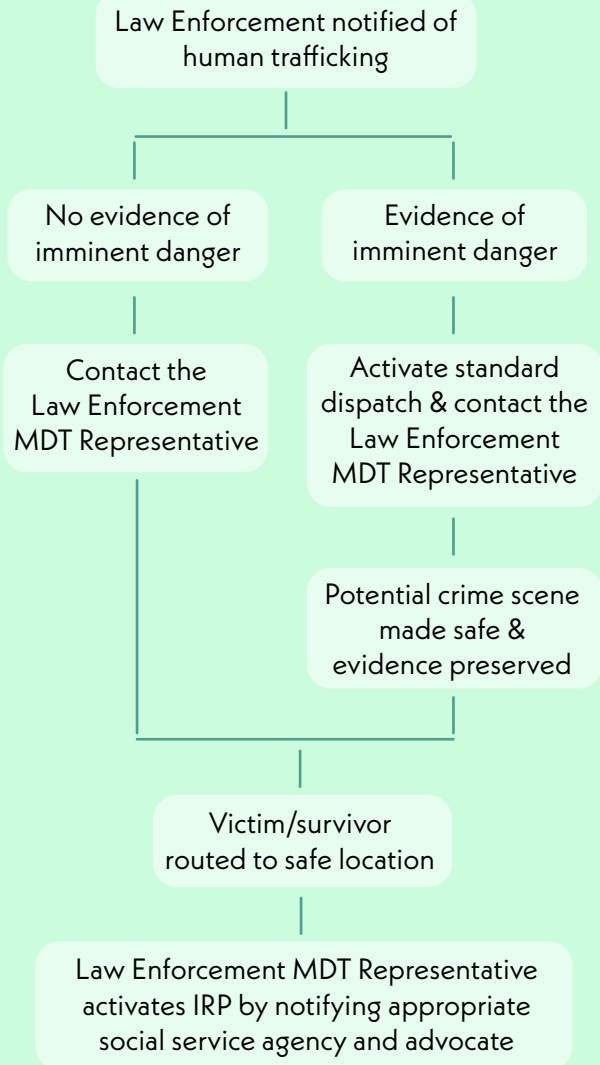
*\*In some areas the Advocate may serve a dual role as a Care Navigator due to limited resources. This role is discussed in the Case Management section.*



The roles and responsibilities of Law Enforcement, Social Service Agencies, and Advocates are equally important. Together this IRP team creates a synergy that ensures the highest possible care and professionalism.



## FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT



Law enforcement will ensure the overall safety of the scene and protection of the victim. A representative from social services will ensure the basic needs of the victim are provided and service provision is started. An advocate should be present to stabilize the victim and ensure his/her voice and interests are represented.

When responding to an instance of suspected human trafficking all responding agencies must adhere to a trauma-informed and victim-centered/offender-focused approach. Each of the three responding agencies must practice situational awareness and be mindful of the safety of everyone involved.

While the roles and responsibilities of each of the three professionals are equally important, together this IRP team creates a synergy that ensures the highest possible care and professionalism. Though each role is indispensable there is an obvious need for the prioritization for the security of the scene and persons involved to be established in order to ensure the safety of all parties during the provision of other services. Once safety has been established, direct services to the victim can begin.

During an incident response it is essential that each of the three professionals adhere to the four guiding principles of collaborative and comprehensive efforts that are trauma-informed and victim-centered/offender-focused. Their engagement should reflect a mutual respect of the value that each partner brings to the response. The responsibilities for protection, provision, and presence are not in a hierarchy of importance but rather together result in the desired outcome. In practical considerations, this means that each of the three parties have an equally authoritative voice in the decisions made. The nature of collaborative relationships requires mutual trust; collaborative processes have no chain of command. Best practices affirm the highest quality of service is rendered when all three initial responders work together in the best interest of the victim/survivor, in an environment of mutual trust and respect.

# NOTIFICATION PROTOCOL

Suspected incidents of human trafficking are reported by members of the community through a variety of methods. Notification by a community member or other professional might be made to law enforcement, social services, a non-governmental organization (NGO), or a hotline. The below processes describe the protocol that should be observed in the various reporting situations.

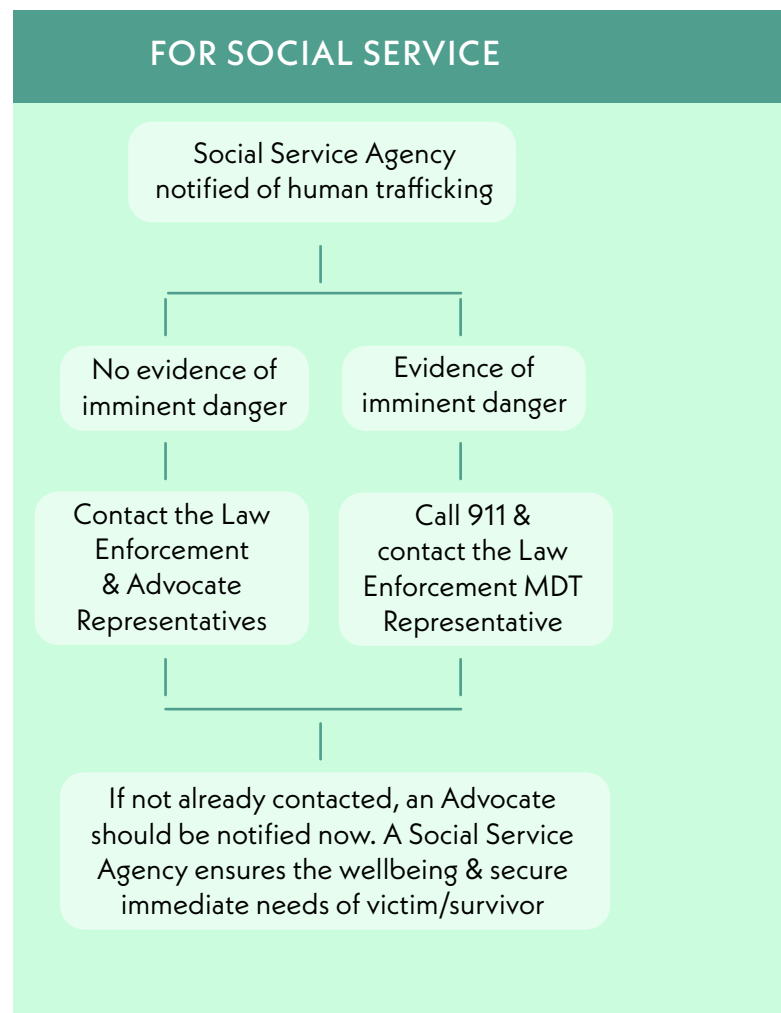
## LAW ENFORCEMENT

When law enforcement receives a notification and determines that an instance of human trafficking is possible, they should immediately notify the Law Enforcement IRP representative in their area who will respond and begin an initial investigation. In an emergent situation, standard dispatch protocols should be followed while the Law Enforcement IRP partner is being notified.

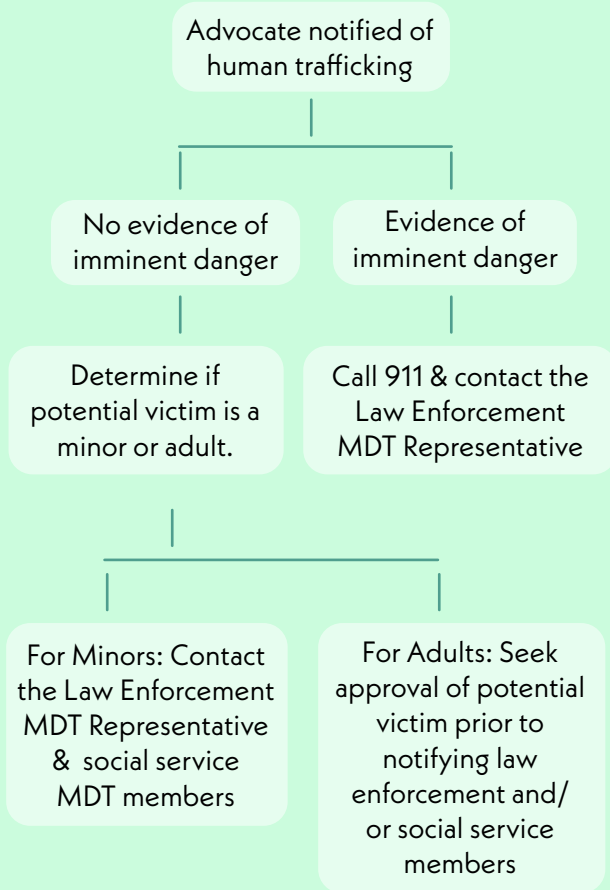
Law Enforcement will control the scene to ensure that the potential crime scene is made safe and potential evidence is preserved. If it is determined that this may be an instance of human trafficking, and a victim/survivor is present, the victim/survivor will be routed to a hospital, police station, CAC, or other safe location. The Law Enforcement partner shall activate the IRP by immediately notifying the appropriate social service agency and the advocate to advise them of the situation and request their response to the location. Human trafficking cases are complex, and it is best practice to confer with the prosecutor as soon as possible to ensure all relevant evidence is collected.

## SOCIAL SERVICE

When any social service agency is made aware of a potential emergent situation involving a potential victim of human trafficking, they shall immediately notify the Law Enforcement representative of the IRP team, who should respond and assume control of the investigation. If that person is not available to respond immediately or if an immediate danger is present, the social service agency shall call 911.



## FOR ADVOCATE



When any social service agency is made aware of a non-emergent situation involving a potential case of human trafficking involving a minor, they shall activate the IRP team by immediately notifying the Law Enforcement representative and Advocate of the IRP team, who should respond within the "response times" below to begin an investigation and ensure services are offered, respectively. The primary responsibilities of social service providers are to ensure the victim/survivor's wellbeing and care for their immediate needs including medical, housing, mental health, necessary clothing, and nutrition.

When any social service agency is made aware of a non-emergent situation of an adult who is potentially a victim of human trafficking, they should seek the approval of the potential victim before making the law enforcement notification. Efforts should be made to refer to the IRP partners whenever possible.

### ADVOCATE

When the Advocate is made aware of an emergent situation involving a potential victim of human trafficking, they shall immediately notify the Law Enforcement representative of the IRP team. If that person is not available to respond immediately or if an immediate danger is present, the advocate shall call 911. The Law Enforcement representative of the IRP team should be notified as soon as possible and assume control of the investigation.

When the Advocate is made aware of a non-emergent situation involving a potential victim of human trafficking who is a minor, they shall activate the IRP by immediately notifying the Law Enforcement and social service IRP team members, who should respond within the "response time" guidelines below to begin an investigation and ensure services are offered, respectively.

When an advocate is made aware of a non-emergent situation of an adult who is potentially a victim of human trafficking, they should seek the approval of the potential victim before notifying law enforcement and/or social service members of

the IRP. Efforts should be made to refer to the IRP partners whenever possible.

In areas with fewer resources, the role of "Presence" filled by the Advocate might be fulfilled by the Care Navigator. Each MDT will have a Care Navigator, but, in areas that do not have the resources for both an Advocate and a Care Navigator, one person could assume the responsibilities of both roles. However, the Advocate is the better choice for the IRP partner, as they are the party focused on building a relationship with the victim/survivor.

The primary responsibilities of the Advocate or Care Navigator during the initial response are the care for the emotional wellbeing of the victim and attempting to facilitate victim stability. The Advocate or Care Navigator will attempt to build rapport and trust with the victim and be their voice in the MDT. This is essential because it facilitates a more thorough and efficient initial investigation by law enforcement without potentially doing further harm. Additionally, it supports the social service partner as they attempt to coordinate for immediate needs and affirms the dignity and intrinsic value of the victim.

Beyond the initial response, the Advocate should have the flexibility to maintain their role in working with each victim/survivor should they be involved in a case in another location, whenever feasible. For instance, if an Advocate has developed a relationship with a victim/survivor in the Birmingham area, and the same victim/survivor has a new case in the Montgomery area, the established relationship between the

victim/survivor and the Advocate should be seen as a strength for the new investigation. While it may be beyond the Advocate's typical geographic area, they should be given the resources necessary to continue that relationship, to the benefit of both the victim/survivor and the investigation whenever possible.

Should a victim leave the geographic region an Advocate can reasonably cover, for instance moving to another state, the Advocate should attempt to establish a new Advocate for the victim/survivor in their new location. Providing continuity through that transition can alleviate some of the stress that could result in a trauma response, or create new trauma, leading to a lapse for the victim/survivor.

## RESPONSE TIMES

The response time will vary from county to county and should be agreed upon by each IRP team. The following can serve as guidelines:

- When Law Enforcement is notified of a potential human trafficking incident, they should respond in a time frame and manner that corresponds with the level of urgency of the situation and complies with their agency's policies and protocols.
- When each of the IRP team partners are notified, Law Enforcement, Social Service and the Care Navigator/Advocate should respond within 60 minutes in urban environments and 90 minutes in rural environments.

# GENERAL NOTIFICATIONS



# GENERAL NOTIFICATIONS

Anyone who is witnessing a potential instance of human trafficking is urged to call 911 immediately. It is not advisable to try to intervene in a potential instance of human trafficking, rather, providing detailed information to law enforcement such as a description of the persons involved and any vehicles involved, the direction of travel, and anything you heard, is often the most helpful action to take.

Many professionals, such as medical, educational, hospitality, etc., may have specific reporting processes. Compliance with your administrative process and Mandated Reporter requirements are essential.

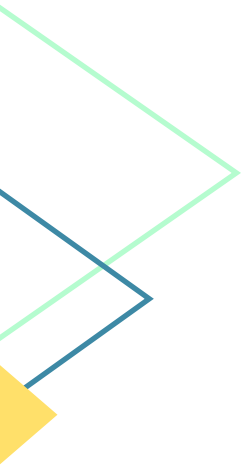
Members of the general public who suspect human trafficking are encouraged to call their local law enforcement to report the indicators believed to be human trafficking. Additionally, residents of Alabama are supported by human trafficking hotlines. Use of these hotlines in addition to calling local law enforcement is encouraged.



If you witness a potential instance of human trafficking, call 911 immediately. Intervening is not advisable.



# HOTLINES





# HOTLINES

## TO REPORT SUSPECTED CASES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONTACT:

**The HSI Tip Line | 866-347-2423**

Tip line maintained by the Department of Homeland Security

**Alabama Fusion Center |  
app.alea.gov/SAR/**

Suspicious Activity Report through the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency

## FOR VICTIM SERVICES CONTACT:

**Trafficking Hope | 225-215-6111**

General support for victims

**The WellHouse | 800-991-0948**

Housing for adult women and children

**The National Human Trafficking  
Hotline | 888-3737-888**

National resources and services for victims

**BEAMS | beamsal.com**

List of more than 400 Alabama service providers

Additional resources can be found in the Resources and Service Providers addendum to this document.



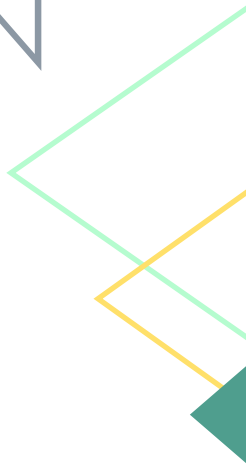
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Every prosecutorial and administrative tool should be explored to make Alabama an inhospitable environment for human trafficking.

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# INVESTIGATION & PROSECUTION



# INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION

## INITIAL CONTACTS AND FIELD INTERVIEWS

### IDENTIFICATION

An investigation will typically begin with patrol. An officer might respond to a call to investigate a suspected incident of human trafficking or might be investigating a different complaint or incident and notice indicators of human trafficking. Indicators of human trafficking can be easily overlooked or misidentified by the untrained law enforcement officer. It is not the purpose of this document to provide that training; rather, each law enforcement agency should implement a training plan in accordance with the Training Strategy in this Initiative. Recurring basic human trafficking training for officers of all ranks and assignments is essential because human trafficking is always combined with other crimes and can be present in any investigation. Continuous and advanced training for individuals working human trafficking cases will enable these officers to stay current on human trafficking indicators, methods and tactics. These officers can also be available to the patrol officers to answer any questions they may have in the field as they investigate other crimes and think they may have a human trafficking case. When employed, all of these practices will increase law enforcement accuracy in the identification of potential human trafficking victims.

### IRP PARTNERS

Once law enforcement makes a determination that they are engaged with a potential victim of human trafficking, they should immediately activate the Incident Response Protocol (IRP). A similar practice of civilian professionals assisting law enforcement in the field has become common in instances of child abuse and sexual assault; some well-resourced departments even have specialized units that include a mental health

representative, such as a therapist, when they respond to crimes or calls for service requiring a mental health response.

Because almost all victims of human trafficking have experienced trauma, and therefore may have trauma responses, a best practice for law enforcement is to notify the Advocate immediately and request their response. The Advocate can attempt to build trust and begin the stabilization process with the victim, which can result in the need for fewer interviews. The Advocate can advise the Law Enforcement partner if the victim is able to proceed with the initial investigation or if the victim's participation should be delayed to avoid causing further harm to the victim. This process will become increasingly effective as the Advocate and Law Enforcement partners build mutual trust and respect for each other and their roles.

## INVESTIGATIONS

In recent years, several agencies have begun to build an expertise in human trafficking identification and investigations. The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA), the Alabama Attorney General's Office, Homeland Security Investigations, the Child Trafficking Solutions Project, and the various task forces like the Northern and Middle District of Alabama Human Trafficking Task Forces and the West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force have all contributed significantly to training law enforcement in the state. Even with all this effort, some law enforcement agencies may not have received training on human trafficking identification or may lack the necessary resources to effectively investigate human trafficking.

If a particular department or region lacks resources and/or expertise, several opportunities can be employed to assist with human trafficking investigations. First, local law enforcement can

create MOUs to share investigators, each making a commitment of resources as appropriate. Rural areas with multiple departments as well as areas with multiple small departments can identify two or three detectives, who will be responsible for investigating these crimes in their areas, to receive human trafficking and Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) training.

Second, ALEA has trained an investigator in each of their seven regions to specialize in human trafficking. These ALEA investigators can respond to the local agencies within their region to provide support and assistance to local detectives or to conduct the investigation themselves at the request of the local agency.

The Alabama Attorney General's Office can provide expertise to local and state law enforcement to increase their expertise in the areas of evidence gathering and investigative processes. Upon request, special agents within the Attorney General's Office may also assist or independently conduct the investigation. The District Attorneys likewise can provide insight into the specific requirements for building a state case on human trafficking in each of the 41 districts.

Additional federal resources include the FBI and Homeland Security Investigations. These federal resources could be available to local and state law enforcement whether the case is being investigated as a state case or a federal case. Alabama is supported with three federal task forces and proactive activities from Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

A final general comment about law enforcement interviews. Even when a trained and skilled officer conducts an interview employing the trauma-informed and victim-centered/offender-focused guiding principles, the initial interview will likely produce limited evidence. It is typical to interview a victim of human trafficking multiple times over many days due to complex trauma and the resulting trauma responses. Often the investigator may feel like the victim is delaying, obstructing or lying. A victim of human trafficking might use these



Recurring basic human trafficking training for officers of all ranks and assignments is essential because human trafficking is always combined with other crimes and can be present in any investigation.





Soft rooms are effective tools for interviewing victims.

They create a safe-feeling environment, allowing the victim to deescalate.



types of tactics out of a perceived need for self-preservation or for the protection of other victims, but these obstacles might also be scientifically verified cognitive processing disruptions resulting from their trauma. Forensic interviews utilizing a forensic interviewer trained specifically in human trafficking can help alleviate some of these issues.

## **INTERVIEWING BEST PRACTICES**

An effective tool for stabilizing and interviewing victims of human trafficking is the use of a “soft room.” These soft rooms create a safe-feeling environment, allowing the victim to deescalate. Often the Advocate might use this room to help the victim stabilize and when the victim is able to participate in an interview, the officer can conduct the initial interview in that safe room or move the now stabilized victim to another interview room.

For a thorough investigation of human trafficking to take place, it is imperative to elicit a detailed narrative of the events from the victim(s). In addition to the victim’s statement being paramount to the case-in-chief, it also aids the Care Navigator and/or Advocate in coordinating resources and follow-up services. To secure a scene and ensure safety, a minimal facts interview with a victim is often needed. This interview should be conducted by a member of the MDT who has received training in trauma-informed practices and minimal facts interviewing. A juvenile victim of human trafficking should never be instructed to complete a written statement.

## **FORENSIC INTERVIEWING**

Before any in-depth interview of a victim takes place, it is necessary to have a meeting amongst all involved team members to formulate a plan on how best to proceed. Human trafficking cases are often complex, and a victim may require multiple interviews to gather all needed information. Each interview should be conducted by the same interviewer in order to maintain continuity, trust, and rapport. Because multiple agencies are often involved in these investigations, it is important to come to a consensus on which agency’s forensic interviewer will be utilized and where

the interview will take place. For cases involving juveniles, the local Children's Advocacy Center would often be the most appropriate location for the interview(s), unless the child is a flight risk or there are other safety concerns. To maintain best practice and defensibility, the forensic interviewer should be trained in a nationally recognized forensic interview structure and take part in quarterly peer review.

Prior to the forensic interview, the designated interviewer should be thoroughly briefed regarding case details. It is not advisable for the interviewer to conduct a blind interview in cases of human trafficking. The interviewer should be familiar with the names/nicknames of individuals involved, any structure/hierarchy associated with the organization, and any physical evidence that may need to be presented during the interview. It is vitally important for the interviewer to have knowledge of, and a comfortability with, state and federal human trafficking statutes and their elements. The interviewer should also have an understanding of poly-victimization, trauma, and defense tactics common in victims of human trafficking.

During a forensic interview, only the interviewer and victim/survivor, and if necessary, an interpreter should be in the interview room. If a facility dog is available, they may be helpful in calming the victim. Observers to the interview should be limited to the investigatory team to minimize who may be called as a witness at trial and to protect the privacy of the victim. This may include the investigator, prosecutor, and/or DHR case worker. The advocate should be available to the victim during interview breaks to provide comfort and continue to build the relationship but should not be a witness to the interview itself.

## **SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTS**

When human trafficking is suspected, but no arrest or victim referral is made, the officer should indicate that contact in a Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) to be submitted through eCrime or other similar system which reports to the Fusion Center. These entries will increase the reliability

of statewide data and can be used by the human trafficking analyst to identify potential trends that may result in actionable intelligence for law enforcement.

## **A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH**

Law enforcement investigations should encompass both demand reduction and supply disruption activities. These activities may be originated by a local agency, state agency and/ or federal agencies. Regardless of the origin of the investigation or the lead agency, the investigation benefits from combined resources when conducted through the collaborative efforts of a law enforcement task force. It is important to apply the guiding principle of being comprehensive in the scope of investigations in the state. While the focus on demand reduction is popular and often cited as the solution to human trafficking, it does not correspond to the actual elements of the crime, and that unilateral thinking might drive the crime to the next community, county or state, but it does not effectively address the nature of the crime. Good law enforcement practice will take a comprehensive approach to this crime by allocating actions and resources to investigate and prosecute both the demand side and the supply side.

## **PROSECUTION**

Because almost all victims of human trafficking have experienced trauma and as a result may have trauma responses, prosecutors will need to work with their law enforcement partners to increase strategies for building good human trafficking cases utilizing a trauma-informed approach. Prosecutors should receive detailed training on prosecuting human trafficking cases, and in turn train law enforcement on what evidence is needed and how to increase the likelihood of prosecution.

Increased efforts should be made to address known obstacles in human trafficking investigations and prosecutions, such as training in how to build a case without reliance on victim testimony, how to prepare a victim to testify, how to create trauma-informed courtrooms, and training for bench officers in human trafficking legislation and case law.

In addition to criminal proceedings, efforts should be made in our legal community to address civil remedies in terms of training professionals, the application of existing legislation, and the evaluation of new legislation. Finally, our law enforcement and legal communities can enhance their efforts towards mitigating human trafficking in the state by training on code violations and other administrative violations that can be used to combat human trafficking. Every prosecutorial and administrative tool should be explored to make Alabama an inhospitable environment for human trafficking.



# MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS (MDT)



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The MDT model facilitates efficiency for the professionals & effectiveness for the victims/survivors.

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# MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS (MDT)

The primary purpose of a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) is to facilitate the communication and collaboration of all the various services being provided for minor victim/survivors, and to support the investigative and prosecutorial efforts when possible. In Alabama, the Department of Human Resources is tasked with maintaining the MDTs. See Ala. Code § 26-16-50 (2012). They accomplish this through empowering the local Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) to organize and run the MDT for the county or counties they serve. This is a promising practice because it decentralizes care of the minor and enables those closest to the issue to make effective decisions. While these MDTs currently focus on minors, there is need for a similar approach for working with adult victims/survivors of human trafficking.

## MDT PRIORITIES

The value of the MDT model is that it facilitates efficiency for the professionals and effectiveness for the victims/survivors. The agencies and individuals participating as members in each MDT will vary based on resources and the needs of the victim/survivor. However, every MDT should have, at minimum, one relevant representative from each of the three categories representing Protection, Provision and Presence.

1. Protection: This is the law enforcement function typically provided by local law enforcement but could also be state or federal law enforcement. The focus is on the physical safety of the victim/survivor and the MDT partners, especially during the IRP, but also the protective effects law enforcement affords in general through all of their actions including investigations and prosecutions.
2. Provision: This is typically a social service function ensuring that the basic needs of the victim are provided for, including, but not limited to physical, emotional, housing, medical, and mental health. An emerging

promising practice is a central person (i.e., a Care Navigator) who will ensure appropriate services are being provided to the victim. This person should be part of the MDT and would coordinate with the various service providers involved in the continuum of care for the victim/survivor. The Care Navigator role will typically be filled by the local CAC, however, it could also be combined with the Advocate role in a county where resources do not allow both roles, and/or might be filled by a local NGO (this is described in the Case Management section below).

3. Presence: This partner has the dual role of being the voice of the victim in the MDT and establishing stability and trust for the survivor. This role will typically be served by an Advocate employed by an NGO service provider who can provide unencumbered advocacy for the victim and advocate for the victim in the MDT. When necessary, the person filling this function might also assume the responsibilities delineated to the Care Navigator when resources and capacity require.

A significant obstacle for MDTs is the variance of available resources from county to county. Every county in Alabama does not have access to all the above resources. The obligation of the State to serve all victims of human trafficking (including minor and adult victims of labor and/or sex trafficking) creates the need to establish a mandatory baseline of services available in each county. This objective is accomplished through the members of each MDT working collaboratively to ensure each victim has protection, provision and presence. For consistency and seamless collaboration, these three roles should be a specifically designated person, or small team of people from each agency as resources permit.

Because the members of an MDT develop a familiarity with the victims/survivors and the nuances of each case under their responsibility, it is a best practice whenever possible for an MDT to manage all human trafficking related cases involving their clients. When this is impossible or impractical, the MDT partners should work collaboratively with the other jurisdictions for their mutual benefit and in good faith towards the best interests of the victim/survivor.

## MDT MEMBERS

To provide the basic essential services to victims the following three core roles must be filled by community partners in each MDT:

1. Law Enforcement (Protection)
2. Social Service (Provision)
3. Advocate (Presence)

MDTs will naturally expand organically as professional members of the community are involved with the care and provision of the needs of victims/survivors. As a result, most MDTs will likely be comprised of more than just the three individuals mentioned. Below are samples of some of the additional professionals that might be included in the MDT from each of the three categories:

ALABAMA UNIFORM HUMAN TRAFFICKING INITIATIVE

## PROTECTION

- Law Enforcement (local, state, federal)
- Legal
- Probation
- Department of Homeland Security
- Family Court
- Prosecutor
- Defense Attorney

## PROVISION

- Social Service (Child Welfare, APS, CAC)
- Child Welfare Investigator
- Forensic Interviewer
- Education
- Medical
- Mental Health
- Shelters/Homeless Services
- Immigration Services
- Substance Treatment
- Faith-based Organizations
- Care Navigator (CAC and/or NGO)

## PRESENCE

- Advocate (NGO and/or CAC)
- Victim/Witness Specialists
- Guardian Ad Litem

## ADULT VICTIMS

Minor victims and adult victims of human trafficking differ legally in several ways. First, for minors there is no need to prove the “means” element of the crime. In other words, there is no requirement that prosecutors prove that force, fraud, or coercion were used to gain compliance. However, the “means” is a required element of the crime for cases involving adult victims/survivors. Second, the state has an obligation to investigate the wellbeing of a minor but has no similar obligation for adults. Finally, adults can

decline the protection of law enforcement services or the provision of social services. For these reasons, more resources are naturally allocated for minors who are victims of human trafficking than for adults. Moreover, because of these differences, adult victims remain stigmatized and marginalized.

However, Alabama has a significant population of human trafficking victims that are adults. The West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force has actively investigated this crime since 2017 and report that more than 90% of their victims are adults. These adult victims lack a single consistent advocacy point like the CACs; instead various NGOs and community resources attempt to provide the necessary services to these adult victims. However, the availability of these resources varies greatly from county to county and are absent altogether in many areas of the state.

Adult victims/survivors are often burdened with the same challenges minors experience but lack the necessary support simply because of age. Several solutions could be explored to fill this gap. One is to explore the creation of Adult Advocacy Centers (AAC) or something similar that can serve the same purposes that the CAC provide for minors. Another is to resource and train the existing Adult Protective Services (APS) to provide the same trauma-informed and victim-centered/offender-focused care that is offered to minor victims. A third solution is to support NGOs through resources and collaboration to provide services to this population. Ultimately, solutions will likely be discovered through the synergy of these or other similar options.

When it comes to case management, adult victims of human trafficking have the exact same needs represented by the categories of protection, provision and presence as minors. Adult victims/survivors need the same level of care provided to minor victims of human trafficking, and steps should be taken to consider how we can support these victims/survivors through a system similar to the MDT, where Care Navigators and Advocates work collaboratively with law enforcement, legal, and all other relevant professionals to accomplish



The West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force has actively investigated this crime since 2017 and report that more than 90% of their victims are adults.



the same objectives of protection, provision, and presence afforded the minors in Alabama.

While some adult victims/survivors may decline involving law enforcement, there is an available option in some regions for collecting evidence should they later decide to pursue a criminal investigation. A Sexual Assault Forensic Nurse Examiner (SAFE/SANE) can provide an initial medical exam and complete a rape kit, without having to contact law enforcement. This evidence is then preserved by the medical clinic, and only provided to law enforcement if the victim/survivor later decides to pursue the case. This again is an option that an adult victim/survivor can choose to accept or decline.

## **THE FIRST 72 HOURS**

After the identification and/or recovery of a victim of human trafficking, the next 72 hours is essential for the health and wellbeing of the victim/survivor, and will greatly impact the opportunity for, and quality of, the investigation of a criminal case. Therefore, the priority for the first 72 hours is the safety and stabilization of the victim/survivor and the provision of their immediate needs. For investigative purposes, a forensic interview should be conducted within the first 24 hours whenever possible.

Each partner of the IRP TEAM will have a role to play during the first 72 hours. Similar to the role of Law Enforcement in securing the safety of the scene initially, as discussed in the Investigation and Prosecution section, the Care Navigator and

Advocate will have the primary responsibilities during this key transitional time for the victim/survivor. The Advocate will immediately begin to establish trust with the victim/survivor. Until the victim/survivor feels they can trust the partners of the IRP TEAM, other essential duties, such as those of the investigation, or even provision of basic needs, cannot be rendered effectively.

While the Advocate is facilitating stabilization, the Care Navigator should begin sourcing resources for the needs of the victim/survivor. Initially, these will be the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, hygiene products, and any necessary medical services. The Care Navigator should work closely with medical personnel and law enforcement investigators to facilitate and schedule any needed forensic medical exams. Since these essentials will be required of almost every victim/survivor, it would be advisable to establish replenishing sources for food, clothing, and hygiene products. This might be coordinated through ongoing relationships with local NGOs, churches, or community organizations.

A common trauma response for human trafficking victims/survivors during the first 72 hours is flight. It is incumbent on each of the core IRP TEAM partners to mitigate this response. The Advocate will accomplish this by building trust with the victim/survivor, and Care Navigator by ensuring the basic needs are provided. All of this should be done in the least restrictive environment possible employing the trauma-informed and victim-centered/offender-focused guiding principles.

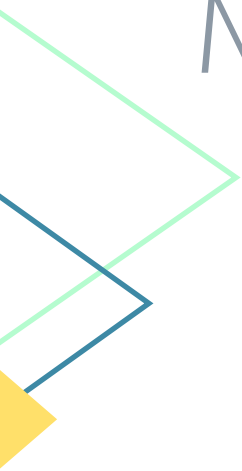
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NAVIGATING  
PUBLIC SYSTEMS  
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TRAFFICKING

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# CASE MANAGEMENT





# CASE MANAGEMENT

Many agencies provide case management services for their clients, which in some instances include survivors of human trafficking. Social welfare agencies and probation are two common examples. These agencies have existing internal processes and protocols for managing their cases. For the purposes of this document, these are not the practices being addressed.

The case management addressed in this document is that of the Care Navigator and that of the Advocate. These two roles identified in this Initiative are focused around the specific needs of survivors of human trafficking. As suggested earlier, in counties or regions that do not have the resources for both positions, the responsibilities can be managed by one person serving in both capacities. That conflation of roles might become increasingly difficult as the continuum of care is considered and delivered through long-term case management.

## CARE NAVIGATOR

Survivors of human trafficking not only have various needs but may be required to navigate several public systems including legal, medical, educational, and/or governmental. This can be overwhelming for anyone; but for someone who has suffered trauma, is not experienced with these systems, and needs to navigate multiple systems simultaneously, it can be insurmountable. The purpose of a Care Navigator is to help the survivor access each of these systems, and to provide care or support resources. The Office for Victims of Crimes through the Office of Justice Programs refers to this role as the “primary case manager” stating, “It is helpful in these situations to identify a primary case manager for each victim to decrease confusion for the victim and streamline communication between various victim service providers and with law enforcement partners” (Office for Victims of Crime, 2020). As the survivor continues to increase their personal capacity of independence, their need for day to day assistance will dissipate. Additionally, as the survivor relies less on social services, their acute need for the focused IRP TEAM services of the Care Navigator is diminished. As that happens, the formal structured need for routine logistical support will naturally transition to the survivor’s need for mentorship instead.

## ADVOCATE

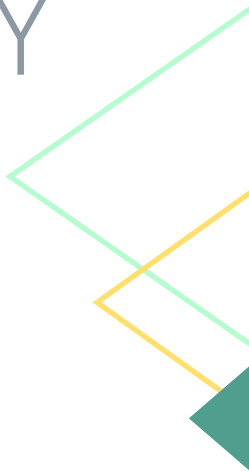
Best practices indicate that the Advocate be an employee of an NGO, a CAC, or other similar organization. While we refer to the Advocate as a person, it is also a best practice that the role is shared by a team of at least three people for the consistency of service and the health and wellbeing of the individual Advocates. Often the agency employing the Advocate also provides housing and/or immersive services for survivors of human trafficking such as psycho-educational services, personal and professional skills development, counseling, mentorship, etc., and is available to respond to the needs of the survivor and MDT partners 24/7/365. However, the Advocate will also need to demonstrate healthy boundaries with the survivor while maintaining this constant availability. This again supports the health and wellbeing of the Advocate and supports the personal development of the survivor.

The Advocate is to have the necessary autonomy from any agency that may provide professional services to the survivor to ensure their decisions are in the best interest of the survivor and not influenced by preference or predisposition of a particular service. Therefore, it is not advisable for the Advocate to be employed by any government

or other key resource organization such as an educator, therapist, medical professional, etc. Instead, the Advocate serves the critical role as a bridge of trust from the survivor to the other professional service providers. The Advocate continues to be a voice for the survivor to the MDT partners, and applies the victim-centered/offender-focused guiding principle by helping to facilitate service provision and prosecutorial needs such as providing emotional support during medical appointments and legal proceedings, and assisting with courtroom testimony preparation, whenever possible. When the Advocate believes,

based on their expertise and/or from the insight of a counselor or therapist, that survivor participation in any of these activities would cause further harm and/or trauma, they will advise the MDT partners. The MDT partners should honor that insight, while all partners continue to collaborate towards seeking justice. In practical terms for the survivor, the Advocate becomes a trusted friend, helping them transition into successful independent living, and that friendship is often maintained after formal services have ended.

# TASK FORCE STRATEGY



# TASK FORCE STRATEGY

While MDTs focus on providing for the safety and well-being of survivors, task forces have a broader scope. Alabama benefits from three types of task forces: (1) a state task force that provides a comprehensive approach to addressing human trafficking throughout the state; (2) law enforcement task forces at the federal and regional level; and (3) community-based task forces located throughout the state.

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS (ALABAMA, 2020)

**500**

Alabama Human Trafficking Summit attendees

**149**

Alabama Mayors signed proclamations in observance of Alabama Human Trafficking Awareness Day

Identifying the scope and purpose of a task force provides clarity and helps direct the outcomes for that task force. The scope and purpose of a task force will typically be a combination of the geographic area it covers and its primary objectives. Each task force should establish a mission, have a clearly defined purpose, and create specific goals and objectives. While each task force might engage in activities outside of its primary purpose, statewide efficiency is best served when the resources of each task force are aligned with their intended outcomes. As such, part of the Alabama Task Force Strategy is to avoid overlapping footprints with redundant objectives.

Each task force might decide to create committees to manage goals and objectives and coordinate individual and/or organizational skills, capacities, and interests. These committees will vary, but examples include law enforcement for the sharing of intelligence and discussing current cases, training, policy, and legislative. Care should be given to avoid mission creep, or gradually shifting objectives, when creating committees. In other words, it might be more strategic for a task force to intentionally resist an attempt to be comprehensive in its response to human trafficking and allow for greater specialization and focus. A network of focused task forces is more efficient and effective than each task force attempting to be comprehensive resulting in duplicated and diluted efforts, and potential competition for services and resources.

For the purposes of this document, Law Enforcement Task Forces are those that are law enforcement led and operate to conduct law enforcement activities and/or provide training for law enforcement investigations. The community led general awareness and training task forces are referred to in this report as Community Task Forces. The Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force enacted by legislation is chartered to address human trafficking comprehensively throughout the state.

# ALABAMA HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

House Joint Resolution 270 sponsored by former Representative Jack Williams (R-Vestavia Hills) passed the Alabama legislature in March 2014. Former Governor Robert Bentley (R-Tuscaloosa) signed the resolution in April 2014 to establish the Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force. The Task Force meets quarterly at the Alabama State House. In April 2016, House Joint Resolution 281 was passed adding additional member agencies to the Task Force.

The purpose and agenda of the Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force includes all of the following:

1. To combat all aspects of human trafficking, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking.
2. To pursue a comprehensive response to crimes of human trafficking.
3. To coordinate strategies to provide necessary services for victims of human trafficking.
4. To focus prevention efforts to end the demand for human trafficking and create awareness through education and community initiatives.
5. To develop legislation to prevent, intervene, and treat human trafficking.

For the past 6 years, the Task Force has sponsored the annual Alabama Human Trafficking Summit training initiative bringing together participants from all disciplines and backgrounds. In January 2020, attendance to the Summit reached 500 attendees. In addition, each year in January, the Task Force sponsors the Alabama Human Trafficking Awareness Day in observance of National Human Trafficking Awareness month. This year, media interviews, public service announcements, and proclamations signed by Mayors of 149 Alabama towns and cities made the 2020 Alabama Human Trafficking Awareness Day the most successful to date.

Since its formation in 2014, the Task Force has effectively provided training and awareness initiatives; collaborated with task forces and other agencies across the state; coordinated victim services strategies; and effectively addressed policy and legislative issues concerning human trafficking in the state. In addition, the Task Force has been a key partner to numerous organizations across the state applying for grant funding for their anti-trafficking programs and research efforts, providing letters of support, in-kind services, and actively working with grant recipients to support the grant funded efforts.

## TASK FORCE COMMITTEES

Various functional committees have been established to increase the effectiveness and work of the task force. These committees are as follows:

- a. Community Relations & Awareness/ Outreach Committee
- b. Services & Protocols
- c. Legislative Committee
- d. Fundraising Committee
- e. Education & Training Committee
- f. Labor Trafficking Committee
- g. Universities & Colleges Outreach Committee
- h. Law Enforcement Committee
- i. Service Providers Committee
- j. Faith-Based Committee

## TASK FORCE CHALLENGES

The Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force is comprised of leaders representing agencies and industries important to the systemic infrastructure of the state. The task force (also referred to as the Governor's Task Force) has no employees and no legislated funding. For example, the current Chair of the task force is a volunteer and does not receive compensation. All members of this body are either employees of the agency

they represent or volunteers. The lack of essential funding creates many challenges to the task force. If appropriate funding were made available, the task force would be well positioned to effectively accomplish each of its comprehensive responsibilities.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCES

Law Enforcement Task Forces are law enforcement led efforts to conduct investigations, operations, and law enforcement trainings related to the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking. They may partner with social services, victim advocates, and NGOs for strategic operational purposes. These are represented by Federal Human Trafficking Task Forces operated by the US Attorney's Offices of the Northern, Middle, and Southern Districts of Alabama, as well as local and regional law enforcement task forces.

The West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force is a good example of a local operational task force created and maintained by local law enforcement. It is comprised of city, county, and state law enforcement agencies and supported by federal law enforcement and their victim service provider Trafficking Hope, a faith based 501(c)3 organization. The Child Sex Trafficking MDT in the greater Birmingham area is another example of an operational task force working effectively in Alabama. While they use the MDT label, functionally they serve as an operational task force through proactive law enforcement operations.

The close collaboration of law enforcement and NGOs is a best practice to combat human trafficking in communities. It is advisable for these partners to not only engage in all sessions of task force meetings but to also engage them in briefings, operations and after-action report activities. This level of sworn and civilian



Each task force should establish a mission, have a clearly defined purpose, and create specific goals & objectives.



collaboration is not needed for every operation and may be more useful in specific types of task forces and/or investigation. These partnerships are essential to effective law enforcement activities where the operation is likely to recover victims/survivors. Careful vetting and MOUs should be utilized when establishing these relationships.

Law enforcement can also address human trafficking by investigating and conducting joint operations to both reduce demand and to disrupt supply chains. Currently, the West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force is focusing its efforts on demand reduction. Federal partners led by Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) are assisting in the demand reduction efforts and are also working on the supply side of both sex and labor trafficking. HSI is assisted by researchers and experts in computer forensics, as well as state and local law enforcement partners including ALEA. In order to effectively address the issue of human trafficking in the state, it is essential that collaborative investigatory activities are conducted to arrest and prosecute, both consumers and traffickers, of both sex and labor trafficking.

## COMMUNITY TASK FORCES

Community Task Forces are typically led by community leaders to engage in general awareness trainings and events in their local communities. Members of these Task Forces include law enforcement, NGOs, other local agencies and individuals. Currently Alabama has four Community Task Forces:

- North Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force
- Cullman County Human Trafficking Task Force
- Renew Hope/Chambers County Human Trafficking Task Force
- Lauderdale County Human Trafficking Task Force

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COLLABORATIVE  
INVESTIGATORY ACTIVITIES  
ARE ESSENTIAL TO  
EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
IN ALABAMA.

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# TRAINING



# TRAINING

All training should incorporate the trauma-informed and victim-centered/offender-focused guiding principles. Together a trauma-informed and victim-centered/offender-focused approach pursues the desire to mitigate further harm to the victim and increase the effectiveness of the agency's intended outcomes, whether that is stronger cases for law enforcement, increased prosecutions for legal professionals, improved mental health, or successful integration into healthy lifestyles for survivors.

Application of a trauma-informed approach to training ensures that the training content is free of sensationalized language and images and does not objectify or further exploit survivors. Survivor exploitation in a training context might include asking the survivor to speak without adequate compensation, or using their "story" to illicit sympathy, shock, or funding.

Likewise, a victim-centered approach in a training environment would seek to include survivors in both the creation and delivery of training content. The insight from the perspective of a Lived Experience Expert (survivor) can inform trainings for agencies, organizations and professionals by providing an understanding of policies, procedures, and practices through the perspective of the victim.

Training on being offender-focused instructs on topics such as trends, offender profiles, common tactics used by offenders, investigative techniques, and other issues that provide insight to agencies that investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases. Law enforcement sensitive information should never be included in trainings that are for the general public.

## TRAINING PRINCIPLES

### **Trauma-informed**

ensures content is free of sensationalized language and image and does not objectify or exploit survivors.

### **Victim-centered**

includes survivors in creation and delivery of training content.

All training, and training/awareness materials must be factual, and not sensationalize the issue of human trafficking or objectify victims of human trafficking.

Training should be specific to the intended audience and should have a specific focus. It is not advisable to attempt to be comprehensive in any single training environment; however, our statewide training strategy should be comprehensive, both in terms of content and audience. Comprehensive training on human trafficking would include the general topics of sex and labor trafficking in their various forms, and the impact it has on adults and minors, males and females. Comprehensive training in terms of the audience means that both professionals and the general community should be trained on human trafficking. Training to each audience should cover indicators of human trafficking that they would be likely to see, and what they should do if they believe human trafficking might be present.

All training, and training/awareness materials must be factual, and not sensationalize the issue of human trafficking or objectify victims of human trafficking. Some practical suggestions are provided by the Department of State in their 2020 release of “Senior Policy Operating Public Awareness and Outreach Committee Guide for Public Awareness Materials” (U.S. Department of State, 2020), included here in Appendix 4. For additional training resources, see the Resources and Service Providers section of this document in Appendix 3.

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

All professionals working in environments where exposure to victims and survivors of human trafficking in Alabama is likely should receive initial onboarding and annual refresher training on human trafficking, victim identification, and the Alabama Uniform Human Trafficking Initiative (AUHTI). A consistent effort from all parties to initiate and continue such training will lead to a greater recognition of trafficking victims, increased service provision for victims, and a greater number of prosecutions against offenders. Consistent training in Alabama is a key component to ensuring professionals across the state are prepared to respond when the need arises.

Continual training is essential as the methods and means of human trafficking are always evolving. Those agencies that investigate instances of human trafficking, prosecute cases of human trafficking and related crimes, and provide services to victims and survivors of human trafficking should incorporate an evergreen training strategy to ensure their personnel are receiving relevant and advanced training.

Trainings in every profession should clearly outline the legal definitions of trafficking, as specified by federal legislation such as the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and Alabama state legislation.

The following professions should be trained through onboarding and annual refreshers. This is not an exhaustive list—any and all professions that a victim may come into contact with can benefit from such training and every effort should be made to train as many professions as possible.

- Corrections (jails, prisons, probation officers, etc.)
- Educators (faculty, staff, and administrators)
- Faith Communities
- Hospitality (hotels, truck stops, restaurants, etc.)
- Law Enforcement
- Legal
- Medical
- Mental Health
- Non-Governmental Organizations
  - Those working with victims
  - Those working in areas victims are likely to be identified
- Retail
- Social Services (including Child Welfare)
- Sports (professional, college, community, and K-12)
- Transportation (ground, air, and sea)

Trainings should be developed and implemented specifically to the needs of each industry. The DHS Blue Campaign has many industry-specific trainings available to use on their website. While the basics of human trafficking will remain consistent across disciplines, how it presents and things to look for may vary depending on the situation and type of interaction involved. Training should also include the proper process for identifying a victim or reporting a perpetrator. Each profession must understand the distinct ways they may be able to identify human trafficking in their field. For instance, teachers may notice a child sleeps throughout the school day if they are being forced to work through the night. Law enforcement may notice certain items that may be indicative of trafficking, such as multiple cellular telephones or hotel key cards in a vehicle at an otherwise routine traffic stop. Because the environment each profession might engage with possible victims and offenders differs, the signs they might notice will be different.

Each agency or industry should develop and implement a training plan to provide training as part of regular new employee onboarding. Reoccurring refresher trainings should be planned for each new calendar, fiscal, or academic year, and be required for every employee. Additional advanced training should be provided for those employees in positions likely to encounter victims of human trafficking or assigned to trafficking-related roles, such as investigations. Establishing such a process would ensure most employees are trained, and those with the highest potential exposure remain knowledgeable about victim indicators and reporting procedures.

## MDT TRAINING

The MDTs are by definition on the front lines of human trafficking mitigation in the state. All multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) in the state should be trained on the basics of human trafficking, how it presents in children, reporting procedures, and the Alabama Uniform Human Trafficking Initiative (AUHTI). Moreover, MDT partners should seek

out additional and continuous training to remain knowledgeable of the current trends and methods of human trafficking and any emerging promising practices.

## COMMUNITY TRAINING

Community training primarily focuses on awareness for the general public and typically does not require the detail and specificity of industry focused professional training. In those instances where community training is inclusive of professional training elements, such as training a parent group from a school, or general training for churches, trainings would clearly need to identify how human trafficking presents in those communities rather than just a general understanding of human trafficking. However, in general, community-based training should be broad while offering specific and clear actions, such as when to call 911 and when to call the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

An essential audience for community training is middle to high school aged children/students. Reaching this group has faced obstacles from local school boards and school administrators. Prevention training at an appropriate level should be provided across the state to arm this human trafficking targeted group against human trafficking. Making this group aware of what human trafficking is, what to watch for, and how to stay safe in various situations, such as parties, social settings, and school activities is recommended.

Many organizations across the state offer community trainings on human trafficking. A broader network of trainers with a consistent training message would benefit the community as a whole in understanding the realities of trafficking and make training more accessible to those seeking it.

“MDTs are by definition on the front lines of human trafficking mitigation in the state.”

Some groups currently offering community trainings include:

- State and federal prosecutors
- Local, state, and federal law enforcement
- Non-governmental organizations
- Task forces

For a more detailed list, see the Resources and Service Providers section of this document in Appendix 3.

Calendars for training and other anti-human trafficking events is available through the BEAMS and End It Alabama websites. If training is not clearly available in a given area, requests may be submitted to the beamsal.com or enditalabama.org websites and will be shared with trainers across the state to identify a training provider.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCES

Annual training conferences allow participants to engage with people and to receive content that is not readily available at the local level. When possible, it is recommended that anyone working in this field attend at least one training conference per year.

### END IT ALABAMA SUMMIT

The Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force offers an annual one-day training summit in Montgomery, Alabama near the end of January. This is a trafficking-specific event, with plenary sessions and breakout workshops covering a variety of topics related to all forms of trafficking.

Participants may also attend a networking reception the night prior to the conference to engage directly with others working to fight human trafficking in Alabama. Discounts are provided for students. For more information visit [enditalabama.org](http://enditalabama.org). Continuing education credits are available for most professions.

### JOINT HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE MEETING

Each year the Northern, Middle, and Southern Districts of Alabama Human Trafficking Task Forces combine together for the Joint Human Trafficking Task Force Meeting in January. This event is held on the campus of Auburn University at Montgomery and includes nationally recognized human trafficking expert speakers. Registration information will be available at [outreach.aum.edu/alabama-crime-prevention](http://outreach.aum.edu/alabama-crime-prevention) in the months preceding the event. This event is free and open to all professionals working in anti-human trafficking but focuses on law enforcement and prosecution efforts.

### INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CHILD ABUSE

The National Children's Advocacy Center offers a four-day conference in Huntsville, Alabama in March each year. While this conference focuses on all aspects of child abuse, human trafficking is a component and is interrelated with many forms of child abuse. The Symposium offers plenary and breakout sessions, workshops, networking opportunities, and evening social events. For more information visit [symposium.nationalcac.org/](http://symposium.nationalcac.org/). Continuing education credits are available for most professions.

# DATA & COMMUNICATION



# DATA AND COMMUNICATION

Two primary barriers to addressing problems associated with human trafficking are the lack of data and the limited ability for systems to communicate between agencies. Victims of human trafficking frequently engage with professionals in industries such as law enforcement, medical, hospitality, and social services. Each of these industries might be collecting or could collect data related to human trafficking and human trafficking victims. The ability to aggregate and use that data would result in a sustainable and reliable source of information that could be used in a plethora of ways to advance the effort to strategically address human trafficking in Alabama.

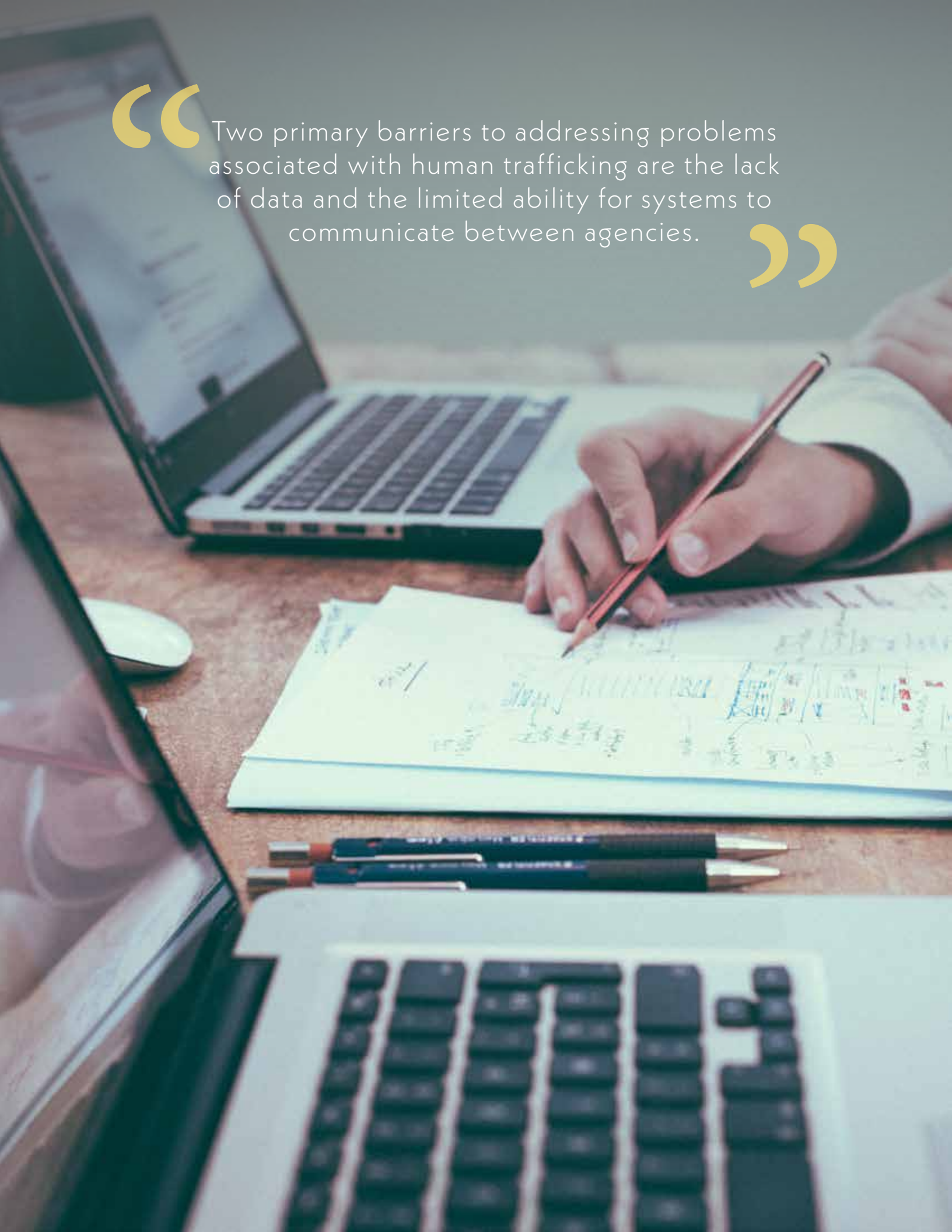
There are several legal and historical obstacles for sharing data between agencies. Though it is necessary to ensure the objectives and privacy principles behind the legislation and policy creating these obstacles remain intact, some thoughtful revision to policies and practices could benefit the effort to mitigate human trafficking. The challenges to resolving these barriers, and potential solutions for data collection and communication are acknowledged. One example of leadership in this area is the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) Human Trafficking Protocol which directs their agency that “Sharing of reports, investigatory tools and information is strongly encouraged to assist the investigation of the criminal matter and the child protection proceeding” (Alabama Department of Human Resources, 2017). To follow in the leadership of DHR, each agency with exposure to victims of human trafficking should create guidelines and processes to facilitate the inter-agency sharing of information and data. Moreover, we need to create a process to aggregate that data in a secure manner at a single repository.



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Two primary barriers to addressing problems associated with human trafficking are the lack of data and the limited ability for systems to communicate between agencies.

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# REPORTING SOURCES

## MINOR VICTIMS

Alabama requires that mandatory reporters notify law enforcement or the Department of Human Resources (DHR) if there is the suspicion of abuse of a minor. See Ala. Code § 26-14-3. This abuse includes sexual abuse and human trafficking. If a mandatory reporter notifies law enforcement of possible abuse of a minor, law enforcement will then notify DHR. If a mandatory reporter notifies DHR of possible abuse of a minor, DHR will then notify law enforcement. DHR's existing internal Human Trafficking Protocol provides guidance for how these suspected cases should be documented.

Our research discovered an opportunity to improve victim identification and reporting through training DHR personnel in how to recognize the indicators of human trafficking and how to document these cases so as not to miss a trafficking case by labeling it as another form of abuse. In most instances, the indications of trafficking, and especially disclosures from victims, will not be immediate. When these indications or disclosures come at a later date, all reporting should be updated to reflect the new information. Internal reports related to trafficking data should be generated monthly and the compiled data should be submitted to the Alabama Fusion Center.

## ADULT VICTIMS

Unlike minors, there are no mandatory reporters of abuse or suspected abuse when it comes to adults in the state of Alabama. Additionally, there is no mandated notification from one agency to another (e.g., law enforcement to adult protective services) as there is with minors (law enforcement to DHR). Thus, data collection with respect to trafficking is more challenging and less systematic for adults than it is for minors. Because many victims of abuse, including trafficking, do seek assistance from some government agencies or NGOs, such as law enforcement, shelter organizations, and



Each agency with exposure to victims of human trafficking should create guidelines and processes to facilitate the inter-agency sharing of information and data.



medical professionals, there are opportunities for data collection. Additionally, law enforcement may encounter victims of human trafficking while investigating other types of crime. This provides law enforcement with a chance to make an assessment of human trafficking identifiers and not only change that person from a suspect to a victim, but also identify that in the reporting system. Because of the contact that a victim might have with one of these government organizations or NGOs, each one should have a protocol in place for the collection of data from potential victims of human trafficking.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

Suspicious circumstances with human trafficking indicators, but not enough evidence for further criminal investigation, should be submitted as a Suspicious Activity Report via eCrime or another non-criminal reporting system and forwarded to the Fusion Center. Instances of suspected human trafficking should be submitted as an Incident/Offence (I/O) report through eCrime or similar software. In either case, the "Send to Fusion Center" box must be checked for this data to be properly collected. While individuals suspected of human trafficking are often charged with something other than human trafficking, in an effort to capture all suspected instances of human trafficking it is advised that a human trafficking charge is indicated on the report as either suspected or a lesser included charge.

The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA), Alabama Association for Chiefs of Police, Alabama Sheriff's Association, and Alabama Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission (APOST) are potential partners in encouraging a statewide effort to appropriately train law enforcement employees to recognize signs of trafficking as well as trafficking victims as such, and to properly collect and submit data on trafficking cases.

It is highly recommended that law enforcement agencies utilize Spotlight, a free online program that helps prioritize leads in sex trafficking investigations. Out of more than 400 law enforcement agencies in Alabama, only 24 are

actively utilizing this service. Spotlight can be located at [spotlight.thorn.org](http://spotlight.thorn.org).

## MEDICAL

Most survivors of human trafficking seek medical assistance at some point during their victimization, especially when an injury or ailment adversely impacts their ability to make money for their trafficker. Often, this medical assistance is sought at an emergency room, urgent care, public health department, rape crisis center, pregnancy crisis center, dentist office, or drop-in health center. All personnel employed at medical facilities should be trained to recognize potential trafficking victims, separate them from their traffickers if they are accompanied, and properly collect data for submission. It is important that not only licensed medical personnel (i.e., doctors, nurses, dentists) be trained, but also receptionists, custodial staff, security, or anyone who might come into contact with a patient.

The Department of Public Health or the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners & Medical Licensure Commission could house such data and forward it to the Fusion Center monthly. However, given their limited purview, additional partnerships would be required for either of these to be successful.

## HOSPITALITY

Trafficking victims are often customers of businesses like hotels, truck stops, and restaurants. Victims who are transported often while being trafficked are especially likely to be identified by hospitality industry personnel. Large corporations often provide some level of training in human trafficking to their employees; however, smaller and/or locally owned businesses may not provide such training.

Industry organizations, such as the American Hotel and Lodging Association or the Alabama Tourism Department, could lead an effort in data collection for the hospitality industry and then house and submit such data to the Fusion Center each month. Any suspected trafficking noticed

in hospitality environments should be reported directly to law enforcement and the Polaris National Trafficking Hotline.

## **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Alabama has several non-governmental organizations that provide services to victims of human trafficking and/or other vulnerable populations, such as substance treatment or homeless populations. These organizations are well positioned to report indications of human trafficking and should make those reports to law enforcement.

## **DATA POINTS**

Several key data points should be measured to provide insight to assist with law enforcement activities, determine proper resource allocation, ensure proper victim services are available, and suggest improvements to policy, practice, and legislation. This is not an exhaustive list, but some of the data that should be collected include basic demographic information about victims and offenders and information about locations, times, tactics, and means used by offenders. Some agencies and organizations already have internal protocols for data collection and in some cases, data sharing. It is important that all relevant entities are collecting some of the same information, and that we create the necessary processes to aggregate the data into a single source.

## **AGGREGATING DATA**

All data related to human trafficking collected by individual organizations and agencies should be submitted to a designated industry partner. This industry partner will be able to compile data into a monthly report that then should be sent to the Alabama Fusion Center at ALEA. The Fusion Center has a designated analyst who will then be able to aggregate each industry's reports, creating

a human trafficking database for Alabama. The Fusion Center Analyst can also aggregate data submissions from multiple sources to identify trends and/or instances of possible trafficking victims and provide any actionable information to law enforcement. For example, a report from the hospitality industry of trafficking at a particular hotel on a certain date could potentially match that of a law enforcement report.

The data can also be de-identified and made available to university researchers for ongoing compilation and analysis for broader scope research purposes. This can be used to assist with evaluations of processes and protocols, inform future legislation, and provide insight to agencies for capacity building and resource allocation.

## **DATA SHARING**

Data sharing is a key component to properly tracking human trafficking cases in Alabama. Unfortunately, it is also the most challenging piece. In order to have a truly comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and collaborative effort against trafficking in Alabama, each agency must be willing to adjust their own internal policies and procedures to enable data sharing. A comprehensive review of data sharing policies within each agency should be conducted to determine how best to share data safely and securely.

To enable a centralized collection of data, the Fusion Center can be utilized as the primary data centralization point. As a law enforcement entity, most data can be submitted without excessive privacy issues. The Fusion Center will be responsible for de-identifying data as necessary prior to data dissemination for broader scope research purposes into human trafficking.

## **MEMORANDA OF AGREEMENT**

In many cases, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or similar instrument between agencies and ALEA could alleviate existing restrictions on data

sharing. Many agencies already have agreements with other organizations for such purposes. This would primarily affect law enforcement, DHR, and the medical field due to privacy laws. The hospitality industry and direct service providers will require an agreement as well. Utilizing the resources at the Fusion Center could limit concerns about what sort of information is being shared. All information submitted from the Fusion Center for research purposes will be de-identified, removing any privacy concerns regarding those records.

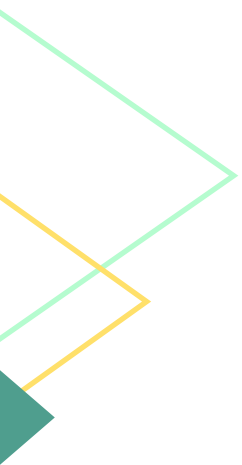
## **HIPAA CONCERNS**

Data collection in medical settings is complicated. While it is very important that the data related to human trafficking be collected and submitted, at no point should an individual's HIPAA protections be violated. In order to both comply with HIPAA laws and provide data necessary to combat human trafficking in Alabama, it is recommended that medical practitioners request a waiver from the patient when possible or submit only non-PHI data when a waiver is not signed.

## **ANALYZING DATA**

Data collected should be analyzed to provide continual tracking of the number of trafficking victims in Alabama, look for trends in trafficking activities, and to inform processes, practices, and resource allocation to address trafficking throughout the state. This analysis will further enable training content to remain evergreen and relevant.

LEGISLATIVE



# LEGISLATIVE

Alabama has made great strides in improving legislation as it relates to human trafficking. Shared Hope International's 2019 report card rates Alabama's trafficking legislation as an A, scoring 94.5 out of a possible 102.5 points. This rating is largely due to the tireless efforts put forth by groups and individuals to improve Alabama's trafficking related laws in recent years.

## STRATEGY AND COLLABORATION

Though we enjoy a high rating from Shared Hope International, we have a tremendous opportunity to increase this strength through a more strategic approach to the collaboration around proposed legislation from entities and individuals throughout the state. The state task force has a legislative committee, however other organizations and individuals don't benefit from a similar level of collaboration. One idea for greater statewide collaboration is to develop a sort of open forum, perhaps led by the state task force for round table discussions over legislative ideas. This could increase awareness of the state task force efforts and open the door for stakeholders in further reaches of the state to be included.

As stakeholders and other concerned citizens continue their efforts to improve legislation, there is an opportunity to approach new legislative efforts around the issue of human trafficking strategically and collaboratively. Alabama benefits greatly from many groups across the state that are interested in improving our legislation. However, this great interest also brings about additional challenges. The efforts of so many different parties crafting and proposing legislation can create a chaotic environment that can leave gaps in what the legislation accomplishes, conflicting or competing legislation, or significant effort expended on creating a solution legislatively when one is already available through other means such as policy or practice.

A hindrance to effective implementation of legislation in Alabama has been the result of

legislation passed that had not fully considered the effect it would have on organizations and agencies impacted by it. The consequences that a particular piece of legislation might have on organizations and agencies already functioning with limited resources and capacity should be considered. Additionally, many of the agencies and organizations affected by new legislation are not properly resourced to comply with the new mandates, through funding or resource expansion. In effect, our practices and policies need to catch up to much of our existing legislation.

A strategic, unified approach that reflects our guiding principles of collaborative, comprehensive, trauma-informed, and victims centered/offender-focused would result in legislative changes that are most beneficial to victims/survivors, are fiscally responsible, consider existing resources and capacities, and are in the best interest of the citizens of Alabama.

## FUNDING AND ENFORCEMENT

To date, funding has been an ongoing issue with legislative changes related to human trafficking. While Alabama has succeeded in improving the letter of the law, there have not been adequate funds attached to the bills to implement the changes needed. For instance, the statewide task force is charged with overseeing anti-human trafficking efforts across the state but is provided no budget with which to do so. Though the voluntary efforts of those task force members are commendable, this is not a sustainable model and

shows a lack of genuine interest from the state legislature in addressing these issues.

Additionally, new requirements must include a mechanism for enforcement to be successful in addressing human trafficking. While bars and truck stops may be required to post signage in restrooms offering hotline information for trafficking victims, Code Enforcement has been charged with the task of enforcing this requirement but lacks the resources or capacity to do so. An unenforced or unenforceable mandate may look good on paper but does not achieve the desired outcomes. All human trafficking legislation making requirements of any group, business, etc. should specify a party responsible for enforcement, adequate time frames for compliance, and funding for both application and enforcement.

## IMPACTS OF LEGISLATION

Legislation carries intended and unintended affects. For example, the purpose of a bill may be to improve data collection related to trafficking cases—a worthwhile goal that serves a real need. The effect, however, might conflict with an existing requirement, policy, or process, require the collaboration of another agency or entity not otherwise directly impacted by the legislation, create a need for additional software, require

new reports to be generated or changed, require employee training to teach the new process, or require new or additional resources to meet the new requirement. Sometimes the long-term effects may be unknown until the legislation is implemented; however, some unintended effects may be recognized with appropriate vetting.

In the course of drafting proposals for new legislation, it is important to seek feedback from all parties that would be impacted should the legislation pass. Understanding how such changes would affect each related organization creates an opportunity to address such impacts from the outset, rather than expecting adaption without issue after the fact. These conversations can establish the specific needs that a new bill would create and provide insight into costs associated with such changes, which, in turn, would allow for funding to be justified for inclusion in the bill.

New legislation also carries the risk of creating unintended consequences for victims and survivors of human trafficking. One way to mitigate what may otherwise be unforeseeable effects on victims/survivors is to engage them in the planning for new legislation. The lived experiences of survivors can fill in the gaps between intent and impact.

The most straightforward solution to each of the issues raised here is to approach human trafficking

legislation strategically and collaboratively. If all potential stakeholders are consulted and given an opportunity to provide input to the ideas put forth, the state can see a greater positive impact from legislative changes and fewer negative impacts.



# RECOMMENDATIONS



# RECOMMENDATIONS

A well-coached football team will have an initial series of plays scripted, followed by a general game plan strategically designed to guide the rest of the game. Our approach with these recommendations follows that same pattern. These initial recommendations will not address every need or accomplish all our goals. Rather, they are the starting point, or, more accurately, the next steps that build upon the foundation laid in our state by many leaders in this field over several years.

This initial set of recommendations has been identified through a mixed-method approach consisting of triangulating our research through cluster mapping, data analysis, and seeking partner insights. The voices that have contributed to the selection of these recommendations include local, state and federal law enforcement; survivors of human trafficking; nonprofit leaders; prosecutors; social workers; the faith community; educators; and others. While several important needs exist, these recommendations take advantage of existing strengths to solve urgent gaps while minimizing the need for additional resources, and the recommendations requiring new or additional resources are deemed high priorities and are strategic to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of our efforts.

Many important and significant opportunities exist to improve our response to the issue of human trafficking in Alabama. The selection of these recommendations does not minimize the other important needs, nor are they a comprehensive solution. Rather, they represent the first set of scripted plays in our new comprehensive and collaborative statewide approach to addressing this issue in Alabama.

These recommendations are selected because we believe they are the best opportunity to build on existing strengths and infrastructure and will lay the foundation upon which future growth can be built. The recommendations focus on three fundamental building blocks: training, data, and management. These three are not only foundational, but interdependent. All future projects to improve our state response to human trafficking will require the competent management and leadership reflected in our Capacity Building and Sustainability section. Responsible resource development and allocation is dependent on accurate data and reporting.

## TRAINING STRATEGY

Training is one of our existing strengths. Many incredible entities and agencies are conducting trainings to various audiences and through many platforms, including the Child Trafficking Solutions Project; the Jefferson County Children's Policy Council; the West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force; leaders in state and federal law enforcement, such as HSI, ALEA, the Federal and State Task Forces; nonprofit organizations, such as the Junior League of Birmingham, The WellHouse, Trafficking Hope; and others. The opportunity we have to improve on this is to simply elevate the profile of these existing trainings through deeper collaboration and promoting them through technological resources, such as the training calendars available on the EndItAlabama.org and BEAMSAL.com websites.

Because training is a strength in many ways in Alabama, we recommend capitalizing on this momentum to improve in both the quality and capacity of our training across the state. Significant needs for training in many areas across the state remain. The disparity between the number of victims in the state and the numbers

of victims receiving services and/or represented by the prosecution of their offenders is not an indictment of our law enforcement, child welfare, or any other agency in the state, but rather an indication of the need for improved training and processes. Opportunities exist to encourage standard language, accuracy, and shared vision in our training content. A significant need exists to reach all areas of the state with human trafficking training. Creating an effective training plan that reaches all communities in our state will be both a first task and an ongoing process.

To meet the most immediate needs not already covered by existing trainings, we recommend the creation of a statewide training strategy that facilitates the sharing of knowledge and resources, unifies languages, and agrees on general guidelines such as the Guide for Public Awareness Materials (Appendix 4). Second, we recommend the development and implementation of a plan to train professionals in areas with limited resources throughout the state who are likely to encounter victims of human trafficking and training the MDTs across the state on the AUHTI.

### **GENERAL PROFESSIONAL TRAINING**

Our larger cities have access to quality training through many of the entities and agencies listed above, however many communities with resource challenges, or which are isolated geographically, are not receiving training. This general training should be offered to professionals whom are likely to encounter potential victims of human trafficking, such as law enforcement, social workers, medical, mental health, restaurant and hospitality employees, and school staff. This training should consist of how to identify a potential victim of human trafficking within the context of their profession, how to engage the potential victim, and how to report the incident. This training will result in more victims identified and service provision being offered to them sooner. This is an important step in mitigating the problem of the “missing” or “hidden” population of victims in the state discussed in the introduction.



This initial set of recommendations has been identified through a mixed-method approach consisting of triangulating our research through cluster mapping, data analysis, and seeking partner insights.





Improved processes for reporting and data collection will enable accurate prevalence estimates and allow for strategic policy and resource allocation.



## REGIONAL MDT TRAINING

Training for MDTs should be conducted by a Law Enforcement representative, a Children’s Advocacy Center representative, and a Lived Experience Expert. These trainers should be consistent across the state, or at minimum across defined geographic regions to ensure consistency in the training provided statewide. In addition to MDT members, other professionals in law enforcement, social services, medical, mental health, or relevant NGOs may wish to attend this training. Partnerships with the Alabama Network of CACs (ANCAC), the Alabama State Attorney General’s Office, and the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) will create relevant and engaging training and assist with the implementation the AUHTI statewide.

The MDT trainings should focus on the Initial Response Protocol (IRP) for the applicable partners and cover relevant content for prosecutors and other parties involved in human trafficking investigation and victim/survivor support. Key components of this training should include victim identification and reporting processes, as well as the nature of human trafficking victimology and best practices.

## DATA AND COMMUNICATION

Without effective reporting processes Alabama does not have the ability to accurately quantify human trafficking activities in the state. Moreover, based on the research conducted by the School of Social Work at the University of Alabama, hidden populations of victims remain unsupported because of the lack of indicator training and reporting processes in each of our public systems. Ineffective reporting processes, or the lack of reporting processes, results in the inability to provide services to existing victim, and the lack of comprehensive and quantifiable data on human trafficking, thus diminishing the ability for informed evaluation of policy and the inefficient allocation of resources.

Improved processes for reporting and data collection will enable accurate prevalence estimates and allow for strategic policy and resource allocation. Over time, this will provide data to inform our knowledge of how human trafficking presents in specific populations and geographies, as well as methods and trends of human trafficking. This level of specificity will enable effective evaluations of the actions we take and inform process correction as we continue to learn and increase capacities to combat human trafficking in the state. In general, we need to create a data and communications plan that answers the questions of what data should be collected, how that data will be collected and secured, and how that data will be shared and communicated.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

All agencies and organizations who potentially engage with victims of human trafficking should create and implement processes to gather and report non-identifiable data on human trafficking. These agencies include law enforcement, child welfare, social services, victim service providers, medical, mental health, schools, and any other entity that could engage with victims of human trafficking.

Additionally, continued research is an important part of our data collection process. The evaluation of human trafficking research in the state will inform responsible resource allocation, relevant training content, and strategies for future initiatives. For example, understanding the fact that a significant number of calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline in the northern part of Alabama are coming from communities off the state highways as opposed to the interstate provides essential information to our law enforcement community that might affect personal deployment decisions.

## **DATA AGGREGATION**

The Alabama Fusion Center should serve as the data aggregator for the state. As the intelligence repository for the state with a universal mission

of information sharing, the Fusion Center has the ability to safely store such data. This would be the ideal place to keep this data regardless of the presence or absence of law enforcement involvement. An additional benefit is that the Fusion Center has law enforcement contacts at the local, state and federal level across the state and is part of the larger National Fusion Center Association which can facilitate collaboration with other fusion centers around the country for seamless intelligence on this borderless crime.

## **DATA COMMUNICATION**

Human trafficking data should be able to be accessed through a secured and searchable database by agencies and organizations that have been approved access to the data via formal agreements such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Relevant elements of this data can also be made available through an annual state report on human trafficking. This report can use the data to tell the story of human trafficking in the state and to provide insights through research and analysis into solutions and mitigation processes.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING**

Alabama currently has limited capacity for effective collaboration across the state. While pockets of successful collaboration exist, they tend to be regional and/or limited in scope. These self-imposed boundaries are not limitations but rather strategies to ensure the efficient use of resources. Some examples include the co-location model at the National Children's Advocacy Center in Huntsville, the West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force which serves as our states only operational task force, and the deeply collaborative MDT model of the Child Trafficking Solutions Project in the greater Birmingham area.

We recognize that Alabama is a diverse state with distinct resources and needs throughout the state. We acknowledge that what works in Huntsville, Tuscaloosa, or Birmingham might not work in

other counties or regions. This reality highlights the need to create capacity for sustainability. While capacity building often requires capital investments, much can be accomplished through collaboration. In some cases, an effective collaboration will attract capital investments by way of foundation or grant funding. And through the synergy of combined resources from multiple agencies and organizations, a deeper collaborative approach can maximize existing strengths.

## RESOURCES

Our state and local law enforcement partners need training and equipment to enhance their investigative capabilities. Our prosecutors and courts need training. Our service providers need capital resources for service provision. Our state needs housing opportunities for child and adult victims, mental health resources, and many other tangible things.

We are recommending a statewide strategic approach to meeting these needs both now and in the future that is twofold: first, collaborating around existing resources; and second, approaching federal grant opportunities with multiple agencies and organizations to write compelling applications through the strength of strategic collaboration.

## STATEWIDE HUMAN TRAFFICKING COORDINATOR

Finally, responsible capacity building must be strategic. We must understand the nature of the problem through research and analysis, create the needed resources, and develop the appropriate responses, manage and evaluate those activities, then make the appropriate changes based on the

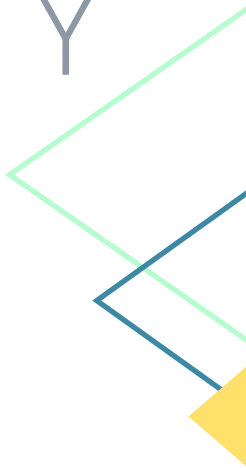
evaluations. For both efficiency and effectiveness, these processes should be centralized under an accountable and empowered statewide leader. We have suggested the title of that position as the Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinator (SHTC) and that person be a full-time employee of either a state agency or an appropriate non-governmental agency.

The SHTC is responsible to develop, oversee, and provide leadership for the statewide strategic AUHTI. This person will manage and facilitate the recommendations of this Initiative and provide vision and leadership for statewide efforts moving forward. The ideal competencies of this role include the ability to create and maintain unity around key policy and practice issues between our diverse communities including law enforcement, social service, nonprofit, academic, legislative, medical, mental health, and faith-based partners.

The hiring process for this position should be transparent and competitive. A job description and basic competencies should be developed and evaluated by a committee representing various experts in this field including the various task forces, direct service providers, and survivors. A similar committee should review all applicants for this position and make hiring recommendations to the employer. Those who agree to serve on these committees should not be applicants for the position once established.

This role is an essential starting point of this Initiative and is key to sustainable efforts. Returning to the football game plan analogy, this is putting in our quarterback to run the first play from scrimmage. The reader will find more information about this role in the next section titled "Sustainability".

# SUSTAINABILITY



# SUSTAINABILITY

Over the past several years many in the state have shown leadership in crafting legislation, developing programs, and proactive law enforcement investigations to address the complex and ongoing issues around human trafficking in the state. Alabama is well positioned to build on our existing strengths; we now have an opportunity to take a more collaborative approach to advance a strategic plan for addressing sex and labor trafficking throughout the state.

The importance of considering how to move forward is paramount. In fact, without a commitment to create the infrastructure to support ongoing anti-human trafficking work in a more collaborative and comprehensive way, any resources allocated, and efforts expended to implement the recommendations of this Initiative are at best a symbolic gesture, a fence erected to dam a river. Effectively addressing the trafficking of adults and minors through sex and labor in Alabama in a sustainable way requires empowered and accountable leadership. Specifically, the key starting point as it relates to sustainability is the creation of the Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinator (SHTC) position to manage and provide leadership for this process.

This short section is not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive. Rather, it provides some practical suggestions related to the recommended Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinator position. Additionally, some of the content of this section will shed light on why our existing resources are inadequate to carry out these responsibilities, and how the creation of this new position would be a prudent first step. For clarity in this discussion, this section has been divided into three elements: Empowerment, Accountability, and Leadership. Each of these elements draws out important nuances of this role.

## EMPOWERMENT

By using the term “empowerment” in this context we are referring to having the authority and access that facilitates the ability to get things done. Authority and access are enhanced through both position and by relationship. Other states have aligned similar positions under different agencies or organizations. For example, Minnesota’s comparable position is located in their Department of Human Services, and Mississippi has aligned their statewide coordinator under the Mississippi Bureau of Investigations, while Oregon and California both have similar positions located within non-governmental organizations that partner closely with their law enforcement and social service partners. Iowa has a similar position within their state Attorney General’s Office. The decision as to where SHTC is placed will have various ramifications including funding, focus, shifting priorities, and autonomy among others. Therefore, this decision should be made carefully, considering the benefits and ramifications of where the SHTC is located.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

When the citizens and leadership of the state of Alabama invest resources to strategically approach the issue of human trafficking in the state, a responsibility of accountability is assumed. Accountability in this context can be grouped into three categories: Management, Evaluation, and Reporting. The SHTC should provide leadership by exhibiting accountability in each of these areas through specific deliverables and responsibilities.



“

Effectively and sustainably addressing human trafficking in Alabama requires empowered and accountable leadership, through the creation of the Statewide Human Trafficking Coordinator position.

”



## MANAGEMENT

The successful management of this systemic statewide approach requires the ability to develop and execute a strategic plan. The implementation of the recommendations in this Initiative will need oversight. A baseline for reporting and data gathering will need to be created, and the ongoing collaborative efforts across the state will require extensive facilitation. These and other similar responsibilities will require the full-time effort of a competent manager.

## EVALUATION

The recommendations in this Initiative are a starting point. They will need to be evaluated for effectiveness and refined on a regular basis. Statewide resources and capacities will need to be identified on an ongoing basis as they naturally will change from year to year. Also, new recommendations based on the continually evolving nature of this crime, the needs of victims, and changes in resource allocations will need to be assessed and prioritized on a regular basis. The SHTC will need to possess the ability to engage in continuous evaluation, assessment, and revision of the strategy.

## REPORTING

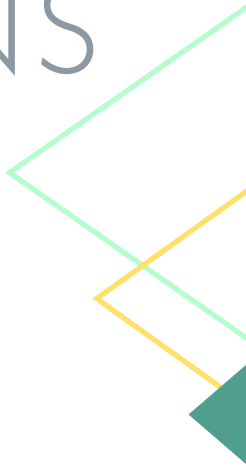
Finally, the state would benefit from an Annual Human Trafficking Report to provide insight into our progress year over year, acknowledge those doing exemplary work, identify important trends, and make appropriate suggestions for continued growth. This report can be used by state agencies to review resource allocation and training. It can be a source of data and best practices for other states or the federal government, and it will provide insight into the effectiveness of our efforts.

## LEADERSHIP

The success of our efforts is dependent on the competent leadership of the SHTC. This person must thoroughly understand the goals of this Initiative and be able to clearly articulate and translate them into measurable actions and create a specific road map outlining how those goals will be realized. Thus, one of the first responsibilities for the SHTC is to create a strategic plan. Goals must be prioritized, considerations given to which activities or actions are contingent and which ones are dependent, and determinations made on the most prudent way to build capacity. Once this strategic plan is established, the SHTC will need to possess the capability to manage collaborative teams for implementation.

As mentioned in the Empowerment section above, "authority" is not simply a position held by an individual, it is also earned through healthy relationships. One of the essential characteristics of the leader who holds the position of SHTC is the ability to build and maintain relational capital among various, and sometimes opposing, entities and agencies. Additional responsibilities of the SHTC include the ability to unify people together, to facilitate healthy and productive discussions around policy and practice, and to provide a platform that encourages collaboration around future grant applications and resource sharing throughout the state. The SHTC will encourage growth strategies, effectively foster public-private partnerships, and facilitate communication throughout the state to strengthen the unified message.

# CONCLUSIONS



# CONCLUSIONS

Alabama has a strong foundation upon which to build. The hard work of many advocates and brave legislators resulted in some of the strongest laws in the nation to protect those vulnerable to human trafficking and to prosecute offenders. Because of tremendous leaders in our law enforcement community, traffickers are beginning to find some places in the state inhospitable to trafficking. Because of our caring professionals in the various social service agencies in the state, the recovered victims are receiving services. And, because of our tireless nonprofit community, survivors are finding the supportive and restorative services they need. Each of these entities and organizations, and each of these committed and compassionate individuals have laid an impressive foundation upon which we can build an exemplary anti-human trafficking statewide initiative.

The State is in a perfect position to invest in the lives of the most vulnerable in Alabama and to support the honorable and difficult work already completed. Our current efforts and resources are inadequate to manage the prevalence and scope of human trafficking in the state. Moreover, the configuration of our existing resources is struggling to meet the existing investigative and service provision needs. By adopting the recommendations in this Initiative and committing to a sustainable strategy for addressing human trafficking in Alabama, we will once again demonstrate leadership as a state for the afflicted and oppressed. Just as we currently lead the nation in our legislative approach to the issue, we can now lead the nation in our comprehensive and collaborative approach to investigations, victim services, and training.

Finally, successful efforts to implement the recommendations in this Initiative will result in a greater number of identified victims of human trafficking. This is because better training, policies, and processes will inevitably lead to more victims identified, more arrests and prosecutions, and more victim services being offered. This can create concern for agencies unprepared to manage an increased demand for services and for the general public as they gain an awareness of increased activities. We must be prepared both logistically with resources and set expectations for public perception for the corresponding increase of reported victims and cases of human trafficking. Thoughtful approaches to training and public awareness will address this by telling the story of our success and leadership evidenced by protecting a greater number of the most vulnerable among us.

# APPENDIX 1 // RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## BACKGROUND

In 2017, the University of Alabama School of Social Work was awarded a grant from the Department of Justice to address juvenile human trafficking in Alabama through three deliverables:

- Development of a statewide response protocol for use when juvenile human trafficking victims are identified
- Provide a statewide training on juvenile human trafficking
- Produce a database of resources available in Alabama for juvenile human trafficking victims

Specific tasks were outlined in the grant award that were to be completed in order to meet these three deliverables. One of these tasks was the expansion of the statewide needs assessment originally conducted by Dr. Williams of the School of Social Work at the University of Alabama in 2014. An updated needs assessment was developed in two forms—an electronic survey and a series of focus groups.

## ELECTRONIC SURVEY

Using a previously deployed survey as a starting model, the electronic survey was re-evaluated and adjusted to meet the current needs. Through UA's license for Qualtrics, the final survey was developed and approved by the university's Institutional Review Board and disseminated by email to as many contacts as the research team was able to identify. The recipients included but were not limited to DHR, CACs and law enforcement. Every DHR county office was contacted via the [dhr.alabama.gov](http://dhr.alabama.gov) website and sent a link through the email portal there to participate. Each of the 35 Child Advocacy Centers, and many sheriff's offices and police agencies were reached through their website, email, or Facebook messenger.

The response to the electronic survey was minimal. Moreover, many responses were started but left incomplete, and there was no way to identify if an incomplete survey was restarted by the same agency, which would have resulted in duplicated data. Therefore, survey responses were not considered in later data analysis.

## FOCUS GROUPS

Recognizing the challenges of collecting responses to an electronic survey, a plan for focus groups was developed simultaneously with the survey. Both methods were intended to collect the same information, just using different formats.

Focus groups were conducted in 13 cities across Alabama (Attachment 1). The cities were chosen to meet certain geographic criteria: major metropolitan areas, far reaching corners, and gap fillers. Ultimately, we held focus groups within a two-hour drive of each other all over the state, making them as reasonably accessible as we could. Some cities were scheduled for two groups where we expected larger turn out, giving us a total of 20 successful focus groups.

Invitations to participate were sent to all relevant entities in an area, including the previously mentioned DHR, CAC, and law enforcement contacts. The invitation specified we were looking for people who work with human trafficking victims or cases, or who would work those cases if they were identified in the area. In total, there were 114 participants statewide from a wide range of professions.

The research team met prior to the start of the focus groups to create a script for instructions and questions to lead discussion during the focus groups (Attachment 2). The goal was to maintain a consistent presentation for each group. Given the open discussion nature of focus groups, the script required minor adjustment throughout the groups, however, the full list of 14 questions was covered in each group.

## FOCUS GROUP ATTENDEES

PROFESSION	ATTENDEES
CACs	13
Church Orgs	4
DHR	13
Education	1
Hispanic Interests	2
Labor	1
Law Enforcement	38
Legal	8
Medical	3
Mental Health	3
NGOs	20
Social Services	6
Task Force	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>114</b>

Prior to beginning each focus group, participants were given a Focus Group Consent Form, outlining the specifics of the research (Attachment 3).

In addition to the discussion, participants were asked to create a diagram outlining their office's current protocol for responding to human trafficking victims. This could be done in any form—a flow chart, list, or whatever the participant was most comfortable with. We asked them to highlight any areas where holes existed in their protocol. This gave us a sampling of agency protocols from a wide variety of professions and geographic areas, as well as to identify gaps in services. In some cases, participants were unable to outline a specific protocol because their organization did not have one.

### DATA ANALYSIS

As focus groups were completed, the audio recordings were submitted to an online transcription service. The research team then edited the transcriptions for accuracy. Transcriptions were uploaded to NVivo, a qualitative software analysis tool, and coded. Coding requires the transcripts to be read through by a member of the research team and texts highlighted and assigned to the relevant code for the data. Primary categories identified by the participants included Challenges, Services, Signs of Trafficking, Trafficking Victims, Victim Descriptions, and Website. Subcategories to these allowed the data to be broken down to more specific details, such as Consent for Services and Staffing under Challenges, and Age and Nationality under Victim Descriptions.

The quantitative data regarding human trafficking victims was pulled from the coded values to determine statewide estimates of trafficking in Alabama in 2017. The 114 focus group participants identified 617 potential victims of human trafficking, of which 354 were minors. We knew this did not account for all trafficking victims because of the limited number of participants. In order to account for the professionals not

represented in our focus groups, we assessed the missing data through a statistical data extrapolation process to account for the instances not captured because they are represented outside of our focus group participants.

## DATA EXTRAPOLATION

A weighted model was used to determine the percentage of victims who had come into contact with professionals in Alabama that our focus groups had been unable to identify. Using county population data, we estimated the percentage of cases identified in our groups for each county. To do this, we tabulated the number of representative participants from each county for four groups: DHR or Social Services, Law Enforcement or Legal, Child Advocacy Centers, and Non-Governmental Organizations. We also looked at whether there was a “primary representative” for each county. Some agencies cover more than one county, so we wanted to know if someone who worked on-site in each county was present.

We assigned the following weights to each of these factors:

- Number of group types represented (DHR/SS, LEO/Legal, CAC, NGO)
  - 4 = 0.5
  - 3 = 0.4
  - 2 = 0.3
  - 1 = 0.2
- 5 or more participants from that county = 0.3
- Primary representative present = 0.2

A county with representatives from all groups, including a primary representative, and five or more participants would receive a 1.0 rating, which would indicate we have a complete picture of trafficking cases accounted for in that county. A county that was unrepresented would receive a 0.0, indicating we have no representation through our focus groups.

## FOCUS GROUPS (ALABAMA, 2017)

**13**

Alabama cities participated

**20**

focus groups conducted

**114**

focus group participants

**617**

potential victims identified

**354**

minors identified as potential victims

These weights were inverted to account for the percentage missing. Each weight was subtracted from 1.0, giving fully accounted for counties a 0.0 and unaccounted for counties a 1.0. We then multiplied the county population by the inversed weight to determine how much of that county population was unaccounted for, which totaled 47.11%.

In total, we determined 52.89% of cases were accounted for by the focus groups, leaving 47.11% unaccounted for. We calculated the estimated missing cases assuming that  $617 = 52.89\%$ , which resulted in  $1167 = 100\%$ . ( $617 * 100 / 52.89$ )

Based on the prior figure of 57% of cases being minors, we estimate that 665 of the 1167 suspected victims were minors.

## OTHER FINDINGS

Beyond the quantitative data, participants identified specific areas of concern for trafficking victims in Alabama. Specifically, it was recognized repeatedly that two forms of trafficking taking place in Alabama that are overlooked are familial trafficking and labor trafficking. Familial trafficking is especially difficult to identify, as the indicators could be easily misidentified or unidentified by professional engaged in the minor's life who have not been trained on human trafficking. Labor trafficking was also identified by participants and seems to be a significant presence in agricultural work in Alabama and may also include child labor.

## LIMITATIONS

As researchers, we understand that the numbers we have determined are not exact. All research comes with limitations. In this case, we have identified the following limitations:

- The potential for duplicate accounts of the same case.
  - During single focus group a participant from DHR, CAC, and law enforcement may be able to say that together they worked a certain number of cases. We cannot say definitively whether someone

in another focus group identified the same case, as we intentionally did not ask for identifying information about any cases or victims due to privacy and information sharing requirements.

- There are cases missing from the data.
  - Victims who have had no contact with professionals cannot be accounted for.
  - Victims who have had contact, but were not identified as victims by professionals cannot be accounted for.
  - Using the Global Slavery Indexes' population based mathematical formula, (1.3 per 1000 people) the actual number of human trafficking victims in Alabama might be closer to 6,337, of which 3,612 would be minors.
- Data extrapolation is not an exact science.
  - We attempted to determine how inclusive the data we collected was from a statewide perspective. While we believe we have done so as accurately as possible, we cannot say with certainty that the extrapolation methods we used provide a fully accurate accounting.
- Research participation was limited.
  - Professionals working in law enforcement, child welfare, social service, mental health, medical, and nonprofit organizations from 41 counties in Alabama participated in the focus groups. The remaining counties were accounted for via data extrapolation based on population.
- In the counties represented, each county did not have "full" representation, therefore providing incomplete data from their county.

Considering these limitations, we acknowledge that our extrapolated estimates do not provide



an exact number of adults or minors who are victim of human trafficking in Alabama. However, we do have extremely high confidence that our methodology and the resulting estimates responsibly indicate the minimum number of potential victims in the state.

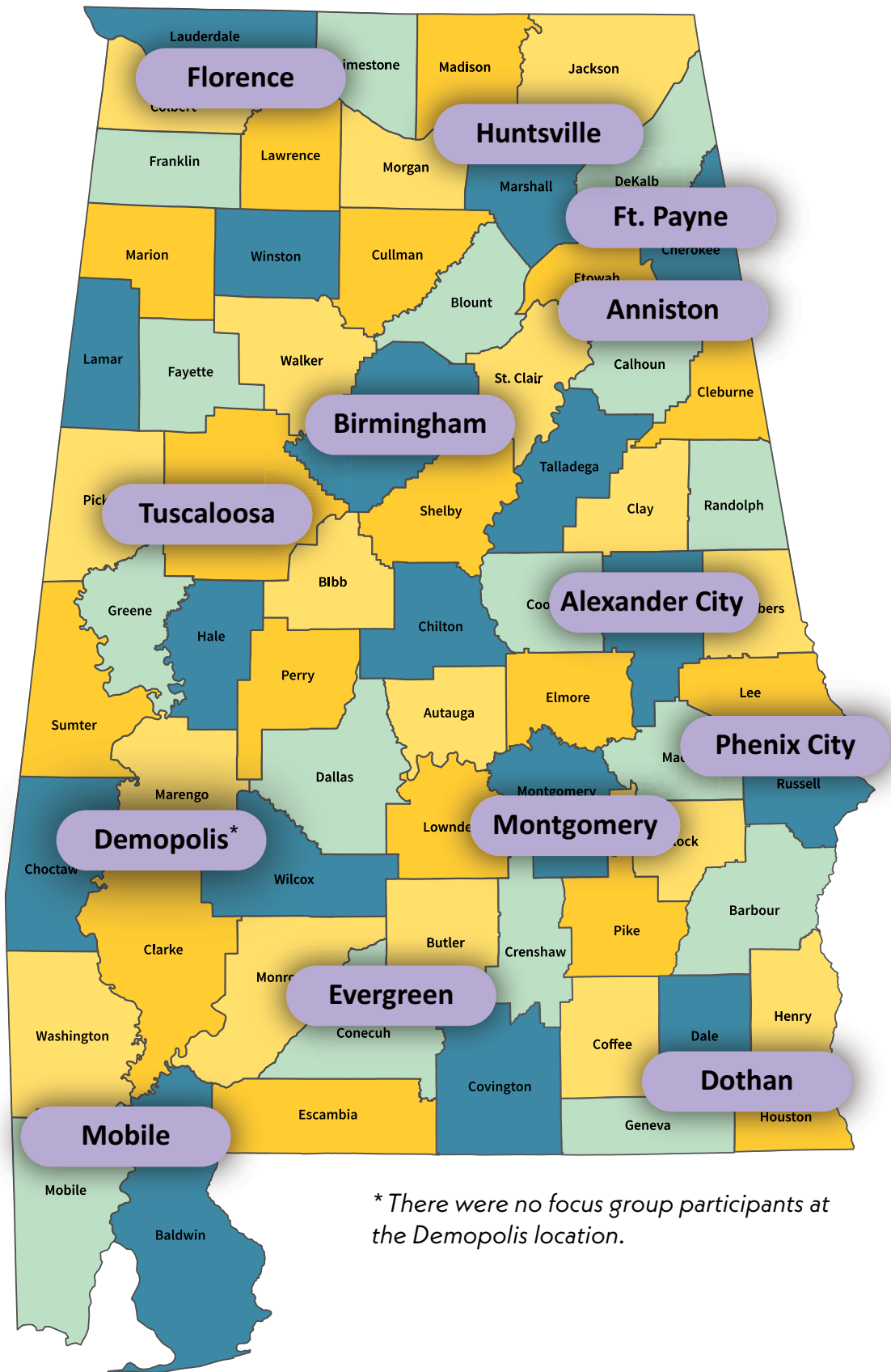
## CONCLUSIONS

Per the grant issued to the University of Alabama by the US Department of Justice, we have earnestly attempted to gauge the prevalence of human trafficking in Alabama as a part of our effort to determine the needs of this population within the state. Without having access to data that can be cross-checked from all relevant entities, we are unable to provide exact figures of trafficking victims known to professionals. Even if that data existed and was available to be evaluated, there would still be a missing segment that is unknown to any child welfare, social services, or law enforcement personnel in the state. Based on the data we have been able to collect, we are confident in the estimates we are able to provide: In 2017, approximately 1,167

suspected victims of human trafficking (sex and labor) had contact with a professional in Alabama, of which 665 (57%) were minors. The nature of these contacts may have been medical provision, counseling, law enforcement, mental health, or other professional services. These individuals may or may not have been identified as victims of human trafficking at that time, and therefore may or may not have engaged in either the criminal justice system or service provision for human trafficking survivors.

The purpose of collecting this data is to determine whether the services available in Alabama are adequate to meet these needs of this population, to gain a clearer understanding of the scope of the problem for more effective policy and process creation, and to increase awareness of the prevalence of trafficking in the state. As human trafficking is a problem commonly believed to happen “somewhere else”—big cities, other countries, etc.—recognizing the prevalence in our home state is essential to combatting the problem and identifying solutions.

# ATTACHMENT 1: FOCUS GROUP MAP



*\* There were no focus group participants at the Demopolis location.*

## ATTACHMENT 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

\*Table introductions

\*Turn off cell phones

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Thank you for your participation in this important focus group. This group is part of a larger series of 20 focus groups we are conducting across the state to get a better understanding of what is currently being done to address the issue of human trafficking, what resources are available and needed, and to determine where the gaps are.

We are tasked with creating a statewide protocol to coordinate services for victims of both sex and labor trafficking for law enforcement, social service, nonprofits and other agencies involved in helping the victims of human trafficking.

Your involvement in this focus group will help us understand what you need to serve this population better. The ultimate result will be threefold:

The establishment of a statewide protocol for first responders, social service and NGO's so that you will know what to do when you come across a potential or confirmed victim of human trafficking.

Training to keep current on issues around this topic including how to investigate and prosecute, how to identify and understand the effects of complex trauma, the basics of human trafficking to best practices.

Finally, we will be creating a database that will be a tool you can use to find vetted resources to make your job easier and aid in the victim's recovery.

So for the next 90 minutes we will be asking you questions and having a conversation about how you currently go about obtaining and coordinating services, what training would be helpful and getting your thoughts on the website.

As we get started, we have 4 requests:

- No Blame – we will be uncovering needs and gaps in services and resources that over the next several months we will be working together to create solutions for. If we do not properly identify the difficulties, we cannot properly create solutions.
- All ideas and concerns are up for discussion. If something comes to your mind put it on the table and let the ideas develop with the other participants.
- No sidebars – We will only have one conversation at the table at a time. Side discussions both distract from what is being considered and robs the rest of the group of the ability to hear what you have to say.
- When the conversation starts to stray too far from the question we will interrupt the discussion and bring it back on point.

Do you have any questions?

## DIAGRAMS:

On the paper provided, please put your agency name and your title or role. Then use the paper to draw a diagram or write out what your department's current protocol is for human trafficking victims. If you know of any holes in services around what your organization does, write those in and highlight them so we can clearly see where the holes are.

## QUESTIONS:

- Scope of the problem
  - In the past year, approximately how many victims of trafficking have you worked with?
  - What types of trafficking do you see? Sex? Labor?
- Existing and needed services
  - Are there differences between the types of services that Victims of sex and labor trafficking need?
  - What services are you aware of that exist in your city/county/state for child/adolescent victims of trafficking?
  - What services are needed but don't exist?
  - What services exist but need to be expanded upon?
- Existing methods of service provision/coordination
  - How do workers in your agency (or you yourself) proceed in obtaining and coordinating services for children/adolescents who have been trafficked? What is your exact procedure? What are the biggest challenges to obtaining/coordinating services in your agency/city/county/state?
  - Are there strengths in service coordination in your agency/city/county/state that we can build upon?
- Website development/content:
  - We are planning to develop a statewide website to assist providers in obtaining and coordinating services. How could a website like this be helpful to you and others in your profession?
  - In a perfect world, what capabilities would you like a website like this to have? (EX: service provider database, online "reservations" for services, online trainings, public information, etc.)
  - Who should have access to it? What sort of access should they have?
  - What concerns do you have about a website like this?
  - What have we not asked about that you think is important for us to know as we consider developing this website?
  - Are there tools other than a website that would be helpful to you and others in your profession?
- Follow up: We would like to reach out to all of you later to continue working together as partners in this endeavor. We'll be emailing you all to requests a list of resources you partner with to help us build a comprehensive list of available resources throughout the state.

## ATTACHMENT 3: FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM

### PURPOSE

You have been invited to participate in a focus group sponsored by the University of Alabama School of Social Work under the direction of Dr. Javonda Williams. The purpose of this focus group is to determine the services available and services lacking to properly serve victims of human trafficking. The information learned in this focus group will be used to build a database of resources and create a statewide protocol for human trafficking victims.

### PROCEDURE

As part of this study, a moderator will ask you several questions while facilitating the discussion. As approved through University of Alabama's Institutional Review Board, this focus group will be audio and video recorded and a note-taker will be present. However, your responses will remain confidential, and no names will be included in the final report. You can choose whether or not to participate in the focus group, and you may stop at any time during the course of the study.

Please note that there are no right or wrong answers to focus group questions. The project team want(s) to hear the many varying viewpoints and would like for everyone to contribute their thoughts. Out of respect, please refrain from interrupting others. However, feel free to be honest even when your responses counter those of other group members.

### BENEFITS AND RISKS

Your participation may benefit human trafficking victims and organizations who serve them by helping the development of a resource database and statewide protocol. However, no risks are anticipated beyond those experienced during an average conversation.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to respect the privacy of other focus group members by not disclosing any content discussed during the study. Researchers within the University of Alabama School of Social Work will analyze the data, but—as stated above—your responses will remain confidential, and no names will be included in any reports.

### CONTACT

Please contact Valerie Trull or Chris Lim at 205-348-6790 or via email at beams@ua.edu should you have ANY questions about the focus group. Dr. Javonda Williams is the Principal Investigator and may be reached at 205-348-3926 or via email at jwilliams11@sw.ua.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a person taking part in a research study or want to make suggestions or file complaints and concerns, you may call Ms. Tanta Myles, the University of Alabama Research Compliance Officer at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066. You may also ask questions, make suggestions, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach Website at [http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO\\_Welcome.html](http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html) or may send an email to participantoutreach@bama.ua.edu.

I understand this information and agree to participate fully under the conditions stated above.

Sign name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2 // DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

**Advocate:** the MDT partner providing the voice of the victim/survivor to the MDT and the bridge of trust providing consistency to the victim/survivor during their continuum of care.

**Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA):** The mission of the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency is to efficiently provide quality service, protection, and safety for the State of Alabama through the utilization of consolidated law enforcement, investigative, and support services.

**Alabama Uniform Human Trafficking Initiative (AUHTI):** The concepts delineated in this document, in particular the commitment to a statewide comprehensive and collaborative approach to addressing human trafficking in Alabama.

**Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC):** A Child Advocacy Center serves as a one-stop-shop for children and their families in the aftermath of child abuse. It serves as a home-base for all the professionals to come together in one place for the benefit of the child. Alabama has 35 CACs covering all 67 counties in the state.

**Care Navigator:** A role in the Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT). Each victim/survivor of human trafficking is assigned a Care Navigator to coordinate the care for the victim/survivor and help them navigate the necessary processes and systems.

**Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR):** Alabama’s child welfare agency. The mission of the Child Welfare Division of DHR is to help families receive the least disruptive services they need, when they need them, and for only as long as they need them in order to maintain children in or return them to a safe, stable home.

**United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS):** A cabinet department of the U.S. federal government with responsibilities

in public security, roughly comparable to the interior or home ministries of other countries. Its stated missions involve anti-terrorism, border security, immigration and customs, cyber security, and disaster prevention and management. DHS includes Homeland Security Investigations, which operate a Birmingham, Alabama office that is highly involved in anti-trafficking efforts in the state.

**United States Department of Justice (DOJ):** A federal executive department of the United States government responsible for the enforcement of the law and administration of justice in the United States of America and is equivalent to the justice or interior ministries of other countries. The DOJ oversees the OJP, and thereby OVC, and is the chief federal funding agency for the Improving Outcomes for Juvenile Victims of Human Trafficking award.

**Forensic interview:** A structured conversation with a child intended to elicit detailed information about a possible event(s) that the child may have experienced or witnessed, conducted by an individual trained in providing forensic interviews. Forensic interviewing is a service often provided by CACs.

**Human Trafficking:** In this document the term human trafficking is inclusive of all forms of human trafficking including sex trafficking and labor trafficking, and all other forms of human trafficking as defined by the law.

**Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC):** Formally, this Task Force Program is a national network of 61 coordinated task forces representing over 4,500 federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. These agencies are continually engaged in proactive and reactive investigations and prosecutions of persons involved in child abuse and exploitation involving the Internet.

**Incidence Response Protocol (IRP):** The IRP outlines the promising practices advised for adoption by all entities in Alabama involved in combatting human trafficking through law enforcement and victim advocacy and service provision roles.

**Lived Experience Expert (LEE):** Individuals with subject matter expertise gained through life experiences. In this case, survivors of human trafficking.

**Mandated reporter:** A person who, because of his or her profession, is legally required to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the relevant authorities. These laws are in place to prevent children from being abused and to end any possible abuse or neglect at the earliest possible stage. For specific details on Alabama's mandated reporter laws, visit [law.justia.com/codes/alabama/2006/19865/26-14-3.html](http://law.justia.com/codes/alabama/2006/19865/26-14-3.html).

**Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding (MOA/MOU):** While an MOU describes a general understanding between parties working towards a common cause with no funding attached, an MOA is a more formal conditional agreement between two or more parties when the transfer of funds for goods or services are anticipated. In common language, the terms may be used interchangeably at times. Most agencies require legal counsel to review MOAs and MOUs before they are signed.

**Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT):** Regional collaborative teams which may cover one or more counties. The focus of an MDT is to provide for the safety and well-being of a victim/survivor. While Alabama's existing MDTs have a larger scope than just the issue of human trafficking, the protocol outlined in this document applies only to their response to those individuals suspected of being victims of human trafficking. Each MDT may have their own protocols that should be followed, such as notifying an MDT Coordinator. The MDT is an indispensable entity in the work to combat human trafficking and service provision of the victim/survivor.

**Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO):** In the context of this document, most NGOs are service providers and advocates working in the anti-human trafficking field, such as shelters and outreach organizations.

**Office of Justice Programs (OJP):** The Office of Justice Programs provides federal leadership, grants, training, technical assistance and other resources to improve the nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime, assist victims and enhance the rule of law by strengthening the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

**Office for Victims of Crime (OVC):** A subsection of the Office of Justice Programs. OVC was established through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) in 1988 and is charged by Congress with administrating the Crime Victims Fund. Funding through OVC established the funding this Initiative was developed under.

**Sexual Assault Forensic Nurse Examiner (SAFE/SANE Nurse):** Registered nurses who have completed specialized education and clinical preparation in the medical forensic care of the patient who has experienced sexual assault or abuse.

**Task Force:** A strategic collaboration focused on one of three primary objectives: statewide oversight, law enforcement, and community. Each of these types of task force serves a specific purpose and are addressed more fully in this document.

**Victim/Survivor:** This protocol uses the terms "victim" and "survivor" to refer to individuals who were trafficked. The terms "victim" and "survivor" of human trafficking have specific, and at times, nuanced implications, legally, sociologically, etc. For simplicity in this document we will use the terms interchangeably or will use the term "victim/survivor" when specifying the differences is not necessary for clarity.

## APPENDIX 3 // RESOURCES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

Resources for up to date information on human trafficking and service providers to meet the needs of victims/survivors, are both important components of a comprehensive approach to addressing human trafficking in Alabama. To this end, the BEAMS website ([beamsal.com](http://beamsal.com)) has dedicated pages for each of these. The Resources page has an ever-growing list of articles on the current research and promising practices, and the Service Providers page has more than 400 providers covering a broad range of service types across the state of Alabama. This list is reviewed regularly, and new providers added as they are identified. Updated information and new entries can be submitted to [beams@ua.edu](mailto:beams@ua.edu).

### ALABAMA

These providers offer a variety of services—from investigatory assistance, to victim services, to training. The providers we are including in this document are focused specifically on anti-trafficking efforts. Additional service providers can be found at the [beamsal.com](http://beamsal.com) website, who offer services needed by victims of trafficking, but are not specifically focused on serving victims of human trafficking, such as detox and rehabilitation programs, legal services, or job training. We have attempted to provide a brief overview here of what each of the listed organizations does, but for more in-depth information we recommend you visit their websites.

- **Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA)/Fusion Center** | [www.alea.gov](http://www.alea.gov)
  - Training available through the Fusion Center, law enforcement resources
- **BEAMS** | [beamsal.com](http://beamsal.com)
  - Human trafficking research, training, and resources
- **Blanket Fort Hope** | [blanketforhope.org](http://blanketforhope.org)
  - Training, community awareness, drop-in shelter (in development)
- **Child Trafficking Solutions Project** | [www.jeffersoncountychildren.org](http://www.jeffersoncountychildren.org)
  - Training, resources for collaboration
- **Cullman County Human Trafficking Task Force** | [www.facebook.com/Cullman-County-Human-Trafficking-Task-Force-870585096352748/](https://www.facebook.com/Cullman-County-Human-Trafficking-Task-Force-870585096352748/)
  - Training, community awareness
- **Dark Tower, UAB Computer Forensics** | [www.uab.edu/cas/thecenter/](http://www.uab.edu/cas/thecenter/)
  - Digital forensics, research
- **End It Alabama / Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force** | [www.enditalabama.org](http://www.enditalabama.org)
  - Training, resources
- **Homeland Security Investigations** | [www.ice.gov/hsi](http://www.ice.gov/hsi)
  - Training, collaboration, law enforcement operations, resource material
- **Joint Electronic Crimes Task Force (JECTF)** | [cybercrime.as.ua.edu/resources/jectf/](http://cybercrime.as.ua.edu/resources/jectf/)
  - ICAC, digital forensics, evidence processing, research
- **North Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force** | [stnow.org](http://stnow.org)
  - Training, community awareness
- **Renew Hope/Chambers County Human Trafficking Task Force** | [www.renewhopeinitiative.com](http://www.renewhopeinitiative.com)
  - Training, community awareness



- **The Rose Center / Eye Heart World | [eyeheartworld.org](http://eyeheartworld.org)**
  - Drop-in center
- **The Wellhouse | 800-991-9937 | [www.the-wellhouse.org](http://www.the-wellhouse.org)**
  - Women’s and children’s shelters, training, speaking
  - Shelter for minor victims of human trafficking
- **Trafficking Hope | 225-819-0000 | [www.traffickinghope.com](http://www.traffickinghope.com)**
  - General support for victims, training
- **US Attorney Generals Offices:**
  - Northern District | [www.justice.gov/usao-ndal](http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndal)
  - Middle District | [www.justice.gov/usao-mdal](http://www.justice.gov/usao-mdal)
  - Training, collaboration
- **West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force | [www.facebook.com/westalahumantraffickingtaskforce](http://www.facebook.com/westalahumantraffickingtaskforce)**
  - Training, collaboration for law enforcement activities
- **Junior League of Birmingham | [www.jlbonline.com](http://www.jlbonline.com)**
  - General training, hotel training

## OUT OF STATE CONFERENCES

Conferences offer opportunities to expand your understanding of different factors related to trafficking and to meet people working in the anti-trafficking field across the country and

even globally. The conferences listed here are ones our team has attended and can personally recommend as quality events. This list is far from exhaustive and we encourage you to seek out diverse training opportunities whenever possible.

### **JuST CONFERENCE**

Shared Hope International, a leading organization in training and awareness of human trafficking, offers an annual Juvenile Sex Trafficking (JuST) Conference. The three-day event takes place in the fall at a different city across the US each year. The conference focuses on current events in anti-human trafficking efforts and the inclusion of survivors in all aspects. Discounts are offered for survivors, students, and Ambassadors of Hope. For more information visit [www.justconference.org](http://www.justconference.org). Continuing education credits are available for most professions.

### **DALLAS CRIME AGAINST CHILDREN CONFERENCE**

One of the oldest and largest conferences available is the Dallas Crimes Against Children Conference. It is held annually in mid-August in Dallas, TX, and hosts more than 5000 attendees each year. This four-day conference offers an opening plenary followed by hundreds of workshops covering a wide variety of topics and professions, as well as social events and networking sessions. Human trafficking is a regular component in many of the workshops, and interplays with most topics related to child abuse. This conference offers one- and two-day registration discounts, as well as a limited number of scholarships to cover registration fees. For more information visit [www.cacconference.org](http://www.cacconference.org). Continuing education credits available for most professions.

## NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

These organizations are working in anti-trafficking beyond Alabama's state borders. They each offer many resources for incorporating into your anti-trafficking efforts and trainings.

- **Blue Campaign** | [www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign](http://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign)
  - Department of Homeland Security public awareness campaign and resources
- **Guardian Group** | [guardiangroup.org](http://guardiangroup.org)
  - Anti-trafficking organization for the hotel industry
- **Office For Victims of Crime** | [www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDuKXs-qp\\_GdY5fy1Yj0sPdLBRaGyRXkl](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDuKXs-qp_GdY5fy1Yj0sPdLBRaGyRXkl)
  - Faces of Human Trafficking, 25 video play list
- **Polaris** | [polarisproject.org](http://polarisproject.org)
  - Data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline
- **Shared Hope International** | [sharedhope.org](http://sharedhope.org)
  - Annual state report cards, training resources
- **Trafficking Matters** | [www.traffickingmatters.com](http://www.traffickingmatters.com)
  - Current News, Cases and Resources
- **Truckers Against Trafficking** | [truckersagainsttrafficking.org](http://truckersagainsttrafficking.org)
  - Anti-trafficking organization for the transportation industry
- **US Department of State** | [www.state.gov/j/tip/index.htm](http://www.state.gov/j/tip/index.htm)
  - The Office to Monitor and Combat the Trafficking In Persons
- **US Department of Labor** | [www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor)
  - International Child Labor & Forced Labor

## CURRICULUM

If you are beginning a training program from scratch, consider using an existing training curriculum, or adapting one to fit your specific needs. These are just a few of the many training curriculums available.

- **Best Life** | [celiawilliamson.com](http://celiawilliamson.com)
  - Human Trafficking Prevention Curriculum for Youth
- **Chosen** | [sharedhope.org/chosen](http://sharedhope.org/chosen)
  - Videos and Discussion Guides
- **Elevate** | [elevate-academy.org](http://elevate-academy.org)
  - Survivor Leadership Training
- **Ending the Game** | [endingthegame.com/what-is-etg](http://endingthegame.com/what-is-etg)
  - Coercion Resiliency Curriculum
- **IEmpathize** | [iempathize.org](http://iempathize.org)
  - Prevention through empowerment
- **Love 146 curriculum, Not a Number.** | [love146.org](http://love146.org)
  - Survivor care, prevention, and training
- **NEST** | [www.nestfoundation.org](http://www.nestfoundation.org)
  - Sexual Violence Prevention Curriculum
- **Prevention Project** | [www.prevention-project.org/home/prevention-project-program](http://www.prevention-project.org/home/prevention-project-program)
  - Human Trafficking Prevention Curriculum
- **Word on the Street** | [www.nolabrantleyspeaks.org/nbs-blog/word-on-the-street](http://www.nolabrantleyspeaks.org/nbs-blog/word-on-the-street)
  - Prevention through mentorship

# APPENDIX 4 // GUIDE FOR PUBLIC AWARENESS MATERIALS

## Senior Policy Operating Group Public Awareness and Outreach Committee Guide For Public Awareness Materials (non-binding)

U.S. Department of State

Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Person

February 27, 2020

Increasing public awareness about the risks and signs of human trafficking (also known as “trafficking in persons” or “modern slavery”) is an important piece of any anti-trafficking strategy, and to date has been a primary prevention measure used by governments and other stakeholders. Effective public awareness and outreach efforts can lead to the detection of human trafficking cases, build public support for governments and communities to take action, and ultimately help prevent human trafficking. With the dissemination of accurate and targeted information, communities will be better prepared to respond to the threat of human trafficking.

The President’s Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (PITF) and the Senior Policy Operating Group (SPOG), which consists of senior officials designated as representatives of the PITF agencies, are dedicated to a multi-faceted response from every level of the U.S. government to ensure coordination of federal efforts to combat trafficking in persons. This coordinated response includes efforts to raise awareness and educate stakeholders to develop targeted strategies to address the factors that increase risk in their communities and prevent traffickers from committing this crime.

This guide serves as a public resource that reflects the common messaging, standard statistics, and shared guidelines on images that SPOG agencies use when creating public awareness and training materials. Members of the public are encouraged to follow this guide and incorporate it into their organization policies and practices. The SPOG would like to thank the survivor experts who lent their time and perspectives to the creation of this document.

### STATISTICS

There are a limited number of reliable statistics related to human trafficking. All public awareness and outreach efforts should remain consistent with research and cite accurate sources. When using data or statistics, the quality and quantity of human trafficking data available are often hampered by the hidden nature of the crime, challenges in identifying individual victims, gaps in data accuracy and completeness, and significant barriers regarding the sharing of victim information among various stakeholders. For these reasons, data and statistics may not reflect the full nature or scope of the problem.

## **International Labour Organization**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Walk Free Foundation, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration, released Global Estimates of Modern Slavery in September 2017. This report estimates that, at any given time in 2016, approximately 24.9 million people were in forced labor. Of the approximately 24.9 million people, "16 million were in the private economy, another 4.8 million were in forced sexual exploitation, and 4.1 million were in forced labour imposed by state authorities." The definition of forced labor used in this report is based on ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), which states in Article 2.1 that forced labor is "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily."

This report also estimates that 40 million people were in "modern slavery" at any given time in 2016, but this figure includes both the estimate for forced labor and an estimate for forced marriage. Consistent with current implementation of U.S. law, it is recommended to use only the 24.9 million estimate when referring to human trafficking. While some instances of forced marriage may meet the international or U.S. legal definition of human trafficking, not all cases do. Note further that the term "modern slavery" is not defined in international or U.S. law.

## **National Human Trafficking Hotline**

The National Human Trafficking Hotline provides data sets on the issue of human trafficking in the United States on its website. These data sets are based on aggregated information learned through phone calls, emails, online tips, and texts the hotline receives and should not be confused with prevalence studies or closed-out confirmed cases. Note that the hotline receives several types of calls in addition to those about human trafficking cases. The hotline does not verify the accuracy of information reported, but it determines on a case-by-case basis whether the information should be passed on to an appropriate local, state, or federal investigative and/or service agency equipped to investigate the tip and/or respond to the needs of the potential victim.

## **Annual Federal Reports**

The U.S. narrative in the U.S. Department of State's annual **Trafficking in Persons Report** and the **Attorney General's Annual Report to Congress on U.S. Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons Report** include updated federal statistics on the following:

- Number of newly opened investigations, initiated prosecutions, and secured convictions
- Number of defendants charged
- Funding to task forces and the number of new task forces
- Number of Certification Letters to foreign adults and Eligibility Letters to foreign children issued
- Funding for victim services and the number of NGOs supported and individuals served through this funding
- Number of child trafficking victims assisted through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program
- Number of granted T non-immigrant status and T non-immigrant derivative status
- Number of issued Continued Presence and extensions of Continued Presence

## GUIDELINES FOR MESSAGING AND IMAGES

### Messages should:

- Be tailored based on the goals, audience, and method of delivery. When creating written and visual content, first determine the specific audience intended to be reached and tailor the message to meet their interests. Keep it simple by using plain language and consider translating the material in accordance with a language access plan.
- Avoid misconceptions about human trafficking.[1]
- Be concise. Have a clear ask that aligns with the goals and encourages the audience to complete one simple action or step, such as calling a hotline number when suspecting a trafficking situation,[2] or learning more by visiting a specific website. In general, campaigns are encouraged to list the National Human Trafficking Hotline's phone number, text line, and/or website that has a live chat option.
- Avoid language like "rescue" or "save," as it is not strengths-based or empowering.

### Victim-centered[3] and trauma-informed[4] messaging:

- Is empowering and hopeful.
- Avoids re-traumatization.
- Supports victims' rights, dignity, autonomy, and self-determination.
- Uses positive framing, which can elicit a positive response from the audience and encourage action.
- Recognizes not all victims may self-identify as such and thus should be cognizant of when to use more person-centered language that identifies them first and foremost as people rather than labeling them solely as "victims."
- Highlights a human trafficking hotline, service program, or law enforcement reporting mechanism to demonstrate there is assistance available for trafficking victims. It is helpful to also include an option to send a text message because people may be unable to make a call or stay on the phone long enough to make a report.
- Uses brighter colors and positive images to signal that help is available for victims of trafficking.

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[1] For examples of common misconceptions, see: [humantraffickinghotline.org/what-human-trafficking/myths-misconceptions](https://humantraffickinghotline.org/what-human-trafficking/myths-misconceptions).

[2] For more information about which hotline to list, see: [www.state.gov/domestic-trafficking-hotlines/](https://www.state.gov/domestic-trafficking-hotlines/).

[3] The victim-centered approach is defined as the systematic focus on the needs and concerns of a victim to ensure the compassionate and sensitive delivery of services in a nonjudgmental manner. For more information, see: [www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/1-understanding-human-trafficking/13-victim-centered-approach/](https://www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/1-understanding-human-trafficking/13-victim-centered-approach/).

[4] A trauma-informed approach includes an understanding of the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma on the individual, as well as on the professionals who help them. For more information, see: [www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/4-supporting-victims/41-using-a-trauma-informed-approach/](https://www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/4-supporting-victims/41-using-a-trauma-informed-approach/).

**When creating a message, engage survivors as participants in the process. When engaging survivors:**

- Consult survivors throughout the development of content to ensure the message can be effective in reaching victims or potential victims and in delivering an accurate depiction of the reality of human trafficking to the broader community. When doing so, take into account survivors' areas of expertise and strengths as well as length of time out of their trafficking situation (e.g., solicit input from labor trafficking survivors for labor trafficking campaigns). Start with survivors who are already active and established as advocates, and be sure to incorporate diverse perspectives (e.g., sex and labor trafficking, LGBTI, and U.S. citizens and foreign nationals).
- Secure written permission before featuring a survivor in any written or visual material, including discussing potential safety risks. It is a survivor's decision to participate in any outreach, marketing, social media, or publicity efforts. Survivors should be informed in advance of how their name, photo, or story will be used, as publishing any of this information without informed consent could compromise their safety and well-being and cause re-traumatization.
- Allow survivors to shape their message in their own way by using open-ended questions (e.g., "What should this audience understand about human trafficking?").
- Offer financial compensation to survivors as it would be made available to other subject matter experts. Through their training and technical centers, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Trafficking in Persons and the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs may be able to provide additional guidance.
- Be clear about next steps and the projected timeline of the project and communicate any changes throughout the process. For any government-supported programs, please note survivors may not be aware of different federal restrictions or processes and should be informed of what to expect when being asked to participate.

**Images should:**

- Be victim-centered and promote an accurate understanding of human trafficking. Images can draw connections in the audience's mind that are both intended and unintended. They project an understanding of what a victim may look like. If all sex trafficking campaigns depict child victims, for instance, audiences may not realize that adults can be victims of sex trafficking.
- Be tailored to the demographics of the target audience to ensure the message is relatable. Images should have backgrounds/scenes that can be easily recognized, such as a city skyline or key landmark.
- Represent the diverse spectrum of human trafficking victims – individuals of all races, ethnicities, ages, and genders.
- Show examples of what someone in the general public might encounter and encourage an appropriate reporting mechanism, such as the National Human Trafficking Hotline. It is important to encourage the general public to get help rather than take independent action.
- Highlight the ways traffickers recruit victims. For example, consider showcasing social media or cell phones as tools used by traffickers.

### **Avoid images that:**

- Display physical abuse. These types of images can be dehumanizing or objectifying and depict victims merely as objects of violence. They can also be re-traumatizing to audience members who may be victims of crime.
- Reinforce misconceptions about human trafficking. Human trafficking is a complex crime that takes many forms. Images that only rely on the most violent examples, like those depicting victims of trafficking in chains, behind bars, or in handcuffs, can promote the common misperception that victims of trafficking must be physically restrained and ignore other forms of force, fraud, and coercion that can be used for exploitation.
- Sensationalize the issue for shock value to draw the audience's attention. Examples of these types of images include scantily clad women on the street, highly dramatic kidnapping scenes, or children sobbing.
- Depict survivors without their informed consent.
- Fail to comply with stock photo terms of use, if relevant.

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