

Light the Way

End Human Trafficking



Human Trafficking Prevention Month

Participation Guide

January 2025



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

TexasEndHumanTrafficking.org

Light the Way

End Human Trafficking

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) invites faith and secular communities to stand with us during National Human Trafficking Awareness month – January 2025.

DFPS has made the fight against human trafficking a priority, and strives to improve awareness, services, and prevention efforts to eradicate trafficking in Texas.

The Participation Guide for Human Trafficking Prevention Month provides ideas that anyone can do – individuals, groups, organizations, businesses, and communities of faith. This guide provides a variety of activities hosted by DFPS, and highlights efforts and information from the Governor's Office and the Office of Attorney General, as well as, the Blue Campaign. This Guide by no means captures all of the anti-trafficking work and January activities that are happening in the great State of Texas. Please feel free to research and participate in your local community's events.

- **Answer the call**

Learn and understand the signs of Human Trafficking.

- **Challenge Injustice**

Report if you suspect child abuse or human trafficking at 800-252-5400.

- **Show your support**

Email your Wear Blue and Blue Lights of Texas photos to HumanTrafficking@dfps.texas.gov

- **Follow Us**

Be sure to tag DFPS on social media by using the handle [@TexasDFPS](https://twitter.com/TexasDFPS)

Hashtags

#HumanTraffickingPreventionMonth

#LightTheWayEndHumanTrafficking

#WearBlueDay

#TXPraysToEndHT

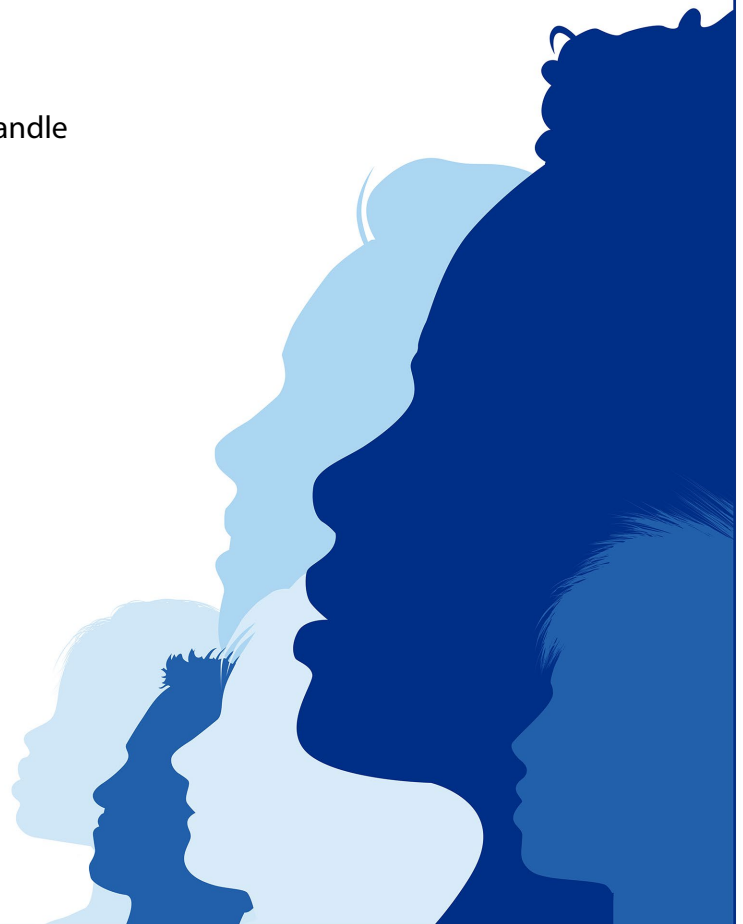
#TXBlueLights

#BeTheOne

#TXHTPCC



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services
Human Trafficking



WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is modern-day slavery and involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain labor or commercial sex. Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked in countries around the world. This serious crime is not just a problem in other countries – it is also happening in the United States in urban, suburban, and rural areas.

Human trafficking is a hidden crime as victims rarely come forward to seek help because of language barriers, fear of the traffickers, and/or fear of law enforcement. The need to increase public understanding and awareness about the prevalence of human trafficking is another factor contributing to its hidden nature.

There are different types of human trafficking:

- **Sex Trafficking**
Victims of sex trafficking are manipulated or forced to engage in sex acts for someone else's commercial gain. Sex trafficking is not prostitution. Anyone under the age of 18 engaging in commercial sex is considered to be a victim of human trafficking. **No exceptions.**
- **Forced Labor**
Victims of forced labor are compelled to work for little or no pay, often manufacturing or harvesting the products we use and consume every day.
- **Domestic Servitude**
Victims of domestic servitude are forced to work in isolation and are hidden in plain sight as nannies, housekeepers, or other domestic help.

What is the Difference Between Sexual Assault and Sex Trafficking?

- Sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the consent of the recipient. It includes sexual acts against people who are unable to consent either due to age or lack of capacity.
- Sex trafficking means recruiting, harboring, transporting, patronizing, soliciting, obtaining, or providing a person to engage in a sex act in exchange for money or something of value. A victim of sex trafficking may also be a victim of sexual assault.

GRACE

Governor's Response Against Child Exploitation

Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking January 6-12, 2025

The Office of the Texas Governor, the Office of the First Lady, and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, and faith communities across Texas are working together to fight child sex trafficking.

Faith communities are encouraged to unite in prayer, become better educated about human trafficking, help prevent exploitation, and support survivors.

Check out and share the [GRACE website \(gov.texas.gov/GRACE\)](http://gov.texas.gov/GRACE) to see daily prayer intentions and more information about this weeklong initiative.

Join us!

January 6-12, 2025

www.gov.texas.gov/GRACE




GRACE

Governor's Response
Against Child Exploitation



TEXAS

Department of Family
and Protective Services



January 10, 2025
10:30 AM
Texas State Capitol
South Steps

Together for Freedom

Texans Unite for Human
Trafficking Awareness Day

PARTNERS

Attorney General's Human Trafficking
Prevention Task Force
Magdalene House of Austin
Senator Joan Huffman
The Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team

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National

Wear Blue Day

January 11, 2025

Join DFPS staff and take photos of friends, family, yourself and colleagues wearing blue clothing and then share them on social media – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram – along with the **#WearBlueDay** hashtag.

Anyone can participate,
all you need is a piece of blue clothing!

- Be sure to tag DFPS in your post on social media by using the handle **@TexasDFPS**
- Email your photos to **HumanTrafficking@dfps.texas.gov**



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services



Light the Way

End Human Trafficking

2025 HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH



Lunch and Learn Series

DFPS will host weekly webinars with subject matter experts during the lunch hour (starting at noon central) to speak about various human trafficking intersections and topics. Please plan to attend, bring your lunch and learn with us on the following Thursdays:

January 9, 2025

How to Activate Faith Communities to Protect Their Children
Jo Lembo

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6132479268696232538>

Reminder: Wear Blue Day January 11th #WearBlueDay  

January 16, 2025

Child Exploitation: Parenting in the Digital Age
Brandon Poor

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/550436855434130264>

January 23, 2025

Groomed To Hide It: Challenges of Victim Identification in Sex Trafficking Cases
Panelist: Sgt. Jake Boyd, Yvette Christy, and Carrie Wright
Facilitator: Ada McCloud

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8576820061085952341>

January 30, 2025

Caught in the System:
The Intersection of Human Trafficking and Forced Criminality
Bekah Charleston

Register:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8496178579767338334>

For more information Email:

HumanTrafficking@dfps.texas.gov



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services
Human Trafficking



OFFICE OF THE TEXAS GOVERNOR

CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING TEAM



The Office of the Texas Governor Child Sex Trafficking Team strives to build sustainable capacity, enhance expertise, promote policies, and create new and leverage existing collaborations to prevent child sexual exploitation, to help survivors heal and thrive, and to bring exploiters to justice.

An Empowering Solution to Human Trafficking

Utilizing the Power of Youth Voice

The Office of the Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team hosts Amy Jolley and Denise Mears in this installment of its Monthly Webinar Series. You will learn how Project Protect Our Children created a Youth Action Board to plan and implement human trafficking awareness events and activities.

The Youth Action Board program is youth-led, research-based and survivor-informed. Join us to learn more.

Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025

Time: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

[Register for this Webinar](#)

Stop Human Trafficking

TEXAS LICENSE PLATE

Available for Purchase: MyPlates.com



Proceeds support *Stop Human Trafficking*
donation account.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Five Ways Faith-Based Organizations Can Help in the Fight against Human Trafficking

1. Empowerment through Education

Learn and share the facts about how labor and sex trafficking affect your community. You can find educational resources at the following websites:

- Office on Trafficking in Persons, An Office of the Administration of Children and Families
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip>
- National Human Trafficking Hotline
<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
<http://www.missingkids.com/home>
- Department of Homeland Security
<https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign>
- Shared Hope International
<https://sharedhope.org/>

2. Identify and Report

If you believe you have information about a potential trafficking situation call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888. Hotline advocates are available 24/7. All reports are confidential and you may remain anonymous. Promote the National Hotline by posting the hotline number and include it in community resource lists.

- Call - **1-888-373-7888**
- Text - **HELP to BEFREE (233733)**
- Email - help@humantraffickinghotline.org

3. Sponsor an Awareness event

Increase awareness by sponsoring opportunities to educate your faith community on how to identify, respond to, and prevent trafficking by hosting experts from the field (including survivors), sharing materials, or discussing films and documentaries about sex and labor trafficking.

- *Be the One*
<https://vimeo.com/244718411>
- *Look Beneath the Surface to End Human Trafficking*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l76cqmHI_k0

4. Partner with local anti-trafficking coalition or task force

Texas has multi-disciplinary task forces or coalitions that need faith-based and community organizations to provide their particular expertise to strengthen efforts to combat local trafficking. For information on local groups: Email - help@humantraffickinghotline.org or humantrafficking@dfps.texas.gov

5. Educate your Congregation

Shared Hope International offers resources for congregations to learn how to protect the youth in their church, and to equip them with tools in protecting their community. Faith Community Resources (Faith in Action Kit, Slaying the Giant). <https://sharedhope.org/store>

Light the Way
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TEXANS

ARE NOT FOR SALE

Human Trafficking Ends Here.

Los Texanos No Estan a la Venta. La Trata De Personas Termina Aqui.

Human Trafficking is a crime that involves exploiting a person for forced labor, services or commercial sex.

La Trata de Personas es un delito que implica la explotación de una persona para obligarla a realizar trabajos, servicios o comercializar sexo.

Human Trafficking RED FLAGS:

- Person appears submissive, fearful, tense, or paranoid.
- Person has physical injuries or branding such as a name tattoo.
- Person defers to another person when answering questions.
- Person lacks control over their money or identification documents.
- Person is unsure about who they are with or what they are doing.
- Person works excessive hours and lives where they work.

SEÑALES DE ALERTA ROJA de Trata de Personas:

- La persona parece sumisa, temerosa, tensa o paranoica.
- La persona tiene lesiones físicas o está marcada, como con un nombre tatuado.
- La persona se defiende a otra persona cuando responde preguntas.
- La persona carece de control sobre su dinero o documentos de identificación.
- La persona no está segura de con quién está o qué está haciendo.
- La persona trabaja demasiadas horas y vive donde trabaja.

REPORTING TRAFFICKING

To report suspected Human Trafficking, contact iWatchTexas at **844-643-2251** or www.iWatchTx.org

To obtain services for a Human Trafficking victim, contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline at **888-373-7888**

In any emergency, including Human Trafficking, **Dial 911**

Or learn more at www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/human-trafficking



PARA DENUNCIAR LA TRATA DE PERSONAS: Para reportar sospechas de Trata de Personas, comuníquese con **iWatch-Texas** al **844-643-2251** o www.iWatchTx.org. **Marque el 911** en caso de emergencia, incluida la Trata de Personas. Para obtener servicios para una víctima de Trata de Personas, comuníquese con la **Línea Nacional de Trata de Personas** al **888-373-7888** o Más información en: www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/human-trafficking

HUMAN TRAFFICKING RED FLAGS

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS MODERN DAY SLAVERY.
IT IS THE EXPLOITATION OF MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN FOR FORCED
LABOR OR SEX BY A THIRD PARTY FOR PROFIT OR GAIN.**

FOR MINOR AND ADULT SEX TRAFFICKING

- Visible injuries: bruising, swelling, redness
- Inconsistent stories
- Descriptions of multiple sexual partners in SANE exams on “normal sex cases”
- Sexually transmitted disease (STDs)
- Failure to make eye contact
- Overtly sexual online profile
- Sexually provocative pictures on the phone or online accounts
- Teased by other students for being sexually active or a prostitute
- Backpage.com ads are linked to a person, business name, or phone number on Google
- Gang signs and/or affiliation
- **Branding and tattoos:**
 - Back of neck
 - Underarm
 - Ankle
 - Above the breasts
 - Above the vaginal line
 - Matching tattoos with trafficker
- Business cards lacking address: tire shop, shoes, repairs, fresh flowers
- Third party control of identity documents
- Contents of a suspicious vehicle and/or location:
 - Hotel receipts
 - Drugstore receipts
 - Lingerie
 - Condoms
 - Female personal hygiene items in a place of business
- New high-end clothing recently purchased
- Hotel keys
- Rolls of money
- **Prepaid credit cards or gift cards**
- Child with multiple runaways within a short period of time
- Child or teenager with older person who is not related to them
- Child appears much older than stated age in appearance
- Child has a rehearsed story, but inconsistent throughout
- Child has in-depth knowledge of life on the streets
- Child thinks that “adult life” and “independence” is the greatest value
- Evidence of controlling relationship
 - Schedule and/or activities dictated by someone else
 - Isolation from friends and family
 - Unable to make simple decisions without approval from “significant other”
- **Claim of boyfriend or girlfriend relationship with an older individual**
- Fake or no identification
- Multiple phone or social media accounts
- Language:
 - Backpage.com
 - Eccie.net
 - Stable
 - Family
 - Daddy
 - Incalls/outcalls
 - Pimpin’
 - Mr. and Mrs.
- Changes in the child’s appearance, friend groups, socio-economic status, level of sexualization, activities, or relationship to authority



RED
FLAGS

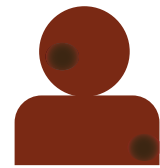


HUMAN TRAFFICKING RED FLAGS



FOR LABOR TRAFFICKING

- Not free to leave or come and go as he or she wishes
- Unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- Not allowed breaks or suffers under unusual restrictions at work
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- High security measures exist in the work and/or living locations, e.g. opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.
- Malnutrition, dehydration, exhaustion, stunted growth
- Dizziness, headaches, memory loss from traumatic brain injury
- Untreated chronic infections
- Dental and/or visual problems
- Chronic back pain, muscle strains, cardiovascular and respiratory issues related to exposure to chemicals, serious industrial injury
- Fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement
- Avoids eye contact
- Lacks health care
- Appears malnourished
- Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture
- Living where they work and in space not zoned for living space
- Transported to and from work by the employer
- Living in squalid conditions and too many people in the space with insufficient beds
- Food, hygiene, and living conditions provided by the employer
- Do not have the proper licensing whether for driving, soliciting, running the equipment, providing the services or even to have a business within city limits
- Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where he or she is currently residing
- Lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or do not know what city he or she is in
- Loss of sense of time
- Numerous inconsistencies in his or her story
- Answers appear scripted or rehearsed
- Withdrawal from the community
- Few or no personal possessions
- Not in control of his or her own money, no financial records, or bank account
- Non-English speakers
- Recruited through false promises concerning the nature and conditions of his or her work
- Multiple middle men in the recruitment scheme
- Recruitment fees - may be in one or multiple payments
- Promises of green cards and permanent residency or citizenship
- High fees for substandard living arrangements
- Not in control of his or her own identification documents, i.e. government identification or passport
- Not allowed or able to speak for themselves - a third party may insist on being present and/or translating



RED
FLAGS



HUMAN TRAFFICKING RED FLAGS

RED FLAGS

FOR MASSAGE PARLORS/SPAS

- Permit or license for something other than actual business
- Identify clientele: Is it only men that receive services at the “spa”?
- Location may have a guarded entrance
- Cameras both inside and outside
- Location storefront may be curtained off, blocked, etc.
- “Employees” may be ferried to and from work by the “spa employers” or may live at the location
- Location may be locked and opened only when someone at the door with a phone
- Men walking through the parking lot talking on their cell phones
- Condoms in the parking lot



HOW YOU CAN BE THE ONE

1. **Pay attention** to the people in your community, your surroundings, and report red flag behaviors.
2. **Don't wait to call.** Make your report timely. Those moments matter.
3. **Don't approach traffickers yourself.** That can place you, the victim and any future prosecution in danger.
4. If the conduct you observe is an emergency, call 911 and tell them you believe that you have observed human trafficking. Don't worry about being wrong. **Your call may be the one that saves a life.**
5. If it is not an emergency or you need to remain anonymous, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-3737-888.
6. **Provide “actionable information”:**
 - Descriptions of cars: make, model, color, license plate
 - Descriptions of people: height, weight, hair color, age, eye color
 - Specific times, dates and locations: when and where you saw the conduct
 - Take a picture if you can safely do so.

THOSE DETAILS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!



RED
FLAGS

FAMILIAL TRAFFICKING WARNING SIGNS

Educators • Medical Professionals • Community Members



What we need to know:

- Trafficking usually begins with a family member. Traffickers can be a parent, grandparents, cousin, aunt, uncle, etc.
- Many commercial sexually exploited children in the United States have been sexually abused in a family situation
- Males are just as likely as females to be trafficked by their family
- Most kids who are sex trafficked don't consider themselves victims, many of them have been conditioned to normalize their situation
- Although 14-16 is a common age for victims to be trafficked, with familial victims typically the abuse starts at a much younger age
- Often emotional, psychological, physical, and relational isolation is a hallmark factor to familial trafficking
- Children come from many backgrounds: there is no standard socioeconomic situation, race, gender, creed or religious indicator to predict who will be trafficked over another child in a family situation

What we need to look for:

- Poor mental health, abnormal behaviors, and lack of control
- May be fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- Tries to please adults or get inappropriate attention from them
- Tries to act older than peers or mental age
- Inconsistent behavior, frequent mood swings
- Behaviors that appear to be sexually promiscuous
- May have vague answers; have been taught to hide secrets
- May have non-evident injuries that affect physical activity
- Isolated and does not socialize normally with peers; poor communication skills
- Appears tired and unable to keep up in studies
- Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating during school meetings, medical appointments, church, etc.)
- Constant cover up for abuser, self-shaming/blaming
- Lack of understanding and education about bodily functions, rape, incest, sexual abuse
- May have poor hygiene, be unaware of body odor or common practices

TO REPORT A TIP OR CONNECT WITH ANTI-TRAFFICKING SERVICES IN YOUR AREA, CONTACT:

! If you see something suspicious, MAKE THE CALL.

You don't have to know all the details to be helpful.

**National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
1-800-843-5678**

If you have information about a missing child or suspected child sexual exploitation, call to report it or visit their website.
cybertipline.com

**National Human Trafficking Hotline
1-888-373-7888**

A national, toll-free hotline, available from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year.

IN AN EMERGENCY: 911

TRAUMA-INFORMED RESPONSES

Trauma may be the result of a single event (an intense one-time event, where there is serious threat of harm or death) or a series of events or situations that are long term (witnessing or experiencing neglect, abuse, or other forms of violence).

As a leader in a house of worship, it is possible that your congregants or community members could come to you or refer someone to discuss traumatic experiences which could include human trafficking. You may be in a position to support them in seeking the necessary help they need to recover from their experiences. It is also important that you use trauma-informed responses during your own interactions. Below is information about trauma-informed approaches when interacting with victims and recommendations on how to build a local network of support services for referrals.

A trauma-informed response begins with understanding the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma on the individual.

TRAUMA-INFORMED PRINCIPLES THAT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED IN HOUSES OF WORSHIP INCLUDE:



Safety – Create a trusted space and welcoming environment. In a house of worship or religious facility, the physical and psychological safety is important to the health and well-being of those adversely affected. The physical setting must be private and safe, and interactions should promote a sense of safety and set a positive tone with those seeking help.



Trustworthiness and Transparency – Build trusted and transparent relationships without judgement. This provides meaningful opportunities for physical and emotional healing.



Peer Support – Seek other individuals who can serve as key partners in recovery from traumatic events.



Empowerment, Voice, and Choice – Allow individual strengths to be recognized, built upon, and validated while developing new skills as needed.



Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues – Key considerations should be made for those experiencing historical and cultural trauma and gender-based violence. Be responsive to the racial, ethnic, gender, and cultural needs of individuals served.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND TRAUMA

Some of the most significant injuries suffered by human trafficking victims are often the least visible. Traffickers can use a victim’s pre-existing relationships, immigration status, built-in trust, alcohol or drug use, or engagement in criminal activity to create vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities and the trauma associated with the experience coupled with feelings of guilt, self-blame, embarrassment, fear, and/or shame may have long-lasting psychological wounds. These emotions can have a significant impact on the ability to assist victims in their own personal healing process. Emotional distress may cause victims to return back to their trafficker numerous times while receiving services or assistance in their recovery.

The majority of trafficking situations are the culmination of many traumatic experiences, most of which are untreated. **Trauma affects how victims see themselves** ("I am helpless," "worthless"), their worldview ("the world is dangerous," "no one can protect me"), and relationships ("I cannot trust anyone"). **A trauma-informed approach is mindful of how to create a situation in which the victim is safe, makes his or her own choices, and feels understood.**

Key components of trauma-informed approaches:

- Realize (acknowledge) how trauma affects people
- Recognize the signs of trauma (fear, sadness, anger, mistrust, anxiety, self-harm, etc.)
- Respond by changing or improving tone, delivery, and language ("What’s wrong?" becomes "What happened?")
- Resist re-traumatization by addressing trauma and toxic stress in the lives of both family/friends and people served



Professional training on trauma & trauma-informed approaches is essential and strongly encouraged.

VICTIM SERVICES

Knowing the services within your community before a victim comes forward can prepare you to offer immediate assistance and help reduce re-traumatization for the victim. Collaborate with organizations and agencies ahead of time to be aware of the services offered within your community. Some of the services that victims of trafficking may need include:



Emergency Services

- Crisis Intervention and Counseling
- Emergency Shelter and Referrals
- Urgent Medical Care
- Safety Planning
- Food and Clothing



Social Services

- Case Management
- Interpretation
- Housing
- Job Training and Education
- Court Accompaniment
- Employment Assistance
- Transportation
- Healthcare



Legal Services

- Immigration Status
- Criminal Case Services
- Civil Case Services
- Witness Protection
- Family Court Services
- Legal Representation
- Vacate Convictions

For more information about the services available to victims of human trafficking, including comprehensive service referrals in the U.S., visit the [National Human Trafficking Referral Directory](https://www.dhs.gov/nhrtd).



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