

# Human Trafficking



## What Is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is the crime of using force, coercion, or fraud to exploit a person for the purpose of labor or commercial sex. There are two main forms of human trafficking: sex trafficking and forced labor.

**Sex trafficking** is the coercion and exploitation of an individual to force them to engage in commercial sex acts. However, in certain cases, coercion and force is not needed for it to be considered sex trafficking. If the person is under the age of 18 and performing commercial sex acts, they are considered a victim of human trafficking regardless of whether they were coerced or forced.

**Forced labor** is the use of coercion and exploitation to make individuals perform labor. Examples of this include servitude, debt bondage, and slavery.

## Who Is Affected?

Anyone can be affected by human trafficking. However, the following populations experience trafficking more frequently:

- Indigenous Americans
- Members of the LGBTQ+ community
- People with disabilities
- Undocumented individuals
- Unhoused youth
- Low-income individuals

Traffickers target people who are in a vulnerable state or those who lack a safety net of social support.

## How People Are Trafficked

Traffickers can use a variety of tactics to obtain victims. They may trick the victim with promises of romantic relationships, a higher paying job, or stable living arrangements. Human traffickers may also use threats of violence and manipulation to scare or pressure victims into performing labor or sexual acts.

## What Are The Signs Of Human Trafficking?

There are many signs that suggest someone is a victim of human trafficking. These include:

- The person appears coached on what to say, or they are often with someone else who they defer to instead of speaking or answering questions.
- They appear disconnected from family and friends or stop participating in their community, church, school, etc.
- They have bruises in various stages of healing.
- They appear to lack freedom of movement (e.g., they cannot leave where they are staying at will) or lack personal belongings.
- They appear fearful or have a sudden change in demeanor.

- Human trafficking is a crime that involves using coercion, fraud, or force to exploit victims. This includes forced labor and sex trafficking.

- Anyone can be a victim of human trafficking, but there are vulnerable groups that are at a higher risk.

- Traffickers use manipulation, fear, and false promises to lure in victims.

- To get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline call [1-888-373-7888](tel:1-888-373-7888)



Wheeler

CONNECTICUT  
Clearinghouse  
a program of the Connecticut Center  
for Prevention, Wellness and Recovery

800.232.4424 (phone)  
[www.ctclearinghouse.org](http://www.ctclearinghouse.org)

A Library and Resource Center on Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs, Mental Health and Wellness

## How To Help A Suspected Trafficking Victim

Traffickers use fear, manipulation, and threats to keep victims from speaking out or trying to escape. For this reason, they may be unwilling to ask for help or respond to attempts to reach out. However, there are some questions to ask a suspected victim:

- Do they live with their employer?
- Are they in debt to their employer?
- Do they have a passport or ID? Do they have access to it?
- Can they leave the job if they want?
- Have they (or their family) been threatened?
- Can they come and go as they wish?

*Do not attempt to confront a suspected trafficker.* Safety is the top priority for both the victims and those who are trying to help. When confronted, traffickers may become violent. For everyone's safety, it is best to report the suspected trafficking to law enforcement.

### Contact Emergency Services

If someone is in immediate danger, or the situation is urgent, it is best to contact **9-1-1** and report the emergency.

### Contact Federal Law Enforcement

If it is not an immediate emergency, individuals should report suspected human trafficking to federal law enforcement.

To contact federal law enforcement and the Homeland Security Investigations Tip Line, call: [1-866-347-2423](tel:1-866-347-2423)

### Getting Involved

In addition to reporting suspected trafficking, there are many ways to get involved and help put an end to human trafficking. Some options include:

- Learning the signs of human trafficking.
- Volunteering with local organizations that offer support for victims.
- Spreading the word: public education is vital to helping others know what to look out for. Sharing resources on social media can also be an effective way to spread information in a short time.
- Being an informed consumer. Some companies utilize or benefit from forced labor. Check where products come from at [ResponsibleSourcingTool.org](https://www.responsible sourcing tool.org), or visit the Department of Labor's list of goods produced by child labor or forced labor.
- Organizing a fundraiser in the community and donating to anti-trafficking organizations.
- Becoming a mentor to youth in the community. Traffickers target people in vulnerable positions, so providing a social safety net for those individuals can help protect them.
- Learning the tactics that traffickers use to recruit people, and how to safely navigate out of suspicious conversation if those signs are present.

## Connecticut Resources

CT Department of Mental Health and  
Addiction Services  
[www.ct.gov/DMHAS](http://www.ct.gov/DMHAS)

2-1-1 of Connecticut  
Call 211

Love146  
[love146.org](http://love146.org)

HART (Human Anti-trafficking Response  
Team)  
<https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/hart/home>

## National Resources

Emergency  
Call 911

Center for Missing & Exploited Children  
[missingkids.org](http://missingkids.org)

Homeland Security Investigations Tip Line  
1-866-347-2423

Blue Campaign  
<https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign>

National Human Trafficking Hotline  
1-888-373-7888  
or text HELP or INFO to BeFree (233733)

Substance Abuse and Mental  
Health Services Administration  
[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)



**CONNECTICUT**  
Mental Health & Addiction Services