



# **Guidance for Police:** **Responding to and Investigating** **Cases of Human Trafficking**



# Introduction

This guidance was drafted as a collaborative effort by the Global Consortium on Prosecuting Human Trafficking, an international group of specialized human trafficking prosecutors and expert advisors. The McCain Institute and Justice and Care founded the Consortium in response to lagging rates of investigation, prosecution, and conviction of human trafficking cases despite rising public awareness of the crime.

This document is not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive, but rather to help guide law enforcement to identify and investigate the complex and evolving crime of human trafficking in a way that is responsive to the needs of both the victims and the prosecution. For more detailed guidance on specific issues, see the [resources](#) at the end of the document.



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# I. Know the Law

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**1.1** The [Palermo Protocol](#) sets out the internationally accepted definition of human trafficking.

Review and understand how human trafficking is defined and addressed in the law of your jurisdiction.

- [Global Compendium - Human Trafficking Laws](#)
- [Global Collection of Human Trafficking Laws \(Warnath Project\)](#)

**1.2** The Action, Means, Purpose (AMP) model helps determine whether a situation is defined as human trafficking

ACTION	MEANS	PURPOSE
<p><b>What is being done?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Recruiting</li><li>o Transporting</li><li>o Transferring</li><li>o Harboring</li><li>o Receiving persons</li></ul>	<p><b>Is the action undertaken through?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Threat or use of force or other forms of coercion,</li><li>o Abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or</li><li>o The giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person.</li></ul>	<p><b>What type of exploitation is involved? Exploitative purposes include but are not limited to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Sexual exploitation</li><li>o Forced labor or services</li><li>o Forced begging or criminality</li><li>o Slavery or practices similar to slavery</li><li>o Servitude, and</li><li>o Removal of organs (in some jurisdictions)</li></ul>

*\*when it comes to minors, the means becomes irrelevant to define a situation as human trafficking*

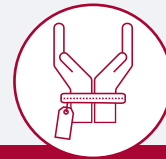
### 1.3 Important Considerations:

- Forced labor is a form of human trafficking, not only a “civil” or “employment” matter.
- Smuggling and Trafficking are different criminal offenses:
- Human trafficking affects not only women and girls, but individuals of every gender and orientation. Boys and men are often overlooked.
- While foreign nationals and undocumented migrants may be vulnerable due to their immigration status, victims of trafficking are often exploited within their country of citizenship and/or residence.



#### SMUGGLING

- o Always involves transnational/cross-border movement.
- o Is a mutual transaction that ends upon arrival.
- o Is a crime against a country.
- o The action often benefits both the smuggler and the person wishing to cross a nation’s border, though in some jurisdictions smuggling need only benefit the smuggler.



#### TRAFFICKING

- o Does not necessarily involve relocation or cross-border movement.
- o Occurs without a victim’s consent or the conditions change after a victim’s initial consent is given.\*
- o Is a crime against an individual person.
- o Is undertaken for the goal of exploiting another person.

\*Although smuggling and trafficking are separate crimes, individuals being smuggled are vulnerable to trafficking. What begins as a mutual relationship can become exploitative if the smuggled person finds themselves indebted to or threatened by the smuggling party.

# II. Characteristics of Trafficking

2.1 Common forms of trafficking vary by country/region, but follow similar patterns.

 <b>Common industries and groups involved in forced and child labor:</b>	 <b>Common industries and groups involved in sex trafficking:</b>	 <b>Common activities undertaken in cases of forced criminality:</b>	 <b>Groups and individuals commonly involved in trafficking for organ removal:</b>
<p>Domestic work, restaurant &amp; food service, peddling &amp; begging, agriculture &amp; fishing, construction, hotels &amp; hospitality, manufacturing, healthcare, family businesses</p>	<p>Escort services, illicit massage businesses, bars &amp; strip clubs, pornography, personal sexual servitude, remote interactive sexual services, family units</p>	<p>Theft, drug cultivation or selling, manufacturing or selling counterfeit goods</p>	<p>Medical professionals, private and public sector facilitators (including hospitals, laboratories, insurance companies, travel agencies, airlines and their staff, guards, drivers, law enforcement officials, and translators)</p>

## Victims of trafficking don't fit a single profile, but law enforcement should be prepared to work with:

Non-citizens, including undocumented individuals and temporary or seasonal workers

Refugees and internally displaced persons

Runaway and homeless youth or adults experiencing homelessness

Individuals engaged in providing commercial sexual services

Individuals experiencing addiction

Individuals with physical or cognitive disabilities

Women and girls impacted by gender discrimination

LGBTQ+ individuals

Child victims

## 2.2 Control

Physical violence and confinement are sometimes used to control victims of trafficking, but not always.

### **Subtle means of control or coercion are often employed. For example:**

**Religious, e.g. ritualistic practices to psychologically coerce the victim into exploitation**

**Threat of deportation or immigration enforcement**

**Cultural norms, e.g. leverage of the trafficker's perceived status or caste over that of the victim**

**Fraud, e.g. false promises of employment, marriage, payment, etc.**

**Threat to family members or loved ones**

**Threat of reputational or financial harm**

**Control through substance use and abuse**

**Deprivation of social support and contact and increased dependency**

**Controlling access to accommodation, transport, food, and finances**

#### **Psychological manipulation, including:**

- Grooming, a process through which traffickers form a connection with a potential victim and employ psychological manipulation to gain control.
- Love bombing, characterized by excessive attention and affection in order to manipulate or influence a victim.
- Humiliation or degradation to induce psychological and physical exhaustion.
- The use of trivial, contradictory, or unachievable demands to demonstrate power over the victim.
- The use of occasional and significant rewards to incentivize the victim's continued cooperation.

## 2.3 Trauma

Victims of trafficking often experience complex trauma that is likely to impact their behavior.

- Each victim will react differently to a traumatic experience, so law enforcement should not assume that a victim's behavior indicates consent to the trafficking situation or a lack of trauma.
- Trauma can impact the ability of victims to:
  - o Exit or recover from a trafficking situation
  - o Concentrate and recall details of their abuse reliably
  - o Trust strangers, including law enforcement and other professionals offering support
- Other impacts of traumatic experiences:
  - o Trauma bonding, serious mental health conditions, and substance use disorders
  - o See section 4.4 Trauma for more details





# III. Investigating Human Trafficking

## 3.1 Proactive Strategies for Identifying Human Trafficking Victims & Perpetrators

Common red flags or indicators can be used to screen for instances of exploitation or trafficking.

### Potential indicators include:

*Individual is transported to and from work by their employer*

*Works excessively long or unusual hours, but does not appear to have access to their own money*

*Lives where they work, or with a large group of other workers often in cramped/rough sleeping conditions*

*Has limited freedom of movement*

*Identification documents are held by employer or third party*

*Individual is in debt bondage to their employer*

*Unable to show any autonomy over accommodation, bills or banking*

*Not allowed or reluctant to speak for themselves*

*Explains their situation with obvious errors*

*Fearful of authorities*

*\*Some red flags are easily observable, while others may require proactive investigation.*

It's critical that a distinction is made between labor law violations and trafficking for forced labor or servitude. Forced labor and labor trafficking relates to any work or service that is extracted from a person under threat of penalty, and for which that person has not offered themselves voluntarily. In addition to being a serious violation of labor rights and fundamental human rights, the exacting of forced labor is a criminal offense.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has guidance for how to use operational indicators to identify human trafficking cases.

### Proactive investigation strategies:

Working with financial institutions and Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) to ensure they can effectively identify financial typologies of human trafficking in suspicious transactions.

Monitoring possible networks of exploitation online, e.g. adult services websites, job sites, and forums in social media to identify indicators of potential recruitment and exploitation.

Considering possible human trafficking in cases of missing women, children, indigenous people, and members of other vulnerable groups, as well as organized criminal activities such as the production or distribution of illegal drugs.

Partnering with other organizations to bring public awareness of human trafficking and identify victims and areas of risk, such as utility workers, hotel employees, emergency room staff, school personnel, port and transportation authorities, labor or code compliance inspectors, and others.

When possible, planning and conducting investigations in coordination with other state agencies such as social services, tax authorities, and labour inspection authorities.

Working with survivors' organizations or council to help identify sectors and communities at risk.

Seeking out proactive sources of evidence, such as criminal assets, social media activity, and observations from surveillance or undercover operations, which may lead to a trafficking investigation before a victim comes forward.

## 3.2 Collecting Evidence

[Intelligence-led policing](#) is an efficient tool to guide human trafficking cases, particularly in the case of digital and financial evidence.

Proactively collecting diverse evidence can help build a successful human trafficking case, both by avoiding an over-reliance on victim testimony and by providing the prosecution with strong objective evidence to present.

### Search/Seizure Law and Evidence Admissibility Considerations

- Evidence should be gathered in a way that ensures its admissibility in court and usefulness in prosecution.
  - Before collecting evidence, consider relevant search and seizure laws and court rules to determine what items may be collected, by whom and in what manner.
- The collection of evidence must be documented in accordance with organizational guidelines and procedures, and at a minimum should include chains of custody and an evidence inventory.
  - Document chain of custody during collection and include a description or unique identifier for evidence, the date and time of receipt, and the name and signature of all persons taking possession of an item.
  - Evidence inventories should contain a listing of the physical evidence, and for digital information should include a list of any data collected from a physical device.

### Physical Evidence

#### Crime scene

- Protect and collect initial evidence at the scene of the crime, including the home, vehicles, waste bins, and all other locations.
- Photograph/Document:
  - Location of exploitation scene, including vehicles
  - Any items or locations referenced by the victim, including clothing, bedding, sex toys, movies, weapons, drugs or alcohol
  - Observations from surveillance or undercover operations
- Collect/Obtain:
  - Any weapons used in offense
  - DNA and fingerprint evidence
- Take note of:
  - Renting or leasing of the premises or business establishment
  - Conditions, weather, odors, and other unique environmental factors

## Physical Evidence

### Witnesses

- Identify and secure all witnesses and separate them in order to avoid contamination of stories.
- Photograph/document:
  - Personal appearances of persons on the scene
  - Evidence obtained from community members, leaders, civil society organizations, confidential informants and sources
- Collection/Obtain:
  - Statement from anyone the victim talked to or told about the exploitation
  - Statements from anyone who interacted with the victim during the period of exploitation

### Victims

- Photograph/Document:
  - Personal appearance of victims, paying close attention to signs of physical abuse but also including attributes such as height, weight, and age
- Collect:
  - Any physical evidence from the victim, including clothing, personal possessions, and mobile phones
  - Any letters, diaries, calendars, or cards written by or to the victim
  - Documentation related to the issuance of passports and visas, including overseas employment contracts and sponsorship letters
  - Any medical laboratory, psychological, psychiatric, and dental examination reports\*
  - Full and detailed statement of the victim\*
- Take note of:
  - Status of the victim at the time of recovery, including physical health, accommodations, and emotional stability
  - Names of any persons involved with support provided to the victim, including organization contact information
  - Origin, transit, and destination locations for all victims

*\*When obtaining a victim statement or sensitive personal information such as medical records, take steps to preserve the victim's privacy and autonomy and consider their condition and mental health. See section IV. Working With Victims for more guidance.*

### Accused

- Legally search the residence of the accused, place of business, phone(s) and other devices such as laptops, tablets, and desktop computers.
- Collect:
  - Statement of the accused
  - Details of any company or agency or recruiters involved
  - Statement from staff and family of the accused
- Recruitment:
  - Collect:
    - Copies of any job or service advertising
    - Application letters, contracts, and appointment books
- Take note of:
  - Involvement, details, and personnel of any licensed recruitment companies

## Financial Evidence

Conduct a parallel financial investigation as part of your criminal investigation to assist in the prosecution of the crime and ensure confiscation and forfeiture happens at the appropriate time.

### **Identification of the proceeds of the crime should occur at the beginning of the investigation.**

- Identify typical assets including houses, businesses or property, vehicles, bank accounts, stocks and shares, machinery, jewelry, furniture, collectables, and cash held on premises.
- Consider proceeds of crime, as well as interest and money accrued through the holding of those proceeds, such as interest on bank accounts and the increased value of real estate.
- For any identified asset, you should determine when it was acquired, from whom it was acquired, the method of payment, the source of funds used, and the availability and location of documentation available in relation to the purchase.

Financial transactions might occur in many phases of a case: payments for premises, credit card transactions, receipts of money transfers, buying tickets for travel, cash deposits and withdrawals from bank accounts, hotels and lodging, payments for written or online advertisements, purchase or rental of vehicles, wages and salary transactions, payments for goods and services.

- Seek out records and gather evidence of any types of financial transactions.
- Traffickers use all forms of financial transactions, both legal and illegal. Many transactions are done in cash to avoid detection and tracing, but other transactions might leave an audit trail.
  - Transactions made through official channels such as banks and post offices, credit and debit cards, international money orders, and local mobile money transfers are very important to trace and document in any trafficking investigation.
- Cash transactions may also be traced and documented through:
  - Daily payment books, handwritten lists of payments, cash vouchers/receipts
  - Documentation pertaining to the management of any business; daily worksheets, payment schedules, and price lists or “menus”
  - Books of accounts, business records, and documentation of employment, recruitment, promotion agencies, business establishments

## Digital Evidence

- Digital evidence, like all other physical evidence, must be carefully handled so that it can be successfully admitted as evidence.
  - Collectors should identify and collect devices that may store data (including computers, mobile phones, personal organizers, flash drives, hard drives), as well as information about the items containing the data (e.g., notes containing usernames, passwords, operating systems documentation, encryption recovery keys, and network credentials).
- Subject to relevant laws and court rules, the following digital evidence should be secured:
  - Videos or audio recordings from electronic surveillance
  - Recordings or videotapes from equipment such as computers, mobile phones, personal organizers
  - Information gathered from social media searches, newspapers, databases, and internal police intelligence, including advertisements for services
  - Electronic communications, including WhatsApp, messages, or other email or social media
  - Tracked telephone numbers of suspects and their counterparts with the respective telecommunications
  - Forensic examination of all phones and analysis of cell data records

### 3.3 Cross-Border Investigations

- Cooperate with international law enforcement entities or investigators in other countries. [This guide](#), published by the UNODC, can help you identify the correct avenues to form international relationships.
  - Foster relationships with law enforcement agencies in neighboring countries, as well as countries linked by common trafficking flows.
  - Cross-border cooperation in human trafficking investigations may include extradition, requests to share evidence across jurisdictions, and tracking of international financial flows.
- Make use of INTERPOL policing capabilities including color-coded notices to send requests and alerts to law enforcement in 195 countries.
- Diplomatic immunity
  - In cases of trafficking by a diplomat, cooperation with the diplomat's home country may be necessary in order to hold the trafficker accountable.
  - Law enforcement should familiarize themselves with their home country's guidelines on cases involving diplomats.

## 3.4 Preparing for the Court Process

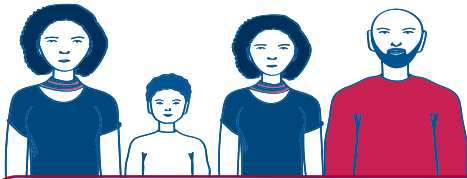
- Anticipate potential defense strategies during the investigation process
- Stay in touch with and continue to support the victim
  - Investigators involved since the start of the case have had a chance to build rapport with victims and can be supportive throughout the investigation and prosecution process.
  - Law enforcement also plays an important role in protecting victims from intimidation.
- Victim compensation
  - Law enforcement should be aware of victim compensation opportunities when seizing assets and proceeds of crime, especially in jurisdictions where compensation comes from seized assets.
  - The trauma and impact of trafficking can affect compensation. Law enforcement should have a strong understanding of how the victim was impacted in order to support requests for compensation.
- Law enforcement can support victims via involvement in bail hearings, as victims may be more likely to feel safe being involved with criminal proceedings if the perpetrator is not granted bail.





# IV. Working with Victims

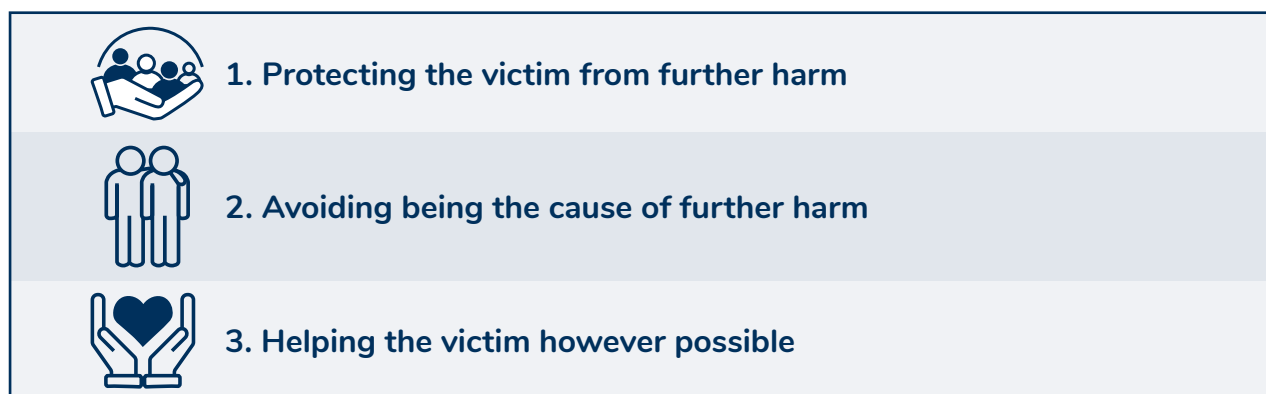
## 4.1 Non-Punishment of Trafficking Victims



In recognition of the fact that victims of trafficking may have been forced or otherwise compelled by traffickers to engage in illegal conduct, a non-punishment principle has emerged in a number of jurisdictions. **This principle states that trafficked persons should not be inappropriately subjected to arrest, charge, detention, prosecution, or be penalized or otherwise punished for illegal conduct they committed as result of their human trafficking situation.**

- Law enforcement should familiarize themselves with whether and how the non-punishment principle has been incorporated into their national laws and regulations.
- Where it has been incorporated into national laws and regulation, non-punishment of victims for unlawful acts committed as a result of trafficking should not be presented as conditional or dependent on the victim's cooperation with investigation and/or legal proceedings.
- Criminal activity that victims may have been forced or coerced to participate in as a result of being trafficked includes prostitution, theft, drug trafficking, and others, including non-criminal matters related to immigration or labour laws.
- Some trafficking victims may eventually become involved in the recruitment and exploitation of additional victims to varying degrees. Victims may be driven to recruit others:
  - in order to pay back a debt to their trafficker,
  - as a result of becoming bonded to or dependent on their trafficker,
  - as a way to "graduate" out of their original role and improve their situation.
- Victims who transition to a controlling or exploiting role complicate the principle of non-punishment. Considerations for victims who have become traffickers or accomplices can take place either at the sentencing stage, or when deciding whether to prosecute.

## 4.2 Three Goals of Victim Support



**In order to meet the goals of victim support, we recommend taking the following actions:**

- A Victim-Centered, Gender- and Age-Sensitive Approach
  - A victim-centered investigation respects the dignity of the victim and adapts, wherever possible, to meet the needs and wishes of the victim.
  - Empowering victims to tell their stories in a meaningful way may encourage them to serve as witnesses in a criminal investigation and subsequent prosecution.
- Early Preparation and Multi-Agency Cooperation
  - Cooperation across agencies strengthens victim identification, intelligence gathering, victim engagement, and supports police operations and strategy. Work with a multi-agency team from the start of the investigation process to:
    - Gather intelligence about the potential victims of the case
    - Develop a safeguarding plan and strategy
    - Support ongoing victim engagement
    - Build a picture of available intelligence
  - Consider gender, culture, and other demographics that may impact the victim's trust and comfort when building the multi-agency team.
  - Consider who else should be present during the investigation, e.g. social workers specializing in children or other vulnerable groups.
- Immediate Needs and Victim Safety
  - Separate the victim from the alleged offender(s)
  - Ensure the victim is not held in immigration detention or imprisoned for trafficking-related offenses, consistent with the non-punishment principle.
  - Ensure that the victim is safe and that their basic needs are covered including:
    - Housing
    - Financial support
    - Social services
      - Ensure the victim is connected to social support services through government, non-government and private sectors.

- o Medical care
  - o Take steps to ensure the victim has access to healthcare to meet their physical, emotional and mental health needs, including to address any substance use disorder or mental illness.
  - o Examine and document medical treatment received, e.g. by photographing injuries or other obvious conditions
  - o Interpretation or translation services when applicable
- o Allow time for victims to speak with someone they trust who can speak their language and is capable of understanding/empathizing with what the victim has been through.
- Ongoing Support
  - o Investigators involved since the start of the case have the chance to build rapport and trust with the victim, and can be supportive throughout the investigation and prosecution process.
  - o Law enforcement also plays an important role in protecting victims from intimidation.
  - o If the victim desires to return to his or her home country, consider how law enforcement can support their decision and facilitate their continued involvement in the investigation.
- Re-Trafficking Risks
  - o Victims whose basic needs are not being met are at risk of being exploited further. Meeting housing, safety, and mental health needs and fostering a long-term supportive relationship helps safeguard victims from re-trafficking.





## 4.3 Victim Interviewing

Victim statements currently play a significant role in human trafficking cases, and many cases rely on them entirely. However, the burden of proving a trafficking offense should not be placed mainly on the victim, and **law enforcement should seek out and prioritize other forms of evidence in order to strengthen trafficking cases and reduce reliance on the victim.**

**The PEACE model (Preparation and Planning, Engage and Explain, Account, Closure, Evaluation) is an example of an interviewing framework that can help law enforcement implement trauma-informed strategies.** Other models may be more appropriate depending on each jurisdiction's criminal justice system.

### PREPARATION AND PLANNING

#### **Prepare interpretation and any other necessary accommodations.**

- Any reasonable requirements expressed by the witness must be accommodated.
- Cultural and language needs must be accommodated to avoid the victim shutting down due to offensive or inappropriate approaches. Consider working with culturally specific service providers prior to the interview to prepare, and consider cultural understandings of gender, subject matter, and narrative style.
- Gender, political orientation or affiliation, regional origins and cultural background of the interpreter should be considered in selecting an interviewer, when possible.
- Avoid using interpreters who are familiar with either party.

#### **Identify a place of safety and avoid bringing victims to the police station.**

- Any approach to the victim should be gradual and nonthreatening. Be sure the victim has some control over the situation, e.g. of breaks and seating placement. Avoid interrogation methods and refrain from physical contact with victims. Screening interviews should take place in a comfortable environment and be conducted by someone who was not directly involved with the victim in raids or arrests.
- Avoid any procedure that brings the victim and the accused in face to face contact.

#### **Reduce the number of interviews.**

- A unified intake form, for example, reduces contact with law enforcement by combining questions from different government agencies.
- If possible, wait to interview a victim until they are stabilized to reduce the need for further interviews and improve the information gathered.

#### **Consider the possibility of using an audio/video link or virtual interview.**

- For example, some jurisdictions allow for virtual recorded interviews for vulnerable or intimidated witnesses.

**Even if an interview is not intended to gather evidence for a court case, law enforcement should prepare for and conduct the interview in such a way that it would be admissible as evidence in their legal system.**

## ENGAGE AND EXPLAIN

Spend time building rapport by discussing neutral topics.

**Communicate clearly.**

- Explain what the interview and investigation process will look like
- Explain what they'll be asked about and why that information is needed
- Make the roles and responsibilities of those involved clear
- Provide an opportunity for clarifying arrangements and asking questions

## ACCOUNT

Minimize evolving statements (victims changing or amending their statement or description over time) by interviewing when the victim or witness is ready and has received the necessary psychosocial support.

Allow for an uninterrupted/interpreted account.

**Avoid leading or confrontational questions.**

- Use a conversational approach rather than a rapid series of questions to obtain preliminary information. Open-ended questions may elicit more information from victims than yes or no questions.
- As described in section 4.4 Trauma, memory loss, lack of focus, emotional reactivity, and multiple versions of a story can all be signs of trauma and can inhibit the interview process.

In early interviews, focusing on open-ended questions instead of a linear story (e.g. "what else happened" instead of "what happened next") can help law enforcement ascertain the elements of the crime while the victim is still recovering. The timeline can be the focus of later interviews or other forms of investigation.

## CLOSURE

Close with a summary of the victim/witness's statement to give them an opportunity to clarify.

Refrain from making promises that aren't guaranteed.

## EVALUATION




Reflect on the following question to inform the next steps of your investigation:

- Is the victim or witness at risk of intimidation or other threats due to the information provided?
- How will the provided information factor into the investigation?
- What additional information is needed, and how can the statement be corroborated/confirmed?

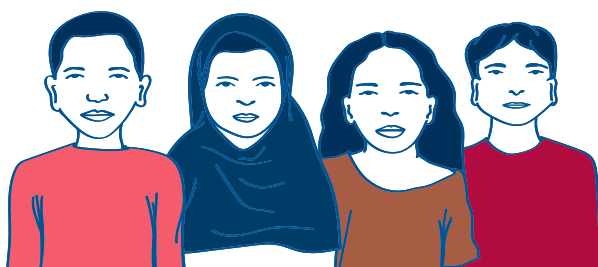


## 4.4 Trauma

The significant impacts of trauma can lead to adverse effects, conditions, and behaviors that limit a human trafficking victim’s ability to work with law enforcement during the interviewing and investigation process. Law enforcement should be ready to work with victims displaying the following effects of trauma:

 <b>Trauma Bonding</b>	 <b>Mental Health Conditions</b>	 <b>Substance Use</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victims can form a deep attachment to traffickers or other victims. This bonding is a common result of trauma and does not indicate that the victim was complicit in their own trafficking, but it may prevent them from coming forward or from testifying against their trafficker. It may also lead them to return to their trafficker, which should not be seen by law enforcement as evidence of a lack of trauma or culpability in the trafficking situation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No two victims will exhibit the exact same psychological symptoms, even if they share a similar abuse situation.</li> <li>Behaviors caused by mental health conditions should not be perceived as an unwillingness to cooperate or a desire to act out.</li> <li>Mental illness can also increase vulnerability to trafficking, meaning many victims may have already been experiencing underlying mental health conditions before being trafficked.</li> <li>Serious mental health conditions can stem from trafficking trauma, including but not limited to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PTSD may occur after exposure to an extremely threatening event or series of events, including human trafficking.</li> <li>Victims with PTSD may be easily startled or in a persistent state of hyper-vigilance.</li> <li>Victims experiencing PTSD or Complex PTSD (C-PTSD) may have significant difficulty cooperating with investigations, working with law enforcement, and recalling events related to the trafficking offense.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Depression and/or Suicidal Ideation</li> <li>Anxiety and/or Panic Disorders</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffickers may use illicit substances to maintain control over a victim, e.g. by supplying or withholding drugs based on the victim’s behavior. Victims of trafficking may also turn to illicit substances to cope with trauma.</li> <li>Long-term substance use or addiction may impact a victim’s behavior, memory, and ability to testify.</li> <li>Substance use that predates the trafficking offense may also have played a role in the recruitment of the victim.</li> <li>Law enforcement should avoid penalizing, criminalizing, or passing judgement on victims due to substance use or addiction.</li> </ul>





### Special Considerations for Minors

- Child victims of trafficking are more vulnerable than adult victims of trafficking, as they be naturally compliant or consider abnormal conduct normal, and they may not know the words to describe what has happened to them.
- Follow trauma-informed best practices with minors
  - The location of the interview should be as child-friendly as possible, and considerations should be given to providing toys and drawing materials appropriate for the child's age.
  - Children are likely to need more breaks than adults.
  - Specially trained investigators with experience working with minors should be involved when possible. Do not change interviewers or translators unless absolutely necessary, as changes may confuse or scare the child.
  - Involve child psychologists and other service providers whenever possible.
- Check domestic legislation for legal requirements when interviewing children. Many jurisdictions require the presence of a lawyer or social worker or the use of video when interviewing vulnerable child witnesses.
- Additional special measures, including video testimony, alternative and safe housing, and the use of intermediaries in communication with law enforcement are encouraged for all victims and witnesses, but are especially necessary for children and other particularly vulnerable witnesses.





## V. Resources

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The following resources were used in the creation of this guidance document. Please refer to them for more detailed information about specific topics referenced.

### General Resources

United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime, *Anti-human trafficking manual for criminal justice practitioners*, 2009, available from <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/2009/anti-human-trafficking-manual.html>

United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime, *First Aid Kit for Use by Law Enforcement First Responders in Addressing Human Trafficking*, available from <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/2011/first-aid-kit.html>

Warnath Group, *Global Collection of Human Trafficking Laws*, available from <https://www.warnathgroup.com/laws/>

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