



# Human Trafficking Basics & Red Flags



## Human Trafficking Definition

Human trafficking is modern-day slavery and involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act. There are two main categories of human trafficking:

### Sex Trafficking Defined

Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of commercial sex. Commercial sex occurs when anything of value – money, drugs, rent – is given to or received by any person in exchange for a sex act. Under human trafficking laws, both the person who sells another person for sex – a trafficker – or the person buying the sex act- a sex purchaser – can be charged with the crime of human trafficking. *(Related: In Texas, both a person buying--or soliciting for sex--and the person selling their body can be charged with prostitution. There is no charge for soliciting a prostitute in Texas).*

### Adults and Minors of Sex Trafficking According to the Law:

- Adults are deemed victims of criminal sex trafficking when they are exploited into a commercial sex act through *force, fraud, or coercion*.
- Minors (under age 18) are deemed victims of criminal sex trafficking when they are persuaded into a commercial sex act, regardless of whether *force, fraud, or coercion* are used.

### Labor Trafficking

Labor trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. Irrespective of age, a person is considered a victim of the crime of labor trafficking when he or she is persuaded to perform labor through *force, fraud, or coercion*.

### Force, Fraud, Coercion

#### Examples of Force

- Physical Abuse, beatings & burnings
- Rape
- Imprisonment
- Forceful drug introduction & fostered addiction

## Examples of Fraud

### Purposely deceitful

- Deceitful job offers or arrangements
- Deceitful promises of a good or better life
- Deceitful romance
- Using poverty or lack of provisions to persuade
- Extortion (blackmail)

### Coercion

### Threats and intimidation

- Threatening violence to a victim or their family
- Controlling
- Creating an atmosphere of fear
- Violent acts or demonstrations (i.e hitting walls, etc.)
- Creating chemical or provisional dependence (trafficker or pimp using shelter, clothing, food or drugs to manipulate. May even use the relationship as manipulation.)
- Setting quotas (threatened to earn a certain amount of money a night or suffer the consequences)
- Making victim believe that they deserved to be victimized
- Telling victim that it's their fault they are being abused

References: [U.S. State Department](#); thedragonfly.org

## Red Flags and Human Trafficking Indicators

### General Red Flags

- Story seems rehearsed or has several inconsistencies
- Hesitates or refuses to answer questions about an injury or illness
- Accompanied by an individual who does not let them speak for themselves, refuses to let the person have privacy, or who interprets for them
- Controlling relationships (unhealthy concerns about pleasing a family member, romantic partner, or boss)
- Avoids eye contact or seems fearful and nervous
- Resists offers of help, possibly even hostile
- Unable to provide his/her address
- Unaware of their location, the date, or even the time of day
- Does not control their money or ID
- Wages are being withheld

## Labor Trafficking Specific Red Flags

- Threats by a boss or even physical harm
- Not allowed to take food or water breaks while at work
- Not provided with adequate protection for hazardous work
- Lives in housing provided by employer OR lives where they work
- Has a debt to employer that they cannot pay off

## Sex Trafficking Specific Red Flags

- Under the age of 18 and involved in the commercial sex industry
- Has markings or brandings (i.e. tattoos) that say, "Daddy," "Belongs to..." etc.
- Talks about frequent sexual partners
- Inappropriate clothing for the weather or venue
- Uses slang or code words common in the commercial sex industry

## Susceptibilities to Human Trafficking

Human trafficking victims and survivors of trafficking come from all walks of life. People harmed by human traffickers are diverse. Anyone can be trafficked.

However, there are some common traits that make others particularly susceptible to human trafficking. Traffickers have been known to prey upon people with the following characteristics or experiences by offering to meet some kind of physical and/or emotional need, thereby gaining control over that person.

## Common Circumstances in Vulnerable Populations

- Minors
- Runaway youth
- Low self-esteem, depression
- History of sexual abuse, physical abuse, or other trauma
- Low income
- Parent or guardian has substance abuse issues
- Developmental / Cognitive delay
- History with Family Protective Services (i.e. CPS) / foster care

Download and print (if possible) this worksheet. Study it and use it to build awareness. Talk it over with someone to not only educate them but also to reinforce the knowledge in yourself. This worksheet can also be used with doing a presentation at a school or other facility to educate about the evil of human trafficking.