



GUIDELINES FOR THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

IDENTIFYING AND HELPING VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is a crime under both Federal and Florida law:

Human trafficking generally involves the use of **force, fraud, or coercion** to exploit a person for profit. Trafficking victims are subjected to sexual exploitation, forced labor, or both. Labor exploitation includes slavery, forced labor, and debt bondage, while sexual exploitation typically includes abuse within the commercial sex industry. If victim is under 18 no force fraud or coercion needed.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS A MAJOR GLOBAL CRISIS

Religious Community Responds to Victims Needs

Spiritual guidance, prayer and support

- Mentoring or counseling- Help to reduce feelings of helplessness, shame, humiliation, shock, denial or disbelief
- Rehabilitation- Assist in the recovery of substance abuse problems or addiction
- Community support- Help to reduce fear, lack of self esteem, and reconnect with the faith community

Basic Needs

- Food- Collect donated food or gift cards
- Shelter-Arrange for safe housing
- Clothing-Collect clothing and needed personal items
- Basic health needs-Provide basic care or help to find needed healthcare assistance
- Employment assistance- Offer safe and supporting employment options

Advocacy

- Raise awareness and educate the faith community and leaders
- Use legislative advocacy by writing congressmen to re-authorize trafficking laws
- Advertise the trafficking hotline number throughout the community
- Volunteer with local human trafficking organizations

Faith-based leaders have a crucial opportunity for identification and intervention because places of worship are one of the few non-threatening arenas where victims of human trafficking are likely to attend while they are still under the control of the traffickers.

IDENTIFYING VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Potential signs and clues for identification of victims of human trafficking – evidence of being controlled; evidence of an inability to move freely or leave employment; bruises or other signs of battering; fear of deportation; recently brought to the country/ moved to the state, city; lack of passport, immigration or identification documents, etc.

Is potential victim accompanied by another person who seems controlling?

Does person accompanying potential victim insist on potential victim not being alone?

Does the potential victim enter through the back door or sit in the back of the church to avoid contact?

Does potential victim seem submissive, nervous, fearful, avoiding eye contact and giving evasive answers?

Does the potential victim appear to always be on time constraints?

Does the potential victim appear afraid to speak of living environment?

Is the potential victim unable to attend social events or maintain friendships?

INTERACTING WITH VICTIMS

Safety is primary;

Attempt to isolate the potential victim from the person accompanying her/him without raising suspicions;

Build an environment of mutual trust and confidentiality; and

Enlist a trusted translator/interpreter who also understands victim's cultural needs.



At its very core Human Trafficking is the devaluing of human life to a sell-able commodity. It is manifested in the complete disregard for the value and dignity of human life assigned by the Creator – being made in the image of God. (Genesis 1:26-27). All faiths condemn this heinous crime. The Quran 5:89 urges followers to free the slaves. Isaiah 61:1-3 calls upon faith leaders to take action and free the captives.



LEGAL STATUS

Foreign born victims can be certified by the US Department of Health and Human Services as trafficked persons. Once certified, victims can access the same benefits as refugees. They are eligible for physical and mental health services, housing, food stamps, educational and vocational programs, as well as legal and translation services. Minors do not require certification. Victims of the severe forms of trafficking may also apply and be granted a T-Visa.

INTERVENTION

If you think you have come in contact with a victim of trafficking, anonymously call the **National Human Trafficking Hotline(1.888.373.7888)** which can assist in finding local resources and developing a safety plan for the victim.