

Questions You Can Ask to Determine if Someone is a Human Trafficking Victim

The following are examples of questions that you can ask someone who might be a human trafficking victim. Make sure that the person is alone when you ask these questions and tell the person that you want to help.

- Under what circumstances or conditions did you come to America? Do you or your family owe a debt to your employer or the person who brought you here? What is your relationship to the person who organized your migration to the U.S.?
- What do you do for work? Were you brought to America for one kind of job, but forced to do something else once you arrived? How did you learn about your job?
- Are you paid for working? Does anyone take the money that you earn? Are you given something instead of money, like drugs or alcohol?
- How many hours a day do you work? How many days a week do you work?
- Do you live at work or nearby? Are you free to leave work or home without permission? Does anyone go with you when you leave?
- Do you have to ask permission to eat, sleep, or use a toilet?
- Has anyone hurt or threatened you or your family?
- Do you have access to your identification documents? Did anyone take them from you?
- Are you afraid that you or your family will be deported if you try to leave work or home?

How You Can Help

Human trafficking is illegal. If you suspect that someone has suffered under any of the practices or conditions described in this brochure, you can help. Human trafficking victims are eligible for protection, immigration assistance, and benefits and services under state and federal law.

Get immediate help or report a human trafficking case for investigation by calling **911**, your **local police department**, or your local **district attorney's office**.

Learn about services for human trafficking victims in New York State by contacting the **New York State Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance**:

1-518-402-3096

Contact the **New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services** for information about how human trafficking victims are confirmed for services in New York State:

1-518-457-8413

Learn about crime victims compensation for human trafficking victims in New York State by calling the **New York State Crime Victims Board**:

1-800-247-8035



Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance

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Human Trafficking: Contemporary Slavery



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What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking *is* modern-day slavery. Despite laws forbidding slavery and involuntary servitude in the United States, people are forced and manipulated into sexual slavery and labor servitude in the U.S. every day. According to the U.S. Department of State, 14,500 to 17,500 people are trafficked into the U.S. every year.

Human trafficking *is* a violation of human rights. Human trafficking victims are sold and bought like commodities. They are forced to work in dangerous, unhealthy conditions for long hours without breaks, food, or pay. Human trafficking victims are made to sell their bodies on the street and in brothels. They are deprived of freedom, isolated from the outside world, beaten and abused into submission.



Human trafficking is *not* smuggling. While human trafficking and smuggling can appear to be similar, human trafficking involves force, fraud, or coercion, whereas smuggling does not.

Human trafficking is *not* a choice. A person cannot meaningfully consent to become a slave. Most human trafficking victims are desperate to escape.

What You Should Know About Human Trafficking

Who is affected by human trafficking?

Human trafficking affects men, women, and children, and people of all races and ethnicities. Human trafficking victims are trafficked into the U.S. from nearly every country in the world,* but most often from impoverished regions with little economic opportunity, politically corrupt and disorganized areas, and places with pronounced social inequality. High demand for victims and low prosecution of traffickers allows human trafficking to persist.

What does human trafficking look like?

Human trafficking victims may be forced to work in sweatshops, fields or farms, hotels, fisheries, or restaurants. They may be forced to beg or peddle, or to become domestic laborers, janitors, or construction workers. Some human trafficking victims are forced into prostitution, exotic dancing, and pornography, while others are forced into marriage. Human trafficking victims can be found in virtually any setting.

Where does human trafficking occur?

Human trafficking occurs all over the world. In the U.S., human trafficking occurs in urban, suburban, and rural areas in every state. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, human trafficking occurs more frequently in New York State than in any other state, after California, Florida, and Texas.

*While the focus of this brochure is international human trafficking, people also become domestic human trafficking victims when they are forced and manipulated into slavery and involuntary servitude in their own countries — human trafficking does not require crossing a border.

How to Recognize a Human Trafficking Victim

Most human trafficking victims are reluctant to identify themselves, even if encouraged, because they live with constant fear and intimidation. However, there are signs that someone is suffering from human trafficking:

- Person appears to be watched or supervised by another, or intimidated by a companion
- Evidence of physical or sexual abuse, e.g., bruises, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Person appears to be fearful, anxious, or depressed



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- Person is unable to speak English and/or someone else insists on interpreting/translating for person
- Signs of malnutrition or dehydration, poor hygiene, or untreated medical problems
- Person has no identification documents, e.g., a passport or visa, or someone else keeps such documents
- Evidence of mental illness or disturbance, especially post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Person has little or no pocket money