



Law Enforcement Screening Tool for Victims of Human Trafficking

BEFORE USING THE TOOLKIT

1. TAKE HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRAINING

- <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/resources/trauma-informed-human-trafficking-screenings>
- Recognize Signs of Trafficking
- Trauma Informed / Victim Centered Approach
- Minimize Re-Traumatization
- Victim Mindsets:
 - ◆ Fear - harm to selves or loved ones
 - ◆ Shame - activities forced to perform
 - ◆ Self-blame – for falling prey to a situation
 - ◆ Traumatic bonding to trafficker – a.k.a. Stockholm syndrome
 - ◆ Distrust of Law Enforcement and service providers
 - ◆ Isolation – complete dependency on trafficker
 - ◆ Hopelessness and resignation – No one cares to help
 - ◆ Psychological Trauma – PTSD
 - ◆ Normalization of exploitation – abuse is a normal part of everyday life
 - ◆ Don't self-identify as victims
 - ◆ Unaware of resources

2. DEVELOP INTERNAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Who Administers the Toolkit
- Language Services
- Nonjudgmental Screener

3. ESTABLISH RESOURCE REFERRAL NETWORK

- Collaborate with Local Resource Service Providers
- Supply Resource Information Materials
- Maintain List of Resource Contacts for Warm Handoffs

ADMINISTERING TOOLKIT

1. ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP

- Build Trust – Administer Verbally
- Lifetime History of Trauma not Uncommon
- Build a Safe Space
- Nonthreatening Calm Tone and Physical Presence
- Allow Time

2. ESTABLISH INTERNAL RESPONSE

- Only use a trained Assessment Screener
- Screener should remain nonjudgmental and encouraging
- Establish internal protocols to guide implementation
- Include language interpreter services

3. RESOURCES

- Offer Resources
- Provide Information Materials
- With Permission Call Referral Contact
- Warm Handoff to Service Provider Contact for Resources and Safety Planning

SCREENERS QUESTIONING THE VICTIM SHOULD CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

Common charges against sex or labor trafficking victims are possession of unlawful weapons or controlled substances, financial crimes, identity theft, selling or cultivating drugs and possession of false identification documents.

Is there evidence of possible “Stockholm” or “Patty Hearst” Syndrome where the victim, because of his or her dependency, actually begins to identify with the trafficker?

It is important to note that trafficking victims rarely self-identify as victims. They do not realize they are victims or that a crime is even being committed.

Law enforcement should make every effort to help victims feel safe and secure. When working with trafficking victims, law enforcement officers may wish to keep the following in mind:

- Enlist the help of victim advocates wherever possible.
- Since many victims have been arrested, it takes time and astute questioning to determine that they are victims, and not criminals
- Be aware that lawyers are sometimes employed by traffickers.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING SCREENING TOOL

1. Fraud/Financial Coercion Questions

- a) Where were you born? _____ (If not a U.S. Citizen continue to (a)-(d))
- (a) How did you get into this country? _____
- (b) Who brought you into this country? _____
- (c) Who organized your travel? _____
- (d) Are you in possession of your own legal (I.D.) documents? If not, why? _____
- (e) Were you provided false documents or identification? _____
- (f) How was payment for your travel handled? _____
- (g) Did you come to this country for a specific job that you were promised? _____
- (h) Were you forced to do different work? _____
- (i) Who forced you into doing different work than what was promised? _____
- b) How did you get your job? _____
- c) Who promised you this job? _____
- d) Was there some sort of work contract signed? _____
- e) Are you getting paid to do your job? _____
- f) Do you actually receive payment or is your money being held for you? _____
- g) Do you owe your employer money? _____
- h) Are there records or receipts of what is owed to your employer/recruiter? _____
- i) Are there records/receipts of what was earned/paid to you? _____
- j) How were financial transactions handled? _____
- k) Are you being made to do things that you do not want to do? _____

2. Physical Abuse Questions

- a) Were you ever threatened with harm if you tried to leave? _____
- b) Did you ever witness any threats against other people if they tried to leave? _____
- c) Has your family been threatened? _____
- d) Do you know about any other person's family ever being threatened? _____
- e) Were you ever physically abused? _____
- f) Did you ever witness abuse against another person? _____
- g) What type of physical abuse did you witness? _____
- h) Were there any objects or weapons used in the physical abuse? _____
- i) Where are these objects or weapons located? _____
- j) Was knowledge of this abuse ever communicated to a person outside of this situation (e.g., police reports, domestic violence reports, hospital records, social service records)?

- k) Was anyone else ever abused or threatened with harm in your presence? _____
- l) How were medical problems handled, and who attended to them? _____

3. Freedom of Movement Questions

- a) Is your freedom of movement restricted? _____
- b) Do you live and work in the same place? _____
- c) What were the conditions under which you were left unattended? _____
- d) Were there instances of physical restriction through locks, chains, etc.? _____
- e) Where are the locks used and who has the keys to them? _____
- f) How was movement in public places handled (e.g., car, van, bus, subway)? _____
- g) Who supervised your movement in public places? _____

- h) How was the purchase of private goods and services handled (e.g., medicines, prescriptions)? _____
- i) What forms of media or telecommunication did you have access to (e.g., television, radio, newspapers, magazines, telephone, the Internet)? _____

4. Psychological Coercion Questions

A. Behavioral indicators:

- a) Who are you afraid of? _____
- b) Why are you afraid of them? _____
- c) What would you like to see happen to the people who hurt you (e.g., jail, deportation)?

- d) How do you feel about the police? Why? _____

B. Environmental Indicators:

- a) Where do you live/work/eat/sleep? _____
- b) Where do the alleged perpetrators live/eat/sleep? _____
- c) Are the living conditions between the two excessively different? _____

Sources: United States Department of Health and Human Services,
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/resource/nhhtacadultscreening>
National Human Trafficking Hotline Resource Center
<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/resources/trauma-informed-human-trafficking-screenings>