

U.S. Government Takes Steps to Eradicate Human Trafficking

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CHICAGO, IL, USA, December 7, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- U.S. Government Takes Steps to Eradicate Human Trafficking

Human trafficking affects millions of people around the world, with victims across many industries, from commercial sex work to farms and nail salons. Trafficking victims do not fit a single profile. Although women and children are the most vulnerable to sex trafficking, men can also be victims of sexual exploitation. Traffickers often know their victims well and take advantage of them, using threats and promises to ensure that victims are under control and kept quiet. 92% of survivors of sex trafficking report experiencing sexual abuse as a child. This root issue often leads them to running away from the abuse they experience at the hands of someone they should be able to trust. Once on the streets, 1 out of 3 children will be approached by a predator within 48 hours. Longing for love, safety and necessities such as food and shelter, it is easy for a predator to take advantage of their vulnerabilities. After gaining their trust and grooming them to believe that their love is sincere, they exploit and sell them to 15-40 buyers every 24 hours.

Human trafficking can occur within a country or across borders and boundaries but does not necessarily involve the movement of the victim from place to place. Trafficking is a crime because of the violation of the victim's rights through force, fraud and coercion and because of their commercial or sexual exploitation. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) found that 79% of human trafficking involves sexual exploitation, which is much more frequently reported than other types of human trafficking. Though men can be victims of sex trafficking, according to the International Labor Office, most victims are women and girls.

Sex trafficking is a widespread and often unseen problem in the United States. According to humantraffickinghotline.org, California reports the most trafficking crimes, followed by Texas and Florida, then Ohio and Georgia. But sadly, trafficking occurs in all 50 states.

Sex Trafficking Prevention at the Federal Level

President Donald Trump, in January 2020, signed the Executive Order on Combating Human

Trafficking and Online Child Exploitation in the United States. This executive order creates a White House position focused on combatting human trafficking and recognizes the 20th anniversary of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

The executive order states that the federal government is committed to sex trafficking prevention and to eradicating all forms of human trafficking in the United States. It also states that every resource of the United States Federal Government will be leveraged to this purpose.

The order also provides for the following:

- Approval of a large Department of Justice (DOJ) grant package to combat human trafficking, including safe housing grants for trafficking survivors.
- Doubling of DOJ funding for the prevention and elimination of human trafficking and prioritization of funding to enforce sex trafficking prosecutions at both the federal and state levels.

In October 2020, the federal government also released a comprehensive plan of action in response to the January 2020 executive order, committing to implementing a whole-government approach to combatting human trafficking. The plan directed the following steps:

- The Center for Countering Human Trafficking (CCHT) was created by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), establishing a central location for experts to coordinate and expand efforts in the fight against human trafficking.
- Federal agencies focused on preventing human trafficking through increased awareness and education, curtailing demand, and decreasing imports of the products of forced labor.
- The Department of Health and Human Services, DOJ, and DHS worked to train more than 95,000 professionals, including law enforcement, civil personnel, and government officials, to expand capacity to appropriately respond to suspected human trafficking.
- Through the President's Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives, the federal government is working in coordination with tribal communities to better understand the impact of human trafficking in those areas.

As a result of these initiatives, federal law enforcement agencies in 2019 recorded more than 1,600 new investigations into human traffickers, and federally-funded human trafficking task forces at state and local levels reported opening more than 2,500 new human trafficking cases.

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Resources and Reporting

There are multiple resources available to help people report an instance of suspected sex trafficking or other human trafficking.

☎Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline toll-free at 1-888-373-7888, or text the Hotline at 233733. Message and data rates may apply.

☎Contact Selah Freedom's intake hotline: 1-888-8-FREE-ME

For a comprehensive look at the U.S. Justice Department Human Trafficking Laws, see <https://www.justice.gov/crt/involuntary-servitude-forced-labor-and-sex-trafficking-statutes-enforced>.

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