

Job Aid: Human Trafficking of Children

Human trafficking of children and adults is a form of modern day slavery that occurs in Florida and throughout the world. Human trafficking is a crime under both Florida and federal laws. Most cases are jointly handled by state and federal law enforcement officials.

Human Trafficking of a Child: The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a child for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. Sex trafficking is a commercial sex act which includes prostitution, pornography, exotic dancing.

Trafficking occurs in many different situations including domestic servitude, construction, landscaping, the sex industry, factories and sweatshops, migrant farm work, begging, service industries such as nursing homes, cleaning services, bars and restaurants and the food industry.

Authority: Section 787.06, F.S. makes human trafficking and benefiting from human trafficking a second degree felony. Section 39.301, F.S. requires the Florida Abuse Hotline to accept reports of alleged human trafficking of a child. Title 18 U.S.C. §§ 1581-1595 contains federal law on human trafficking including definition of "severe form of trafficking."

Policy: The Hotline will accept reports/intakes about human trafficking of children.

Factors to Consider:

- Indicators for human trafficking will frequently contain incidents of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect while others may meet criteria for special conditions such as Caregiver Unavailable.
- Most callers will not use the phrase "human trafficking" when making a report. Law enforcement, however, is more likely to call the matter "human trafficking" or say that the child has been "trafficked."
- Under federal law, whenever a child is induced to commit a commercial sex act (including prostitution), that child is considered to be a victim of trafficking.
- Trafficked children may reside with or accompany other children and adults who are not trafficked.
- Traffickers may pose as relatives and caregivers; relatives and caregivers may enslave and traffic their own children.
- Traffickers may be organized crime or they may be smaller criminal enterprises; traffickers can also be "mom and pop" operations.

- The alleged perpetrator/trafficker may be unknown or may have a fictitious identity.

Potential scenarios:

The following situations could represent human trafficking of a child. The list does not include every possible situation.

- A neighbor sees children playing in the yard and they appear to be taken care of. There is another child who is rarely seen, is school-aged, and who may be of the same or different ethnicity. This child does not appear to go to school or does not go regularly and does not seem to be taken care of in the same way as the other children -his clothes are dirty or worn, he has poor hygiene, and/or seems underfed and frightened.
- There is a commercial farm that grows vegetables. For the past week, every weekday between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., four children are seen at this farm picking vegetables alongside adults. The children appear to be between the ages of eight and twelve and school is in session.
- A health care provider is attending to a child/teen who will not give any information about her parent(s) or who she lives with; the provider suspects the child has mild mental retardation and is not getting the special care she needs.
- An adult brings a child into a health care setting because the child was exposed to harmful chemicals, or was injured on the job, and the adult leaves. No one is there to give consent for treatment.
- A neighbor notices that many men are coming and going from one of the houses on their street. Sometimes they also see children who seem to live there being picked up in a van on weekend nights and are kept out all night.
- Law enforcement calls about a young woman whom they arrested in the street for prostitution. She was processed as an adult but appears very young and has superficial injuries and questionable identifying marks such as a name tattooed on her neck. She appears to be pregnant. She insists that she is 19 and her boyfriend will bail her out soon.
- Someone who just stayed at a motel calls to say that a child/teen who works there speaks little or no English and seems afraid when trying to talk to them.
- School counselors find out through word-of-mouth that a mother is getting her teen daughter, who has cognitive disabilities, to dance in a strip club.

Accepting an Intake and Coding Guidelines:

The Hotline will complete a full assessment of all allegations.

The Hotline will accept an intake when:

- There is reasonable cause to suspect abuse, neglect or abandonment by a caregiver.
- The information meets criteria for a special conditions intake.
- There is reasonable cause to suspect human trafficking of a child by a caregiver or non-caregiver.
- A professional reporter who works with human trafficking cases suspects or is reporting human trafficking.

Coding Guidelines:

Select the Human Trafficking maltreatment when:

- There is reasonable cause to suspect human trafficking of a child by a caregiver or non-caregiver.
- A professional reporter who works with human trafficking cases suspects or is reporting human trafficking.
- The information causes the Hotline counselor to suspect human trafficking.

If the reporter suspects or is reporting human trafficking, the Hotline will document that in the allegation narrative.

Documentation in the reporter narrative:

- When the reporter did not mention human trafficking but the counselor suspects the maltreatments described might be indicative of human trafficking the counselor will document in the reporter narrative that the reporter did not mention human trafficking and the reasons the counselor suspects it.
- When the Hotline counselor accepts a Special Conditions intake and suspects human trafficking, the counselor will document in the reporter narrative the reasons they suspect human trafficking.

For all situations, the response priority will be based on the risk assessment.

- When in doubt, ask a supervisor or manager.