

A business owner's responsibility in preventing human trafficking



If you suspect human trafficking may be occurring, contact the national human trafficking hotline: 1-888-373-7888 or text HELP or INFO to BeFree (233733).

As business owner, you have a duty to prevent human trafficking from occurring, under the [Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act \(TVPRA\)](#). You can be held both criminally and civilly liable for allowing it to occur within your business. While hotels and motels are the primary businesses associated with human trafficking, it can occur anywhere.

What is human trafficking?

- Human trafficking is the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of labor or a commercial sex act with an adult or minor. Human trafficking is considered a modern form of slavery.
- There are an estimated 20.8 million victims of human trafficking worldwide.¹
- Human trafficking occurs worldwide, including all 50 US states. It can happen in any community.
- Trafficking victims span all ages, genders, and nationalities.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline reported in 2019 that two of the five most frequently used venues for sex trafficking were residence-based commercial sex (which includes apartments), and hotels/motels.

In a 2018 survey conducted by the Polaris Project, 75% of survivors of human trafficking reported coming in contact with hotels at some point during their exploitation, and 94% of these survivors indicated they never received any assistance or identification from hotel staff.

What can you do?

- Do not confront a suspected victim or trafficker directly.
- **Know the signs.** Educate staff on potential identifiers of human trafficking. Information on signs of human trafficking can be found based on industry at www.polarisproject.org and at www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign.
- **Have a plan.** Develop a written anti-human trafficking response plan. A written plan can help educate staff on what to do if they suspect human trafficking and create consistency in their response. This plan should also include a prohibition from employees from participating in human trafficking activities.
- **Connect with human trafficking prevention resources.** Have human trafficking reporting hotline contact information readily available and posted prominently near phones in staff areas (and for hotel operations, post prominently in tenant common areas or guest hotel rooms where victims may be present).

Human Trafficking Prevention

- Connect with local law enforcement and local human trafficking task forces or organizations to discuss local resources and response planning tools available for human trafficking prevention.
- In an urgent emergency, call 911 for emergency services.

References

- ¹ [U.S. Department of Homeland Security - Combatting Human Trafficking Through Social Science](#)

Resources

- [Polaris Project - U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline 2019 Data Report](#)
- [U.S. Department of Homeland Security - Blue Campaign: What is Human Trafficking?](#)
- [U.S. Department of Homeland Security - Blue Campaign: Human Trafficking Indicator Card](#)
- [Polaris Project - A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Prevent and Disrupt Human Trafficking](#)

Training:

- [Shared Hope International: Resources](#)
- [ECPAT USA - Training for Hotel Associates](#)
- [National Human Trafficking Hotline - NHTH Online Training Courses](#)

You can report potential human trafficking cases to the Department of Homeland Security's human trafficking reporting number: 1-866-DHS-2-ICE (347-2423).

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For your risk management and safety needs, contact Nationwide Loss Control Services: 1-866-808-2101 or LCS@nationwide.com.