

Human Trafficking

Issue Brief for Local Officials

Human trafficking – a \$32 billion-a-year global industry – is the world’s fastest growing criminal enterprise.¹ Considered today’s modern form of slavery, human trafficking denies victims their freedom and violates basic rights afforded to all. Perpetrators exploit and profit off of the most vulnerable populations, often times women and children.

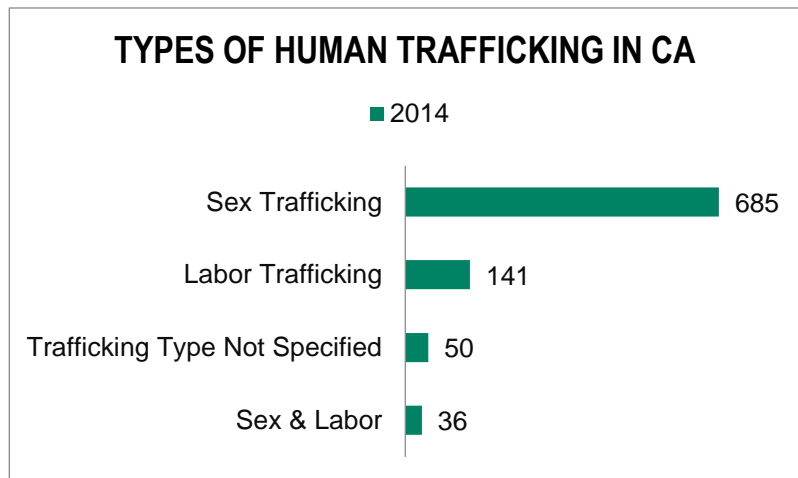
In California, human trafficking is defined as "all acts involved in the recruitment, abduction, transport, harboring, transfer, sale or receipt of persons, within national or across international borders, through force, coercion, fraud or deception, to place persons in situations of slavery or slavery-like conditions, forced labor or services, such as forced prostitution or sexual services, domestic servitude, bonded sweatshop labor, or other debt bondage."²

Types of human trafficking include:

- Sex trafficking
- Labor trafficking
- Domestic servitude

California Statistics

- California is one of the nation’s top four states for trafficking human beings.³
- In the two years between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2012, California's nine regional human trafficking task forces initiated 2,552 investigations, identified 1,277 victims of human trafficking and arrested 1,798 individuals.⁴
- In 2014, 912 human trafficking cases were reported in California:
 - 783 female, 113 male⁵
 - 597 adult, 297 minor⁶



Human Trafficking Indicators

Below are possible indicators that can help identify the signs of a human trafficking victim.⁷

- Excessive work-related injuries
- Bruises and other evidence of sexual assault, beatings, physical restraint or confinement
- Untreated sexually transmitted diseases
- Untreated critical illnesses such as diabetes or heart disease, malnourishment, etc.
- Severe psychological distress
- Poor dental health
- Under 18 and providing commercial sex acts
- Inability to speak to someone else alone, or to speak for themselves
- Limited to no English
- Disoriented – lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or loss of sense of time, or inability to clarify where he/she is staying
- Evidence of being controlled

What Can Local Leaders Do?

- **Encourage Public Awareness.** In many human trafficking cases, it can be difficult for victims to come forward due to fear, isolation or coercion, making it increasingly important for others to be able to identify and report cases of human trafficking. To do this, it is necessary to raise public awareness around human trafficking to encourage individuals to come forward and report abuse. Below are steps local officials can take to educate staff and community members to help fight human trafficking:
 - Provide supplemental training to different agencies, law enforcement and staff to handle situations dealing with human trafficking.
 - Organize awareness and outreach events to educate the public on what human trafficking is, how to recognize it and resources available to help.
 - Support victims with rehabilitation and recovery programs and services.
- **Collaborate.** Across California, local agency officials and staff are working collaboratively with community organizations and state departments to combat human trafficking.
 - **[Regional Task Forces.](#)** Between 2004-2005 and 2009-2010, the U.S. Department of Justice and the California Emergency Management Agency provided grants for the creation of nine regional task forces in California. The regional task forces consisted of law enforcement, local, state, and federal prosecutors, governmental leaders and nongovernmental organizations. Together, the nine task forces not only arrested 1,798 human trafficking perpetrators between 2010 and 2012, but also provided services to train 25,591 law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, victim service providers and other first responders.
 - **[H.E.A.T. \(Human Exploitation and Trafficking\) Watch.](#)** H.E.A.T. Watch is a joint program of various agencies, disciplines and individuals, organized by the Alameda County District Attorney's Office. The program's mission is to develop an effective, comprehensive, collaborative and regional response to human trafficking of all forms; to provide tools, education and community engagement to change societal, legal and

institutional approaches; and to support victims and hold their offenders accountable. Since January 2006, the Alameda County District Attorney's H.E.A.T. Unit has charged over 325 human trafficking cases, with an 86% overall conviction rate.⁸

- **Sacramento Together.** Sacramento Together is a coalition of law enforcement, state and local public agencies, and community based organizations working together to combat human trafficking and exploitation in Sacramento. Working collaboratively, the coalition coordinates and maximizes efforts and community assets to better service victims of human trafficking. Coalition members include the City of Sacramento, the Sacramento Police Department and the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office.

Find out more about human trafficking and how you can help:

- California Attorney General: Human Trafficking
<https://oag.ca.gov/human-trafficking/what-is>
- National Human Trafficking Resource Center
www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/state/california

- **Oakland Unified School District (OUSD).** In 2011, the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Task Force for OUSD was created to implement prevention mechanisms in Oakland schools to stop child sex trafficking before it starts. The collaborative effort between school administrators and community service agencies focuses on educating parents and young girls on the facts of child trafficking in Oakland.

About the Institute for Local Government

This tip sheet is a service of the Institute for Local Government (ILG) whose mission is to promote good government at the local level with practical, impartial and easy-to-use resources for California communities. ILG is the nonprofit 501(c)(3) research and education affiliate of the League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties and the California Special Districts Association.

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References and Resources

¹ California Department of Justice, *The State of Human Trafficking in California* (November 2012), p. 3.

² Section 11(g), Assembly Bill 22, 2005-2006.

³ California Department of Justice, *The State of Human Trafficking in California* (November 2012), p. 3.

⁴ California Department of Justice, *The State of Human Trafficking in California* (November 2012), p. 4.

⁵ National Human Trafficking Resource Center, *California*, 22 Oct. 2015. Web.

<http://www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/state/california>

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, *Identifying Human Trafficking*, 22 Oct. 2015. Web.

⁸ The Office of the District Attorney of Alameda County, *H.E.A.T. Watch Toolkit*, p 1.