

Iowa Department of Public Safety



# **Office to Combat Human Trafficking**

## **Annual Report 2020**

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**2020 Annual Report  
of the  
Office to Combat Human Trafficking**

Preface

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***Acknowledgements***

*The creation of the Office to Combat Human Trafficking could not have occurred without the leadership of former Iowa House Speaker Kraig Paulsen, Iowa Senator Zach Nunn, and Iowa Senator Kevin Kinney along with the support of other legislators in both houses of the Iowa General Assembly. The continued support of Speaker Pat Grassley and Senate President Jack Whitver has made it possible to carry out the statutory mandates of the Office to Combat Human Trafficking.*

*The operation of the Office to Combat Human Trafficking depends on the dedicated work of countless volunteers and professionals. Those deserving special thanks include: Iowa Law Enforcement Director Judy Bradshaw, Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller, Crime Victim Assistance Director Janelle Melhon and Human Trafficking Coordinators Celine Vilongco and Gretchen Brown-Waech for their support for victim services programs, George Belitsos and the Board of Directors of the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery, Michael Ferjak of Youth Emergency Services for their commitment to non-government organization support for anti-human trafficking initiatives, and former Assistant United States Attorney Stephen Patrick O’Meara, whose steadfast support for anti-human-trafficking efforts has shaped Iowa’s response. The tireless efforts of former Iowa Senator Maggi Tinsman began and continue to expand the public’s commitment to combat trafficking.*

## *Preface*

*The Office to Combat Human Trafficking was designed to facilitate a more effective enforcement response, to raise public awareness of the issue, and to coordinate the efforts of many dedicated professionals and volunteers who are committed to the reduction and ultimate elimination of human trafficking.*

*Any successful effort to combat criminal activity requires the engagement of many groups. Law enforcement may begin the process of holding traffickers accountable, but simply knowing what has occurred will not stop it. Even as cases proceed through the legal system and some individual offenders are imprisoned and fined, there are many others who are willing to take their places in the trafficking arena.*

*Genuine efforts to address human trafficking require commitment from everyone: government officials who address child welfare and labor issues, community-based groups who raise public awareness and assist in raising funds for community programming, medical and legal professionals who encounter victims and traffickers and have opportunities to ensure that a fair and just response can occur, religious and educational groups and charitable organizations can work with their constituencies to reshape community values and expectations and to provide assistance in prevention, deterrence and broad-based community efforts to combat human trafficking.*

*The Department of Public Safety takes seriously the obligation to seek out all who engage in human trafficking and to play a role in the coordination of resources and efforts to combat human trafficking in Iowa and elsewhere.*

## I. Update on Human Trafficking

Coordinated efforts by many government agencies and non-government organizations have improved awareness among members of the public, advocacy groups, justice system officials, health providers, and other service providers. Law enforcement agencies are sharing information with one another at an increased pace, which has led to more investigations and several cases being successfully prosecuted. The systematic study of human trafficking in academia has expanded, providing additional context for understanding what occurs and what responses are most likely to be effective. Of particular note in 2019 and 2020, public awareness of human trafficking issues has improved considerably, and this awareness has spurred action in many different arenas.

### Legal Issues

Over the past couple of years, a number of human trafficking prosecutions have been brought in Iowa's federal courts. The United States Attorney's Office in the Southern District of Iowa reported several convictions for human trafficking during that time.

- On May 15, 2019, five defendants were indicted for sex trafficking minor victims in the Southern District of Iowa. Two of the defendants were charged with sex trafficking minor victims by force, fraud, and coercion. Two of the defendants were charged with sex trafficking minor victims; providing methamphetamine, cocaine, and/or marijuana to those victims; and other drug-related offenses. One of the defendants was charged with sex trafficking a minor victim by advertising her for commercial sex acts.<sup>1</sup>
- On August 20, 2019, a defendant was sentenced in the Southern District of Iowa to seven years in prison for sex trafficking a female victim by force. The defendant placed ads offering the services of the victim and transported the victim to locations in Iowa and Nebraska. The defendant physically assaulted the victim to ensure she would participate in commercial sex acts.<sup>2</sup>
- On January 28, 2020, a defendant from Hills, Iowa, was found guilty of three counts of child sex trafficking, two counts of distributing methamphetamine to children, one count of possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine, one count of unlawful user in possession of a firearm, and one count of possessing a firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking in the Southern District of Iowa. The defendant sex trafficked three teenagers in Iowa City, Coralville, and Cedar Rapids from November 2018 through February 2019. The defendant paid the victims in cash and methamphetamine in exchange for sex acts.<sup>3</sup>
- In August 2020, a defendant was charged with sex trafficking eight victims in the Southern District of Iowa. The defendant was charged with sex trafficking seven adult victims by force, threats of force, fraud, and coercion, and sex trafficking one minor victim. The defendant was also charged with providing heroin to two of the victims.<sup>4</sup>

The state appellate courts in Iowa have heard very few cases involving human trafficking convictions to date. There were no reported cases on appeal in state court in 2019. There are

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdia/pr/five-eastern-iowa-men-charged-sex-trafficking>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdia/pr/omaha-man-sentenced-sex-trafficking>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdia/pr/iowa-man-convicted-child-sex-trafficking-methamphetamine>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdia/pr/des-moines-man-charged-sex-trafficking-eight-victims>

only a few state court cases from prior years. In 2010, the Iowa Court of Appeals affirmed convictions for ongoing criminal conduct and human trafficking and pandering. *State v. Russell*, 781 N.W.2d 303 (Iowa Ct. App. 2010) (unpublished), *post-conviction relief denied*, *Russell v. State*, 866 N.W.2d 106 (Iowa Ct. App. 2016) (unpublished). In 2016, a civil commitment action was instituted based in part on allegations that the patient was the victim of human trafficking, but the case was later reversed for a lack of evidence. *In re J.K.*, 885 N.W.2d 218 (Iowa Ct. App. 2016) (unpublished). In 2012, the Court of Appeals noted a criminal defendant was acquitted of a charge of human trafficking. *State v. Miller*, 824 N.W.2d 562 (Iowa Ct. App. 2012) (unpublished). In 2017, the Court of Appeals referenced that possible child abduction/human trafficking was unsupported by the evidence. *State v. Lopez-Cardenas*, 908 N.W.2d 539 (Iowa 2017) (unpublished).

Human trafficking, however, may also be hidden by the nature of the criminal charges brought. Often, human trafficking is accompanied by other types of crimes, such as fraud, financial crimes, identity theft crimes, drug offenses, and other vice offenses (e.g., pimping, pandering, or prostitution). These other offenses may be prosecuted in order to hold offenders accountable, without requiring the vulnerable trafficking victims to testify. While it would be ideal to always prosecute human trafficking crimes, sometimes the victims who have survived trafficking are struggling to rebuild their lives and may find that participation in the criminal justice process does not help their healing process. Sometimes survivors are justifiably concerned for their own safety and the safety of their loved ones should they testify. More and more, prosecutors are sensitive to the risks involved in victims' participation, and prosecutors may choose other avenues to prosecute offenders besides human trafficking charges. This approach can hold offenders accountable while protecting the interests of the crime victims.

## II. Iowa Perspective

Human trafficking is a crime involving the exploitation of youth under the age of 18 for commercial sex; the exploitation of adults for commercial sex through the use of force, fraud, or coercion; and the exploitation of any individual for compelled labor.<sup>5</sup> Human trafficking does not require the transportation of individuals across state lines or that someone is physically restrained. Signs that a person is being trafficked can include working excessively long hours, unexplained gifts, physical injury, substance abuse, running away from home, isolation from others, or being controlled or closely monitored by another.

Anyone who suspects human trafficking is occurring, be it a minor engaged in paid sex acts, or anyone being coerced into prostitution or labor, is urged to please call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888.

Like most crimes, human trafficking may be hidden from public view, and it can be challenging to determine the incidence and prevalence of the crime.<sup>6</sup> The Iowa Office to Combat Human Trafficking has seen increased reporting of human trafficking activity occurring in Iowa, but it is difficult to say whether the increased reporting is the result of more trafficking or more reporting.

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<sup>5</sup> Hilinski-Rosick & Lee, *Contemporary Issues in Victimology: Identifying Patterns and Trends* (Lexington Books, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> Incidence refers to how many crimes occur during a particular period of time. Prevalence measures how many people experience a particular crime during their lifetimes. National Institute of Justice, *Measuring Frequency*, <https://www.nij.gov/topics/crime/rape-sexual-violence/campus/Pages/measuring.aspx>

Certainly, many public and private sector agencies and individuals have made efforts to focus on public awareness, including more media attention to the issue. It seems likely these public-awareness efforts have spurred more reporting. It is then difficult to say whether there are more cases or whether more people recognize the signs of trafficking and feel empowered to report their observations to law enforcement.

The Iowa Office to Combat Human Trafficking continues to receive reports of human trafficking, primarily through tips received from Polaris.<sup>7</sup> In addition to Polaris tips, Iowa's Office to Combat Human Trafficking also receives information from local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies regarding both labor and sex trafficking that may be occurring in Iowa. Overall reporting received by the Office to Combat Human Trafficking shows a steady increase in human trafficking-related reports from 2013 to 2017 (calendar years), and a significant decline in documented reports in CY2018. In 2019, a spike in reporting occurred that was consistent with trend levels from 2013 to 2017.

A portion of the human trafficking reporting received by the Office to Combat Human Trafficking comes from Polaris.

- In CY2019, Iowa's Office to Combat Human Trafficking received sixty-one (61) tips from Polaris, and three (3) tips from other sources, a slight increase in tip-reporting of human trafficking activity from 2018.
  - Of the reporting in 2019, just over sixty (60) reports of suspected criminal activity were documented related to sex trafficking (through force or coercion or of a minor) or labor-related activity. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of reports in 2019 related in some way to suspected sex trafficking.
- Since January of 2019, only two individuals have been charged under Iowa's human trafficking statute (710A.2), with no convictions reported. However, there have been several significant trafficking operations that were disrupted and ultimately prosecuted in federal court.<sup>89</sup>

Based on reporting through the first half of CY2020, human trafficking-related reporting appears to be on the decline. The cause for the decline cannot be identified at this time; however, contributing factors may include the societal effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., travel and community movement restrictions, health concerns, and a significant drop in large gatherings like sporting events).

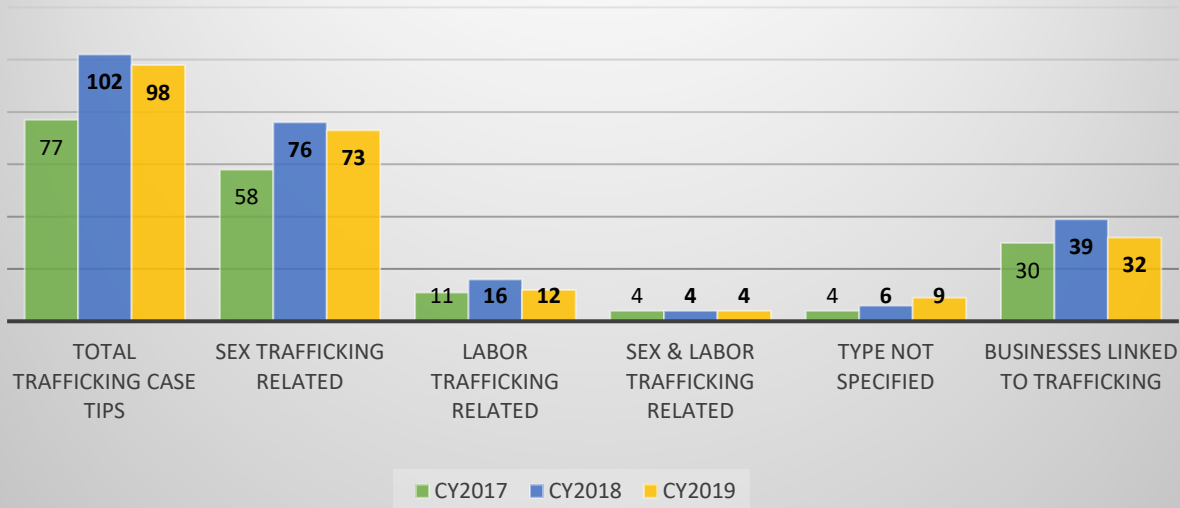
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<sup>7</sup> <https://polarisproject.org/>

<sup>8</sup> See reports received from January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Disposed charges involve all charged offenses, including charges that resulted in a conviction, as well as charges that were ultimately dismissed, acquitted, not filed or reduced. Cases may include one or more charges, and all are included in the counts. Local ordinances are not included in this data. These are all the charges reported to Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning regardless of how they were ultimately handled and do not represent prosecution or conviction data.

## National Human Trafficking Hotline Tips Related to Iowa\*\*



\*\*<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/states>

In July 2020, the Iowa Legislature passed House File 2259 to assist in the reporting, training, and prevention of human trafficking. House File 2259 requires human trafficking training for employees of Iowa-based lodging providers as defined in Iowa Code section 423A.2. The bill requires the Office to Combat Human Trafficking, in collaboration with other government agencies, nongovernmental agencies, and community organizations who have expertise in the area of human trafficking prevention to develop a human trafficking prevention training program. Lodging providers within the state may choose to voluntarily participate in the program beginning January 1, 2022. The training must focus on accurate and prompt identification and reporting of, or response to, suspected human trafficking. At a minimum, the training must include the following:

- A general overview of human trafficking.
- A general overview of state law on human trafficking.
- The definition of human trafficking and the commercial exploitation of children.
- Guidance on the difference between labor trafficking and sex trafficking.
- Guidance on how to recognize potential human trafficking victims.
- Guidance on how to recognize potential human traffickers.
- Guidance on how to identify activities commonly associated with human trafficking.
- Safe and effective responses to human trafficking situations, including but not limited to how to report suspected human trafficking to proper law enforcement officials.



The training must be approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, who is also tasked with adopting rules to implement and administer the training as necessary under Iowa Code chapter 17A.

# Appendix A

## Iowa Code Chapter 710A: Human Trafficking

### 710A.1 Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

1. “*Commercial sexual activity*” means any sex act or sexually explicit performance for which anything of value is given, promised to, or received by any person and includes, but is not limited to, prostitution, participation in the production of pornography, and performance in strip clubs.
2. “*Debt bondage*” means the status or condition of a debtor arising from a pledge of the debtor’s personal services or a person under the control of a debtor’s personal services as a security for debt if the reasonable value of such services is not applied toward the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined.
3. “*Forced labor or services*” means labor or services that are performed or provided by another person and that are obtained or maintained through any of the following:
  - a. Causing or threatening to cause serious physical injury to any person.
  - b. Physically restraining or threatening to physically restrain another person.
  - c. Abusing or threatening to abuse the law or legal process.
  - d. Knowingly destroying, concealing, removing, confiscating, or possessing any actual or purported passport or other immigration document, or any other actual or purported government identification document, of another person.
4. a. “*Human trafficking*” means participating in a venture to recruit, harbor, transport, supply provisions, or obtain a person for any of the following purposes:
  - (1) Forced labor or service that results in involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.
  - (2) Commercial sexual activity through the use of force, fraud, or coercion, except that if the trafficked person is under the age of eighteen, the commercial sexual activity need not involve force, fraud, or coercion.
- b. “*Human trafficking*” also means knowingly purchasing or attempting to purchase services involving commercial sexual activity from a victim or another person engaged in human trafficking.
5. “*Involuntary servitude*” means a condition of servitude induced by means of any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that if the person did not enter into or continue in such condition, that person or another person would suffer serious harm or physical restraint or the threatened abuse of legal process.
6. “*Labor*” means work of economic or financial value.
7. “*Maintain*” means, in relation to labor and services, to secure continued performance thereof, regardless of any initial agreement on the part of the victim to perform such type of services.
8. “*Obtain*” means, in relation to labor or services, to secure performance thereof.
9. “*Peonage*” means a status or condition of involuntary servitude based upon real or alleged indebtedness.
10. “*Services*” means an ongoing relationship between a

person and the actor in which the person performs activities under the supervision of or for the benefit of the actor, including commercial sexual activity and sexually explicit performances.

11. “*Sexually explicit performance*” means a live or public act or show intended to arouse or satisfy the sexual desires or appeal to the prurient interest of patrons.

12. “*Venture*” means any group of two or more persons associated in fact, whether or not a legal entity.

13. “*Victim*” means a person subjected to human trafficking.

2006 Acts, ch 1074, §2; 2009 Acts, ch 19, §1; 2012 Acts, ch 1057, §2

Referred to in §80.45, §232.68, §915.51, §915.87

### 710A.2 Human trafficking.

1. A person who knowingly engages in human trafficking is guilty of a class “D” felony, except that if the victim is under the age of eighteen, the person is guilty of a class “C” felony.
2. A person who knowingly engages in human trafficking by causing or threatening to cause serious physical injury to another person is guilty of a class “C” felony, except that if the victim is under the age of eighteen, the person is guilty of a class “B” felony.
3. A person who knowingly engages in human trafficking by physically restraining or threatening to physically restrain another person is guilty of a class “D” felony, except that if the victim is under the age of eighteen, the person is guilty of a class “C” felony.
4. A person who knowingly engages in human trafficking by soliciting services or benefiting from the services of a victim is guilty of a class “D” felony, except that if the victim is under the age of eighteen, the person is guilty of a class “C” felony.
5. A person who knowingly engages in human trafficking by abusing or threatening to abuse the law or legal process is guilty of a class “D” felony, except that if the victim is under the age of eighteen, the person is guilty of a class “C” felony.
6. A person who knowingly engages in human trafficking by knowingly destroying, concealing, removing, confiscating, or possessing any actual or purported passport or other immigration document, or any other actual or purported government identification document of a victim is guilty of a class “D” felony, except that if that other person is under the age of eighteen, the person is guilty of a class “C” felony.
7. A person who benefits financially or by receiving anything of value from knowing participation in human trafficking is guilty of a class “D” felony, except that if the victim is under the age of eighteen, the person is guilty of a class “C” felony.
8. A person’s ignorance of the age of the victim or a belief that the victim was older is not a defense to a violation of this section.

2006 Acts, ch 1074, §3; 2012 Acts, ch 1057, §3; 2013 Acts, ch 90, §187

Referred to in §9E.2, §272.2, §692A.102, §710A.3, §710A.5, §802.2D, §911.2A, §911.2B, §915.94, §915.95

**710A.2A Solicitation of commercial sexual activity.**

A person shall not entice, coerce, or recruit, or attempt to entice, coerce, or recruit, either a person who is under the age of eighteen or a law enforcement officer or agent who is representing that the officer or agent is under the age of eighteen, to engage in a commercial sexual activity. A person who violates this section commits a class “D” felony.

2012 Acts, ch 1057, §4; 2013 Acts, ch 90, §188

Referred to in §692A.102

**710A.3 Affirmative defense.**

It shall be an affirmative defense, in addition to any other affirmative defenses for which the victim might be eligible, to a prosecution for a criminal violation directly related to the defendant’s status as a victim of a crime that is a violation of section 710A.2, that the defendant committed the violation under compulsion by another’s threat of serious injury, provided that the defendant reasonably believed that such injury was imminent.

2006 Acts, ch 1074, §4

**710A.4 Restitution.**

The gross income of the defendant or the value of labor or services performed by the victim to the defendant shall be considered when determining the amount of restitution.

2006 Acts, ch 1074, §5

**710A.5 Certification.**

A law enforcement agency investigating a crime described in section 710A.2 shall notify the attorney general in writing about the investigation. Upon request of the attorney general, such law enforcement agency shall provide copies of any investigative reports describing the immigration status and

cooperation of the victim. The attorney general shall certify in writing to the United States department of justice or other federal agency that an investigation or prosecution under this chapter has begun and that the person who is a likely victim of a crime described in section 710A.2 is willing to cooperate or is cooperating with the investigation to enable the person, if eligible under federal law, to qualify for an appropriate special immigrant visa and to access available federal benefits. Cooperation with law enforcement shall not be required of a minor victim of a crime described in section 710A.2. This certification shall be made available to the victim and the victim’s designated legal representative.

2006 Acts, ch 1074, §6

**710A.6 Outreach, public awareness, and training programs.**

The crime victim assistance division of the department of justice, in cooperation with other governmental agencies and nongovernmental or community organizations, shall develop and conduct outreach, public awareness, and training programs for the general public, law enforcement agencies, first responders, potential victims, and persons conducting or regularly dealing with businesses or other ventures that have a high statistical incidence of debt bondage or forced labor or services. The programs shall train participants to recognize and report incidents of human trafficking and to suppress the demand that fosters exploitation of persons and leads to human trafficking.

2015 Acts, ch 138, §138, 161, 162

Referred to in §915.94

Establishment of human trafficking enforcement fund; 2015 Acts, ch 138, §141; 2016 Acts, ch 1137, §20

# Appendix B

## House File 2259: Human Trafficking Prevention

House File 2259 - Enrolled House

File 2259 AN ACT RELATING TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION TRAINING AND REPORTING FOR EMPLOYEES OF LODGING PROVIDERS IN THE STATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

Section 1. NEW SECTION. 80.45A Human trafficking prevention training — lodging providers.

1. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

- a. “Commissioner” means the commissioner of the department of public safety or the commissioner’s designee.
- b. “Human trafficking” means the same as defined in section 710A.1. 9
- c. “Lodging” means the same as defined in section 423A.2.
- d. “Lodging provider” means the same as defined in section 423A.2.
- e. “Lodging provider’s employee” means an individual who is employed by a lodging provider, including an owner, operator, manager, and temporary employee.
- f. “Public employee” means an individual employed by a public employer.
- g. “Public employer” means the same as defined in section 20.3.
- h. “Public funds” means the same as defined in section 12C.1.
- i. “Temporary employee” means an individual who is employed by a temporary employment firm to provide services to a lodging House File 2259, p. 2 provider to supplement the lodging provider’s workforce during absences, seasonal workloads, temporary skill or labor market shortages, and for special assignments and projects.
- j. “Temporary employment firm” means a person engaged in the business of employing temporary employees.

2. Human trafficking prevention training.

- a. Beginning January 1, 2022, a lodging provider may voluntarily complete and certify to the commissioner that each of the lodging provider’s employees have completed human trafficking prevention training.
- b. The human trafficking prevention training may be developed and delivered to lodging providers by the office to combat human trafficking, a governmental agency, or nongovernmental or community organization that has expertise in the area of human trafficking. The human trafficking prevention training must be approved by the commissioner.
- c. A lodging provider shall maintain training records for each of the lodging provider’s employees pursuant to rules adopted by the commissioner.

3. Human trafficking prevention training content. The human trafficking prevention training shall focus on the accurate and prompt identification and reporting of, or response to, suspected human trafficking. The human trafficking prevention training shall include, at a minimum, all of the following:

- a. A general overview of human trafficking.
- b. A general overview of state law on human trafficking.
- c. The definition of human trafficking and the commercial exploitation of children.
- d. Guidance on the difference between labor trafficking and sex trafficking.

- e.** Guidance on how to recognize potential human trafficking victims.
- f.** Guidance on how to recognize potential human traffickers.
- g.** Guidance on how to identify activities commonly associated with human trafficking.
- h.** Safe and effective responses to human trafficking situations, including but not limited to how to report suspected human trafficking to proper law enforcement officials. House File 2259, p. 3

4. Certification by the commissioner. No later than December 31, 2021, the commissioner shall develop and maintain all of the following to certify a lodging provider's voluntary completion of human trafficking prevention training:

- a.** A certification issued by the commissioner that a lodging provider may display, in an area readily visible to the public, in the following areas of all lodging owned, operated, or owned and operated by the lodging provider: (1) The front entrance of the lodging. (2) The check-in area of the lodging. (3) Any internet site advertising or promoting the lodging.
- b.** An internet site, readily accessible to the public, that identifies lodging providers in this state that are certified as having completed human trafficking prevention training. The internet site shall be maintained by the department.

5. Certification for utilization of public funds.

- a.** Prior to expending or committing public funds for a purpose described in paragraph "c", a public employer or a public employee shall confirm a lodging provider's current certification status on the internet site maintained by the department pursuant to subsection 4, paragraph "b".
- b.** A certification issued pursuant to subsection 4, paragraph "a" shall be valid for three years from the date the commissioner issues the certification to a lodging provider.
- c.** If a lodging provider is not certified as having completed human trafficking prevention training pursuant to subsection 4, paragraph "a", a public employer and a public employee shall not use public funds for any of the following purposes: (1) To procure lodging that is owned, operated, or owned and operated by the lodging provider. (2) To procure space or services for a conference, meeting, or banquet located at a site where lodging is available that is owned, operated, or owned and operated by the lodging provider. (3) To host a conference, meeting, or banquet at a site where lodging is available that is owned, operated, or owned and operated by the lodging provider.
- d.** This section applies to all public funds expended for a purpose described in paragraph "c" on or after January 1, 2022. House File 2259, p. 4

6. Immunity. A lodging provider's employee who acts in good faith shall be immune from civil liability for reporting suspected human trafficking activities to any law enforcement official.

7. Rules. The commissioner shall adopt rules pursuant 1 to chapter 17A as necessary to implement and administer this 2 chapter.

# Appendix C

## Human Trafficking Indicators

The following list of indicators has been published by the Polaris Project.<sup>10</sup> Please note that not all indicators will be present in all situations. The type of trafficking and the content or environment are all important to take into account.

### *Common Work and Living Conditions: The individual(s) in question*

- Is not free to leave or come and go at will
- Is under 18 and is providing commercial sex acts
- Is in the commercial sex industry and has a pimp / manager
- Is unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- Is not allowed breaks or suffers under unusual restrictions at work
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- Was recruited through false promises concerning the nature and conditions of his/her work
- High security measures exist in the work and/or living locations (e.g. opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.)
- Is living and working on site
- Experiences verbal or physical abuse by their supervisor
- Is not given proper safety equipment
- Is not paid directly
- Is forced to meet daily quotas

### *Poor Mental Health or Abnormal Behavior*

- Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement or immigration officials
- Shows signs of substance use or addiction

### *Poor Physical Health*

- Shows signs of poor hygiene, malnourishment, and/or fatigue
- Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture

### *Lack of Control*

- Has few or no personal possessions

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<sup>10</sup> <https://polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/recognize-signs>

- Is frequently monitored
- Is not in control of their own money, financial records, or bank account
- Is not in control of their own identification documents (ID or passport)
- Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)

#### *Other*

- Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where they are staying/address
- Lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or do not know what city he/she is in
- Appears to have lost sense of time
- Shares scripted, confusing, or inconsistent stories
- Protects the person who may be hurting them or minimizes abuse

This list is not exhaustive and represents only a selection of possible indicators. The red flags in this list may not be present in all trafficking cases. Each individual indicator should be taken in context, not be considered in isolation, nor should be taken as “proof” that human trafficking is occurring. Additionally, cultural differences should also be considered.