

INDICATORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND DETENTION CENTER



LABOR TRAFFICKING

A potential victim of human trafficking may:

- ▶ Not know their wage, or their wage does not equate to standard practice.
- ▶ Not be paid regularly or at all because of the “debt” they owe their employers for basic amenities such as food or rent.
- ▶ Be doing work that is different from what they initially agreed to.
- ▶ Not be provided with the protective equipment necessary for their work.
- ▶ Be afraid to speak against their “employer,” particularly if this could impact the responsibility they may have for providing for family members or themselves, as they may believe their “job” will eventually start paying as promised.
- ▶ Work excessively long hours, perhaps without any breaks.
- ▶ Appear to send written communication, such as text messages, that is beyond the potential victim’s language capabilities, suggesting someone else wrote the text.
- ▶ Insist you only communicate with them via the phone their “employer” gave them (which is really in the perpetrator’s control).
- ▶ Experience work and living conditions that do not match their visa.
- ▶ Not speak the language of those they are with, and someone is insisting on providing interpretation or speaking on their behalf.
- ▶ Not be familiar with their human rights and is not able to quickly identify that they are a victim of a crime.
- ▶ Show physical signs of working in unsafe conditions, such as odors, respiratory infections, skin burns, indications of chemical burns, exposure to the elements, and/or an inability to keep themselves hygienic.
- ▶ Say that their “employer” is sending money back to their family; however, the victim cannot confirm that the money was successfully sent.

NOTE Labor trafficking can often be combined with other forms of abuse or trafficking, such as sexual exploitation or domestic servitude.

GENERAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING INDICATORS

A potential victim of human trafficking may:

- ▶ Appear apprehensive to speak in the presence of the person they are with or other potential victims.
- ▶ Be dependent on another person (i.e. financially, emotionally, and/or for drugs).
- ▶ Lack information on where they are traveling to, staying, or working.
- ▶ Have few personal belongings or be dressed inappropriately for the weather conditions.
- ▶ Live and work in the same place.
- ▶ Not be free to come and go as they please.
- ▶ Be traveling alone and receive frequent calls or messages on their phone (from the trafficker) which cause visible anxiety.
- ▶ Not be in control of their own identification documents. Instead, another person is in control of their identification documents.

NOTE Labor trafficking victims may show signs of physical neglect or abuse, such as scars, bruises, burns, etc., and/or seem malnourished or disheveled. In contrast, victims of sex trafficking are less likely to show signs of physical abuse in areas like the face, arms, or legs.

Review resources titled “Victim Centered Approach,” “Sex Trafficking Investigations,” or “Labor Trafficking Investigations” for additional tips on engaging with a potential victim of trafficking.