

A close-up, grayscale photograph of a person's face, focusing on the nose and mouth. A piece of white tape is stuck over the mouth, and the word "VICTIM" is written on it in black, hand-drawn capital letters.

VICTIM

New Jersey

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING COUNTY TASK FORCE GUIDELINES

2015

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING COUNTY TASK FORCE GUIDELINES  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING WORK GROUP  
PROTECTION COMMITTEE  
NEW JERSEY TASK FORCE ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT (NJTF CAN)**

For over a year the Human Trafficking Work Group of the Protection Committee of the NJTF CAN has been working to develop Guidelines for a multidisciplinary approach to cases of youth effected by human trafficking, both labor and commercial sexual exploitation, and those at risk including missing youth. The HT Work Group includes representation from diverse stakeholders from local, state and federal agencies as well as professionals who come in contact with this population.

New Jersey has increasingly become aware of the presence of the trafficking of minors in New Jersey, and has made great strides in increasing public awareness, providing training, enacting new legislation, and responding to the needs of survivors. And, the anti-trafficking work to date has benefited from the historical collaboration that has occurred in the realm of child abuse. There are many areas of intersection between the two, but also unique characteristics involved in responding to the identification and needs of a trafficking survivor.

With this in mind, the Workgroup believes that guidelines about responding to human trafficking may be of assistance to New Jersey. Each of New Jersey's 21 counties has different strengths and challenges in addressing trafficking as well as varying numbers of identified trafficking cases. As such, it makes sense for each county to work with their Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), Child Advocacy Center (CAC), Sexual Abuse Response Teams (SARTs), existing human trafficking coalitions, or other stakeholders to develop a local, county-based response that may take the shape of an HT Task force, Coalition or Steering Committee. The goal is for agency leaders and stakeholders to develop coordinated protocols for addressing these cases for their county. Because many of these cases involve law enforcement who are pursuing criminal charges, there should be a strong presence of law enforcement involvement – potentially from the local, county, state and/or federal levels. In addition, a method for case specific review and coordinated case planning for identified cases should be developed that focuses on restoring the youth yet supports law enforcement's pursuit of the criminal action that has occurred, or be still be occurring.

It is important that each county develop a response that reflects local needs and strengths, leverages existing resources, and engages local entities, with the overall goal of coordination as well as closing gaps, particularly with regard to services. For example, HT cases can be added to the Agenda of individual MDT Case Review Team meetings; alternatively, a separate HT Case Review Team can be convened to meet on a regular basis, with appropriate case specific professionals invited. Or, if the youth is involved with a CMO, their Treatment Team Meeting may be the appropriate venue. Recognizing that the victimization of youth through trafficking has been occurring under our radar for sometime, we are not necessarily seeking new entities to address a new population, but rather wish to

see existing child-centered partners adapt to the fact that they have been seeing these youth and mobilize their strengths and that of their community to fight this exploitation and slavery.

**The HT Work Group has identified the following possible goals for County HT Task Forces/Coalitions which will address trafficking of minors/youth, those at risk and/or missing:**

- Prevention and Public/Community Awareness/Education
- Coordinated response to HT reports
- Ensuring immediate as well as long-range services to support the survivor
- Supporting law enforcement efforts with regard to the prosecution of traffickers and buyers
- Formalizing collaboration at a county level, leveraging existing entities and services
- Developing and/or combining available resources
- Strategic planning to reduce demand and interdict activity
- Giving survivors a voice
- Cross Discipline Training
- Collection and analysis of county-level data regarding Human Trafficking and Trafficked youth (as well as methods for safeguarding any data collected)<sup>1</sup>Ensuring that survivors are treated in a culturally sensitive manner

**Collaboration is Essential**

Effective collaboration is more easily conceptualized than accomplished; nevertheless, it is essential and provides the greatest strength in fighting this crime and supporting its victims, and potentially his/her family and siblings as well. This multidisciplinary response model (i.e., of agencies from various disciplines working together) is encouraged by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and is considered a best practice in the worldwide response to human trafficking.

Some counties already have entities in place that may be working on trafficking or trafficking related issues. In addition, sexual violence groups are often familiar with trafficking, and groups working with victims of child abuse or sexual abuse (such as MDTs and CACs) are natural fits given the fact that many youth who are trafficked have histories of past childhood abuse. County Commissions on Missing and Exploited Children would also be important collaborators and all receive some funding to address related issues. In addition, national data shows that child welfare agencies, and runaway and homeless youth programs have often been in contact with youth who have been victimized by trafficking. They, along with Street Outreach providers should be involved. New Jersey is also fortunate to have some NGO's who work to combat trafficking, as well as faith-based organizations who should be considered partners as well.

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<sup>1</sup> It is important for counties to capture their own data regarding the incidence and characteristics of trafficking in their communities and be able to share that with state-level entities working on this issue. In the future, we hope that there will be state-level guidance on the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data regarding Human Trafficking. However, for now, counties are encouraged to examine their existing data collection system to ascertain their ability to collect and analyze such data.

One way to for a county to start is by having an educational event, following a roundtable format for awareness, followed by a discussion with the intent of building buy in and direction for the county on proceeding. Or, it may be that there is already a small-scale group doing this work and they may wish to consider expanding or formalizing their work. As each County Prosecutor's Office has both an Assistant Prosecutor and a Detective assigned to handle trafficking cases, it is suggested that they be engaged early on, as well as the county Child Protection and Permanency Office which frequently is involved in cases involving minors.

Regardless of the involvement of prosecutor's offices or other governmental entities, it is critical that each County Wide HT Task Force/Coalition ensure that its policies and interventions are victim-centered."

**Suggested membership in County Wide HT Task Forces/Coalitions encompass a variety of voices and may include the following**, with awareness that the roles of each potential member should be tailored to their area of expertise and that, for instance, case management and or first response protocols may be appropriately developed by a select subgroup governed by laws and confidentiality issues:

- Prosecutor's Offices (including County Prosecutor and Detective HT liaisons) and/or representatives from the Office of the Attorney General
- Department of Children and Families, including but not limited to DCP&P, Institutional Abuse, CSOC (including Mobile Response and Stabilization) and/or Division on Women
- Other Local, county, state and federal law enforcement – including FBI, Homeland Security, ICE
- Judicial partners, including FCIUs, Probation, Juvenile Justice, Youth Service Commission
- Dream Catchers
- MDTs, MDT Coordinator, and CAC
- County Anti-Human Trafficking Coalitions or Task Forces (such as ATTAC in Atlantic County and the Rescue & Restore Coalition for Camden, Gloucester and Cumberland), or faith based organizations working to combat trafficking
- Legal Advocacy groups/visa assistance
- Street Outreach providers
- Care Management Organizations (CMO's)
- Survivors
- Health Care Providers, including hospital staff, physicians, and any other clinicians
- Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs), Forensic Nurses, Regional Diagnostic and Treatment Centers, and Confidential Sexual Violence Advocates.
- Prevent Child Abuse local chapters
- Educators
- Victim Advocacy Services of all kinds
- Faith-based organizations or coalitions
- Domestic and Sexual Violence Programs

- Shelters and other homeless coalitions that could provide shelter
- Trauma Informed Mental Health Professionals such as those trained to provide Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TFCBT) or other evidence-based modalities as identified by the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare ([www.cebc4cw.org](http://www.cebc4cw.org))
- County Commission for Missing and Exploited Children
- LGBTQI specific agencies
- Youth Advisory Boards

**County HT Task Forces/Coalitions may develop Protocols to address the following:**

- Response
- Information sharing/Confidentiality within the context of State and Federal Laws
- Collection and analysis of county-level data regarding Human Trafficking and Trafficked youth as well as methods for safeguarding any data collected (see footnote 1 on page 2)Referrals
- Case Management & Coordination
- Service provision

While acknowledging that protocols are very helpful, we have also learned from experience as well as from our counterparts in other parts of the country that building personal relationships and trust among those professionals working to combat and respond to trafficking is the most critical step. From that, protocols may emerge but it is the ability to be flexible and to respond to the unique circumstances of every case that brings value to the process. There is no single profile of a child who has been trafficked, and thus the importance of relationships which allow for tailored responses.

For instance, law enforcement may not require a forensic interview immediately following a youth's recovery, but may instead prefer to wait several days, and utilize an affiliated law enforcement forensic interviewer. They may wish to utilize a Child Advocacy Center for the location of that interview, but prefer that the CAC not conduct its own interview of the victim.

Another example is that while a rape kit may be utilized for other sexual assaults, this may not be needed for the prosecution of a sexual trafficking case. Case specific coordination and discussion on this may help avoid an unnecessary exam and further trauma to the victim.

The intent of these guidelines is to promote communication and coordination within a county so that when a victim/survivor is identified, a trauma-informed response to their specific needs and circumstances can occur.

**County HT Task Forces/Coalitions may focus on the following areas:**

- Education and Awareness for:
  - Youth
  - Parents
  - Educators

- Health professionals
- Social Service providers/Human Services Advisory Councils (HSACs)
- Law enforcement
- Judicial Community
- Technology based prevention
- Campaigns to address demand (both ending demand and deterrence from initial involvement)
- Skill Building for stakeholders, including service providers and first-responders
  - Engagement skills and interviewing
  - Trauma knowledge
  - Victim-Centered and Trauma informed training
  - Safety training – handling safety issues for victim, responders, providers
  - Cross-training in a variety of areas including coordinated response and communication protocols
- Identifying and/or developing resources within the community
  - Identifying both unmet and met needs
  - Publishing directories of services for cross-system use
- Services and Service Coordination for victims
  - Immediate – safety, health and welfare
  - Short Term – shelter, housing, safety, income, substance abuse
  - Long Term – education, training, housing, employment, ongoing health and mental health care
  - Collateral supports to the family, siblings or other key individuals of the survivor, which may extend to training for school personnel
  - Advocacy, including legal assistance for expungements, visas, other issues
  - Establish single point of entry for service provision
  - Collaborate with law enforcement victim witness assistance staff, and victim compensation resources

**County HT Task Forces/Coalitions are requested to provide feedback annually to the following Statewide Groups for on-going statewide review and coordination**

- HT N.J. Commission on HT
- AG’s Task Force on HT
- NJ Coalition Against HT
- NJ Coalition Against Sexual Assault(NJ CASA)
- NJ Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

**County HT Task Forces/Coalitions should keep the following things in mind:**

- Safety, safety, safety
  - Victim/Survivor
  - Family members, including siblings
  - Responders
  - Service Providers

- Never compromise law enforcement efforts; so be sure to have strong partnerships and collaborate with them
- Respect the different roles of law enforcement and service providers, and have mechanisms for relationship building and conflict resolution
- Cases should not be discussed at general coalition/task force meetings, and confidentiality and safety protocols need to be in place for many potential aspects of the group's work. Confidentiality should be maintained throughout all government agencies, service providers, advocacy groups, and faith-based organizations when referring to survivors.

### **Resources to Get Started**

*Creating and Sustaining a Local Response to Human Trafficking, Division of Anti-Trafficking in Persons – Compendium of Promising Practices, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2008-2011)*

*Ending the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: A Call For Multi-System Collaboration in California, California Child Welfare Council*

*Blueprint: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to the Domestic Sex Trafficking of Girls, Center on Poverty and Inequality, Georgetown Law*

National Human Trafficking Resource Centers operated by Polaris

Polaris.org

NJ Coalition Against Sexual Assault

NJ Coalition Against Battered Women

Department of Labor (for instances of labor trafficking)

Department of Human Services

Office of Refugee and Resettlement

Federal regulations that discuss confidentiality in terms of trafficking (e.g., 42 USC 13925(a)(20)&(b)2), 42 USC 10402)

The New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect wishes to thank the members of the Human Trafficking workgroup who developed these guidelines. The members are listed below:

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