

Faces of Human Trafficking: An Introduction to Labor Trafficking

This video provides an overview of labor trafficking. It features survivors and professionals—including law enforcement, judges, social service, legal and health care providers—who share information on victim indicators, ways victims are often identified, how professionals may come into contact with victims of labor trafficking, and industries where labor trafficking is more common. It is intended for a general audience but will be especially useful for professionals who may be in a position to identify victims, such as legal and social service providers, law enforcement, judges, juvenile justice personnel, child welfare personnel, code enforcement personnel, school personnel, health care providers, migrant worker organizations, immigrant service providers, faith-based communities, and community-based organizations.

Key Points

- Everyone has a role to play in identifying victims. Victim identification rests not only on service professionals but also on community members knowing what labor trafficking is, what to look for, and whom to contact.
- General awareness of labor trafficking remains a barrier to identifying victims and referring them for services. There are many creative outreach strategies to build awareness among the public.
- Service providers may already be working with trafficking victims but on a different presenting issue, such as workplace violations (including wage and hour violations and sexual harassment or discrimination in the workplace), immigration violations, or domestic violence. Many victims have experienced polyvictimization—exposure to multiple kinds of victimization—such as sexual

abuse, physical abuse, bullying, and exposure to violence.

- Once trained, members of law enforcement and the criminal and juvenile justice systems may experience a paradigm shift when they realize that those caught in human trafficking are victims, not criminals.

“In order to build any sort of relationship, you have to go out to them—anywhere where labor trafficking victims may go for strength or help.”

— Keith Bickford, Detective
Multnomah Sheriff’s Office, Oregon

- Professionals and community members need to understand what labor trafficking is, and believe victims when they disclose their experiences. Believing and supporting victims is critical to their healing process.

Discussion Questions

1. How would you define labor trafficking?
2. What might make someone vulnerable to labor trafficking?
3. In the media, the focus is typically on sex trafficking and not labor trafficking. Why do you think this is?
4. What are the “red flags” or indicators that someone might be a victim of labor trafficking?
5. Why might victims hesitate to come forward and disclose that they are victims of labor trafficking? How might this be different for specific populations, such as immigrants, youth, or abused spouses?
6. Who in the community might come into contact with victims of labor trafficking?
7. For service providers, what are some of the issues a victim may present to you?
8. For law enforcement, what are some of the crimes that you respond to where labor trafficking may be present, if given a closer look?
9. What services might victims of labor trafficking need once they are out of the exploitative situation? How might service needs be different for specific populations such as minors; males; females; individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer; American Indians and

Alaska Natives; foreign nationals; and U.S. citizens?

10. What can be done in your community to raise awareness of labor trafficking?
11. What can you do with the knowledge that you have gained today?

Supplemental Training Materials

- Provide the federal definition, from the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, of “a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons” (found at 22 U.S.C. 7102).
- Provide a brief history of modern human trafficking legislation in the United States, including the TVPA of 2000 and its reauthorizations, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, and relevant legislation in your state.
- Discuss industries and areas within your community where labor trafficking might be found.
- Describe labor trafficking cases that have been successfully prosecuted in your area.
- Describe the systems and resources currently available in your community (including gaps and challenges) for exploited workers (such as low-cost legal services for employment law issues through the U.S. Department of Labor and the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission) and exploited immigrants (such as immigrant-serving legal and social service providers).

For more information, including additional training resources, please visit www.ovc.gov/trafficking or www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide.