

# Signs of Human Trafficking for Law Enforcement

Recognizing key indicators can save a life. This is the first step in identifying victims. If you suspect that someone may be a human trafficking victim, please reach out to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations' (HSI) field office at **1-866-347-2423** or human trafficking task force in your area to work collaboratively on an investigation, or report a tip. ICE HSI is responsible for investigating human trafficking and arresting traffickers. There also may be an organization-specific protocol you should follow to notify your supervisor and engage the proper local authorities.

Not all indicators listed below are present in every human trafficking situation, and the presence or absence of any indicator is not necessarily proof of human trafficking.

## Labor or Service Indicators

- Was the person recruited for one purpose and forced to engage in some other job?
- Is the person's salary being garnished to pay off alleged debts?
- Was the person forced to perform sexual acts? Is the person a juvenile engaged in commercial sex?
- Does the person work excessively long and/or unusual hours?
- Is the person inadequately dressed for the situation or work they do?

## Control Indicators

- Is the person in possession of his or her identification and travel documents; if not, who has control of the documents?
- Does the person appear to be coached on what to say? Are they with someone who appears to be controlling the situation?
- Has the person or their family been threatened with harm?
- Is the person fearful, timid or submissive?
- Has the person been threatened with deportation or law enforcement action?
- Is the person confused, afraid, or do they show signs of mental or physical abuse?
- Can the person freely contact friends or family?
- Is the person allowed to freely socialize or attend religious services?

## Living Conditions Indicators

- Does the person lack personal possessions and appear to have an unstable living situation?
- Does the person have freedom of movement? Can the person freely leave where they live? Are there unreasonable security measures?
- Has the person been deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care or other life necessities?

## Travel Indicators

- Does the person know his or her final destination? Or how they will get there?
- Does the person know who is meeting him or her at that final destination?
- Is a child traveling with someone who does not seem to be their real parent or guardian?

## Medical Indicators

- Does the person have scars, burns, mutilations, or infections?
- Is the person being prevented from or limited in providing his or her medical history?

National Human Trafficking Resource Center 1-888-3737-888 (Polaris Project)