



Human Trafficking

HUMAN
TRAFFICKING

Glossary of Definitions

Advocacy: Efforts to influence public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions. New legislation have been proposed in various states, laws amended and non-governmental organizations formed as part of the advocacy for the end of human trafficking.

Coercion: Threats or perceived threats of serious harm to or physical constraints against any person; a scheme intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform will result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person.

Continued Presence: Allows victims who lack legal status and are assisting law enforcement as potential witnesses to remain in the country for the course of criminal investigation. Through continued presence, victims can receive temporary immigration relief.

Contract Slavery: A situation where worker is deceived into slavery through the use of a false employment contract. These contracts convince people that there are job opportunities, but when they arrive, they are forced to work without pay and cannot leave. The false contracts are used to avoid criminal charges or to prove that a "debt" is owed to the slaveholder.

Date: The time and place where a prostituted woman or girl is scheduled to meet a man, known as a "john."

Debt-bondage: An illegal practice in which traffickers tell their victims that they owe money (often relating to the victims' living expenses and transport into the country) and that they must pledge their personal services either for labor or commercial sex to repay the debt.

Human trafficking: The illegal trading, either nationally or internationally, of human beings for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation or forced labor; a modern-day form of slavery. It is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world, and second largest, tied with the illegal arms industry and second only to the drug trade.

Human Smuggling: Helping someone to illegally cross country borders, often without identification or papers, for financial or material benefit. Smuggling ends with the arrival of the migrants at their destination, whereas trafficking involves the ongoing exploitation of the victims in some manner to generate illicit profits for the traffickers.

ICE (US Immigration Customs Enforcement): The largest investigative agency in the US Department of Homeland Security, responsible for upholding public safety by maintaining American border security. In regard to human trafficking, ICE attempts to alter the perception of internationally trafficked women and girls from illegal immigrants to victims in need of help.

Involuntary domestic servitude: Nonconsensual labor exploitation in an informal workplace, often a home and often connected to the victim's off-duty living quarters. Such an environment, which can socially isolate domestic workers, is conducive to nonconsensual exploitation since authorities cannot inspect private property as easily as they can inspect formal workplaces.

John: A slang term for a man who pays for the services of a prostitute.

Labor trafficking: "The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion." (Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000). Victims are forced to work against their will under threat of violence or other punishment. Their freedom is restricted and a degree of ownership is exerted.

Migrant Labor: Work done by people who travel all over for employment. Usually, these people are immigrants, sometimes illegal, and often exploited by their employer. Much of the work is agricultural, and the workers move around the country to harvest crops during different growing seasons. They are usually paid little for work, sometimes crossing the line into slavery when they are paid nothing and unable to leave.

Non-governmental organization (NGO): A legally constituted organization created by citizens or companies that operates independently from any government.

Peonage: Holding someone against his or her will to pay off a debt.

Pimp: An agent who manages prostitutes, scheduling their “dates” and profiting from their earnings. The relationship between pimps and prostitutes is often psychologically and physically abusive. Prostituted women are sometimes kidnapped off the street by pimps at a young age or lured through the Internet. Pimps are often involved in other illegal industries and activities such as drug dealing or abuse.

The Polaris Project: One of the largest anti-trafficking organizations in the US and Japan, with programs operating at international, national and local levels. The Project is involved in direct outreach and victim identification, social services and transitional housing to victims, and operation of the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC). The NHTRC serves as the central hotline on human trafficking in the US.

Prostitute: Contrary to the common belief that a prostitute is a person who voluntarily sells his or her own body, several anti-trafficking NGOs and government agencies view prostitution as an act forced upon individuals in which their bodies or services are sold against their will.

Sexual trafficking: Sexual trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act is under the age of 18. A “commercial sex act” means any sex act performed for financial gain. Victims of sex trafficking can be women or men, girls or boys, but the majority are women and girls.

Staying in pocket: A slang term for the practice of forbidding prostituted women from observing street or establishment names or general surroundings during “dates” in order to keep them isolated.

T visa: A type of visa allowing former victims of human trafficking to remain in the US if they agree to assist law enforcement in testifying against perpetrators. Aside from a willingness to testify, the visa is available to people who would suffer extreme hardship if deported to their native countries.”

Trafficking Victims Protection Act 2000 (TVPA): Federal U.S. legislation passed in 2000 that emphasizes the prevention of trafficking, protection of victims and the prosecution of traffickers.