

Maine Human Trafficking Identification and Response Screening Tool

Human trafficking, as defined by the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act, is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, providing, or obtaining of a person, through force, fraud, or coercion, for labor services or commercial sex - OR any commercial sexual activity by a minor.

Introduction

Some indicators of trafficking can be observed during one encounter with an individual, while others may be observed over time. The following tool may help to assess whether trafficking is present and to provide supportive questions you may consider asking to find out more about a person's circumstances. This tool is intended to help shape a conversations and begin to assess services needed. It is not intended to be given in 'check-list' form or given to the person you are working with.

Indicators

If you have observed (or a person has disclosed) the following indicators, they may be experiencing or are at risk to experience trafficking or exploitation. The list is not exhaustive, and the presence – or lack of – indicators cannot confirm concretely whether trafficking is occurring.

General and Labor Trafficking

- Referral from law enforcement or community partner with suspicion of trafficking.
- No access to personal identification, especially passports for foreign nationals.
- Mentions of quota or debt in reference to employer/family member/partner.
- Travel across state lines (without known resources to do so).
- Frequenting hotels or areas known for criminal activities.
- Unexplained physical injuries or signs of untreated illness or disease.
- Disconnected or cut off from any family or support system.
- Works excessively long hours or unusual hours and is unpaid, paid very little or paid only through tips.
- Cannot identify address or residence.
- Not allowed to speak for themselves—a 3rd party speaks or translates for them.
- Untreated mental health and medical needs (including STIs and a history of pregnancies).
- Evidence of a controlling, abusive or dominating employer, partner or older adult.

Sex Trafficking

- All of the above, as well as:
- Indicates involvement in commercial sex work (or witnessed by others or prostitution arrest).
 - History of involvement in the foster care or juvenile justice system.
 - Evidence of brands or tattoos.
 - Drug charges/substance abuse.
 - Unexplained expensive items (cell phones, clothing, etc).
 - For juveniles, multiple reports of running away and truancy issues.

Assessment Questions

The following questions may support you to better understand an individual's circumstances, in order to better address their needs and plan for safety.

- Have you ever traded or been asked to trade sex/sexual acts for food, shelter or other basic needs?
- Does someone control, supervise or monitor what you do?
- How did you meet this person/how did you find out about this job?
- Is your communication (calls, emails, conversations) ever restricted or monitored?
- Do you have access to all your identification/personal documents?
- Do you have access to any money or the money that you earn? Does anyone take all or some of your money?
- What did you expect of this situation/relationship? Has it been as promised?
- What would happen if you didn't do what this person asked of you?
- What would happen if you left this person/situation?

How to Respond

If the indicators or assessment questions above lead you to suspect that trafficking or exploitation is occurring:

- Follow your internal agency protocol; and/or
- Call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center 24-hour hotline at 1-888-373-7888. The hotline can help you to safety plan, and connect you with Maine's local anti-trafficking service network.
- If the individual is a minor, mandatory reporting procedures may apply, and the Dept. of Health and Human Services can be reached at 1-800-452-1999

Additional Resources

- **Polaris Project** -- www.polarisproject.org
Information on trafficking assessment, data and statistics, and response resources.
- **National Human Trafficking Hotline** – 1-888-373-7888
Connection with local resources, as well as support for victims/survivors and providers.
- **Maine Dept. of Health and Human Services** – 1-800-452-1999
Mandatory reporting for minors, connection and referral with child welfare services.
- **Maine Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Network** -- www.mainesten.org