



Legal Rights of Human Trafficking Victims & Survivors

Understanding Your Rights as a Survivor

Survivors of human trafficking in Canada have specific **legal rights and protections** under federal and provincial laws. These rights exist to help survivors **seek justice, rebuild their lives, and access support services** without fear of retaliation or criminalization.

Your Right to Safety & Protection

- You have the **right to be protected from your trafficker** and any ongoing threats.
- Law enforcement agencies must take your safety seriously and provide **protective measures**, including restraining orders and safe housing options.

- You have the right to report your trafficker **without fear of being charged for crimes committed under coercion** (such as drug possession or identity fraud).
 - If you are **not a Canadian citizen**, you can apply for a **Temporary Resident Permit (TRP)**, which allows you to stay in Canada and receive healthcare and social services.
 - **Sex work is legal in Canada** when done **independently** (without coercion or control). However, it is illegal to **purchase, advertise, or financially benefit from someone else's sexual services**. Traffickers often coerce victims into committing crimes, which can lead to **unintentional criminal involvement** in activities such as distributing explicit content or coercing others. Survivors should seek legal counsel if they are facing charges related to their exploitation.
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Your Right to Legal Assistance

- You have the **right to a lawyer**, whether you are reporting a crime, testifying in court, or seeking legal aid for immigration status.
 - Survivors can access **free legal services** through organizations such as:
 - **Legal Aid Ontario** (for those who qualify financially)
 - **Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic** (specialized in gender-based violence cases)
 - **The Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking** (referrals to legal support)
 - If you are involved in a legal case **against your trafficker**, you may be eligible for **witness protection** or **testimony accommodations** (such as video testimony instead of in-person court appearances).
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Your Right to Compensation & Financial Support

- You may be eligible for **criminal injury compensation**, which provides financial assistance to survivors for medical expenses, therapy, and lost income.
- Under **Bill C-308**, survivors could receive **long-term financial support** to rebuild their lives.
- You have the right to file a **civil lawsuit** against your trafficker or **any entity that benefited from your exploitation**, including hotels, strip clubs, or online platforms that facilitated your abuse.

- There are **survivor funds and grants** available for education, housing, and career development.
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Your Right to Privacy & Non-Discrimination

- Survivors have the **right to confidentiality** when reporting a crime, seeking services, or applying for legal protection.
 - Your **criminal record (if any) may be expunged** if the crime was committed while being trafficked.
 - You have the right to **equal access to services**, regardless of gender, immigration status, or background.
 - **Employers cannot discriminate against you** for being a survivor of trafficking, and you have workplace protections under **Canadian labour laws**.
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Your Right to Immigration & Refugee Protection

- If you are **not a Canadian citizen**, you may apply for a **Temporary Resident Permit (TRP)**, which provides:
 - **A legal stay in Canada for up to 180 days (renewable)**
 - **Access to medical care, housing, and counseling**
 - **A possible path to permanent residency if you cooperate with law enforcement**
 - You may also qualify for **asylum or refugee status** if returning to your home country would put you at risk of being re-trafficked.
 - Immigration lawyers can assist you in applying for **legal status and protection from deportation**.
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How to Exercise Your Rights

If you believe your rights are being violated or need legal assistance, here is what you can do:

1. **Contact a trusted lawyer or legal aid clinic** – Many organizations provide free or low-cost legal help.
 2. **Reach out to a survivor advocacy organization** – Groups like **Voice for the Silent, The Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking, and Women at the Centre** can support you.
 3. **Report any threats or retaliation to law enforcement** – If you feel unsafe, contact **Toronto Police Anti-Human Trafficking Unit or the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline (1-833-900-1010)**.
 4. **Document everything** – Keep records of communications, threats, or attempts to deny your rights.
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Helpful Resources

- **Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline** – 1-833-900-1010
 - **Legal Aid Ontario** – www.legalaid.on.ca
 - **Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic** – www.schliferclinic.com
 - **The Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking** – www.canadiancentretoendhumantrafficking.ca
 - **Voice for the Silent (Survivor-Led Advocacy)** – www.voiceforthesilent.ca
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Final Note

You are not alone. Your voice matters. Your rights matter. There are people ready to fight for you. If you need help, reach out. There is life beyond trafficking, and you deserve to live it freely and safely.

Share this resource to help more survivors know their rights.

Share and follow:

Instagram: [@voiceforthesilent.ca](https://www.instagram.com/voiceforthesilent.ca)

VOICE^{FOR} THE SILENT

- Combatting Human Trafficking -

For any inquiries, please contact:

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www.voiceforthesilent.ca