

2025

FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW
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HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN METRO SYSTEMS

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WELCOME MESSAGE



Thank you for your time this evening. Before we begin, I want to remind everyone that the information shared today is for general educational purposes and should not be taken as legal advice. If you need legal guidance, resources have been provided within this presentation to assist you.

Additionally, this topic can be difficult to process. If at any point you find the discussion overwhelming, please feel free to step away and return whenever you feel comfortable. Your well-being is important, and we encourage you to engage with this material in a way that feels right for you.



INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is the exploitation of people through **force, fraud, or coercion*** for labor or commercial sex. It is often described as a form of modern-day slavery.



SOME KEY INFO:

- **Global Issue:** 27.6 million victims, billions in trafficker profits.
- **Everywhere:** Reported in **all 50** U.S. states.
- **Types:** Sex trafficking (exploitation) & labor trafficking (forced work).
- **Victims:** Anyone, but the vulnerable—runaways, homeless youth, and migrant workers—are most at risk.

2025



CAN YOU SPOT HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

WHY METRO SYSTEMS?

Traffickers exploit public transit for **speed, anonymity, and access to victims.**

01.

High Anonymity

ID-free travel lets traffickers blend in and avoid paper trails.

02.

Low Cost & Convenience

Cheap, 42% of survivors used local buses, approx. 20% subways.

03.

Recruiting Grounds

Stations attract vulnerable individuals like runaways, targets.

WARNING SIGNS IN TRANSIT

When using metro systems, **know the red flags** that could indicate a person is being trafficked. Trafficking victims rarely self-report, but there are observable signs:



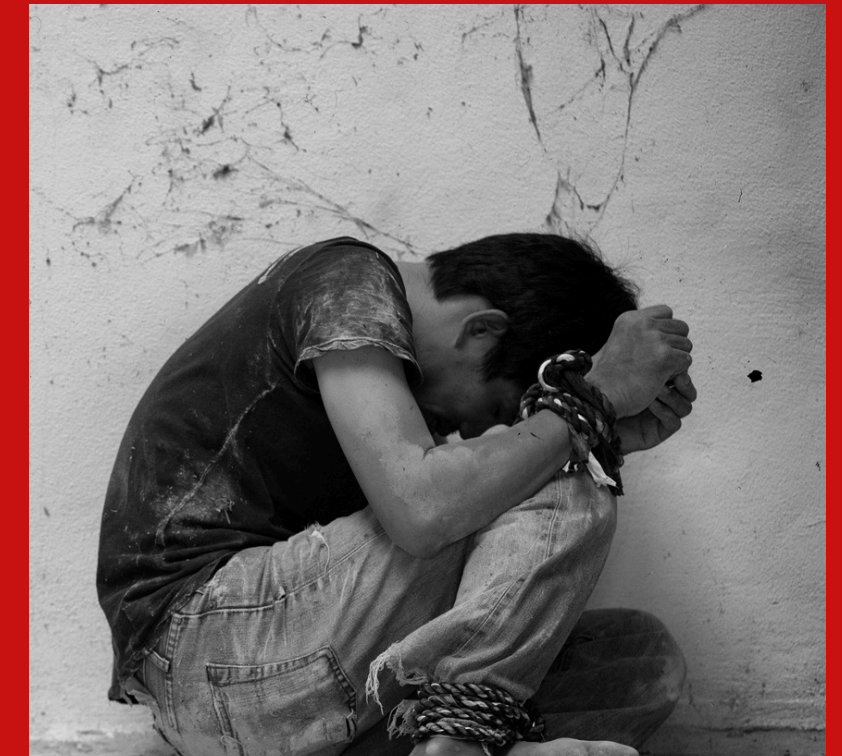
Lack control of their own ID or money

- **does not hold their own cash**
- **may appear confused about their travel details**



Show signs of fear or trauma:

- adult or child might have visible **bruises, injuries**, appear malnourished, tired, or usually anxious.
- Dressed inappropriately, avoiding staff or law enforcement



Restricted freedom of movement:

- **1 individual** closely monitors another, speaking for them or preventing them from interacting with others.
- You might see a pair where 1 (often older) is alert and watchful while the other is silent and avoiding eye contact.

CASE STUDIES (SURVIVOR STORIES)

ANNIKA'S STORY

“I was 18, alone at a bus station when a friendly stranger offered me a ride...” — Annika Huff was **trafficked from a bus stop**. She accept what seemed like a kind offer of help, but it turned into **years of violence and forced prostitution**. Annika’s trafficker moved her between cities by bus and car, keeping her under surveillance. Eventually, she escaped and is now an advocate training others to spot signs of human trafficking. Her story shows how a moment of trust at a transit hub was exploited by a trafficker.



CASE STUDIES (SURVIVOR STORIES)

FLOR'S STORY (LA):

“I came to Los Angeles for a garment factory job... but ended up a prisoner.” — Flor Molina was lured from Mexico to Los Angeles with false promises of a good job in a clothing factory. Upon arrival, her “employer” confiscated her documents, forced her to sew cloths in a factory for 18+ hours a day, and kept her in squalid conditions. Flor eventually escaped when a sympathetic stranger noticed her distress on a public bus and helped her contact authorities. Her story highlights labor trafficking in a metro area — and how an ordinary bus ride became her route to freedom when someone recognized something was wrong.



PROFESSIONALS WITH A DUTY TO REPORT

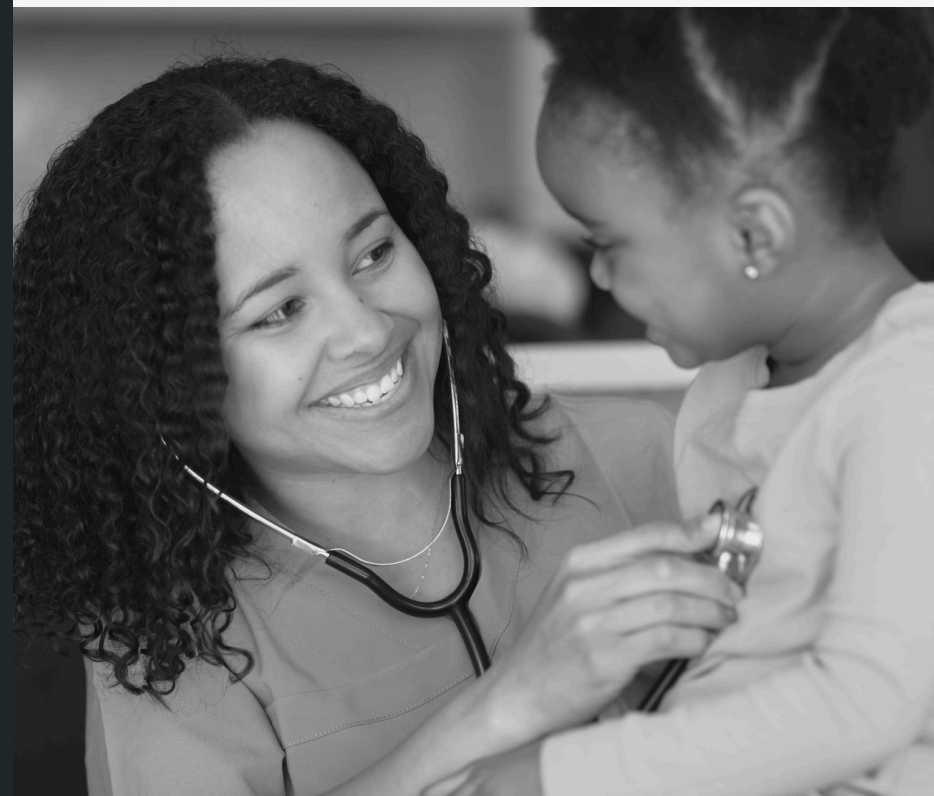
TRANSIT EMPLOYEES

LAW ENFORCEMENT & SECURITY



HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Healthcare Professionals:
all 50 states, healthcare
professionals are
mandated reporters for
minors who show signs of
abuse (including trafficking).
Encouraged, if not required,
for adults as well.



EDUCATORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

HOSPITALITY AND TRANSPORT INDUSTRY STAFF

New York City requires all taxi, Uber, and Lyft
drivers to complete sex trafficking awareness
training and prohibits them from knowingly aiding
trafficking.



RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

If you suspect human trafficking or need help, numerous resources are available.

National Human Trafficking Hotline

- **1-888-373-7888** (24/7 confidential hotline) for reporting tips or seeking help.
- OR text "HELP" or "INFO" to 233733 (BEFREE)

Emergency Services:

If someone is in **immediate danger**, call **911** (or local emergency number) without delay. Law enforcement can intervene quickly. On Transit: Notify the train/bus operator, get a station manager, or use emergency control boxes.



RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

NGOs and Local Services:

Organizations like **Polaris**, **Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT)**, **ECPAT**, and **CAST LA (Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking)** offer victim support, training, and advocacy.

Local nonprofits (e.g., in D.C., **FAIR Girls**; in NYC, **Safe Horizon**; in Atlanta, **Wellspring Living**) provide shelter, counseling, and legal aid for survivors. Many have hotlines or drop-in centers.



LEGAL INSIGHTS

Federal Law:

The primary federal statute is the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, which defines human trafficking as the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit individuals for labor or commercial sex. Penalties under the TVPA are severe, including lengthy imprisonment and substantial fines.

District of Columbia:

- In D.C., human trafficking is governed by Title 22, Chapter 18A of the D.C. Code. It includes:
 - Forced Labor (§ 22–1832): It is unlawful to knowingly use coercion to compel someone to provide labor or services.
 - Sex Trafficking of Children (§ 22–1834): Prohibits recruiting, enticing, harboring, transporting, providing, obtaining, or maintaining a minor for commercial sex acts, regardless of whether coercion is involved.
 - Penalties (§ 22–1837): Violations can result in imprisonment, fines, and asset forfeiture.

LEGAL INSIGHTS

California and Los Angeles:

California addresses human trafficking under Penal Code § 236.1, which includes:

- Forced Labor or Services (§ 236.1(a)): Depriving or violating someone's personal liberty with the intent to obtain forced labor or services is a felony, punishable by 5, 8, or 12 years in state prison and fines up to \$500,000.
- Sex Trafficking (§ 236.1(b) & (c)): Involving minors in commercial sex acts or depriving someone's liberty to commit sex-related offenses carries penalties ranging from 8 to 20 years in prison, with fines up to \$500,000, and mandatory sex offender registration.
- **In Los Angeles County, additional measures include:**
 - Human Trafficking Ordinance: Requires certain businesses to post notices about human trafficking resources and mandates employee training to recognize signs of trafficking.
 - Task Forces: The Los Angeles Metro Area Task Force on Human Trafficking collaborates with various agencies to combat trafficking through enforcement and victim support.

WHAT TO DO IF SUSPECT TRAFFICKING?

- Do NOT confront the trafficker or alert the victim directly.
- Secure Help Quickly
- Observe and Note Details Safely (location, station, bus number/route, car number) time, etc.
- Report to Hotline or Authorities

SUPPORT VICTIM BUT ONLY WHEN APPROPRIATE...

Remember, **YOUR safety and the VICTIMS safety come FIRST.**

Never attempt to “rescue” on your own. Trafficking situations can be complex and dangerous. Law enforcement and trained service provided are equipped to handle them. By promptly reporting, you are helping to rescue the victim in a safe manner.

CALL TO ACTION

- **Stay Vigilant:** When you're commuting or traveling, keep an eye out for the red flags we discussed. Trust your gut – if something seems off, it probably is. Your awareness is a powerful tool; traffickers want to operate unseen, so don't let them.
- **Take Action:** If you see something, report it. Save the hotline number. Encourage your workplace to provide trafficking awareness training, especially if you work in transportation, education, or healthcare. Small actions – like a phone call – can have life-changing outcomes for a victim.
- **Support Survivors:** Get involved with local organizations that help survivors rebuild their lives. This could mean volunteering, donating, or even offering professional skills (legal, medical, counseling) if you have them. Survivors often need housing, jobs, and community acceptance. As a community, we can support their reintegration and healing.
- **Raise Awareness:** Use your voice. Share what you learned today with friends, family, and colleagues. Consider hosting an awareness event or simply starting conversations – breaking the taboo and misconceptions around trafficking is crucial. Advocate for policies in your city or campus (like posting hotline info in public places, or ensuring ride-share drivers get training). The more people know the signs and the facts, the safer our community will be.

A person is seen from the chest up, behind a chain-link fence. Their hands are gripping the fence. The image is dark and grainy, with a red vertical bar on the left side.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION. WHETHER YOU'RE A LAW STUDENT, A TRANSIT WORKER, OR A DAILY RIDER, YOU HAVE A ROLE. JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING BY STAYING INFORMED AND ENGAGED. SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS WEARING BLUE ON NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS DAY (JANUARY 11) OR AS COMMITTED AS MENTORING AT-RISK YOUTH CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAUSE. LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE OUR METRO SYSTEMS — AND OUR COMMUNITIES — ARE SAFE SPACES WHERE EXPLOITATION HAS NO PLACE TO HIDE.

STAY SAFE