CHALLENGE

According to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, the national hotline has received over 100,000 calls since 2007 from all 50 states, with nearly one quarter of the calls received in 2015. Human trafficking, or modern day slavery, is found in a variety of forms: brothels masquerading as massage parlors that traffic women from Asia and force them into the commercial sex trade, and restaurants that source kitchen help from traffickers who recruit Mexican workers. Trafficking victims can be found among nannies, nail stylists and factory and farm workers.

This crime also impacts teen runaways, foster youth, LGBTQ youth disowned by their families and other homeless youth. Commercial sexual exploitation of young people includes the sexual abuse of children and youth under the age of 18 through the exchange of sexual acts for drugs, and for food, shelter, protection, money and other basics of life. Commercial sexual exploitation includes involving children and youth in prostitution, the creation of pornography and sexually explicit websites, and online exploitation.

While many people think of human trafficking as a problem in other countries, it is also a serious problem here in the United States. Those who are trafficked, most of whom are women and
girls, are forced into labor or the sex trade—working against their will, for example, in massage parlors and hotels as sex slaves, or in corporate offices and high rises as underpaid and abused janitors or in many other industries.

While trafficking laws vary by state, people who have been trafficked are often treated like criminals. Cities lack resources, particularly shelters for trafficking survivors, both minors and adults. It is essential to apprehend and prosecute perpetrators and help people who have been trafficked recover from trauma and start a new life. In the long term, understanding and addressing the structural factors (poverty, homelessness, homophobia and lack of access to jobs and fair wages) that make people vulnerable to trafficking in the first place, must all be addressed in a systematic approach.
Launch a Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking, composed of city officials, law enforcement, and community advocates. Gather key players to develop an action plan to address human trafficking in your community.

- Staff the Task Force with an existing agency director, or a new hire, to chair and coordinate the effort and action plan.
- Charge the Task Force with collecting data on suspected and known incidents of human trafficking.
- Track police records and other statistics to determine the scale, scope and location of the trafficking in your community.

Seek funding from the city, county, state and federal levels, as well as private sources for this effort. Develop resources for the following areas:

- Task Force staffing and activities
- Trauma-informed social services for human trafficking survivors
- Specialized trainings and programs
- General public outreach and training

Train key city officials and personnel on how to identify human trafficking victims and serve them in a trauma-informed manner. Provide training for, but not limited to, the following personnel:

- Social services providers
- Health professionals
- Building inspectors, firefighters
- Airport personnel
- Public transit workers
- Law enforcement (police, district attorneys)
- Recreation & parks directors
- Librarians
- Teachers, principals, cafeteria workers
- Juvenile probation officers

Identify trafficking and exploited victims by enlisting the help of well-trained city personnel and community service providers, as well as the general public.

- Pass a law that requires all bus stations, emergency rooms, massage parlors and bars to post the national human trafficking hotline number or be subject to fines that go toward victim restitution. Enforce the law.
- Identified victims should be provided with language accessible, trauma-informed care and wrap-around services such as housing, counseling and job skills training.
- Enlist the cooperation of survivors and identified victims in prosecuting exploiters when possible.
  - Survivors are many times unable or unwilling to cooperate for personal safety reasons.
  - The Alameda County District Attorney’s Office has employed creative tactics such as examining business (e.g., taxes) records of suspected traffickers to find other serious violations and basis for arrests.

**Recognize that massage parlors are possible locations of human trafficking.**
- Fund and train bilingual advocates (separate from the police) to go into massage parlors to identify and connect with the women who may be exploited.
- Mandate that massage parlor owners provide a handout on labor rights to job applicants.

**Commerically sexually exploited people are arrested even though they are the victims.**
This is particularly true in the case of minors. Additionally, sex workers who engage in sex work by choice are often criminalized due to their occupation and can face barriers receiving health care and housing.

**Changing attitudes towards sex work can be extremely difficult.**
- In San Francisco, prostitution cases that were formerly assigned to the Vice Crimes Unit of the Police Department are now handled by the Special Victims Unit and investigated for signs of human trafficking.
- Rather than refer minors suspected of prostitution to the juvenile justice system, they are being assigned social workers from the Family & Children’s Services Division to access social services.

**Local government is responsible for ensuring the personal safety of all residents, including those who choose sex work. They should be able to report abuse and violence without fear of arrest.**
- Pass Safe Harbor laws to decriminalize all prostitution and trafficking-related crimes for minors.
- Provide education for law enforcement and legal professionals on the difference between sex work and sex trafficking.
- Prioritize prosecution of violent crimes against sex workers over enforcing prostitution laws against them.
It is essential to apprehend and prosecute perpetrators and help people who have been trafficked recover from trauma and start a new life.

**TREATMENT**

- **Women and youth freed from human trafficking need support to recover from trauma and re-start their lives.**
  - Provide survivors with job skills and training, particularly for women who have multiple arrests for prostitution but few marketable skills.
  - Provide specialized shelters and support systems, mental/legal/psychological services and food/clothing/transportation assistance. It is not sufficient to expect homeless or domestic violence shelters to be able to meet the needs of human trafficking survivors.
  - Offer peer-based programs – create internship programs for young people who have worked in the sex industry. As survivors of exploitation, they can be experts in prevention and intervention and paid for helping others (e.g., the San Francisco-based Lavender Youth Recreation Center).

**LEGISLATION**

- **Enact laws and ordinances that:**
  - Ensure brothels cannot masquerade as massage parlors. Require compliance with masseuse licensing, and decent exposure laws.
  - Decriminalize all prostitution and trafficking-related crimes for minors. Utilize **Safe Harbor** laws.
  - Ensure that workers are fully aware of their employment rights through mandatory posting of rights on job sites.
  - Require hotels and restaurants to train their personnel on the signs of human trafficking and to review their supply chains for slave labor.
  - Address broader labor rights of low income workers. Fair pay and minimum wage laws will also help trafficking survivors.

**COLLABORATION**

- **Create interagency and cross-county collaborations which include a broad group of stakeholders, not just law enforcement.**
  - **Universities:** In the San Francisco Bay Area, Stanford University Law School students examined how cities hosting major events such as the Super Bowl and the Olympics planned to respond to human trafficking. Their recommendations were incorporated into the work of the San Francisco Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking in the lead up
to the 2016 Super Bowl. Stanford University also agreed to host free, online human trafficking trainings for restaurant and hotel workers.

- **Hospitals**: Hospital exam rooms are among the very few places where victims are not accompanied by their exploiters. Trained doctors and nurses can play a critical role in identifying human trafficking. Involve hospitals and include more support from trained mental health providers.

- **Hospitality Industry**: Hotels and restaurants do not want to have reputations as venues for human trafficking, whether sex trafficking or labor trafficking. They can be powerful allies in responding to the problem by training staff to be able to identify signs of human trafficking and ensuring that their supply chains are slavery free.

- **Consulates**: Pursue partnerships with local consulates of countries where victims are from.

- **Counties**: Traffickers move from county to county. Encourage and support collaboration among counties and share information.
In San Francisco, the Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking, staffed by the Department on the Status of Women (DOSW), released a Human Trafficking Report in San Francisco in 2015. The report compiles data from 19 government and community-based agencies and is the city’s first attempt to provide an overview of identified human trafficking cases. While the report also documents survivors of labor trafficking, 78% of the 291 individuals identified are affected by sex trafficking. Nearly half of the individuals in the study are under 18 years old and a majority are women, including transgender persons.

San Francisco has a long history of sex workers organizing themselves, and because of this they are included in policy development. San Francisco is developing a policy with the District Attorney’s Office and the Police Department to protect sex workers who come forward and report sexual assault or trafficking to the police, so they don’t have to fear being arrested or prosecuted.

An example of addressing broader labor rights of low income workers is the California Domestic Worker’s Bill of Rights championed by Mujeres Unidas and enacted in California.

Peer-based services provide trafficked persons and sex workers an understanding and non-judgemental space to get access to a multitude of support services.
Resources

Articles, Books, Organizations, Videos

- **Freedom Network** - A national alliance of experienced advocates working with survivors of all forms of human trafficking to ensure they have access to justice, safety and opportunity.
- **H.E.A.T Watch** - Alameda County has one of the highest prosecution rates in human trafficking. This is an effective, comprehensive, collaborative and regional response to human trafficking of all forms. The goal is to provide tools, education and community engagement to change societal, legal and institutional approaches; and to support victims and hold their offenders accountable.
- **National Trafficking Human Resource Center** - The national anti-trafficking hotline and resource center serving victims and survivors of human trafficking and the anti-trafficking community in the United States.
- **St. James Infirmary** - This San Francisco-based agency provides free, compassionate and nonjudgmental healthcare and social services to sex workers (current or former) of all genders and sexual orientations.
- **SWOP (Sex Workers Outreach Project)** - A national social justice network dedicated to the fundamental human rights of people involved in the sex trade and their communities, focusing on ending violence and stigma through education and advocacy.
- **A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power** by President Jimmy Carter.
- Toolkit of national resource center on human trafficking from [Polaris](#).
- **MISSEY** - Oakland-based nonprofit working to support sexually exploited youth.
- A “No Traffic Ahead” website being developed by [South Bay Coalition to End Human Trafficking](#) will list trainings and resources in the Bay Area and businesses that have taken steps to address human trafficking.
- **Life Interrupted** - By Denise Brennan, exploring forced labor in the United States.
- **Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: Beyond Victims and Villains** - Alexandra Lutnick analyzes the forces behind the sex trafficking industry in the United States and provides a reference for practitioners.
- Dr. Emily Murase, Executive Director of the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women, is working with the San Francisco Unified School District to provide [training to all adults to identify possible sex trafficking](#).
- **Child Sex Trafficking: A San Francisco Survivor’s Story** - a 15-minute video about a survivor of human trafficking who is able to escape.
- **San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking** - a community-based collaborative that focuses on an annual public outreach campaign: www.sfcaht.org.
- **Not for Sale** - an international organization provides survivors and at-risk communities in five countries with safety and stability, education, and economic opportunities. Specifically, they provide survivors with job skills and places them in “traineeships” at the offices of its corporate sponsors.
- **Dress for Success** - is an international not-for-profit organization that empowers women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, professional attire and the development tools to help women thrive in work and in life.
- **Safe Harbor Laws** - an example of a Safe Harbor Law from the Polaris Project.
- **Polaris Project** - Polaris works to ensure that the U.S. government prioritizes efforts to eradicate all forms of human trafficking and protect victims of this crime at home and abroad.

**Stop Human Trafficking in San Francisco**

Call the **National Human Trafficking Resource Center** at 1-888-373-7888 (24/7) or text BeFree (233733) to get help and connect with a service provider in your area, report a tip with information on potential human trafficking activity; or learn more by requesting training, technical assistance or resources.

To report suspicious activity to the San Francisco Police Department, call their Trafficking Tip Line at 1-415-643-6233.

**City Staff Contacts**

- San Mateo: **Tod Medford, Susan Manheimer, Adriene Beckman, Mayor Maureen Freschet**
- San Francisco: **Minouche Kandel**, City and County of San Francisco, Department on the Status of Women: oversees work on human trafficking and violence against women [minouche.kandel@sfgov.org](mailto:minouche.kandel@sfgov.org)
- South San Francisco: Police Chief **Jeff Azzopodi**
- Ventura: **Mayor Cheryl Heitmann**

**Expert Contact Info**

- **Minh Dang**, on child sex trafficking: [minhspeakstruth@gmail.com](mailto:minhspeakstruth@gmail.com)
- **U.S. Congresswoman, Jackie Speier**: 155 Bovet Rd Suite 780, San Mateo, CA 94402, (650) 342-0300
- **Bradley Myles**, CEO of the **Polaris** Project
- **Russell Wilson**, male survivor: [russellgwilson@russellgwilson.com](mailto:russellgwilson@russellgwilson.com)
- **Antonia Lavine**, Coordinator, San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking: [antonia lavine@sfcaht.org](mailto:antonia lavine@sfcaht.org), (415) 283-6760
- **Nancy O’Malley**, District Attorney, Alameda County: [askrcd-da@acgov.org](mailto:askrcd-da@acgov.org), (510) 272-6222
- Office of California Attorney General Kamala Harris: (916) 227-3287
- Justin Dillon, CEO, Made in a Free World for slavery free supply chains: mrjustindillon@gmail.com
- Alex Lutnick, Principal, RTI, expert on sex workers: alutnick@rti.org
1. Create, fund and staff a Mayor’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking to collect local data to determine the scope and location of the problem and to develop an agenda for action.

2. Educate and train people in your city to identify traffickers and victims and how to report abuse.

3. Find and prosecute the perpetrators; free those who have been trafficked.

4. Decriminalize the involvement of people engaged in sex work.

5. Provide treatment for all people freed from human trafficking and support them to recover from trauma and re-start their lives.

6. Address systemic causes, including economic inequality, that make persons vulnerable to trafficking.

7. Collaborate with relevant agencies, counties, hospitals and organizations.

8. Sufficiently fund anti-trafficking programs.


10. Provide peer-based services to address occupational harm and health issues related to sex work.