

A Toolkit for NYC Faith Leaders & Communities Against Human Trafficking



Dear Reader:

Thank you for your interest in joining the City's efforts to respond to and prevent human trafficking. We are thankful for the opportunity to work together to strengthen the role that faith communities across cultures and traditions can play, not only in raising awareness about the issue of trafficking but also in responding to survivors and connecting them to services.

Human trafficking is a serious societal and spiritual concern. Like other forms of gender-based violence, it hinders the dignity of human beings and violates basic moral principles of all religious faith traditions. The work of spiritual leaders and community members to end injustice and help the most vulnerable among us makes you critical partners and powerful advocates in our work to address this issue. You are also in positions to provide counsel, moral support, and safety to those in need, and can help in our goal to raise awareness about human trafficking by educating your community members on the issue, taking action, and alerting survivors to the services and resources available in NYC.

This packet includes information about sex and labor trafficking, including its prevalence and guidance on how to address this issue in communities throughout NYC. Also included are links to resources for survivors and their families, and information about the training and outreach opportunities that ENDGBV offers.

Thank you, again, for joining ENDGBV to support survivors and address human trafficking throughout New York City.

Warm regards,

Cecile Noel, Commissioner

Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence



What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is the use of power and control to force, defraud, or coerce someone into engaging in labor or services, including commercial sex or sexual activity. Traffickers use tactics including violence, emotional manipulation, psychological threats, and financial control, often exploiting social and economic inequity for their benefit.

Human trafficking is a prevalent issue in our society, impacting marginalized and vulnerable people and communities throughout the world and right here in NYC. It can have dire physical and mental health impacts on survivors and their families. New York continues to be both a gateway and a destination for trafficking, underscoring the need for both prevention and intervention at the local level.

Globally, sex and labor trafficking are estimated to be a \$150 billion industry with approximately 49.6 million victims of which 27.6 million people were victims of forced labor and 6.3 million in forced commercialized sexual exploitation.¹

Based on the overall population, an estimated 1.1 million people may be living in trafficking situations in the United States.²

In 2020, for every 10 victims detected globally, five are adult women and two are girls, according to a report released in 2021 by the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime.³

LABOR TRAFFICKING

Labor trafficking is when a person or entity exploits people for labor or services through force, fraud, coercion, debt repayment, or other forms of power or control.

In New York State, common venues and industries for labor trafficking include domestic work, restaurants and food service, agriculture, construction, and peddling and begging rings.

Labor traffickers may target individuals who are in economic distress, are unemployed or are undocumented migrants. Due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is likely that labor trafficking increased during the pandemic. (Global Report on Trafficking in Persons: 2020)

¹ International Labour Organization (ILO), Walk Free, & International Organization for Migration (IOM). (September 2022). Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage. Geneva; ILO, Walk Free, and IOM

² Walk Free Foundation. (2023). The Global Slavery Index 2022

³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2020) Vienna; United Nations.

Human trafficking has deep impacts on individuals, families, and communities. The solutions to this crisis include strategies that go beyond individual victims and address the systemic barriers and inequities that put people and communities at risk.

Broadly, those most sought out to be exploited through trafficking are those from oppressed or stigmatized communities, with many victims holding multiple marginalized identities. Vulnerable groups often include: immigrants and migrants, particularly those without permanent immigration status; Black, Indigenous, and other people of color; LGBTQI+ people; young people, especially those impacted by poverty; people living in poverty; people who have experienced violence, including war, displacement, child abuse, sexual assault or abuse, domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence; people who do not speak English; and people in shelter or without permanent housing.

How Can Members of the Faith Community Support Victims of Human Trafficking?

1. Understand the issue of human trafficking.

- Learn about and share information with your community about the dynamics and prevalence of human trafficking and its impact on victims, families, and communities.
- Schedule a training on human trafficking and other forms of gender-based violence by contacting our ENDGBV Training Team.

Contact: training@endgbv.nyc.gov

www.nyc.gov/endgbvtraining

- Schedule an outreach event through ENDGBV or a local community-based organization (CBO) to raise awareness throughout your faith community by contacting our ENDGBV Community Initiatives Team:

Contact: outreach@endgbv.nyc.gov

SEX TRAFFICKING

Sex trafficking, or commercial sexual exploitation, is when a person or entity recruits, transports, or houses a person for the purposes of performing coerced, forced, or involuntary sex acts in return for payment or benefits.

In New York State, common venues and industries for sex trafficking include illicit massage parlors and spa businesses, the pornography industry, hotels and motels, and escort/delivery services.

Sex traffickers may target individuals who are young and unhoused, who have substance abuse disorders, who have been in foster care or juvenile facilities, or who are in economic distress.

2. Create a culture of safety and support.

- Be willing to see and acknowledge the problem.
- Foster a welcoming environment for all survivors to come forward, including survivors of child sex abuse and intimate partner violence.
- Educate yourself and your congregation on best practices for supporting survivors.
- Assist survivors without passing judgement; be present for them while respecting their right to privacy and self-determination.
- Consider how your community can be part of preventing human trafficking and supporting survivors by reducing underlying vulnerabilities (e.g., help community members with housing and employment).
- Speak out against human trafficking in sermons and services, especially in January, also known as Human Trafficking Prevention month. You and your community can get involved in the annual awareness campaign by encouraging members to wear blue, post photos with campaign hashtags, display blue awareness ribbons, and post resource materials prominently.

3. Know your community resources and post the information.

- Share human trafficking resources, such as ENDGBV's informational materials, with your faith community. Download ENDGBV informational materials [here](#) or contact the Community Initiatives Team at outreach@ENDGBV.nyc.gov.
- Have resources and information readily available and on display. For example, the National Human Trafficking Hotline [1-888-373-7888], educational pamphlets from [ENDGBV](#) and community-based organizations, and information about the [New York City Family Justice Centers](#), and the [NYC HOPE](#) online resource directory.
- Consult national and international toolkits for faith leaders that recognize shared values and beliefs that directly align with efforts to respond to, and end, human trafficking.

4. Create an ongoing support network.

- Partner with ENDGBV, other city agencies, and community-based organizations that serve survivors.
- Create peer support groups for survivors and individuals dedicated to raising awareness of human trafficking and finding solutions in your community.
- Use social media to raise awareness of the issue across faiths by posting photos and videos and using the hashtags **#EndHumanTrafficking** and **#AwarenessHelpHope**.
- Educate and engage young people and youth-serving organizations within your community to help raise awareness.

While we must take on the long-term work of addressing the systemic and social factors that contribute to trafficking, there is a great deal people of faith can do now. For those reaching out during their most desperate moments, faith communities can encourage them to seek help, provide support and be a place to seek healing from the trauma caused by trafficking. They can provide spiritual and moral support for those being trafficked, provide guidance, and denounce those who perpetrate the exploitation of others.

What does the faith community need to know about working with survivors of human trafficking?

1. Be aware of common misconceptions that exist about human trafficking.

Misconception: If someone consents to an exploitative situation, such as working without pay, then it is not trafficking.

Reality: Even if consent is given, the situation may legally be considered trafficking if force, fraud, or coercion was used or if the person who gave consent is a minor.

Misconception: Trafficking is an international issue.

Reality: Trafficking happens locally in communities across the U.S., including New York City.

Misconception: Trafficking mostly impacts adults.

Reality: Trafficking impacts victims of all ages, including youth.

Misconception: Trafficking always involves transportation.

Reality: Trafficking can happen in your own community and does not have to involve movement from one place to another, or crossing borders without proper documentation, or smuggling.

Misconception: Trafficking victims are ready to self-identify as victims of crime and often reach out for help.

Reality: There are many barriers to trafficking victims reaching out for help, including fear of engaging with the criminal justice system, stigma, and shame.

Misconception: Only women are victims.

Reality: Trafficking impacts people of all gender identities.

Misconception: Sex trafficking is more widespread than labor trafficking.

Reality: Worldwide, experts believe there are significantly more instances of labor trafficking than sex trafficking.

Misconception: Commercial sex, or sex work, is always human trafficking.

Reality: The reality is more nuanced. Adults may engage in sex work for a variety of reasons, including lack of educational or employment opportunities due to structural oppression (e.g., no access to work authorization) or by choice. Some of these adults may not consider themselves to be victims of trafficking, though they may experience violence or labor exploitation (wages being withheld, etc.). Additionally, anyone under the age of 18 cannot by law willingly engage in sex work so it is always considered trafficking. Regardless of the legality, it is important to keep principles of self-determination in mind, allowing those who come forward to define their own experiences and choose their next steps.

2. Be aware of risk factors or signs of human trafficking.⁴

Red flags may include the following:	
Unable to leave or come and go at will	Few or no personal possessions
Under 18 and engaging in commercial sex acts	Forced to live and work on-site
Engaged in the commercial sex industry and have a pimp or manager	Minimize the abuse they are experiencing or protect the person that hurts them
Unpaid or paid very little, or work excessively long and/or unusual hours	Signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture
Not allowed breaks, or suffer unusual restrictions at work	Not permitted to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)
Owe a large debt to a trafficker or employer	Whereabouts/movement is frequently monitored
Experience verbal or physical abuse by their supervisor	Lack of control over own money, financial records, or bank accounts
Fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid, especially when involving law enforcement or immigration officials	Lack of control over own identification documents (ID or passport)

⁴ Please note that many of the factors listed above do not constitute human trafficking when considered alone or without additional context.

3. Be aware of barriers to survivors getting help.

Consider that survivors may:	
Distrust service providers and law enforcement from personal experience or trafficker's narrative	Need a high level of care (physical and mental health, shelter, resources, economic support)
Be physically and/or psychologically controlled by traffickers	Fear arrest and prosecution for criminal acts they have been forced into
Be trained by traffickers to tell lies and false stories, or "scripted narratives"	Not self-identify as victim of human trafficking
Have loyalty or debt to traffickers (attachment, addiction, fear)	Not be accurately identified by community, law enforcement, or service providers as a trafficked person
Fear arrest and deportation for lack of legal status	Feel shame due to stigma associated with trafficking

4. Work to support survivors of human trafficking.



Listen to the members of your congregation and surrounding community and pay attention to vulnerabilities that can be risk factors for human trafficking.



Create a welcoming and supportive environment that will encourage survivors to use your space as a source of comfort and support.



Encourage survivors to seek out assistance when it is safe to do so.



Use language that recognizes survivors' diverse experiences and that does not isolate or create additional barriers for survivors in need.

What steps can faith leaders take to get involved and stay connected?

1. Show your support.

Blue is the official color of human trafficking prevention. In January, which is **Human Trafficking Prevention Month**, we ask faith leaders and their members to wear blue in solidarity with human trafficking survivors. Decorate your houses of worship with blue ribbons and decorations. Post videos of your sermons that denounce human trafficking and express support for survivors, their families, and their communities. Take and post photos of your congregation wearing blue to social media to share your commitment to ending human trafficking. Use the hashtags **#EndHumanTrafficking** and **#AwarenessHelpHope**.

2. Sermons and messaging.

Carry messages within your sermons that denounce human trafficking and commit to care for the people and communities that can be most impacted by this issue. Share messages about the need to protect and prioritize the safety and well-being of all people, especially those most vulnerable and marginalized. Promote prevention efforts that address root causes of trafficking and other forms of gender-based violence, including poverty and other systemic inequities and barriers.

3. Share information and resources.

Invite ENDGBV and partners addressing the issue of human trafficking to present to your congregation or table at a service or faith event, so people can avail themselves of materials and information, and can support and promote prevention and intervention within their networks.

4. Build Capacity.

Request training for you and your staff from ENDGBV or community-based organizations that work with trafficking survivors. Create a policy and procedure within your house of worship for how you will respond to and address disclosures of trafficking within your congregation or surrounding community. Consider joining an anti-trafficking group.

5. Help spread the word.

Plan and organize an outreach event in your community to raise awareness about services and resources. Work with the ENDGBV Outreach Team to hand out flyers at a busy transit station, or host a town hall, special event, or forum where the issue can be presented and discussed.

6. Support.

Organize a donation drive to collect food, clothing or supplies for an organization that provides trafficking services.

As we seek to increase capacity, build trust and awareness, and engage with you and your faith communities, please reach out to ENDGBV about city resources that are available.

NYC HOPE RESOURCE DIRECTORY

The City of New York's Resource Directory of domestic and gender- based violence services provide comprehensive information on services available to survivors throughout the five boroughs.

Before referring a survivor to an organization listed in the directory, you should first contact the organization to ensure that appropriate services are available.

Find local resources in New York City for survivors and their children with the Resource Directory at nyc.gov/NYCHOPE

NYC FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS

New York City Family Justice Centers (FJs) are safe, caring environments that provide one-stop services and support. Key City agencies, community, social and civil legal services providers, and District Attorney's Offices provide case management, economic empowerment, counseling, civil legal, and criminal justice assistance for survivors of all forms of domestic and gender-based violence, including human trafficking.

The FJs welcome everyone regardless of language, income, gender identity, or immigration status. All Centers are available by phone and in-person, no appointment necessary Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Interpretation is available in over 200+ languages.



NYC Family Justice Centers

Free and confidential help for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence.

**Domestic Violence • Family Violence • Elder Abuse
Dating Abuse • Stalking • Sexual Violence • Human Trafficking**

- Call 311 or visit the **New York City Family Justice Center (FJC)** in the borough where you live (or one where you feel safest) to get connected.
- All Centers are open for in-person or remote services, Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- No appointment is needed. See back side for contact information.

The Family Justice Centers can help you with:

- Planning for your safety.
- Counseling and mental health services to support emotional well-being for you and your children.
- Economic empowerment through financial literacy classes and financial coaches to help with credit repair and budgeting.
- Meeting with trained law enforcement, such as NYPD, NYC Sheriff's Office, and District Attorney's Offices.
- Applying for emergency shelter and exploring housing options.
- Information about public benefits and job training programs, including help with resume writing and interviewing skills.
- Legal consultations for orders of protection, custody, visitation, child support, divorce, housing, and immigration. ** Legal representation is not guaranteed.
- Childcare for children while you receive services on-site.

All services are voluntary. You can choose the services that you want.



NYC's Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-621-HOPE (4673)

24 hours, 7 days a week, call to be connected to immediate safety planning, shelter assistance, and more.



Search services from community-based providers through the NYC HOPE Resource Directory at www.nyc.gov/NYCHOPE

Scan below to learn more about ENDGBV:



The Family Justice Centers offer free, confidential help to people of any:

Age	Immigration Status	Sexual Orientation	Income	Language Spoken	Gender Identity	Disability
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Please call or visit any Family Justice Center Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

No appointment is needed.
 Interpretation services are available onsite.



<p>Manhattan Family Justice Center 80 Centre Street, 5th Floor Accessible entrance: (10 Hogan Place around the left corner from 80 Centre Street is wheelchair accessible.) New York, NY 10013 (212) 602-2800 4 5 6 to Brooklyn Bridge-City Hall N Q R to Canal Street J Z 1 2 3 A C to Chambers Street M5, M9, M22, M103</p>	<p>Brooklyn Family Justice Center 350 Jay Street, 15th Floor Brooklyn, NY 11201 (718) 250-5113 A C F R to Jay Street 2 3 4 5 to Borough Hall B25, B26, B38, B51, B54, B57, B61, B65, B67, B75</p>
<p>Queens Family Justice Center 126-02 82nd Avenue Kew Gardens, NY 11415 (718) 575-4545 E F to Kew Gardens-Union Turnpike Q10, Q37, Q46, Q60</p>	<p>Bronx Family Justice Center 198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor Bronx, NY 10451 (718) 508-1220 4 B D to Yankee Stadium BX1, BX2, BX6, BX13</p>
<p>Staten Island Family Justice Center 126 Stuyvesant Place Staten Island, NY 10301 (718) 697-4300 SIR Staten Island Railroad to St. George Ferry Terminal S40, S42, S44, S46, S48, S51, S52, S61, S62, S66, S74, S76, S78, S81, S84, S86, S90, S91, S92, S94, S96, S98</p>	<p> All Centers are wheelchair accessible. Please call ahead to request accommodations. Thank you.</p>

THE ENDGBV TRAINING TEAM

ENDGBV's Training Team provides tailored trainings to City agencies and CBOs on topics across the spectrum of GBV, as well as providing technical assistance in the review and development of their policies and protocols. The Training Team works with City Agencies and CBOs to identify training needs for staff and creating work plans for the implementation of ongoing relevant trainings. The Training Team also assists these agencies in the review and development of their current policies and protocols around GBV and designs and facilitates trainings that are specifically tailored to these service providers and their roles at City Agencies and CBOs.

If you have questions, or would like to schedule training, please contact the ENDGBV Training Team via email at training@endgbv.nyc.gov.

THE ENDGBV COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TEAM

The Community Initiatives Team, within the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV), is responsible for engaging New Yorkers across all five boroughs to better understand what they need to contribute to the City's response to gender-based violence. Using on-going community convenings, public engagement campaigns and events, and supporting community-based organizations that receive funding from ENDGBV, the Community Initiatives team strives to use the collective wisdom of everyday New Yorkers to improve New York City's response to gender-based violence.

If you would like to speak to a Community Coordinator about potential collaborations or engagement ideas, or if you would like to invite us to present to your community, organization, or group, please send us an email at outreach@endgbv.nyc.gov.

About ENDGBV

The Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV) supports survivors of domestic and gender-based violence by developing and delivering accessible and inclusive services to survivors, their families, and communities through collaboration with government agencies, community partners, survivors, and philanthropy.

We strive to ensure that the City's services and resources reduce barriers, address gaps in service, and create new pathways to safety through program development, legislative and policy advocacy, research, training, community-based initiatives and engagement, and operation of the New York City Family Justice Centers.

We hope this toolkit is a (an) helpful introduction to this important issue, and that it empowers and inspires you to take a stand and get involved. Learn more at www.nyc.gov/endgbv.

In January and throughout the year, share messages of awareness and/or support on social media.

Use the hashtags:

#EndHumanTrafficking #AwarenessHelpHope

Don't forget to follow & tag us: **@nycendgbv**



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