

ON THE FRONT LINES: Equipping Service Providers and First Responders to Prevent, Early Identify, and Serve California's Trafficking Victims

A PROPOSAL FOR A CONTINUING FUNDING ALLOCATION IN CALIFORNIA'S GENERAL FUND FOR \$2.5 MILLION TO PROVIDE STATEWIDE TRAINING AND TECHNICAL RESOURCE CONSULTATION TO SERVE AND IDENTIFY VICTIMS OF ALL FORMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING



THE URGENT NEED: Human trafficking survivors require specialized programs that offer shelter, nutrition, medical treatment, legal assistance, social services, alcohol and drug treatment programs, education programs, and life skills training. The organizations across California that provide these services to victims of human trafficking are now in critical need of a centralized source of technical assistance, guidance, and training. Moreover, California's law enforcement agencies, teachers, child welfare workers, health care providers, and other "first responders" need training on how to recognize the signs of human trafficking when interacting with the public at large, for purposes of preventing and early identifying victims of human trafficking and connecting those victims or those at risk for commercial exploitation with service providers.

I. Human Trafficking in California

Human trafficking is a crime in which victims are deceived and coerced into providing forced labor or sexual services for the benefit of their traffickers. **Within the United States, human trafficking has had a particularly dramatic impact on the state of California.** Thousands of women, men, and children, representing both U.S. citizens and foreign nationals, are victimized by traffickers every year in California.¹ According to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), California has consistently ranked at the top of the NHTRC hotline calls from 2012 through 2018.² In 2017 alone, the NHTRC hotline received 3,998 calls from California, with a total of 1,305 human trafficking cases reported. Indeed, 2017 statistics indicated a nearly 265% increase in cases reported to the hotline since 2012. The NHTRC hotline reports likely indicate a mere small percentage of actual trafficking cases in California. For example, although very little additional data exists on trafficking in California. The 2018 annual homeless study for Los Angeles County reported that over 5,000 of the 54,000 homeless on any given night in California reported they had been victims of sex or labor trafficking.³ This is almost 10% of homeless population, and the homeless are just one of the many vulnerable populations traffickers target.

California is particularly vulnerable to human trafficking because of factors such as large runaway and homeless youth populations, proximity to international borders, the number of ports and airports, a significant immigrant population, and a large economy including industries that attract forced labor and sex trafficking.⁴ Good data on the prevalence of human trafficking in California is lacking, with the most recent comprehensive report on human trafficking in California released in 2012. The available data indicates California has a long way to go in order to address this issue and must expand specialized resources to assist this vulnerable population. For example, the 2012 report indicated that the California human trafficking taskforces identified 1,300 victims of human trafficking and made 1,798 arrests related to human trafficking.⁵ Further, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), three of the nation's thirteen High Intensity Child Prostitution areas are in California — Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Diego.⁶

¹ See, e.g., *The State of Human Trafficking in California*, CALIFORNIA DEPT. OF JUSTICE, OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (2012), <http://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/ht/human-trafficking-2012.pdf> (reporting that the majority of sex trafficking victims identified in California are U.S. citizens); see also Abby Sewell, *Most L.A. County Youths Held for Prostitution Come from Foster Care*, L.A. TIMES, November 27, 2012, <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/nov/27/local/la-me-1128-sex-trafficking-20121128>.

² *Hotline Statistics*, NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESOURCE CENTER, <http://www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/states>.

³ *Prevalence Study on Human Trafficking in the City of Los Angeles*, Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking (CAST) and Los Angeles Commission on the Status of Women (LACSW) (2018).

⁴ *What is Human Trafficking*, CALIFORNIANS AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, <http://www.caseact.org/learn/humantrafficking/>.

⁵ See *supra* note 4, *The State of Human Trafficking in California*.

⁶ *The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Effort to Combat Crimes Against Children, Audit Report 09-08*, U.S. Dep't of Justice, Ch. 4 (2009), <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/FBI/a0908/final.pdf>.

Additionally, a 2017 survey found that 19% of the homeless youth population in California have experienced some form of trafficking, with 14% experiencing sex trafficking, 8% experiencing labor trafficking, and 3% experiencing forms of both.⁷

II. History of Funding Allocations by the California State Legislature

In 2014, the California State Legislature took an important first step in improving access to comprehensive services by approving a \$10 million, one-time funding request for organizations providing comprehensive direct services to victims of trafficking. In 2015, the California State Legislature established a Human Trafficking Victim Assistance Fund, to which it allocated another \$10 million one-time award. The California State Legislature approved an additional one-time funding request of \$5 million in 2017, and another one-time funding request of \$10 million in 2018. Through each of these funding allocations, the California Office of Emergency Services (“Cal OES”) solicited funding proposals from human trafficking service providers and awarded funds to at least 21 different providers across the state. Finally, in June 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom signed a state budget into law that established **\$10 million annually** in continuing funding to human trafficking services providers.

During the first two years of the Cal OES Program, running from April 1, 2016 to September 30, 2018, a total of 11,023 victims of human trafficking were served by the Cal OES funding allocations. Together, these programs provided a total of 364,444 comprehensive services to victims of human trafficking, including, but not limited to, crisis counseling, case management, shelter services, and legal assistance. In the years to come, thousands more human trafficking survivors will be provided with services through the newly established continuing annual budget request for \$10 million in California’s General Fund.

III. An Additional 2.5 Million in Continuing Funding is Needed to Help Identify and Serve Survivors of Human Trafficking Through Training and Technical Consultation Resources

While the \$10 million ongoing, stable funding source for the provision of comprehensive services is a huge step forward for the state of California, its enactment failed to provide the full \$12.5 million of the original comprehensive request. This additional \$2.5 million in continuing funding is needed for training and technical consultation resources that will help prevent trafficking in our state and enable service providers and first responders to identify and serve additional survivors of human trafficking.

Investment is needed not just to fund specialized services, but to create a framework of training and support for agencies and first responders so that California spends its money with the highest level of impact when addressing the pervasive and insidious problem of human trafficking.

⁷ *Labor and Sex Trafficking Among Homeless Youth*, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS, MODERN SLAVERY RESEARCH PROJECT, <https://nspn.memberclicks.net/assets/docs/NSPN/labor%20and%20sex%20trafficking%20among%20homeless%20youth.pdf>

IV. \$1.5 Million in Continuing Funding to Train First Responders

To develop curriculum and provide training on effective identification of human trafficking victims and service provision for this unique population, **\$1.5 million** is requested annually. This funding will be used to develop and deliver training statewide to the diverse groups of front-line “responders” who might encounter a victim being trafficked or just escaping trafficking, including law enforcement agencies, labor inspectors, child welfare workers, school educators, health care providers, housing/homeless services, and public defenders. **This \$1.5 million allocation would allow for Cal OES to provide three grants of \$500,000 each over a two-year period**, meaning that Cal OES could choose to fund different types of statewide training for each two-year period. For example, over the first two-year period, Cal OES could choose to provide one \$500K grant for training law enforcement agencies, one \$500K grant for training health care providers, and one \$500K grant for training K-12 teachers. Accordingly, the flexibility to fund different types of training over each two-year period would allow Cal OES to be responsive to input from the field as to the types of first responder training it could prioritize to be funded in any given year. **Continued funding for different types of responder-specific training would allow for an extensive range of outreach points to touch the full diversity of potential human trafficking victims, including both adults and children involved in labor and/or sex trafficking.** As more individuals on the “front lines” are trained, more victims will be identified and connected with the services they need to escape from trafficking situations and to rebuild their lives.

A lack of adequately funded training resources is a significant barrier for new and existing programs to properly assist victims of human trafficking. According to a 2013 study funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, 72% of service providers cited inadequate funding as a major barrier in responding to victims’ needs, while 65% of service providers indicated inadequate training as a significant concern.⁸ California can remove this barrier through a strategic allocation of resources to responder-specific training.

V. \$1 Million in Continuing Funding for Centralized Technical Support

To provide ongoing support to the newly funded trafficking programs and other programs identifying trafficking victims across California, **\$1 million** is requested for ongoing, centralized, statewide technical consultation **annually**. This statewide technical consultation funding is based on domestic violence and sexual assault models of statewide technical assistance and support already available in California. This funding for specialized human trafficking technical support will provide victim service providers, law enforcement, and government agencies with a common resource across the state to field individual questions, coordinate law enforcement taskforces statewide, and assist those setting up new human trafficking programs or coordinating statewide services to ensure that the immediate and long-term needs of human trafficking survivors are met. **The agency receiving this funding for statewide technical consultation for example could propose to provide the following support, including but not limited to:**

- Training on victim identification and best practices in service provision for new agencies starting anti-trafficking programs;

⁸ *Id.*

- Research and analysis for law enforcement agencies working with human trafficking victims of issues of privilege, confidentiality, and victim-centered protocols;
- Centralized provision of referrals for law enforcement agencies and other first responders to local programs and partners that can serve the needs of an identified trafficking victim;
- Dissemination of trafficking research study results to law enforcement agencies and service providers;
- Development of best practices for human trafficking service providers and assistance for local taskforces in creating action plans to address trafficking; and
- Coordination and education state, county, and city government agencies statewide agencies around the issue of human trafficking in California.

By funding a an agency with statewide reach to provide ongoing technical support and training statewide, service providers, law enforcement, and state agencies will be able to increase their capacity for receiving/responding to hotline calls, identifying trafficking victims, participating in first response to victims to provide them with services, and meeting basic needs such as housing, food, counseling, and legal assistance. Funding of a centralized source for technical consultation will also create increased opportunities for training and professional development to ensure that all victim services agencies funded by Cal OES are committed to trauma-informed, high-quality care for the individuals that they serve. Included in this request is an estimated cost of hiring 4 survivor consultants at \$60,000 annually⁹ to ensure that the voices of human trafficking survivors will be included in the training, outreach, and technical consultation under this program.

A Working Model for Centralized Provision of Training and Technical Resources to Service Providers

The field of domestic violence prevention can serve as a prototype for California’s human trafficking programs in regards to centralized, statewide provision of training and technical resources to service providers. Every state across America currently has one federally recognized State Domestic Violence Coalition which provides technical assistance and training to local domestic violence programs.¹⁰ These state Coalitions help provide supervision, direction, coordination, and administration of statewide activities related to the prevention of domestic violence. While these Coalitions do receive some federal funding, the continuity and amount of federal funding remains uncertain and subject to change under the current federal political dynamics. Therefore, it is important for states like California to provide funding for their own state Coalitions in order to provide a stable, reliable continuity of care that cannot be undermined by a sudden removal of federal funding.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the primary role of each state Coalition is threefold:

- A. To provide education, support, and technical assistance to the primary-purpose domestic violence service providers and providers of direct services in the State;

⁹ For an illustrative example of salary alone, see Salary for Training Specialist I in California, [www.Salary.com](http://www.salary.com), <https://www.l.salary.com/Program-Coordinator-Salary.html>.

¹⁰ U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, “State Domestic Violence Coalitions,” <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/programs/family-violence-prevention-services/programs/state-dv>.

- B. To serve as an information clearinghouse, primary point of contact, and resource center on domestic violence for the State and supports the development of policies, protocols, and procedures to enhance domestic violence intervention and prevention in the State; and
- C. To help programs develop and continue culturally competent practices ... including the promotion of trauma-informed services that help facilitate the social and emotional well-being of both victims and their children.¹¹

In California, for example, the state Coalition is the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence, which receives funding from Cal OES.¹² The California Partnership to End Domestic Violence provides a wide range of technical assistance and training services to over 100 domestic violence programs across the state.¹³

A similar model should be implemented to assist human trafficking service providers. **Statewide coalitions which provide technical support and training for human trafficking service providers and law enforcement have been established in a number of states**, including North Carolina (North Carolina Coalition Against Human Trafficking),¹⁴ Minnesota (Minnesota Human Trafficking Task Force),¹⁵ Maine (Maine Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Network),¹⁶ North Dakota (FUSE--Force to End Human Trafficking and Exploitation),¹⁷ Washington (WARN--Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network),¹⁸ Kentucky (Kentucky Rescue and Restore Coalition),¹⁹ and Colorado (Colorado Network to End Human Trafficking).²⁰ **California, which faces a higher incidence of human trafficking than each of these states, should follow suit by dedicating resources to a program which acts as a centralized source of training and technical support for human trafficking service providers across California.**

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² California Partnership to End Domestic Violence, <http://www.cpedv.org>; see also Annual Report 2017-2018, 14 <http://www.cpedv.org/annual-reports-financials>; Past Financials, 2017-18, 24, http://www.cpedv.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2018_form_990_fye_06.30.18_no_state.pdf5.

¹³ California Partnership to End Domestic Violence, "Professional Training and Services," <http://www.cpedv.org/professional-training-and-services>; "Domestic Violence Member Programs," <http://www.cpedv.org/domestic-violence-organizations-california>.

¹⁴ <http://www.nccasa.org/resources/human-trafficking-resources>.

¹⁵ <http://mnhddf.org/>.

¹⁶ <http://www.mainesten.org/>.

¹⁷ <http://www.projectfuse.org/>.

¹⁸ <http://www.warn-trafficking.org/>.

¹⁹ <http://www.rescueandrestoreky.org/>.

²⁰ <http://combathumantrafficking.org/about-licht/our-work/coneht-hotline/>.

V. Cost Analysis

Need	Cost*	Outcome
Ongoing training for service providers, first responders, and law enforcement	\$1.5 million, divided into three \$500,000 grants	Thousands of human trafficking cases prevented or identified earlier
Centralized, statewide technical consultation and resource provision	\$1 million	Hundreds of human trafficking cases identified earlier and existing programs have the capacity, resources, and training to more effectively serve survivors
Total	\$2.5 million annually	

VI. Conclusion

California must act strategically to allocate resources to ensure early identification, prevention, and an understanding of the dynamics of the problem of human trafficking throughout California. In recent years, the California State Legislature has taken important first steps in improving access to comprehensive services by approving funding for comprehensive services to survivors of human trafficking. These funding allocations have greatly impacted (and will continue to impact) the people of California. **However, a new funding allocation of \$2.5 million for additional comprehensive technical resources and training would allow for more effective provision of services and targeted identification of victims across the state of California.** By approving this budget request, Governor Gavin Newsom will continue to cement a powerful legacy of championing the needs of human trafficking victims.

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COALITION TO ABOLISH SLAVERY AND TRAFFICKING

Systemic change is at the core of CAST's mission. Taking a survivor-centered approach to ending human trafficking, CAST has a proven track record of working directly with survivors of human trafficking which builds an important bridge between practice and policy to inform effective policy initiatives. By developing broad-based partnerships, CAST effectively advocates for policies that work to end human trafficking and help survivors rebuild their lives.

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