



## RESOURCES: IDENTIFYING THE CRIME OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING



- Law enforcement officers should keep in mind that the following scenarios may involve some form of human trafficking, or may be situations in which victims and/or traffickers could be found:
  - Prostitution rings
  - Operations of massage parlors, strip clubs, etc.
  - Domestic abuse
  - “False” or poorly examined 911 calls
  - Vice raid where foreign nationals are encountered
  - Encounters with migrant workers where a foreman or supervisor attempts to keep the group away from the law enforcement officers or attempts to control all communication between the officer and the group
  - Brawls between people in which money is owed
  - Crimes involving immigrant children in situations such as prostitution or forced labor
  
- Law enforcement officers may encounter the perpetrators or traffickers themselves who will offer alleged explanations of the situation. In these cases it is important for the first responding officer to note the following about others at the scene of the crime who may be victims of human trafficking:
  - What are their living conditions?
  - What are their working conditions?
  - Are there indications of restriction of movement (e.g., are they allowed to leave the premises)?
  - Are they forced to make frequent moves?
  - Are there any behavioral indicators of severe dependency (e.g., submissive behavior, fearful behavior in the presence of others)?
  - Who is in physical possession of their legal documents of identification?
  - Who insists on providing information to law enforcement?
  - Are they in the country legally?
  
- Traffickers use various techniques to keep victims enslaved. Some traffickers keep their victims under lock and key, however, the more frequent practice is to use less obvious techniques including:
  - Debt bondage – financial obligations, honor-bound to satisfy debt
  - Isolation from the public – limiting contact with outsiders and making sure that any contact is monitored or superficial in nature
  - Isolation from family members and members of their ethnic and religious community
  - Confiscation of passports, visas and/or identification documents
  - Use or threat of violence toward victims and/or families of victims
  - The threat of shaming victims by exposing circumstances to family
  - Telling victims they will be imprisoned or deported for immigration violations if they contact authorities
  - Control of the victims’ money, e.g., holding their money for “safe-keeping”



The result of such techniques is to instill fear in victims. The victims' isolation is further exacerbated because many do not speak English and are from countries where law enforcement is corrupt and feared.

- Traffickers may also violate multiple state and local laws including:
  - Murder
  - Kidnapping
  - Prostitution, pandering or promoting prostitution
  - Assault
  - Sexual assault and battery
  - False imprisonment

If you think you have come in contact with a victim of human trafficking, call the **Trafficking Information and Referral Hotline at 1.888.3737.888**. This hotline will help you determine if you have encountered victims of human trafficking, will identify local resources available in your community to help victims, and will help you coordinate with local social service organizations to help protect and serve victims so they can begin the process of restoring their lives. For more information on human trafficking visit [www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking).