

CHALLENGES AND GAPS IN LOUISIANA'S EFFORTS  
TO ADDRESS HUMAN TRAFFICKING



PERFORMANCE AUDIT SERVICES  
ISSUED FEBRUARY 26, 2020

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LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR  
DARYL G. PURPERA, CPA, CFE

February 26, 2020

The Honorable Patrick Page Cortez,  
President of the Senate  
The Honorable Clay Schexnayder,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Dear Senator Cortez and Representative Schexnayder:

This report provides the results of our audit of Louisiana's efforts to address human trafficking. The purpose of this audit was to identify challenges and gaps in those efforts.

Overall, we found Louisiana could make improvements in how it fights human trafficking.

For example, Louisiana does not have a specific entity designated to oversee case management and coordination of services for adult victims of human trafficking or for juvenile victims who are not in the custody of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). As a result, fewer resources are available to assist these victims and ensure they receive essential services.

In addition, we found Louisiana does not have sufficient placement options and specialized mental health services for human trafficking victims. Although at least 291 beds are available statewide, placement options are often not located in rural areas or do not allow access for all victims.

Louisiana also has limited data on human trafficking victims and the effectiveness of the services the state provides. Although DCFS collects some data, the information is not complete because the Department relies on service providers to voluntarily report their cases. We found, as well, that there is no systematic or centralized collection of data related to program outcomes so that the effectiveness of anti-trafficking efforts and the services provided to victims can be evaluated.

While the state has leveraged federal grants to help fund anti-trafficking activities, it does not have a predictable and consistent source of state funding. For instance, the Legislature established a dedicated fund in June 2013 to pay for anti-trafficking efforts, but no funds have ever been deposited.

The Honorable Patrick Page Cortez,  
President of the Senate  
The Honorable Clay Schexnayder,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
February 26, 2020  
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We found, too, that while some regions of the state have developed ways to increase the public's awareness of human trafficking, a statewide campaign would help ensure Louisiana residents know how to recognize and report suspected cases.

In addition, no entity is responsible for enforcing compliance with the state law that requires child assault awareness training in schools, and some entities need additional training to better identify human trafficking victims.

Although Louisiana has established criminal laws with penalties for human trafficking, we found the state could improve these laws by providing prosecutorial immunity for trafficked youth and criminal record relief for adult victims, as other states do. We also found that because Louisiana has focused most of its efforts on sex trafficking, awareness of the problem of labor trafficking and efforts to address it are lacking.

I hope this report will benefit you in your legislative decision-making process.

We would like to express our appreciation to the numerous stakeholder representatives for their assistance during this audit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daryl G. Purpera". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Daryl G. Purpera, CPA, CFE  
Legislative Auditor

DGP/aa

HUMANTRAFFICKING

# Louisiana Legislative Auditor

Daryl G. Purpera, CPA, CFE



## Challenges and Gaps in Louisiana’s Efforts to Address Human Trafficking

February 2020

Audit Control #40190021

### Introduction

We reviewed Louisiana’s efforts to address human trafficking in order to identify challenges and gaps. Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery and is prohibited by state law;<sup>1</sup> it occurs when a trafficker exploits an individual with force, fraud, or coercion to make them perform commercial sex acts or work. Although the public is most aware of trafficking in the sex industry, human trafficking can also occur in less obvious industries such as construction and agriculture.

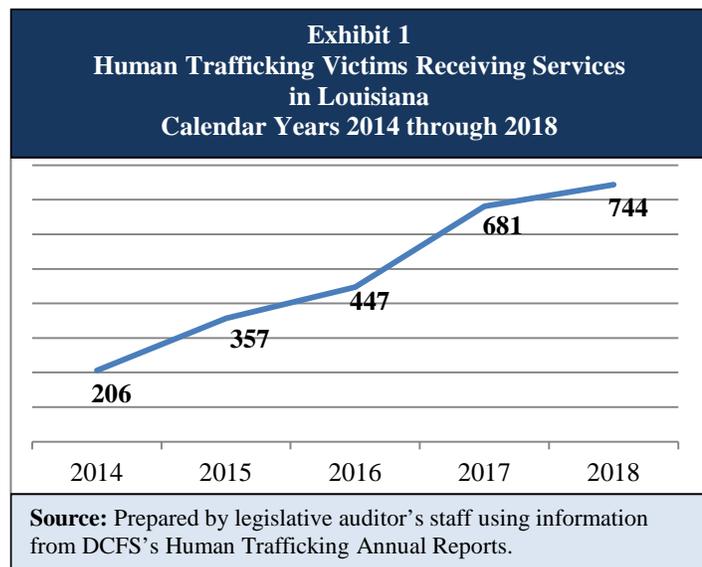
**Sex Trafficking** – adults are compelled to engage in commercial sex acts by force, fraud, or coercion. Minors are compelled to perform commercial sex acts regardless of the presence of force, fraud, or coercion.

**Labor Trafficking** – individuals are compelled to work or provide services by force, fraud, or coercion.

**Source:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

We conducted this audit because, according to statistics from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS),<sup>2</sup> the number of human trafficking victims receiving services in Louisiana has steadily increased by at least 261.2% from 206 in calendar year 2014 to 744 in calendar year 2018,<sup>3</sup> as shown in Exhibit 1. In addition, DCFS reported that 428 (57.5%) of 744 victims identified as juveniles and 678 (91.1%) victims were female. Caddo, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, and Orleans are the parishes most frequently identified as the trafficking locations for both adult and juvenile victims. See Appendix B for a breakdown of reported human trafficking victims by parish and age for calendar year 2018.

Louisiana’s efforts to address human trafficking include the establishment of a statewide Human Trafficking Prevention Commission (HTPC) within the Governor’s Office to



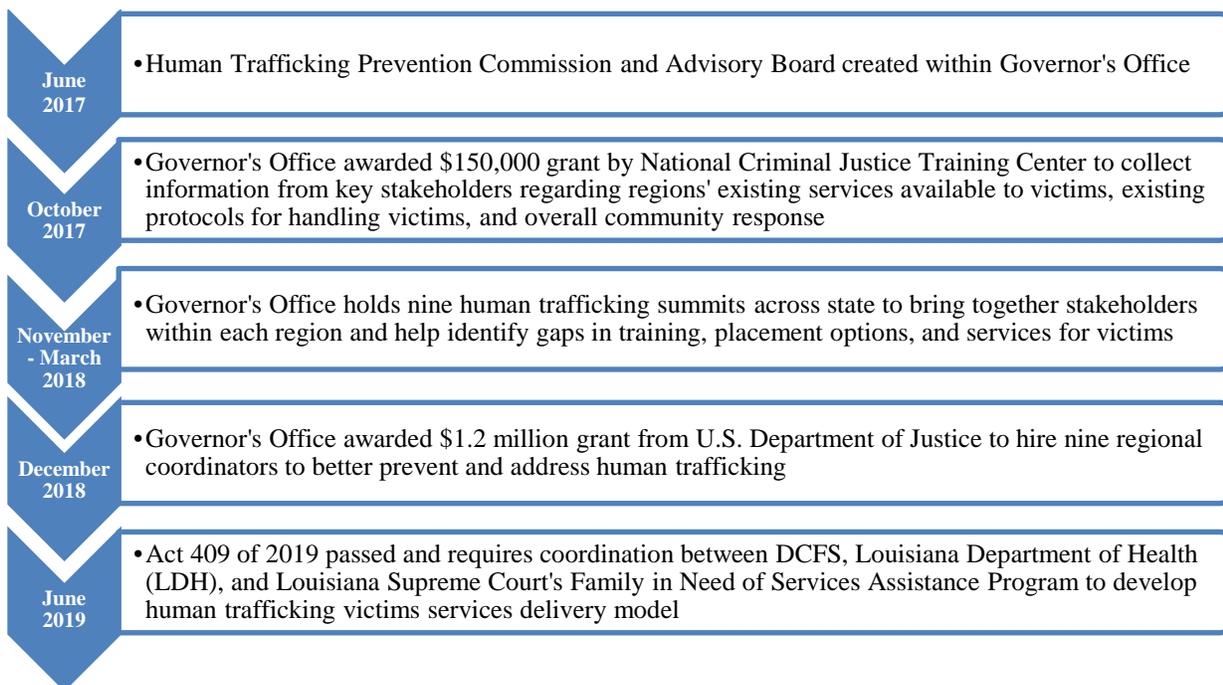
<sup>1</sup> Louisiana Revised Statutes (R.S.) 14:46.2 and 14:46.3

<sup>2</sup> Act 564 of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session requires DCFS to develop an annual statistical report by gathering data from service providers on the human trafficking victims they served during the year.

<sup>3</sup> See more about DCFS’s data on page 9 of this report. DCFS victim count data is based on voluntary reporting from service providers. Voluntary participation has increased from calendar years 2014 to 2018 which may be resulting in higher numbers of reported victims. In addition, DCFS states that these data likely include duplicates.

assist state and local leaders in developing and coordinating human trafficking programs and to strengthen prevention programs and intervention services in the state.<sup>4</sup> Louisiana also has two regional task forces located in New Orleans and in the Caddo/Bossier regions to address human trafficking issues in their areas. Exhibit 2 provides a timeline of Louisiana's recent statewide efforts to address human trafficking.

### Exhibit 2: Louisiana's Recent Statewide Efforts



**Source:** Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information from state law, stakeholders, and the HTPC 2018 Annual Report.

For this review, we interviewed multiple stakeholders, including HTPC members, state agencies, and non-profit organizations; and reviewed HTPC and task force reports, research, and best practices. According to Shared Hope International<sup>5</sup> and many stakeholders, Louisiana has established strong laws related to human trafficking; however, adequate funding has not been dedicated to the enforcement and implementation of these laws. In addition, there are still gaps and challenges that need to be addressed in order to effectively address human trafficking. The objective of this review was:

#### **To identify challenges and gaps in Louisiana's efforts to address human trafficking.**

Our results are summarized on the next page and discussed in detail throughout the remainder of the report. Appendix A details our scope and methodology, including a list of stakeholders we interviewed; Appendix B contains a breakdown of reported human trafficking victims by parish and age for calendar year 2018; Appendix C contains additional information about the entities involved in anti-trafficking efforts in Louisiana; and Appendix D contains information on federal grants received for human trafficking.

<sup>4</sup> R.S. 46:2165

<sup>5</sup> Shared Hope International is a non-profit that grades states based on the strength of their laws related to domestic minor sex trafficking. Grades are based on an annual review of state laws as analyzed under the Protected Innocence Challenge Legislative Framework. [https://sharedhope.org/PICframe9/reportcards/PIC\\_RC\\_2019\\_LA.pdf](https://sharedhope.org/PICframe9/reportcards/PIC_RC_2019_LA.pdf)

## Objective: To identify challenges and gaps in Louisiana's efforts to address human trafficking.

Overall, we found that Louisiana could strengthen its efforts to address human trafficking in the following areas:

- **Louisiana does not have a designated entity responsible for case management and coordination of services for adult victims of human trafficking or for juvenile victims who are not in DCFS custody. As a result, fewer resources are available to assist these victims and ensure they receive essential services.** Best practices<sup>6</sup> show that a coordinated approach to providing services and case management are important for meeting the diverse and complex needs of all human trafficking victims.
- **Louisiana lacks sufficient placement options and specialized mental health services for victims of human trafficking.** Although there are at least 291 beds available statewide for victims of human trafficking, placement options are often not available in rural areas or do not allow access for all victims. In addition, the development of a statewide and/or regional service provider registry that identifies which programs are evidence-based or incorporate best practices would help victims to better access services.
- **Louisiana has limited data on human trafficking victims and on the effectiveness of services.** Although DCFS collects some data on victims, the data is not complete because DCFS relies on service providers to voluntarily report their cases. In addition, there is no systematic or centralized collection of data on program outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-trafficking efforts and services provided to victims.
- **Although Louisiana has leveraged federal grants to help fund anti-trafficking activities, it does not have a predictable and consistent source of state funding.** For example, the legislature established a dedicated fund in June 2013 to pay for anti-trafficking efforts, but no funds have ever been deposited. In addition, some entities receive no funding for their human trafficking initiatives.
- **While some regions have developed methods to increase public awareness, a statewide campaign would help ensure that Louisiana residents know how to recognize and report human trafficking.** In addition, no entity is responsible for enforcing compliance with the state law that requires child assault awareness training in schools, and some entities need additional training to better identify human trafficking victims.

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<sup>6</sup> The Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) is a program of the Federal Office of Justice Programs that provides technical assistance for victim service providers and allied professionals who serve crime victims.

- **While Louisiana has established criminal laws with penalties for human trafficking, it could improve by providing prosecutorial immunity for trafficked youth and criminal record relief for adult victims as recommended by best practices.** Twenty states and the District of Columbia have legislated prosecutorial immunity for trafficked youth, meaning children cannot be charged with certain statutorily-specified crimes. This is important because a recent trend in state child trafficking policy focuses on treating trafficked youth as survivors of trauma who should be provided rehabilitative services rather than as perpetrators of crimes they were forced to commit.
- **Because Louisiana has focused most of its efforts on sex trafficking, awareness of labor trafficking and efforts to address it are lacking in Louisiana.** One of the largest labor trafficking cases in U.S. history resulted from human trafficking that occurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Additional training that is focused on labor trafficking may be effective to increase identification of these victims.

These areas are discussed further in the remainder of the report, along with recommendations to assist the legislature in strengthening Louisiana's current efforts to address human trafficking.

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**Louisiana does not have a designated entity responsible for case management and coordination of services for adult victims of human trafficking or for juvenile victims who are not in DCFS custody. Best practices show that a coordinated approach to providing services and case management are important for meeting the diverse and complex needs of all human trafficking victims.**

In Louisiana, the structure for addressing human trafficking is fragmented with multiple state, local, and non-government organizations all playing a role.<sup>7</sup> For example, Louisiana State Police (LSP) and local law enforcement entities are responsible for investigating cases of human trafficking, the Department of Children and Family Service (DCFS) is responsible for case management for children in its custody, and various non-profit and faith-based entities across the state provide housing and other services for victims. Best practices<sup>8</sup> show that a coordinated approach to providing services and case management are important for meeting the diverse and complex needs of all human trafficking victims.

**Louisiana does not have a designated agency responsible for case management for adult victims or for juvenile victims that are not in DCFS custody.** According to best practices,<sup>9</sup> because victims are often unaware of the benefits and services available to them, a

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<sup>7</sup> See Appendix C for a summary of entities involved in Louisiana and their roles.

<sup>8</sup> OVC TTAC

<sup>9</sup> OVC TTAC and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

designated entity and case manager are vital to assist victims in accessing services and acting as the single point of contact for the various entities involved in a human trafficking case, such as law enforcement and service providers. DCFS is responsible for case management and coordinating services for juvenile victims of human trafficking who are in DCFS custody. However, there is no designated agency responsible for case management and coordination of services for juvenile victims who are not in DCFS custody or for adult victims of human trafficking.

For juvenile victims of human trafficking, the National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the U.S.<sup>10</sup> recommends that the child welfare agency (DCFS in Louisiana) be able to respond to all cases of child human trafficking, including cases where the perpetrator is not a parent or caregiver. In addition, the HTPC recommended in its 2018 annual report that DCFS serve all juvenile victims of human trafficking.<sup>11</sup> In 2017, the Louisiana State Law Institute proposed legislation to make DCFS the lead agency for all juvenile victims of human trafficking.<sup>12</sup> According to DCFS, it had concerns about being able to serve an expanded population without having the necessary funding and resources. As a result, the bill was amended to remove the requirement that DCFS serve all juvenile victims.

For adult victims of human trafficking, Louisiana does not designate an entity responsible for service delivery or case management. Other states have designated entities responsible for providing services to adult victims. For example, Tennessee designates the Department of Human Services, and Washington uses an existing statewide network of crime victim service centers. The HTPC stated in its 2018 annual report that very few resources are available to assist adult victims in their identification, rescue, shelter, and recovery. Developing a service delivery model that includes a designated entity for adults may help them better access services.

**While Louisiana has recently passed legislation to develop a service delivery model for juvenile victims of human trafficking, this law does not require a model for adult victims.** Act 409 of the 2019<sup>13</sup> Regular Session requires DCFS, LDH, and the Family in Need of Services Assistance Program to develop a human trafficking victim services delivery model to provide a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach that coordinates resources and improves the statewide response and delivery of services to juvenile victims. The plan must address placements, funding, stakeholder partnerships, coordinated response, and appropriate and responsive services. A report on the progress of this plan is due to the Legislature in June 2020. According to DCFS, the primary aim of the report is to find solutions for how agencies can work together to better serve and eventually close the gap for juvenile victims who are not in DCFS custody. While this plan may address some challenges associated with service delivery and coordinated care for juvenile victims who are not in DCFS custody, the law does not require a

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<sup>10</sup> National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the U.S., Preliminary Recommendations to Strengthen the Nation's Response to the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the U.S., 2019

[https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/otip/preliminary\\_recommendations\\_to\\_strengthen\\_the\\_nations\\_response\\_to.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/otip/preliminary_recommendations_to_strengthen_the_nations_response_to.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <https://gov.louisiana.gov/assets/Programs/ChildrensCabinet/HTPC-2018-Exec-Summary-Annual-Report.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Senate Bill 54 of the 2017 Regular Legislative Session

<sup>13</sup> R.S. 46:62

service delivery plan for adults. According to DCFS, there may be aspects of the service delivery model for juveniles that could apply to adult victims as well.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider designating and funding an entity responsible for case management for adult victims and for minor victims of human trafficking who are not in DCFS custody.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider expanding R.S. 46:62 to require the development of a service delivery model that includes adult victims.

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**Louisiana lacks sufficient placement options and specialized mental health services for victims of human trafficking. Although there are at least 291 beds available statewide for victims of human trafficking, placement options are often not available in rural areas or do not allow access for all victims. In addition, the development of a statewide and/or regional service provider registry that identifies which programs are evidence-based or incorporate best practices would help victims to better access services.**

According to OVC TTAC and the National Human Trafficking Hotline, human trafficking crimes are complex in nature and victims experience deep physical and emotional trauma. As a result, trafficking victims may require an array of services to promote healing such as housing, medical and mental health care, and job training, and have needs ranging from immediate needs such as food, clothing, and emergency housing to more long-term needs such as trauma therapy and legal services. However, according to stakeholders, there are gaps in the availability of essential services for victims, and some programs are not evidence-based.

**Evidence-based treatment** is necessary to address the needs of victims. However, there are major gaps in Louisiana in terms of access to quality evidence-based treatment for trauma and substance abuse for youth. Efforts must be made to improve access to evidence-based services and monitoring to ensure quality and outcomes.

**Source:** HTPC

**Gaps exist in placement and housing options and in mental health services for human trafficking victims in Louisiana.** From November 2017 through March 2018, the Governor's Office held nine human trafficking summits across the state to bring together

stakeholders within each region to identify strengths and gaps in services for victims.<sup>14</sup> These summits revealed a lack of multiple types of services across the state. All regions cited the lack of placement options and the lack of specialized mental health services as a significant concern, as discussed below.

- **Limited placement, shelter, or housing options for all victims in all regions in the state.** Although there are at least 291 beds available statewide for victims of human trafficking<sup>15</sup> in entities such as Covenant House, Eden House, and Metanoia Manor, placement options are often not available in rural areas, and many do not allow access for certain victims, such as labor trafficking victims and victims who are male, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer), or adults with children. Because of the lack of placement options, law enforcement and first responders stated that they have no other option than to take victims to detention centers or jail. To address this issue, the HTPC recommended allocating funding to develop additional emergency and long-term placement options, create specialized foster homes, and develop at least two additional residences in New Orleans and Baton Rouge that provide long-term comprehensive recovery services.
- **Lack of adequate mental health services.** Although some housing providers and non-profit organizations like Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response (STAR), Gingerbread House, and Empower 225 provide mental health services, the regional summits showed that the state does not have adequate availability of specialized, trauma-informed and evidence-based services for trafficking victims. For example, Caddo Parish's Juvenile Services offers programs such as evidence-based Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) in Baton Rouge provides Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Trauma and Grief Component Therapy for Adolescents. However, these programs are not available statewide. To address this gap, the HTPC recommended implementation of evidence-based interventions to address the needs of trafficked youth, using knowledge of promising and best practices from other jurisdictions, while also collecting evidence for local program effectiveness to make data-driven decisions.

**To help victims access services, Louisiana should develop regional and state resource guides or service provider registries. These guides should indicate which programs are evidence-based and/or incorporate best practices, such as victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches.** Because a diverse array of providers and services is needed to address victim needs, some states have developed resource guides or referral directories of providers in different regions. The National Human Trafficking Hotline maintains a nationwide

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<sup>14</sup> Stakeholders at these summits identified gaps in other areas such as training and awareness efforts, which are discussed throughout this report. The summits were made possible by funding from AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program, a program of the National Criminal Justice Training Center which issued a report titled *State of Louisiana Child Sex Trafficking Project Report*, <https://gov.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/Issues/La-HT-Summit-Project-Report.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Greater New Orleans Human Trafficking Task Force, *Opening Doors: Louisiana Human Trafficking Survivor Housing Report* (2019), <http://www.nolatrafficking.org/research>

referral directory of anti-trafficking programs offering services to victims, and some states have taken steps to create statewide directories of service providers. For example, Washington maintains a statewide database of agencies that provide services to trafficking victims, and Nevada's Attorney General's website maintains a statewide human trafficking resource guide. In Louisiana, the Greater New Orleans Human Trafficking Task Force (GNOHTTF) maintains a provider resource guide that lists service providers and their contact information in the greater New Orleans region. The HTPC recommended that the state create a statewide provider directory to assist victims, especially adult victims, in accessing social and legal services.

Resource guides should also indicate which services are evidence-based and/or incorporate best practices in their programs. According to HHS, there is a lack of research and studies on which programs are effective. However, there are best practices<sup>16</sup> that should be included when designing and delivering programs for victims of human trafficking. For example, programs for victims should be victim-centered and trauma-informed. In a victim-centered approach, the victim's wishes, safety, and well-being take priority in all matters and procedures. Programs should also use a trauma-informed approach that (1) recognizes the impact of the trauma; (2) identifies recovery as a primary goal; (3) employs an empowerment model; (4) provides a respectful and safe atmosphere; (5) is culturally competent; and (6) involves the client in service feedback and evaluation. While the state cannot require that non-governmental or faith-based service providers incorporate best practices in their programs, it should identify those providers that do in a provider registry or resource guide.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider requiring service providers to use evidence-based and/or best practices when designing and delivering services to human trafficking victims.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider requiring the creation and maintenance of statewide and regional resource guides/provider registries.

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<sup>16</sup> HHS

**Louisiana has limited data on human trafficking victims and on the effectiveness of services. Although DCFS collects some data on victims, the data is not complete because DCFS relies on service providers to voluntarily report their cases. In addition, there is no systematic or centralized collection of data on program outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-trafficking efforts and services provided to victims.**

Collecting data on human trafficking victims and their characteristics is important for quantifying the prevalence of human trafficking and ensuring that sufficient and relevant services exist for victims. Outcome data is also needed to evaluate anti-trafficking efforts and services provided to victims in order to determine if current efforts are working. Various federal and state entities collect data on human trafficking cases. For example, HHS, the FBI, and the National Human Trafficking Hotline collect data nationally on statistics such as number of human trafficking cases, number of survivors identified, and number of potential traffickers. However, research shows that assessing the prevalence of child trafficking crimes within the U.S. is challenging because existing statistics vary greatly and are mostly limited to sex trafficking.<sup>17</sup> For example, current estimates for the number of American youth who are commercially sexually exploited range from 1,400 to 2 million according to the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council.<sup>18</sup>

**Although DCFS collects some data on victims, it cannot be used to accurately count or estimate all cases of human trafficking in Louisiana.** In Louisiana, Act 564 of the 2014 Regular Session requires that DCFS collect data related to the prevalence of human trafficking and issue an annual report that includes data on adult and juvenile victims involved in both sex and labor trafficking. However, data in DCFS's report is not complete because it relies on service providers to voluntarily provide information. As a result, not all service providers submitted data, resulting in the underreporting of trafficking victims. In addition, the report noted that agencies that provide services to migrant and refugee populations only minimally reported, resulting in the significant underreporting of labor trafficking data. According to DCFS's February 2019 report, there are 58 providers identified as providing human trafficking services, but only 60% of them reported to DCFS.

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<sup>17</sup> [NCSL "Safe Harbor: State Efforts to Combat Child Trafficking," April 2017](#)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.nationalacademies.org/hmd/~media/Files/Report%20Files/2013/Sexual-Exploitation-Sex-Trafficking/infographic.pdf>

**Data is also needed on program outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-trafficking efforts and services provided to victims.** Currently, there is no systematic or centralized data collected on services and their outcomes. As part of Act 564 of the 2014 Regular Session, DCFS collects limited data on the services victims receive, how long they receive services, and whether victims complete the service or exit for other reasons, such as returning to the trafficker. According to DCFS’s February 2019 report, only 31.7% of victims completed services during calendar year 2018, as shown in Exhibit 3.

| Exhibit 3<br>Exit Reasons Reported by Service Providers<br>Calendar Year 2018   |            |             |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Exit Reason   | Count      | %           |
| Completed service   | 58         | 31.7%       |
| No longer chooses to work with the provider   | 43         | 23.5%       |
| Unable to locate or other reason  | 46         | 25.1%       |
| Aged out (reached age 18)   | 12         | 6.6%        |
| Client returned to trafficker   | 9          | 4.9%        |
| Client moved out of service jurisdiction  | 6          | 3.3%        |
| Youth placed with family or guardian  | 6          | 3.3%        |
| Transferred/referred to another provider  | 3          | 1.6%        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>183</b> | <b>100%</b> |
| <i>Source: Prepared by legislative auditor’s staff using information from DCFS’s Human Trafficking, Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes, and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Annual Report, February 2019.</i> |            |             |

In addition, non-profits such as the CACs may collect data on victims and program outcomes; however, there is no requirement that entities collect specific and consistent data elements or report this information to any one entity. Examples of data elements that could be collected include characteristics of victims served, the results of surveys completed by participants, and outcome data for victims who receive services. This kind of information would allow the state to make data-driven decisions on what services are most effective and could be replicated across the state.

According to the National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the U.S., states should establish a data governance organization structure that defines who is responsible for data reporting, collection, maintenance, quality assurance, and analysis. This organization would also provide guidance on the sharing of data and establish policies on privacy, confidentiality, and data security. While there are currently no established standards for data collection on human trafficking, HHS’s Office on Trafficking in Persons’ Human Trafficking Data Collection Project<sup>19</sup> is working to establish these standards. A centralized entity could encourage providers to use these standards once they are established to collect data on human trafficking survivors.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider designating an entity responsible for data collection that is responsible for identifying what data elements should be collected, ensuring that providers are reporting data elements, and developing a database to use for analysis and evaluation purposes.

<sup>19</sup> This project examines current data collection practices, data standards, and technologies used for human trafficking data collection for the purposes of understanding human trafficking victimization and service needs. The project is gathering requirements for an interoperable data collection platform that could address known challenges in collecting data on human trafficking: inconsistent screening; insufficient service coordination; differences in data standards and formats; and lack of resources to securely collect, analyze, and share data. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/research-policy/data-collection>

**Although Louisiana has leveraged federal grants to help fund anti-trafficking activities, it does not have a predictable and consistent source of state funding. For example, the legislature established a dedicated fund in June 2013 to pay for anti-trafficking efforts, but no funds have ever been deposited. In addition, some entities receive no funding for their human trafficking initiatives.**

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and stakeholders we interviewed, one of the primary barriers to addressing human trafficking is the lack of financial resources to support awareness and training efforts, investigations, and services for victims. From federal fiscal years 2015 through 2019, Louisiana has received at least \$13.8 million in federal grant funding from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and HHS for state and local programs and services related to preventing and addressing human trafficking. For example, the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement (LCLE) applies for and manages DOJ and HHS grants and awards these funds to sub-grantees such as the non-profit housing providers Metanoia Manor and Covenant House. Appendix D summarizes the various federal grants and amounts that the state has received during federal fiscal years 2015 through 2019.

**Although state law created a dedicated fund in June 2013 to pay for anti-trafficking efforts, no funds have ever been deposited.** At least 22 states including Louisiana have created special funds to help pay for anti-trafficking efforts, including training law enforcement and providing services to victims of human trafficking.<sup>20</sup> In June 2013, the Louisiana Legislature established the Exploited Children's Special Fund,<sup>21</sup> which requires that any person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to an offense involving trafficking of children for sexual purposes, prostitution with persons under 17, or enticing persons into prostitution must pay \$2,000. Monies in the fund can be used for services administered by DCFS for sexually exploited children and adults, such as securing residential housing, health services, and social services, and can also be used by LCLE for training initiatives. However, according to the Louisiana Department of Treasury, no money has ever been deposited into this special fund. While individuals we spoke with did not know why no fines have been deposited into this fund, it may be because courts have flexibility in assessing and collecting fines, and districts are not required to track these cases.

**State law<sup>22</sup> also provides that fines collected for offenses related to the solicitation and purchasing of commercial sexual activity are shared by law enforcement and district attorneys for efforts to address human trafficking. However, these fines are not consistently collected and tracked by the courts, so we could not determine how much has been collected.** In Louisiana, the crime of purchasing commercial sexual activity carries increased fines based on the number of convictions and the age of the person from whom sex is being

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.ncsl.org/research/civil-and-criminal-justice/human-trafficking-an-overview-of-services-and-funding-for-survivors.aspx>

<sup>21</sup> R.S. 15:539.2

<sup>22</sup> R.S. 15:539.4

purchased, with maximum fines ranging from \$50,000 to \$75,000 per violation.<sup>23</sup> The law enforcement agency that made the arrest can use its distribution of the funds for training officers in the recognition and the prevention of human trafficking. The district attorney can use its funds to pay for victim services programs that counsel, treat, and help victims of human trafficking or those who are charged or convicted of prostitution. However, as we found in an April 2014 report on the collection of court costs and fines in Louisiana judicial districts,<sup>24</sup> fines assessed by the judicial system are not consistently collected and tracked by the courts. As a result, because the source of revenues are not always clear, the fees and fines that law enforcement and district attorneys rely on may not be applied to the proper use, nor can they depend on consistently receiving such funding to pay for victim services.

**Some entities do not receive any funding to support their human trafficking efforts.** Multiple law enforcement entities noted that extensive resources are required to conduct thorough investigations and, as awareness of human trafficking expands, the demands on these entities will continue to increase. For example:

- LSP receives no direct funding for its Human Trafficking Special Victims Unit which employs 11 investigators who work on child exploitation and human trafficking cases across the state.
- The Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control (ATC) receives no additional funding for its Human Trafficking Task Force which consists of five agents and one computer forensics expert who participate in human trafficking investigations of businesses with ATC permits.
- The Attorney General's office receives no additional funding for ongoing efforts to assist the Northwest Louisiana Human Trafficking Task Force.
- LCLE currently develops human trafficking training for law enforcement out of its regular Police Officer Standards and Training budget.

In addition to state agencies, most non-profit organizations do not receive state funding to support their efforts to address human trafficking. For example, there are 16 Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC) located throughout Louisiana dedicated to lessening the trauma experienced by child victims of sexual abuse, severe physical abuse, and/or crisis-related trauma. Some CACs provide training in their region on how to prevent, identify, and report potential human trafficking cases. For example, the Gingerbread House (CAC in Shreveport) obtained approval from the Bossier and Caddo School Boards to provide human trafficking training to children and faculty in area schools. The CACs play an important role in the identification of child sex trafficking victims and their case management. While the Louisiana Children's Code<sup>25</sup> requires that CACs conduct forensic interviews, lead Multi-Disciplinary Teams, and establish protocols for how to respond when a victim of child abuse is identified, CACs do not receive any state funding.

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<sup>23</sup> R.S. 14:82(C)

<sup>24</sup> The report can be found here:

[http://app1.la.state.la.us/PublicReports.nsf/0/EC68FCD9E9FFA8AC486257CAE00699A86/\\$FILE/00038BDE.pdf](http://app1.la.state.la.us/PublicReports.nsf/0/EC68FCD9E9FFA8AC486257CAE00699A86/$FILE/00038BDE.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Articles 523 and 524 of the Louisiana Children's Code provide for the governance and responsibilities of CACs.

**Other states fund human trafficking initiatives through various means. Many are similar to Louisiana in imposing fines on certain criminals, but several states appropriate money for specific anti-trafficking funds.** Arizona imposes fines on massage parlors and escort services for advertising violations. Texas charges sexually-oriented businesses, such as strip clubs, a fee of \$5 per customer. In 2016, Illinois lawmakers appropriated \$100,000 in the Specialized Services for Survivors of Human Trafficking Fund to make grants to non-governmental organizations for the purpose of providing specialized trauma-informed services associated with prostitution and human trafficking.<sup>26</sup> In 2016, Minnesota appropriated \$820,000 for grants to state and local units of government to support new or existing multijurisdictional entities to investigate, provide technical assistance, and train law enforcement on sex trafficking crimes. Since 2014, lawmakers in California have appropriated \$35 million for the state's Human Trafficking Victim Assistance Fund, which is distributed to qualified non-profit organizations that provide services to survivors of human trafficking. In addition, since 2012, Texas lawmakers have regularly made anti-trafficking-specific appropriations, mostly to the Department of Public Safety and the Office of the Governor. The Texas Office of the Governor has received approximately \$11.3 million in human trafficking-related appropriations since fiscal year 2012.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider more consistent and reliable funding for programs that prevent and address all types of human trafficking, including adult sex and labor trafficking.

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**While some regions have developed methods to increase public awareness, a statewide campaign would help ensure that Louisiana residents know how to recognize and report human trafficking. In addition, no entity is responsible for enforcing compliance with the state law that requires child assault awareness training in schools, and some entities need additional training to better identify human trafficking victims.**

Awareness and education are integral parts of identifying and preventing human trafficking, but according to the HTPC, the general public is unaware and uninformed of the experiences and realities of human trafficking victims. As a result, there is a need for efforts to increase community awareness, such as public awareness campaigns and educational initiatives targeted at individuals and groups at risk of becoming victims of human trafficking. In addition, training on how to identify human trafficking is needed for child welfare workers, teachers, healthcare workers, and other providers who regularly engage with children as well as for workers in industries where trafficking may occur, such as in hotels, casinos, and bars.

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<sup>26</sup> [NCSL "Safe Harbor: State Efforts to Combat Child Trafficking," April 2017](#)

**Similar to other states, Louisiana should develop a statewide awareness campaign to equip Louisiana residents with information on how to recognize, understand, and report human trafficking.**

While Louisiana has not developed a statewide awareness campaign, efforts have been made regionally by various entities. For example, the Northwest Louisiana FREE Coalition facilitated and conducted a public awareness campaign called “Not in My City” in Caddo and Bossier Parishes to increase public knowledge of how to identify and report cases of trafficking. In addition, state law<sup>27</sup> requires sexually-oriented businesses, massage parlors, hotels, gas stations, outpatient abortion clinics, airports, bus terminals, and railway stations to post information regarding the National Human Trafficking Hotline. The GNOHTTF is in the process of creating awareness materials in several languages that will be posted in places where vulnerable people congregate, and ATC distributed posters that include labor trafficking information to be posted in public places such as gas stations and public rest stops throughout the state. Other states have implemented statewide awareness campaigns that focus on identifying trafficking victims or reducing the demand for commercial sex, as described below.

Research consistently identifies certain risk factors that indicate a higher risk of becoming a victim, including:

- teenagers
- individuals that identify as LGBTQ
- runaways or homeless
- history of sexual or physical abuse
- interactions with child protective services or juvenile justice system
- substance abuse
- mental health issues
- living in high-crime areas, etc.

**Source:** HHS, National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center

- The Texas Office of the Attorney General developed a digital training tool designed to educate all Texans on what human trafficking is, how to identify victims, and how to report suspected trafficking. The video, “Be the One in the Fight Against Human Trafficking,” challenged all Texans to be a part of the solution in the fight against human trafficking, and all state employees were asked to view the video.
- The South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force takes various approaches to awareness including promoting the National Human Trafficking Hotline, awareness posters, billboards, and special events that generate dialogue in communities. Specifically, South Carolina has an “I Speak” poster that features more than 60 languages that law enforcement officers, healthcare providers, or others in the community can reference when providing assistance to potential human trafficking victims.
- Kansas’s “Demand an End” sex trafficking-specific public awareness campaign is driven by a demand-focus approach and designed to complement and build upon legislative initiatives to deter buyers and reduce the demand for commercial sex. The initiative also includes a new website with information about the effort and a petition for Kansans to sign to demand an end to sex buying.

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<sup>27</sup> R.S. 15:541.1

**Although Louisiana requires that schools provide instruction on child assault awareness, no entity is responsible for ensuring that schools comply with this requirement.** Erin's Law<sup>28</sup> was passed in during the 2014 Regular Session and requires all public elementary and secondary schools to provide age- and grade-appropriate classroom instruction on child assault awareness and prevention to students. However, neither the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) nor any other entity has the statutory authority to ensure that schools comply with this requirement. In addition, according to LDOE, schools have the autonomy to decide how and when the training will be provided, who will provide the training, and what the curriculum will include. The HTPC recommends that Erin's Law be implemented statewide and that a comprehensive coordinated statewide school-based education program be developed.

Gingerbread House, the CAC that serves Bossier and Caddo parishes, has been successful in collaborating with local school boards to provide nationally-recognized training to children in elementary and middle schools on preventing sexual abuse and trafficking of children. However, because Louisiana has historically been resistant to requiring or promoting sex education in schools, Gingerbread House staff stated that they had to earn the trust of the school administrators by presenting its curriculum and training in advance for approval. Staff also held many meetings with stakeholders, shared their research and resources, presented data on the prevalence of human trafficking in the areas, and made assurances that there would be no prophylactics provided or nudity shown during the training. Eventually, the school boards agreed when they saw the results from the early training sessions where a few children came forward to report abuse and/or trafficking.

**Training on how to identify human trafficking is needed for professionals who regularly engage with children or adults that may be potential victims.** According to the HTPC, training should be conducted at all points of contact in the community where a victim may be identified, including law enforcement officers, healthcare providers, courts, and schools. Currently, multiple organizations across the state provide critical training on detecting signs of human trafficking for some professionals. For example, all law enforcement and peace officers receive mandatory training on human trafficking, and DCFS collaborated with the Child Welfare Training Academy to customize specialized and in-depth human trafficking training for caregivers, case managers, and child welfare supervisors. In addition, Act 280 of the 2019 Regular Session requires abortion facility staff to participate in training on human trafficking awareness and prevention on an annual basis.<sup>29</sup> Appendix C includes training conducted by various state entities.

**Identifying victims of human trafficking is a challenge.** Victims often do not self-identify as a victim, meaning they do not recognize that they are victims of abuse. Victims may be coached by their trafficker to fear the police; they are made to believe that they will be arrested or deported if encountered by authorities. In some cases, the trafficked individual is attempting to escape other problems in their life such as an abusive family or extreme poverty.

Source: [Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth: A Summary of the Research and Recommendations for the Field, 2018](#)

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<sup>28</sup> R.S. 17:81(Y), also referred to as "Erin's Law" after Erin Merryn, a victim of sexual abuse as a child and prominent activist in the effort to further prevent child sexual abuse.

<sup>29</sup> R.S. 40:2175.7

The HTPC and the Governor's Office's regional summits identified multiple gaps in training. For example, the school system is a primary point of entry where training should be mandated for all school personnel to improve identification and response to sex trafficking of minors. However, Caddo, Bossier, DeSoto, and Webster are currently the only parishes that have conducted coordinated human trafficking training in schools for all personnel including teachers, custodians, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, administrators, and school resource officers. Some non-profits also provide training in schools, but only to select groups. For example, Catholic Charities provides some human trafficking training in New Orleans Catholic schools, and the Recognizing Exploitation and Advancing Life (REAL) Choices program<sup>30</sup> is a training facilitated by Eden House in New Orleans for high school-aged students who are at risk for human trafficking.

**Training to identify signs of human trafficking would also be beneficial in businesses/industries where human trafficking is common such as hotels, casinos, bars, and massage parlors.** According to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, the hospitality industry is one of the many venues that traffickers use to exploit their victims because trafficking victims often go unnoticed by hotel guests and staff.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, it is important for staff in the hospitality industry to recognize the signs of human trafficking and be prepared to act if they observe a potential human trafficking situation in their

establishment. Hotels and motels may be especially attractive venues for all forms of human trafficking, but trafficking can occur at many venues in the tourism and hospitality industries including bars, massage parlors, nail salons, and sporting events. For example, stakeholders noted that events such as the Super Bowl and the Louisiana Grand Isle Tarpon Rodeo are magnets for trafficking. However, employees working in these industries may not be educated on how to recognize and report signs of trafficking. According to information from the National Human Trafficking Hotline, the top venues for sex and labor trafficking in Louisiana in calendar year 2018 were hotels, motels, illicit massage parlors, and retail businesses.<sup>32</sup> Stakeholders also agreed that businesses in the hospitality and tourism industries are common trafficking venues and recommend additional training for employees in these businesses.

“Human trafficking is one of the world’s biggest and fastest-growing crimes. It affects every industry sector, including the hotel sector, and every service level within the hotel sector from budget to luxury. Hotels thus need to take action to reduce the risk of trafficking for sexual exploitation in their premises, and the risk of forced labor through the use of unscrupulous labor providers.”

**Source:** Fran Hughes, International Tourism Partnership

According to the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards' 2017 report on human trafficking,<sup>33</sup> since regulatory authorities are charged with protecting the public and vetting individuals who apply for a credential to practice in the profession, training in human trafficking specifically as it relates to the massage profession and knowledge of a jurisdiction's resources and laws are essential in the protection of the public, prevention and prosecution of human

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<sup>30</sup> REAL Choices educates the community to identify, resist, and prevent human trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, and gender-based violence in the New Orleans area through outreach and prevention education.

<https://edenhousenola.org/prevention/>

<sup>31</sup> <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/resources/human-trafficking-and-hospitality-industry>

<sup>32</sup> <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/state/louisiana>

<sup>33</sup> Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards, Human Trafficking Task Force Report, 2017. <https://www.fsmtb.org/media/1606/htf-report-final-web.pdf>

trafficking, and in the treatment of victims. The transportation sector can also play a role in facilitating human trafficking; Truckers Against Trafficking<sup>34</sup> is a non-profit that exists to educate, equip, empower, and mobilize members of the trucking, bus, and energy industries to combat human trafficking.

Local efforts to combat human trafficking in the hospitality industry include ATC providing human trafficking training at some casinos in Louisiana. In addition, ordinances in East Baton Rouge and Jefferson parishes<sup>35</sup> suspend or revoke hotel permits if law enforcement receives more than a certain number of complaints related to potential human trafficking that were not made by hotel staff. These ordinances encourage hotels to be more aware, self-monitor, and report any concerns to law enforcement. However, according to some stakeholders, to successfully identify signs of human trafficking, law enforcement would need buy-in from chain hotels to provide training to their staff. In addition, there is the risk that hotel employees may be paid by traffickers to alert them to any law enforcement activities.

Nationally, at least four states<sup>36</sup> have passed legislation that requires training for employees of lodging facilities to recognize signs of human trafficking and what actions to take in the event that such signs are observed. In addition, some businesses related to tourism have signed the Tourism Child-Protection Code of Conduct, which is a voluntary set of business principles that travel and tour companies can implement to help prevent sexual exploitation and trafficking of children.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider establishing and funding a statewide awareness campaign to equip Louisiana residents with information on how to recognize, understand, and report human trafficking.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider granting LDOE the authority to ensure schools comply with R.S. 17:81(Y) that requires all public elementary and secondary schools to provide age- and grade-appropriate classroom instruction to all students on child assault awareness and prevention.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider mandating statewide human trafficking training for the numerous entities that engage with children and adults that are potential victims, including all school personnel, first responders, healthcare professionals, juvenile justice providers, and child welfare and shelter staff.

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<sup>34</sup> <https://truckersagainstrafficking.org/>

<sup>35</sup> East Baton Rouge Parish Ordinance 9:1250 and Jefferson Parish Municipal Ordinance 17.5-8

<sup>36</sup> California, Connecticut, Minnesota, and New Jersey

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**While Louisiana has established criminal laws with penalties for human trafficking, it could improve by providing prosecutorial immunity for trafficked youth and criminal record relief for adult victims as recommended by best practices.**

The 2019 report card issued by Shared Hope International rated Louisiana's human trafficking criminal laws as an "A," meaning the laws make the actions of traffickers, buyers, and facilitators subject to serious penalties, including high fines as discussed in previous sections. However, child sex trafficking victims in Louisiana are not fully protected from criminalization for prostitution and other offenses committed as a result of their victimization, and adult victims are not provided criminal record relief.

**Louisiana law does not provide prosecutorial immunity for trafficked youth.**

According to NCSL, a recent trend in state child trafficking policy focuses on treating trafficked youth as survivors of trauma who should be provided rehabilitative services rather than as perpetrators of crimes they were forced to commit.<sup>37</sup> Policies created for this purpose are a subset of child trafficking measures often referred to as "safe harbor" laws. Twenty states and the District of Columbia have legislated prosecutorial immunity for trafficked youth, meaning children cannot be charged with certain statutorily-specified crimes. Laws differ in that some states provide criminal immunity to every person under 18, while other states such as Kentucky, Montana, North Dakota, and Oklahoma require proof that the child is a trafficking survivor before they can benefit from criminal and/or juvenile court immunity. The majority of states that provide criminal immunity do so for prostitution, but some state laws also extend immunity to misdemeanor theft, controlled substances, and other crimes committed as a direct result of being trafficked, such as in North Dakota.

**While Louisiana provides criminal record relief for human trafficking survivors who were minors at the time of their arrests, these laws do not apply to adult victims.**

According to Polaris,<sup>38</sup> human trafficking victims are commonly arrested for prostitution or other crimes, such as possession of weapons, drugs, or trespassing. This results in trafficking victims having a criminal record, which can result in difficulty finding employment and housing. While there is no nationwide data on how many trafficking survivors have a criminal record as a result of their victimization, an August 2016 survey conducted by the National Survivor Network found that 118 (90.8%) of 130 trafficking survivors reported having been arrested.<sup>39</sup>

In 2010, New York became the first state to allow trafficking survivors to clear charges from their criminal records. Since then, almost every state has enacted some form of criminal record relief for trafficking survivors. However, these laws vary greatly. According to Polaris, Louisiana is one of four states (along with Georgia, Missouri, and Tennessee) that have trafficking-specific laws for criminal record relief<sup>40</sup> that only apply to survivors who were

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<sup>37</sup> [NCSL "Safe Harbor: State Efforts to Combat Child Trafficking," April 2017](#)

<sup>38</sup> Polaris is a non-profit that works to combat and prevent human trafficking.

<sup>39</sup> <https://nationalsurvivornetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/VacateSurveyFinal.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> LSA Ch.C. Art 923

minors at the time of their arrests. However, the average age at entry into trafficking was 19 years old for potential victims who contacted the National Human Trafficking Hotline between January 2015 and June 2018. Louisiana's current law leaves adult trafficking victims without the opportunity for criminal record relief. In addition, according to the HTPC, the current law extends only to prostitution-related offenses and recommends amending the law to include other offenses arising from trafficking.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider providing prosecutorial immunity for trafficked youth.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider expanding access to criminal record relief to adult victims of human trafficking and for other offenses arising from trafficking.

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### **Because Louisiana has focused most of its efforts on sex trafficking, awareness of labor trafficking and efforts to address it are lacking in Louisiana.**

According to stakeholders, awareness of and efforts to address labor trafficking in Louisiana are lacking. Victims of labor trafficking can be young, old, male, or female. Some victims enter the country legally on worker visas, while others are in the U.S. illegally. Some are employed in common occupations such as domestic, agriculture, or construction work, while others work in illegal industries such as the drug trade. According to HHS, there are several forms of exploitative practices linked to labor trafficking that can affect adults and children (*see text box at right*).

**Bonded labor/debt bondage** is probably the least known form of labor trafficking but the most widely used method of enslaving people. Labor is demanded as a means of repayment for a loan or service. However, the terms or conditions are not defined or the value of the victims' labor is not appropriately applied toward the debt.

**Forced labor** is a situation in which victims are forced to work against their own will, under the threat of violence or some other form of punishment. Forced labor can include domestic servitude, agricultural labor, sweatshop factory labor, and other service industry labor.

Source: HHS

According to stakeholders, addressing labor trafficking has not been a priority in Louisiana, in part due to limited resources. In addition, labor trafficking has unique challenges including cultural and language barriers. Many victims do not speak English and according to stakeholders, some victims are immigrants who are making more money than they would in their home countries and worry about being deported if they talk to law enforcement.

Federal programs are in place to assist victims of human trafficking in stabilizing their immigration status and accessing benefits and services including food, healthcare, and employment assistance.<sup>41</sup> In addition, LSP stated it has partnered with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to obtain special visas for labor trafficking victims and to provide them with services. However, according to members of the GNOHTTF Labor Trafficking Committee,

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<sup>41</sup> <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/victim-assistance/services-available-to-victims-of-trafficking>

connecting victims with service providers rather than processing them as criminals is not consistent throughout the state, and victims of labor trafficking are often deported, which can hinder investigations and prosecution of labor traffickers.

Research,<sup>42</sup> best practices,<sup>43</sup> and the HTPC recommend conducting a threat assessment to identify potential locations, industries, and categories of victims that are susceptible to labor trafficking as a first step in developing a plan to address this issue (see graphic at right<sup>44</sup>). Best practices encourage partnerships between federal, state, and local entities that already have information about potential locations for labor trafficking including law enforcement and regulatory entities. For example, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) has implemented a mandatory annual human trafficking training for personnel who visit work sites. LWC staff also regularly review and investigate complaints received related to human trafficking.



Source: <https://truckersagainstrafficking.org/>

According to Polaris, labor traffickers seek to exploit vulnerabilities in victims that are rampant in the aftermath of natural disasters. Disasters can cause people to lose their jobs, homes, livelihoods, communities, support systems, and stability. In addition, law enforcement and state agencies may be too overwhelmed by logistical issues and meeting the immediate needs of the community to protect vulnerable citizens from exploitation.<sup>45</sup> For example, one of the largest labor trafficking cases in U.S. history resulted from human trafficking that occurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.<sup>46</sup> Signal International, LLC used the federal government's H-2B guest worker program to import nearly 500 men from India to work as welders, pipefitters, and in other positions to repair damaged oil rigs and related facilities. When the men arrived at Signal shipyards in Pascagoula, Mississippi, beginning in 2006, they discovered that they would not receive the permanent resident immigration status they had been promised. Signal also forced them each to pay \$1,050 a month to live in isolated, guarded labor camps where as many as 24 men shared a space the size of a double-wide trailer. Under the guest worker program rules, workers are tied to a specific employer through a temporary work visa and are not allowed to change jobs if they are mistreated, and face deportation if they complain, are fired, or quit. A federal jury awarded \$14 million in compensatory and punitive damages to five Indian guest workers who were defrauded and exploited and ruled that Signal engaged in labor trafficking, fraud, racketeering, and discrimination.

<sup>42</sup> *Proactive Case Identification Strategies and the Challenges of Initiating Labor Trafficking Cases*, Desai and Tepfer, 2017. <https://cclou.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Labor-trafficking-article.pdf>

<sup>43</sup> OVC TTAC

<sup>44</sup> [www.truckersagainstrafficking.org/labor-trafficking/](http://www.truckersagainstrafficking.org/labor-trafficking/)

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.nolattrafficking.org/natural-disasters>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.splcenter.org/news/2015/02/18/federal-jury-splc-case-awards-14-million-indian-guest-workers-victimized-labor-trafficking>

HHS provides information for disaster responders and describes actions that they can take before, during, and after a natural disaster to mitigate the risk of labor trafficking.<sup>47</sup> For instance, HHS recommends that, in preparation for natural disasters, labor trafficking training be incorporated in the training for first responders and that disaster responders get to know where the at-risk populations are located and build relationships with leaders in those areas. The City of Houston Mayor's Office took proactive steps to mitigate the potential impact of natural disasters on human trafficking by developing a short- and long- term disaster response toolkit that was used during Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath in August 2017. The toolkit contains presentations to explain what human trafficking is, information about the vulnerability of displaced people, informational materials in several languages, sample social media messages, signs that can be displayed in public places, and educational materials.<sup>48</sup> The HTPC report found that Louisianans are at risk for labor trafficking due to high poverty rates, high hunger and food insecurity, high risk of natural disasters, and high unemployment and recommended the creation of a statewide "Natural Disaster Awareness Plan" modeled after Houston's toolkit.

**Additional training that is focused on labor trafficking may be effective to increase identification of these victims.** As with many forms of abuse, first responders, including law enforcement and healthcare workers, often interact with individuals who may be victims of labor trafficking. Other groups that may benefit from training are those already investigating in areas that may overlap with labor trafficking, such as organized crime and drug trafficking. In addition, research and best practices encourage targeted outreach for populations that are vulnerable to becoming labor trafficking victims including undocumented workers, individuals in the U.S. legally on guest worker programs, and unaccompanied minors. Providing specialized training and awareness for these individuals may help to prevent them from becoming victims of labor trafficking.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider funding implementation of the HTPC's recommendation to conduct a threat assessment to identify potential locations, industries, and categories of victims who are susceptible to labor trafficking as a first step in developing a plan to address labor trafficking.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider implementation of the HTPC's recommendation to create a statewide "Natural Disaster Awareness Plan" modeled after the City of Houston's Mayor's Office Emergency Disaster Response Toolkit.

**Matter for Legislative Consideration:** The legislature may wish to consider expanding current human trafficking mandates to include training specific to labor trafficking.

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<sup>47</sup> <https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Documents/disaster-resp-trafficking.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> <https://humantraffickinghouston.org/toolkits/emergency-disaster-response-toolkit/#watchfortraffickAfterNaturalDisasters>



## APPENDIX A: SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This report provides the results of our evaluation of Louisiana’s efforts to address human trafficking. We conducted this evaluation under the provisions of Title 24 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended. This evaluation generally covered fiscal years 2014 through 2019, which allowed us to evaluate the state’s most recent efforts. Our objective was:

### **To identify challenges and gaps in Louisiana’s efforts to address human trafficking.**

This audit was not conducted in accordance with generally accepted *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; however, we used those standards as a guide and believe the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions. To answer our objective, we performed the following audit steps:

- Reviewed Louisiana state laws and federal laws related to human trafficking.
- Interviewed the following stakeholders to identify gaps and challenges: Sen. Ronnie Johns, the Louisiana Children’s Cabinet, Louisiana State Police, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, Louisiana Sheriffs Association, Judge Joy Cossich Lobrano, Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement, Children Advocacy Centers, Office of Juvenile Justice, Greater New Orleans Human Trafficking Task Force, East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney, Alcohol Tobacco Control Human Trafficking Task Force, Louisiana Law Institute, Dr. Laura Murphy, Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Attorney General, Louisiana Public Defender Board, Louisiana Workforce Commission.
- Reviewed best practices, research materials, and reports related to human trafficking from sources including the Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center, National Conference of State Legislatures, the Department of Children and Family Services, the Louisiana Human Trafficking Prevention Commission and Advisory Board, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Polaris.
- Attended multiple meetings of the Louisiana Human Trafficking Prevention Commission and the Greater New Orleans Human Trafficking Task Force committee on labor trafficking.
- Incorporated feedback from stakeholders into the final report.



## APPENDIX B: TRAFFICKING VICTIMS BY PARISH AND AGE CALENDAR YEAR 2018

The exhibit below summarizes the number of human trafficking victims reported for calendar year 2018 by parish and age in the Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) Calendar Year 2018 Annual Report titled *Human Trafficking, Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes, and Commercial Sexual Exploitation*.<sup>49</sup> Caddo, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, and Orleans are the parishes most frequently identified as the trafficking locations for both adult and juvenile victims. This data was self-reported to DCFS by 32 agencies, including DCFS. According to DCFS, the trafficking location was not reported on 32 adult victims and 50 minor victims, which places some limitation on this data.

| Parish                  | 18 and Older      |                  | Age 17 and Under  |                  | Age Unknown       |                  |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
|                         | Trafficked Parish | Parish of Origin | Trafficked Parish | Parish of Origin | Trafficked Parish | Parish of Origin |
| Acadia                  | 0                 | 0                | 0                 | 2                | 0                 | 0                |
| Allen                   | 0                 | 0                | 0                 | 1                | 0                 | 0                |
| Ascension               | 7                 | 9                | 5                 | 1                | 0                 | 0                |
| Avoyelles               | 1                 | 1                | 2                 | 3                | 0                 | 0                |
| Bienville               | 0                 | 0                | 1                 | 1                | 0                 | 0                |
| Bossier                 | 0                 | 1                | 22                | 30               | 0                 | 0                |
| <b>Caddo</b>            | <b>16</b>         | <b>15</b>        | <b>92</b>         | <b>78</b>        | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>         |
| Calcasieu               | 6                 | 7                | 18                | 19               | 1                 | 1                |
| Claiborne               | 0                 | 0                | 1                 | 1                | 0                 | 0                |
| Concordia               | 0                 | 0                | 2                 | 2                | 0                 | 0                |
| De Soto                 | 0                 | 0                | 2                 | 2                | 0                 | 0                |
| <b>East Baton Rouge</b> | <b>59</b>         | <b>55</b>        | <b>47</b>         | <b>44</b>        | <b>1</b>          | <b>1</b>         |
| East Carroll            | 0                 | 0                | 0                 | 2                | 0                 | 0                |
| Grant                   | 0                 | 0                | 3                 | 2                | 0                 | 0                |
| Iberia                  | 1                 | 1                | 0                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                |
| Jackson                 | 0                 | 0                | 1                 | 1                | 0                 | 0                |
| <b>Jefferson</b>        | <b>4</b>          | <b>6</b>         | <b>7</b>          | <b>24</b>        | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>         |
| Jefferson Davis         | 1                 | 0                | 1                 | 2                | 0                 | 0                |
| Lafayette               | 2                 | 1                | 5                 | 6                | 0                 | 0                |
| Lafourche               | 1                 | 2                | 0                 | 3                | 0                 | 0                |
| Lincoln                 | 4                 | 3                | 4                 | 6                | 5                 | 5                |
| Livingston              | 2                 | 3                | 10                | 7                | 0                 | 0                |
| Madison                 | 0                 | 0                | 1                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                |
| Natchitoches            | 1                 | 1                | 4                 | 3                | 0                 | 0                |
| <b>Orleans</b>          | <b>34</b>         | <b>16</b>        | <b>83</b>         | <b>75</b>        | <b>4</b>          | <b>3</b>         |
| Ouachita                | 0                 | 0                | 5                 | 10               | 0                 | 0                |

<sup>49</sup>

<http://www.defs.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/searchable/Child%20Welfare/PlansReports/Human%20Trafficking%20Report%202019.pdf>

| Parish   | 18 and Older      |                  | Age 17 and Under  |                  | Age Unknown       |                  |
|--|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
|  | Trafficked Parish | Parish of Origin | Trafficked Parish | Parish of Origin | Trafficked Parish | Parish of Origin |
| Plaquemines  | 0                 | 0                | 1                 | 1                | 0                 | 0                |
| Pointe Coupee  | 1                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                |
| Rapides  | 2                 | 2                | 5                 | 9                | 0                 | 0                |
| St. Bernard  | 0                 | 2                | 1                 | 2                | 0                 | 0                |
| St. Charles  | 1                 | 3                | 0                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                |
| St. Helena   | 0                 | 0                | 1                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                |
| St. James  | 1                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                |
| St. John   | 0                 | 0                | 0                 | 1                | 0                 | 0                |
| St. Landry   | 0                 | 0                | 2                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                |
| St. Mary   | 0                 | 0                | 2                 | 1                | 0                 | 0                |
| St. Tammany  | 4                 | 2                | 4                 | 10               | 0                 | 0                |
| Tangipahoa   | 3                 | 1                | 8                 | 4                | 0                 | 0                |
| Terrebonne   | 0                 | 0                | 3                 | 5                | 0                 | 0                |
| Union  | 0                 | 0                | 3                 | 2                | 0                 | 0                |
| Washington   | 0                 | 0                | 5                 | 0                | 0                 | 0                |
| Webster  | 0                 | 0                | 8                 | 8                | 0                 | 0                |
| Multiple   | 13                | 0                | 17                | 0                | 0                 | 0                |
| Out of State*  | 26                | 43               | 2                 | 9                | 1                 | 2                |
| Out of Country**   | 1                 | 8                | 0                 | 2                | 0                 | 0                |
| Unknown  | 32                | 41               | 50                | 49               | 81                | 81               |
| <b>Totals</b>  | <b>223</b>        | <b>223</b>       | <b>428</b>        | <b>428</b>       | <b>93</b>         | <b>93</b>        |
| *Out of state locations included Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Missouri, Mississippi, Idaho, Illinois, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, and Tennessee.                                  |                   |                  |                   |                  |                   |                  |
| **Out of country locations included Mexico, Turkey, China, Guatemala, Honduras, and St. Lucia.   |                   |                  |                   |                  |                   |                  |
| <b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information provided in DCFS's Calendar Year 2018 Annual Report titled <i>Human Trafficking, Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes, and Commercial Sexual Exploitation</i> , February 2019. |                   |                  |                   |                  |                   |                  |

## APPENDIX C: ENTITIES INVOLVED IN ADDRESSING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Due to the complex nature of human trafficking, many state, local, and non-governmental entities are involved in addressing human trafficking, each with a unique jurisdiction, authority, or expertise over the different aspects of human trafficking. This appendix summarizes some of the entities involved and their role. In addition to these entities, many non-governmental entities throughout the state are involved in efforts to address human trafficking.

| <b>State and Local Entities Involved in Human Trafficking</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <b>State and Local Entities</b>                               |  |
| <b>Entity</b>   | <b>Description</b>   |
| Office of Alcohol Tobacco Control (ATC)                       | <p>ATC has a Human Trafficking Task Force based in New Orleans that consists of five ATC agents and one computer forensics expert. ATC often partners with federal, state, and local law enforcement to assist in human trafficking investigations of businesses with ATC permits. ATC agents are trained law enforcement officers who can suspend ATC issued licenses/permits, conduct raids, seize property, and/or enter into consent agreements with businesses during investigations.</p> <p>ATC provides human trafficking training to staff in hotels and casinos, and has a training program for high schools and colleges that provides information on trafficking, traffickers, and internet safety. ATC also provides awareness training to community-based (e.g., apartment associations, non-profits), faith-based organizations, and social groups such as sororities, Junior League, and Kiwanis. In addition, Act 280 of the 2019 Regular Session requires ATC to approve a human trafficking flyer that all full-service gas stations adjacent to an interstate highway and all highway rest stops are required to post to the inside of the door to each bathroom stall.</p> |
| Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)             | <p>Act 409 of the 2019 Regular Session requires DCFS, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), and the Family in Need of Services Assistance Program to develop a human trafficking victim services delivery model to provide a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach that coordinates resources and improves the statewide response and delivery of services to juvenile victims. The plan must address placements, funding, stakeholder partnerships, coordinated response, and appropriate and responsive services. A report on the progress of this plan is due to the Legislature in June 2020.</p> <p>DCFS collaborated with the Child Welfare Training Academy (CWTA) and Empower 225 to customize specialized and in-depth “Human Trafficking 101” training for caregivers, case managers, and child welfare supervisors who service human trafficking victims, as well as a basic computer-based training that is available to the public on the Louisiana CWTA website.</p> <p>DCFS is responsible for case management and services for children in its custody</p>  |

| <b>State and Local Entities (Cont.)</b>                           |  |
|---|--|
| Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and Local School Systems | Local school systems have the autonomy to decide how the training related to "Erin's Law" will be provided, who will provide the training, what the curriculum will entail, and how often the training is provided. According to LDOE, it provides information to school systems about new laws and requirements, but does not have authority to monitor schools to ensure compliance with "Erin's Law" requirements.  |
| Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement (LCLE)                    | LCLE provides mandatory basic Police Officer Standards and Training for all law enforcement and peace officers on human trafficking. This basic curriculum includes identifying and assisting victims of human trafficking, understanding the perception of human trafficking crimes and victims, and state and federal laws. LCLE has also developed more in-depth electives on human trafficking topics that are available online for in-service training, such as an introduction to modern slavery, labor trafficking, and information on visas. In addition, LCLE awards \$50,000 annually to agencies that identify/address human trafficking crimes to develop training for their employees. In the past, LCLE has awarded this grant to the Louisiana District Attorneys Association to provide training on how to prosecute human trafficking crimes as well as law enforcement agencies for training on identifying human trafficking cases. LCLE manages and sub-grants some Department of Justice and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) grants |
| Louisiana Department of Health (LDH)                              | LDH’s Office of Public Health’s Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) has an initiative to provide training to EMS/first responders on identifying and reporting trafficking victims. Beginning August 1, 2019, Act 280 of 2019 requires that certain mandatory reporters to law enforcement shall certify to LDH that they have participated in training on human trafficking awareness and prevention on an annual basis. The bill further requires that LDH promulgate rules to provide for compliance with the training requirement in new law utilizing the online educational videos on human trafficking awareness and prevention provided by the HHS, Administration for Children and Families, Office on Trafficking in Persons. Via Medicaid, LDH provides services to human trafficking victims who are eligible for Medicaid.   |
| Attorney General (AG)   | The AG provides human trafficking training to local law enforcement and others and the AG assists the Northwest Louisiana Human Trafficking Task Force with investigations   |
| Louisiana State Police (LSP) and Local Law Enforcement            | LSP operates a Human Trafficking Special Victims Unit that provides training across the state on investigating and detecting the signs of human trafficking for other law enforcement entities and the gaming industry. Whenever LSP has a case where local law enforcement is involved, it takes the opportunity to educate them on the topic of human trafficking. In addition, LSP has also started outreach with school systems by providing them training on identifying victims of human trafficking.  |
| Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)                              | LWC has implemented a mandatory annual human trafficking training for personnel who visit work sites. LWC staff also regularly review and investigate complaints it receives related to human trafficking.   |

| <b>State and Local Entities (Cont.)</b>  |  |
|--|--|
| Office of the Governor   | The Children’s Cabinet in the Office of the Governor serves as the governing body for the state of Louisiana responsible for coordinating funding and programmatic services at the state and local level related to children and their families. In addition, The Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board provides information and recommendations from the perspective of advocacy groups, service providers, and parents on policies and programs relating to Louisiana children.  |
| District Attorney (DA)   | District Attorneys investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases.  |
| <b>Commission, Advisory Group, and Task Forces</b>   |  |
| Louisiana Human Trafficking Commission and Advisory Committee  | Act 181 of the 2017 Regular Legislative Session created the Human Trafficking Prevention Commission within the Governor’s Office to conduct a review of all existing public and private human trafficking programs in Louisiana to identify gaps in prevention and intervention services, to assist state and local leaders in developing and coordinating human trafficking prevention programs, and to increase coordination among public and private programs to strengthen programs and intervention services in the state.                                    |
| Greater New Orleans Human Trafficking Task Force (GNOHTTF)   | The GNOHTTF, established in 2015, has a multi-disciplinary task force model funded by a Department of Justice grant for Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Force to Combat Human Trafficking. The GNOHTTF funds both service providers and law enforcement agencies to create a victim-centered, trauma-informed collaborative response to victims/survivors and their needs. The task force has more than 85 member organizations from different sectors, including law enforcement, social services, legal services, medical services, and research institutions. |
| Northwest Louisiana Human Trafficking Task Force   | Created in November 2019, this task force is led by the U.S. Attorney’s Office and Bossier Parish Sheriff’s Office. The task force is a collaboration of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors, along with local non-governmental victim services organizations, including civic, faith-based, and social services organizations.   |
| <b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor’s staff using information provided by entities included in exhibit above. |  |



## APPENDIX D: FEDERAL GRANTS FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Between federal fiscal years 2015 and 2019, Louisiana has received at least \$13.8 million in federal grant funding from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for state and local programs and services related to preventing and addressing human trafficking.

| <b>DOJ and HHS Grants awarded to Entities in Louisiana for Programs Addressing Human Trafficking*</b>   |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |                     |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Federal Fiscal Years 2015 through 2019</b>   |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |                     |
| Program/Provider  | 2015               | 2016               | 2017               | 2018               | 2019               | Total               |
| <b>DOJ</b>  |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |                     |
| Covenant House New Orleans  | \$900,000          |                    |                    | \$900,000          |                    | <b>\$1,800,000</b>  |
| Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office   | 600,000            |                    |                    | 600,000            |                    | <b>1,200,000</b>    |
| HP Serve/Empower 225  |                    | \$445,664          |                    |                    | \$497,546          | <b>943,210</b>      |
| Volunteers of America Southeast Louisiana   |                    |                    | \$450,000          |                    |                    | <b>450,000</b>      |
| Louisiana Governor's Office   |                    |                    |                    | 1,270,538          |                    | <b>1,270,538</b>    |
| <b>DOJ Total</b>  | <b>\$1,500,000</b> | <b>\$445,664</b>   | <b>\$450,000</b>   | <b>\$2,770,538</b> | <b>\$497,546</b>   | <b>\$5,663,748</b>  |
| <b>HHS</b>  |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |                     |
| Covenant House New Orleans  | \$157,061          | \$157,061          | \$347,445          | \$330,947          | \$545,684          | <b>\$1,538,198</b>  |
| Education and Treatment Council, Inc.   | 200,000            | 200,000            | 200,000            | 282,176            | 200,000            | <b>1,082,176</b>    |
| Elle Foundation   | 192,093            |                    |                    |                    |                    | <b>192,093</b>      |
| HP Serve/Empower 225  | 636,084            | 878,982            | 687,366            | 837,231            | 587,378            | <b>3,627,041</b>    |
| Our House, Inc.   | 199,750            | 199,750            | 194,726            | 194,726            | 194,726            | <b>983,678</b>      |
| Start Corporation   |                    |                    |                    | 200,000            | 200,000            | <b>400,000</b>      |
| The Kennedy Center of Louisiana, LLC  | 170,878            | 170,878            |                    |                    |                    | <b>341,756</b>      |
| <b>HHS Total</b>  | <b>\$1,555,866</b> | <b>\$1,606,671</b> | <b>\$1,429,537</b> | <b>\$1,845,080</b> | <b>\$1,727,788</b> | <b>\$8,164,942</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$3,055,866</b> | <b>\$2,052,335</b> | <b>\$1,879,537</b> | <b>\$4,615,618</b> | <b>\$2,225,334</b> | <b>\$13,828,690</b> |
| *This includes grant information that is made available to the public.  |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |                     |
| <b>Source:</b> Prepared by legislative auditor's staff using information from the U.S Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. |                    |                    |                    |                    |                    |                     |