

Recognizing the Signs

Are you or someone you know being trafficked?

Is the situation you may have encountered human trafficking?

The following is a list of potential red flags and indicators of human trafficking to help you recognize the signs.

The presence of these red flags is an indication that further assessment may be necessary to identify a potential human trafficking situation.

Also, the red flags in this list may not be present in all trafficking cases and are not cumulative. Indicators reference conditions a potential victim might exhibit.

This list is not exhaustive and represents only a selection of possible indicators.

Abnormal Behavior:

- * Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where he/she is staying/address.
- * Lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or of what city he/she is in.
- * Loss of sense of time.
- * Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story.
- * Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement.
- * Avoids eye contact.

Poor Mental and Physical Health:

- * Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid.
- * Lacks medical care and/or is denied medical services by employer.
- * Appears malnourished or shows signs of repeated exposure to harmful chemicals.
- * Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture.

Lack of Control:

- * Has few or no personal possessions
- * Is not in control of his/her own money, no financial records, or bank account
- * Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport)
- * Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating).

Common Work and Living Conditions:

- * Is not free to leave or come and go as he/she wishes
- * Is in the commercial sex industry and has a pimp / manager
- * Is unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- * Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- * Is not allowed breaks or suffers under unusual restrictions at work
- * Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- * Was recruited through false promises concerning the nature and conditions of his/her work
- * High security measures exist in the work and/or living locations (e.g. opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.)

Note: According to federal law, any minor under the age of 18 engaging in commercial sex is a victim of sex trafficking, regardless of the presence of force, fraud, or coercion.

If you believe you are a victim of human trafficking or may have information about a potential trafficking situation, please contact the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) 1-888-3737-888

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, please call 911.