

SOUTH CAROLINA

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

Issue No. 6 | December 2020

NEWSLETTER



WELCOME

The State Task Force is continuing to develop a number of initiatives. We are excited to announce the launch of a new regional task force covering Lexington, Edgefield, McCormick, and Saluda counties. The development of this task force increases regional capacity to respond to human trafficking cases by strengthening a multidisciplinary approach.

The Task Force has also been expanding a number of data collection and research initiatives to measure the impact of COVID-19 on human trafficking response efforts statewide. The State Task Force partnered with the University of South Carolina to develop a COVID-19 Survey for dissemination to service providers. The data is being collected and will be shared in the 2020 Annual Report.

Furthermore, the Task Force has begun meeting with key state agencies in order to grow South Carolina's capacity to collect human trafficking data elements across sectors. These meetings will continue throughout 2021. By improving human trafficking data collection, the Task Force

aims to better quantify the magnitude of this crime, improve the public's understanding of the issue, and combat the spread of misinformation online while also identifying gaps in much-needed victim services.

As National Human Trafficking Awareness Month approaches, the State Task Force is preparing for the release of its legislatively mandated 2020 Annual Report. Task Force members will receive questionnaires designed to collect and synthesize information on state and regional anti-human trafficking efforts. The data provided by the questionnaires will highlight sector-specific efforts throughout South Carolina. Key stakeholders who are partnered with the Task Force will also have the opportunity to submit goals for their anti-trafficking efforts in the upcoming year.

We thank you for your continued efforts to combat human trafficking in South Carolina, especially in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to continued collaboration with Task Force members throughout 2021. We wish you all a safe, happy holiday season!

RELEVANT ARTICLES, REPORTS, & RESOURCES

- Office on Trafficking in Persons—**National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States: Best Practices and Recommendations for States**
- WCIV—**Carolina Youth Development Center to train in My Life My Choice Prevention Solution Model**
- Office on Trafficking in Persons—**Resources for Adult Certification Letters**
- Polaris—**The Latino Face of Human Trafficking and Exploitation in the United States**
- Office on Trafficking in Persons—**SOAR to Health and Wellness Training for Continuing Medical Education Credits**
- Department of Homeland Security—**DHS Launches New Center for Countering Human Trafficking**
- WBTW—**Survivors of sex trafficking in South Carolina share their stories of how trafficking happens**
- Polaris—**Separating Fact From Fiction: Recent Cases of Recovered Missing Children and What They Show About Child Sex Trafficking**
- WBTW—**Labor trafficking cases in South Carolina occur among hotel, restaurant workers**

CURRENT ISSUES IN THE FIELD

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose unique challenges to the anti-human trafficking field. The resources below are designed to assist anti-human trafficking advocates as they face ongoing challenges due to the pandemic.

COVID-19 and Human Trafficking

- Office on Trafficking in Persons—**COVID-19 Resources, Services, and Support**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—**Human Trafficking in the Wake of a Disaster**
- HEAL Trafficking—**Human Trafficking During the COVID-19 Pandemic**
- JAMA Network—**COVID-19 and Human Trafficking: The Amplified Impact on Vulnerable Populations**
- Council on Foreign Relations—**The Evolution of Human Trafficking During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

In recent months, the anti-human trafficking field has witnessed the proliferation of human trafficking misinformation online and across social media platforms. This dangerous trend has overwhelmed the National Human Trafficking Hotline and complicated the awareness efforts of professionals in the field. It is essential that the public is educated on the facts about this crime as well as how to identify and stop the spread of disinformation. The resources below are designed to aid advocates in this process.

Human Trafficking Misinformation

- WBTW—**Special report: How human trafficking conspiracy theories keep human trafficking victims from getting help**
- Polaris—**Myths, Facts, and Statistics**
- NPR—**How Conspiracy Theorists Are Disrupting Efforts to Fight Human Trafficking**
- Shared Hope International—**Fact or Conspiracy Theory? How the Spread of Misinformation Threatens Effective Solutions That Address Child Sex Trafficking**
- Reuters—**'Report it, don't share it': Viral trafficking posts flood U.S. hotlines**

Regional Task Force to Launch in December

The State Task Force is proud to announce the launching of the **Lexington, Edgefield, McCormick, and Saluda (LEMS) Regional Task Force**. This task force will be co-chaired by the Dickerson Children's Advocacy Center and the 11th Circuit Solicitor's Office.

The task force launch is scheduled for early December. Representatives from the Office of the South Carolina Attorney General's Office, Dickerson Children's Advocacy Center, 11th Circuit Solicitor's Office, and law enforcement agencies throughout the region will be in attendance.

By covering four new counties, the LEMS Regional Task Force will be a key partner in strengthening the State Task Force strategic response model and improving local and regional capacities to respond to human trafficking cases. The State Task Force welcomes this new coalition and looks forward to growing this partnership in the future.

UPCOMING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The following grant opportunities related to human trafficking service provision have been forecasted and are estimated to be posted in 2021.

- **Victims of Human Trafficking - Services and Outreach Program:** Administration for Children and Families Region 4 Department of Health and Human Services
- **Trafficking Victim Assistance Program**

Visit [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) to search for these and future human trafficking grants.

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Website: humantrafficking.scag.gov

Facebook: [@SCHumanTraffickingTaskForce](https://www.facebook.com/SCHumanTraffickingTaskForce)

Twitter: [@SC_HTTF](https://twitter.com/SC_HTTF)

STATE MEETING AND UPDATES

Due to COVID-19, the next **State Task Force Meeting** will be held **virtually on Dec. 4 at 10AM**. Register here: <https://attendee.got-owebinar.com/register/4376171038779055373>

January is National Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The State Task Force will be releasing its 2020 Annual Report on January 11 to honor National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Once released, the report can be accessed on the Task Force website.

Law Enforcement Training: Identifying & Responding to Child Sex Trafficking in SC on Dec. 15-16 from 12:30-4pm. This training is only open to law enforcement officers. RSVP [here](#).

Save the Date: Labor Trafficking Conference on Oct. 13 & 14, 2021 in Louisville, KY. Click [here](#) for more details.

REGIONAL MEETINGS AND UPDATES

For Regional Task Force contact information, click [here](#).

Richland County Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force

The next Richland County Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force meeting will be held on Jan. 15.

2nd Judicial Circuit Human Trafficking Task Force

The next meeting will be held on Dec. 18 at 10AM, likely via Zoom. The task force is also looking for volunteers during the first week of January to help put up awareness ribbons in Aiken, Barnwell, and Bamberg counties.

Upstate Human Trafficking Task Force

The next meeting will be held on Jan. 15 to report on 2021 subcommittee goals and share 2021 meeting and event information.

Coastal Region Human Trafficking Task Force

The Coastal Region Human Trafficking Task Force has entered a vehicle to the Conway Christmas Parade and the Surfside Christmas Parade on Dec. 12. The vehicle will have human trafficking awareness information on both sides.

The task force also posts human trafficking awareness information daily to their Facebook page, "SC Coastal Region Task Force on Human Trafficking," and hosts live events on the third Wednesday of each month.

Foothills Human Trafficking Task Force

During January, the task force will host weekly Zoom presentations called 'Shine a Light Series' every Thursday at 7pm. Topics include Human Trafficking in the Upstate, Human Trafficking Parent Awareness, & Human Trafficking and the Faith Community.

Lowcountry Human Trafficking Task Force

The Lowcountry Human Trafficking Task Force Community Address will be held on Jan. 13 from 10AM to 12PM at Faith Church, 858 Bells Highway, Walterboro, SC 29488. To RSVP, email SCLCHTTF@gmail.com or call 843-338-8896.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) Celebrates its 20th Anniversary

October 28th marked the 20th anniversary of the TVPA, the groundbreaking federal legislation that established human trafficking as a crime in the U.S. The law has since been authorized in 2003, 2005, 2008, 2013, 2017, and 2018.

The TVPA created the 3P framework that many anti-human trafficking advocates still use: preventing trafficking, prosecuting traffickers, and protecting victims. Since its passage twenty years ago, advocates have added a fourth component, partnership.

In the last twenty years, the U.S. has made significant strides in combatting human trafficking. With the strong foundation of the TVPA, the next twenty hold the potential for continued progress.