

The following is a list of red flags to look for in a potential situation of or a victim of human trafficking. Taken individually, each indicator may not be deterministic of trafficking and nor is this list meant to be exhaustive. If you come in contact with anyone exhibiting one or more of the following indicators, they may be a victim of human trafficking.

Common Work and Living Conditions

- Is not free to leave or come and go as he/she wishes
- Is under 18 years of age and is providing commercial sex acts
- 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 and/or increasing debt and is unable to pay it off

Poor Mental Health or Abnormal Behavior

- Exhibits unusually fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid behavior
- Reacts with unusually fearful or anxious behavior at any reference to “law enforcement,” and/or no emotion at all (flat affect)
- Avoids eye contact

Poor Physical Health

- Exhibits unexplained injuries or signs of prolonged/untreated illness or disease
- Appears malnourished
- 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 and/or has no financial records or bank account
- Is not allowed or able to speak for him/herself (e.g., a third party may insist on being present and/or interpreting)
- Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (e.g. ID, passport, or visa)

Other

- Has been “branded” by a trafficker (e.g. a tattoo of the trafficker’s name/symbol)
- Exhibits a lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or does not know what city he/she is in
- Exhibits a loss of a sense of time
- Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story and/or has a scripted response

Human trafficking situations are often very dangerous and unpredictable. If you suspect human trafficking in your community, contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 888-3737-888, or call 911.