WHAT WE INVESTIGATE

Civil Rights Public Corruption Organized Crime Terrorism Counterintelligence Cyber Crime White-Collar Crime Violent Crime WMD

News

Human Trafficking/Involuntary Servitude

Human trafficking, believed to be the third-largest criminal activity in the world, is a form of human slavery which must be addressed at the interagency level. Human trafficking includes forced labor, domestic servitude, and commercial sex trafficking. It involves both U.S. citizens and foreigners alike, and has no demographic restrictions. The FBI works human trafficking cases under both its Civil Rights program and its Violent Crimes Against Children program. The majority of human trafficking victims in our cases are U.S. citizens, and we take a victim-centered approach in investigating such cases, which means that ensuring the needs of the victims take precedence over all other considerations.

Overview

Here in this country, people are being bought, sold, and smuggled like modern-day slaves, often beaten, starved, and forced to work as prostitutes or to take jobs as migrant, domestic, restaurant, or factory workers with little or no pay. Over the past decade, human trafficking has been identified as a heinous crime which exploits the most vulnerable in society. Among the Civil Rights Unit's priorities is its human trafficking program, based on the passage of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which provided that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States."

Under the human trafficking program, the Bureau investigates matters where a person was induced to engage in commercial sex acts through force, fraud, or coercion, or to perform any labor or service through force, coercion, or threat of law or legal process. Typically, human trafficking cases fall under the following investigative areas:

- Domestic Sex Trafficking of Adults: When persons are compelled to engage in commercial sex acts through means of force, fraud, and/or coercion.
- Sex Trafficking of International Adults and Children: When foreign nationals, both adult and juveniles, are compelled to engage in commercial sex acts with a nexus to the United States
- through force, fraud, and/or coercion. (Note: Matters of domestic juvenile sex trafficking are handled by the FBI's Violent Crimes against Children Section." Forced Labor. When persons, domestic or foreign nationals, are compelled to work in some service or industry through force or coercion.
- Domestic Servitude: When persons, domestic or foreign nationals, are compelled to engage in domestic work for families or households, through means of force or coercion.

Human Trafficking Task Forces

The most effective way to investigate human trafficking is through a collaborative, multiagency approach with our federal, state, local, and tribal partners. In concert with this concept, FBI investigators participate or lead task forces and working groups in every state within the U.S.

- Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team (ACTeam is a multi-agency initiative aimed at building human trafficking enforcement efforts and enhancing access to specialized human trafficking subject matter experts, leads, and intelligence. Each ACTeam develops and implements a strategic action plan, which leads to high-impact federal investigations and prosecutions. The federal agencies involved in the ACTeam initiative are the Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of Labor. Twelve FBI field offices participate in the initiative, including Atlanta, Boston, Cleveland, El Paso, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Memphis, Miami, Minneapolis, Newark, Portland, and Sacramento. Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking is a multi-agency task
- force initiative funded through the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). These multidisciplinary task forces include members from the U.S. Attorney's office, local prosecutor's office, federal law enforcement, state/local law enforcement, and a community service provider, with the goal of proactively identifying and recovering victims of human trafficking. FBI Human Trafficking Task Forces: The Bureau's Human Trafficking program has
- established FBI-funded human trafficking task forces in multiple field offices, with the purpose of working with state and local law enforcement agencies in combating human trafficking through proactive and collaborative practices. The ultimate goal of these task forces is to recover victims and investigate traffickers at the state and federal level.

Trafficking Victims Protection Act

As a result of the 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), law enforcement was given the ability to protect international victims of human trafficking through several forms of immigration relief, including Continued Presence and the T visa. Continued Presence allows law enforcement officers to request temporary legal status in the U.S. for a foreign national whose presence is necessary for the continued success of a human trafficking investigation. The T visa allows foreign victims of human trafficking to become temporary U.S. residents, through which they may become eligible for permanent residency after three years. The TVPA also established a law requiring defendants of human trafficking investigations to pay restitution to the victims they exploited.

provided a three-pronged approach to addressing trafficking. In addition to the protections offered through immigration relief for foreign national victims of human trafficking, it also focuses on prevention through public awareness programs, both domestically and abroad, and prosecution through new federal criminal statutes. As a result of the TVPA and subsequent reauthorizations, the FBI has been provided with statutory authority to investigate matters of forced labor; trafficking with respect to peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or forced labor; sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion; and unlawful conduct with respect to documents in furtherance of trafficking. More on human trafficking laws.

The TVPA, passed to create the first comprehensive federal law to address human trafficking,



Investigations

FBI human trafficking investigations are conducted by agents within the human trafficking program and members of our federal human trafficking task forces, and every one of our 56 field offices has worked investigations pertaining to human trafficking. Often, investigations involving human trafficking come to the attention of field offices and task forces through:

- Citizen complaints;
- The National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline;
- A referral from a law enforcement agency; A referral from non-government organizations (NGOs);
- Proactive victim recovery operations; and

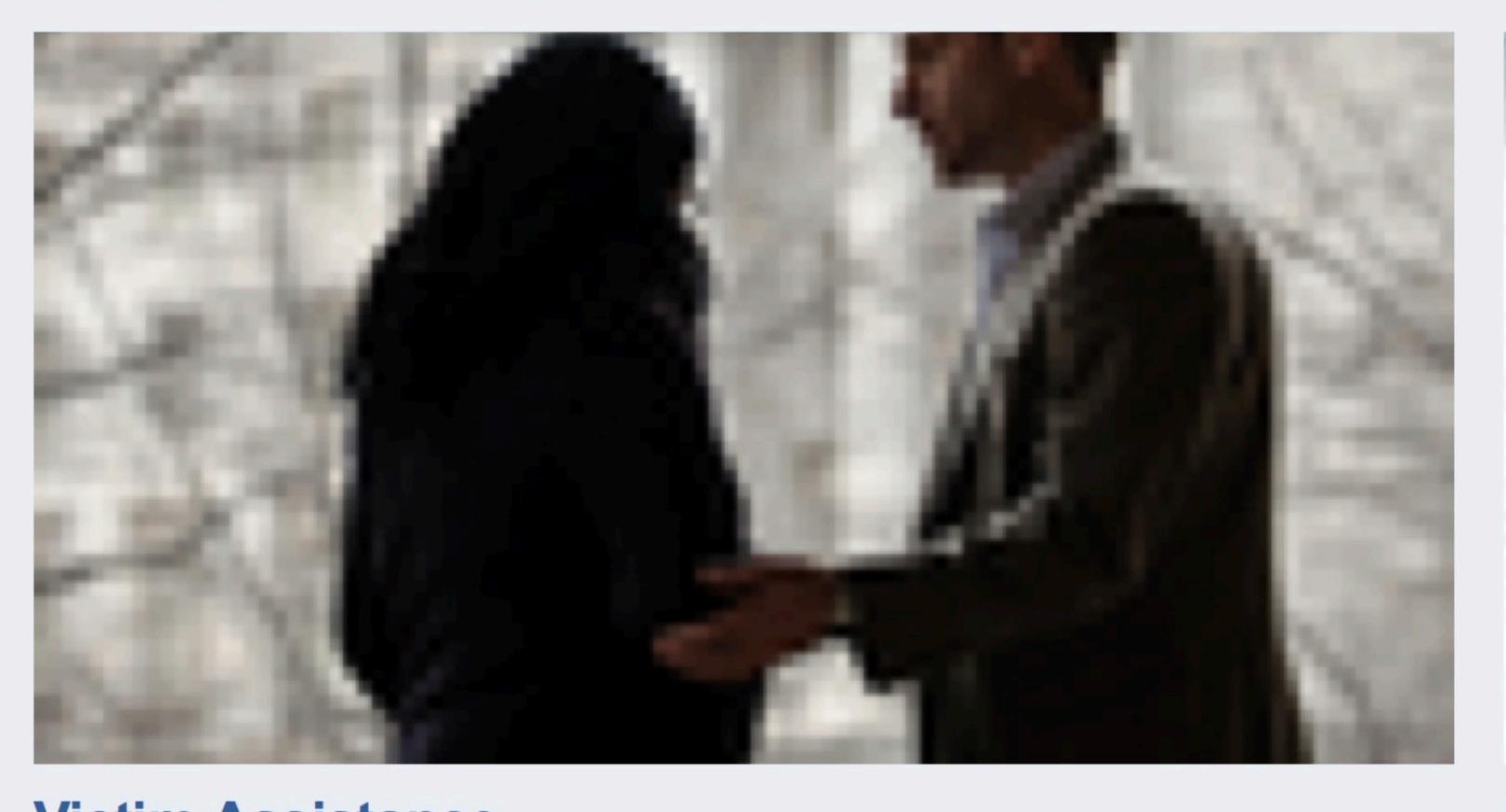
Outreach to state government and community entities.

During the stages of a human trafficking investigation, the primary goal of investigators is the recovery of victims in order to remove them from an environment of violence and exploitation. Program representatives work in unison with victim advocates and NGOs, who are able to provide victims of human trafficking with the short-term resources (shelter, food, clothing) and long-term resources (counseling, education assistance, job training) they require during the road to recovery. After recovering a victim of human trafficking, field offices are then able to conduct logical, efficient, and effective investigations which lead to the eventual arrest and successful prosecution of their traffickers, as well as the potential recovery of additional victims and identification of other traffickers.

The Bureau's human trafficking program has also successfully used lawful, sophisticated techniques— such as undercover investigations and Title III wire intercepts—to take down trafficking organizations, recover victims, and intercept traffickers before they are able to victimize others.

Over the past decade, the FBI's human trafficking investigations have been responsible for the arrest of more than 2,000 traffickers and the recovery of numerous victims. The FBI will continue to take part in multi-agency efforts to combat the threat; provide outreach to law enforcement and community organizations to aid in the awareness of the threat, proper investigative techniques, and identification of trafficking victims; and train international entities on how to identify victims of trafficking so that the Bureau and other law enforcement can intercept them before they are victimized by traffickers in the U.S.

FBI Resources



Victim Assistance

The FBI is committed to ensuring that victims receive the rights they are entitled to and the assistance they need to cope with crime. Treating victims with respect and providing them with assistance benefits victims and helps us build better cases. Our resources include an Office for Victim Assistance at FBI Headquarters and victim specialists nationwide.

potential trafficking victims, suspicious behaviors, and/or locations where trafficking is suspected to occur.



Help for Victims of Trafficking Brochure Trafficking in Persons (human trafficking) is a violation of federal civil rights laws. The FBI is

investigating these crimes as one of its top civil rights priorities to protect those who may be a victim of this crime.

FBI Kids

FBI Jobs

Report Trafficking & Get Help If you believe you are the victim of a trafficking situation or may have information about a potential trafficking situation, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) at 1-888-373-7888. NHTRC is a national, toll-free hotline, with specialists available to answer calls from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year related to

You can also submit a tip on the NHTRC website.

U.S. Justice Dept. Human Trafficking Prosecutions

External Links & Resources

U.S. Justice Dept. Human Trafficking Laws

U.S. Justice Dept. Civil Rights Division

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