

Minnesota Human Trafficking and Exploitation Prevention and Response

Minnesota's Human Trafficking Prevention and Response approach spans a statewide network of multidisciplinary partners, including organizations that provide services, housing, shelter, outreach, and support to victim/survivors of human trafficking and exploitation (sex and labor).

This response includes services for victims of labor trafficking and exploitation of all ages and genders. The Safe Harbor program increases awareness and identification of the commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of youth through age 24. The Safe Harbor law protects youth under age 18 from being arrested or prosecuted for prostitution.

The Minnesota Departments of Health (MDH) and Human Services (DHS) administer the grants to organizations that support this response. [Human Trafficking and Exploitation Prevention and Response \(health.state.mn.us/humantrafficking\)](https://health.state.mn.us/humantrafficking)

The Safe Harbor response

Minnesota Safe Harbor has a strong network of services with twelve Regional Navigators, including two in Tribal Nations, who direct youth through age 24 and providers to specialized services, housing, and shelter. Regional Navigators are available to increase local capacity and awareness by training communities. Using state and federal funds, Safe Harbor supports Tribal Nations, state-level partners, and community-based services, as well as survivor subject matter experts who provide guidance on program implementation. [Safe Harbor Sex Trafficking and Exploitation of Youth \(health.state.mn.us/safeharbor\)](https://health.state.mn.us/safeharbor)

Responding to labor trafficking and exploitation

Minnesota's response to labor trafficking and exploitation, supported by state and federal funds, includes six programs to address the supportive service and legal needs of victims/survivors of all ages and genders. [Labor Trafficking \(health.state.mn.us/labortrafficking\)](https://health.state.mn.us/labortrafficking)

In addition, Labor Trafficking Protocol Guidelines are available through the Advocates for Human Rights. [Labor Trafficking Protocol Guidelines: Identifying and Responding to Victims of Labor Trafficking 24 Years Old and Under - The Advocates for Human Rights \(theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Publications/A/Index/?id=149\)](https://theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Publications/A/Index/?id=149)

Labor trafficking and exploitation

Labor trafficking includes debt bondage or forced labor or services. Debt bondage means someone is under another's control or debt and the debt cannot be paid back with reasonable work due to fraud by the trafficker. MN Statutes 609.281-609.282. Labor exploitation involves violations of laws protecting how workers are treated, including how much and when someone is paid, child labor, and health and safety in the workplace.

Commercial sexual exploitation

Commercial sexual exploitation occurs when someone exchanges sex for anything of value or a promise of something of value such as money, drugs, food, shelter, rent, or higher status in a gang or group. Another person may or may not be involved in arranging this exchange.

Sex trafficking

Sex trafficking is a type of commercial sexual exploitation that involves the prostitution of an individual in which a third person – not the buyer or the victim – facilitates or profits. MN Statutes 609.321-609.322.

State agency partners

Safety through child welfare system responses

Sex trafficking of a minor is a mandatory child protection response. Child protection must be notified of all youth victims of sexual trafficking, whether or not their families are involved in the trafficking. Child welfare agencies must investigate reports of sexual exploitation by caregivers and offer a voluntary child welfare response for all victims/survivors of sexual exploitation by non-caregivers. Services focus on youth safety while connecting them to trauma-informed, specialized services. [Safe Harbor / Minnesota Department of Human Services \(mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/program-overviews/child-protection-foster-care-adoption/safe-harbor/\)](https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/program-overviews/child-protection-foster-care-adoption/safe-harbor/)

The law enforcement response

Law enforcement plays a critical role in the anti-human trafficking movement. The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) in the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) coordinates the Minnesota Human Trafficking Investigators Task Force and Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC), offers Victims' Relations, and works closely with law enforcement agencies statewide. Call the BCA 24/7 hotline about suspected exploitation/trafficking at 877-996-6222. [Investigations - Human Trafficking \(dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca/bca-divisions/investigations/Pages/human-trafficking-investigations.aspx\)](https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca/bca-divisions/investigations/Pages/human-trafficking-investigations.aspx)

The Office of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives (MMIR)

The Office of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives in the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs (OJP) provides support to families with murdered or missing relatives, and offers educational and awareness trainings for youth, community, and professionals on prevention and available supportive services. MMIR provides statewide data analysis on MMIR statistics and a reward fund. [Missing and Murdered Relatives Office \(dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/mmirt/Pages/default.aspx\)](https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/mmirt/Pages/default.aspx)

The Office of Missing and Murdered Black Women and Girls (MMBWG)

The Office of Missing and Murdered Black Women and Girls in the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs offers support for families of missing or murdered Black women and girls, and provides training to youth, community, and professionals on prevention and services. MMBWG provides statewide data analysis on the epidemic of missing and murdered Black women and girls, and provides grants to organizations designed to mitigate the harm experienced by Black women and girls. [OJP Home - Missing and Murdered African American Women Task Force \(dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/Pages/missing-murdered-african-american-women-task-force.aspx\)](https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/Pages/missing-murdered-african-american-women-task-force.aspx)

Implementing community response protocols

Professionals must work across specialized teams to provide the most appropriate response to victim/survivors of human trafficking. Please reach out to Standpoint for technical assistance and training in developing and implementing protocols for responding to the sex trafficking and exploitation of youth through age 24, [Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking — STANDPOINT \(standpointmn.org\)](https://standpointmn.org)

Related projects

Health Care Training

The Serving Survivors of Human Trafficking in Health Care Settings online course covers identification of survivors of human trafficking, and how to provide trauma-responsive care. Free and self-paced. [Serving Survivors for Human Trafficking in Health Care Settings \(health.mn.gov/communities/humantrafficking/training/healthcare.html\)](https://health.mn.gov/communities/humantrafficking/training/healthcare.html)

Office of the Minnesota Attorney General (OMAG)

In addition to dedicated prosecutors in the areas of human trafficking (sex and labor) and wage theft, the OMAG has a statewide expungement project to help people seal criminal records and a conviction review unit to address unjust convictions. Survivors of trafficking and exploitation who were arrested or convicted for crimes related to their victimization may benefit from these programs. [Attorney General's Office \(ag.state.mn.us/\)](https://state.mn.us/) and [Office of Attorney General Keith Ellison: Sealing My Criminal Records \(ag.state.mn.us/Office/Expungement.asp\)](https://state.mn.us/Office/Expungement.asp)



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To obtain this information in a different format, email health.safeharbor@state.mn.us or call 651-201-5400.

Not A Number: Love 146's Child Trafficking and Exploitation Prevention Curriculum

Embraced by MDH and DHS, this human trafficking prevention curriculum provides youth with information and skills in a manner that inspires them to make safe choices. Youth learn to identify and utilize healthy support systems that may decrease their vulnerabilities. [Not A Number - Love146's Child Trafficking Prevention Curriculum \(love146.org/notanumber\)](https://love146.org/notanumber)

Minnesota Student Survey and Sexual Exploitation

The Minnesota Student Survey for 9th and 11th graders includes a question on sexual exploitation. The University of Minnesota MYST Project, working in partnership with MDH, estimates at least 4,800 youth in the state have experienced some form of sexual exploitation, based on 2022 data. MDH Safe Harbor Program uses this information to direct its response, resources, and prevention efforts. [Trading Sex and Sexual Exploitation among High School Students: Data from the 2022 Minnesota Student Survey \(PDF\) \(conservancy.umn.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/054647ee-ef95-4c35-b6d7-c3b490211e09/content\)](https://conservancy.umn.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/054647ee-ef95-4c35-b6d7-c3b490211e09/content)

Safe Harbor for All

MDH and research partners with the University of Minnesota, The Advocates for Human Rights, and Rainbow Research submitted a report and strategic plan to the legislature exploring ways to help adults affected by commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. [Safe Harbor Safe Harbor for All \(health.mn.gov/communities/humantrafficking/reports/shforall.html\)](https://health.mn.gov/communities/humantrafficking/reports/shforall.html)

Minnesota Youth Human Trafficking and Exploitation Identification (MYTEI) Tool and Guide

The MYTEI Tool and Guide is designed to help providers identify and assist youth ages 13-17 who are experiencing human trafficking or exploitation. [Minnesota Youth Trafficking and Exploitation Identification Tool and Guide \(health.state.mn.us/communities/humantrafficking/training/mytei.html\)](https://health.state.mn.us/communities/humantrafficking/training/mytei.html)

Minnesota Lodging Sex Trafficking Prevention and Response Training

MDH developed an online prevention and response training curriculum for lodging licensees to train staff on commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. This training is required by state statute for licensees.