



RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS | Polaris Project

Are you or someone you know being trafficked?

Is human trafficking happening in your community?

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. If you see any of these red flags, **contact the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline at 1-888-373-7888 for specialized victim services referrals or to report the situation.** Click here to learn more about reporting potential human trafficking situations.

The presence of these red flags is an indication that further assessment may be necessary to identify a potential human trafficking situation. This list is not exhaustive and represents only a selection of possible indicators. 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.

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.)

POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH :

- 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)

OTHERS :

- 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

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

