

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Prevent • Protect • Prosecute



In 2025, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division reported 315 human trafficking tips across 41 of the state's 46 counties, including two out-of-state tips. Of the 315 human trafficking tips opened, 86% involved sex trafficking. Of the 323 victims identified, 234 were children and youth. South Carolina also experienced a 48 percent increase in identified adult victims. These figures underscore the continued prevalence of human trafficking across our communities and the urgent need for a coordinated, statewide response.

South Carolina remains steadfast in strengthening service provisions to victims and survivors of human trafficking. In a 2018 unfunded mandate, the General Assembly required the State Task Force to certify service providers supporting individuals impacted by human trafficking. In 2025, the State Task Force established the South Carolina Safe House Certification Program, becoming the first state in the nation to implement statewide certification of specialized human trafficking programs. This achievement marked a defining moment in South Carolina's commitment to serve minor and adult victims of human trafficking.

In 2025, the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force, in collaboration with the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission, hosted its inaugural Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference. This multistate conference brought together over 300 multidisciplinary professionals from across South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia. The conference featured international, national, and local experts and covered investigative resources, prosecutorial strategies, and service provider coordination.

The Task Force also collaborated with its Survivor Advisory Subcommittee to redesign the National Human Trafficking Hotline posters to commemorate the tenth anniversary of South Carolina's legislation requiring the posting of hotline information in designated establishments statewide.

In addition to these efforts, the Task Force advanced several key initiatives in 2025 to enhance prevention, awareness, and collaboration. These included



phase three of TravelWatchSC, expanding training and outreach to frontline bus workers and bus operators for COMET, COAST RTA, Greenlink, and CARTA. The State Task Force also increased implementation of TraffickProofSC, the state's award-winning prevention education curriculum, and partnered with SC Welcome Centers to distribute labor trafficking posters, targeting all major highways across the state.

Responding to human trafficking requires a coordinated and multidisciplinary approach. The dedication of the State Task Force, its mandated members, regional task forces and other advocates is undeniable. Together, we create a state that prioritizes protecting victims, preventing exploitation, and holding traffickers accountable. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to ending human trafficking in South Carolina.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Wilson".

Alan Wilson  
Attorney General  
Chair, South Carolina Human Trafficking  
Task Force



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# Overview of the State Task Force

# Overview of the State Task Force

The 2012 human trafficking law, S.C. Code Ann. 16-3-2050 (B)(1), states that the Attorney General will chair a task force to address the crime of human trafficking in South Carolina. Task Force efforts are in collaboration with federal, state, and local agencies. The law indicates that the Task Force shall submit annual reports, inclusive of findings and recommendations, to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate.

## **In addition to the South Carolina Office of the Attorney General, legislatively mandated members include:**

- » The Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
- » The South Carolina Police Chiefs Association
- » The South Carolina Sheriffs' Association
- » The State Law Enforcement Division
- » The Department of Health and Environmental Control
- » The State Office of Victim Assistance
- » The South Carolina Commission on Prosecution Coordination
- » The Department of Social Services
- » The Office of the Governor
- » The Department of Employment and Workforce

In addition to the aforementioned members, two non-governmental organizations are appointed to the task force: The South Carolina Coalition against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (SCCADVASA) and the South Carolina Victim Assistance Network (SCVAN). An invitation of membership is also extended to representatives of the United States Department of Labor, the Office of the United States Attorney, and federal law enforcement agencies within the State.

## **The Task Force shall also consider completing the following collectively or via one or more of its constituent agencies:**

- » Collect and share trafficking data among government agencies while respecting the privacy of victims of trafficking in persons;
- » Coordinate interagency information sharing for the purposes of identifying criminals engaged in trafficking in persons;
- » Establish policies to position state government to work with non-governmental organizations and other elements of civil society to prevent trafficking and provide assistance to United States citizens and foreign national victims;
- » Review the existing services and facilities to meet trafficking victims' needs and recommend a system to coordinate services;
- » Evaluate the various approaches used by state and local governments to increase public awareness of trafficking in persons;
- » Collect and publish data on trafficking, posting the information on the Attorney General's website;
- » Design and implement public awareness campaigns to inform potential targets of the risks of victimization;
- » Create and disseminate materials to increase public awareness of trafficking in persons, both US citizens and foreign nationals, within the United States.

# Human Trafficking State Plan

## 2012

- » First comprehensive legislation passed defining human trafficking as a crime. Legislation also mandated a new state human trafficking task force with the Attorney General as the Chair.

## 2015

- » Legislation passes authority for the State Grand Jury to investigate human trafficking.
- » National hotline posters are mandated in certain businesses across South Carolina.
- » The National Summit on Human Trafficking and the State Courts was attended in New York City by a delegation of a Family Court Judge, General Sessions Judge, Human Trafficking Prosecutor and the Director of Court Administration.

## 2017

- » South Carolina joins the National Compendium of State-Run Anti-Human Trafficking Initiatives joining 24 other states and three national representatives.
- » SLED assigns Special Agents to specifically work human trafficking cases.
- » A state MOU was signed between the South Carolina Office of the Attorney General, as the Chair of the State Task Force, and Polaris that runs the National Human Trafficking Task Force.

## 2014

- » The legislatively mandated South Carolina Human Trafficking State Plan released in June.
- » First Human Trafficking for State Prosecutors Training held in Columbia, South Carolina. Human Trafficking Task Force hosted in partnership with the National Attorneys General Training and Research Institute.

## 2016

- » The first human trafficking conviction using State Grand Jury jurisdiction.
- » Human Trafficking in the South Carolina Courts training held by the Human Trafficking Task Force in partnership with the State Justice Institute and attendance for judges was mandated by the Chief Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court.

## 2018

- » Legislation passed that modified the definition of abuse and neglect in South Carolina to position the Department of Social Services to respond to the needs of minor sex and labor trafficking victims.
- » The Attorney General's Office, as the Chair of the Task Force, is legislatively mandated to develop certification for direct service providers and create the criteria for Acute Crisis Care and Resource Centers. The legislation also requires the Task Force to develop a resource directory for family court judges and law enforcement.
- » A cohort of family court judges participated in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges National Judicial Institute on Domestic Child Sex Trafficking in Asheville, NC.
- » The first statewide Human Trafficking Healthcare Protocol completed.

## 2014 State Plan

### 1. Determining the Magnitude of Human Trafficking in South Carolina

- » Finding: There is not abundant or comprehensive data about human trafficking as it is happening in South Carolina.

### 2. Protecting, Supporting, and Serving Victims of Human Trafficking

- » Finding: First responders, labor agencies, and victim advocacy groups must be able to recognize the signs of human trafficking.
- » Finding: There is a lack of sufficient funding for, access to, and availability of resources for groups that provide services to victims of human trafficking.

- » Finding: South Carolina does not have adequate shelter space to meet the needs of human trafficking victims.
- » Finding: There is a lack of understanding and awareness of the various immigration benefits for non-citizen victims of human trafficking, which are essential to victim safety and prosecution.
- » Finding: Civil relief options for a trafficked victim are not well known or communicated.
- » Finding: Delivery of and access to victim services need to be better coordinated.

## 2019

- » The State Task Force pilots the Victim Service Provider Certification for Human Trafficking (VSP-HT) professionals. It is the first of its kind in the nation.
- » The General Assembly provided funding for two full-time SLED Special Agents to work human trafficking cases, officially creating the Human Trafficking Unit under Alcohol and Vice Services.

## 2021

- » The Task Force partners with the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission and The Irina Project at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill to host an online training for media on responsible news reporting about sex trafficking.

## 2023

- » The first statewide prevention education curriculum, TraffickProofSC, is developed for middle and high school students in partnership with SCETV.
- » An online training and special event calendar is developed to share opportunities with interested citizens and stakeholders across the state.
- » The first survivor retreat was held to better align lived experiences with state-level subcommittees and gather input on initiatives.
- » The mandated resource directory starts development online to provide access to all professionals working with victims and survivors of human trafficking.
- » Work begins on the first specialized human trafficking court for juveniles to be piloted in the Lowcountry of South Carolina.
- » The Task Force's Law Enforcement Subcommittee convenes state-level human trafficking investigators from the eight southeastern states to meet in Columbia.
- » The Attorney General Special Victim Prosecutors, in conjunction with the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force, conducted a two-day state-wide training on prosecuting sexual assault and human trafficking cases.

## 2020

- » The Task Force moves quarterly meetings and professional trainings online in response to Covid-19.
- » Online resource materials are developed for the public in both English and Spanish to help prevent and respond to human trafficking during the pandemic.
- » The Task Force forms its Advisory Council of subject matter experts to gain input on initiatives related to vulnerable populations.
- » The Task Force works with other southeastern states to develop formal guidance on human trafficking training and awareness to ensure accurate information sharing throughout the region.

## 2022

- » The State Task Force celebrates its 10th anniversary.
- » The South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force receives its first recurring financial appropriation from the General Assembly. The appropriation positions the Task Force to implement its strategic response plan.
- » The State Task Force begins hiring new staff to implement the strategic response plan and roll out a statewide prevention education initiative.

### 3. Investigating and Prosecuting Human Traffickers

- » Finding: The lack of resources available to law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges frustrates opportunities to arrest, prosecute, and sentence human traffickers.
- » Finding: The lack of information-sharing among law enforcement officers and prosecuting offices hinders opportunities to arrest, prosecute, and sentence human traffickers.
- » Finding: The lack of trained law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judges prevents opportunities to arrest, prosecute, and sentence human traffickers.

### 4. Preventing Human Trafficking in South Carolina

- » Finding: There is inadequate enforcement of existing rules and regulations in South Carolina.
- » Finding: Lack of awareness about human trafficking and ingrained societal perceptions aggravate this problem, resulting in lost opportunities to help victims and hold perpetrators accountable.

### 5. Areas for Additional Consideration and Study

- » Foreign National Victims
- » Rapid Response Teams
- » Child Victims
- » Internet and Technology

# Human Trafficking State Plan

## 2024

### **2024 South Carolina Code of Laws Act 213**

» Amended legislation, years in the making, went into effect July 2, 2024. The final act addresses several topics in addition to human trafficking, like address confidentiality for victims. The human trafficking law changes include adding to the definition of sex trafficking, South Carolina Code Section 16-3-2010(7), the following crimes: (k) sexual exploitation of a minor pursuant to Section 16-15-395, 16-15-405, or 16-15-410; or (l) promoting or participating in prostitution of a minor pursuant to Section 16-15-415 or 16-15-425.

- » Additionally, the new law expands the safe harbor provision for minors to include nonviolent misdemeanors and Class F felonies in both general sessions and family court. The provision becomes effective if it is determined after investigation that the minor committed the offense as a direct result of, or interrelated to trafficking. If charges are dismissed, it provides instructions to ensure the Department of Social Services has been notified of the situation.
- » The amended law allows for both minors and adults to move to expunge a conviction and provides the method to carry it out. The expungement is available in the discretion of the court to anyone who can prove by a preponderance of the evidence that the conviction or adjudication of a nonviolent misdemeanor or Class F felony was a direct result of, or interrelated to, trafficking. Victims of trafficking who are being tried or adjudicated for any crime may raise the affirmative defense that the crime was done under duress or coercion because it is directly a result of, or interrelated to being a victim of trafficking.
- » While the affirmative defense was already an option, the new legislation added to the prior wording.

### **\$6.5 million Appropriation to Build Services for Minor Victims**

» Under the leadership of Attorney General Wilson, the State Task Force requested funding to increase the number of specialized service providers in South Carolina. The General Assembly appropriated \$6.5 million for the development of residential programming for minors of both sex trafficking and labor trafficking. The funds are to be dispersed through a Human Trafficking Grant Program that will seek proposals for multiple levels of care for both minor female and male victims.

## 2025

- » The State Task Force launched South Carolina's Safe House Certification Program in partnership with Safe House Project. This legislatively mandated initiative established a comprehensive, standards-driven approach to evaluating residential and non-residential anti-human trafficking organizations. South Carolina is the first state in the nation to require Safe House certification as part of its statewide service delivery framework.
- » The State Task Force partnered with the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission to host the 2025 Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference in Columbia, South Carolina. The two-day conference convened more than 300 attendees from South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia and featured international, national, and local experts.
- » The State Task Force collaborated with its Survivor Advisory Subcommittee to redesign National Human Trafficking Hotline posters, commemorating the tenth anniversary of South Carolina legislation requiring the posting of hotline information in designated establishments statewide.
- » The State Task Force established a partnership with HEAL trafficking to implement a unified, trauma-informed, and survivor-centered healthcare response to human trafficking as established in the 2014 State Plan.

# Meet the Team

## Meet the Team



**Monique Patton Garvin** is the Director of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Programs and the State Human Trafficking Task Force at the South Carolina Attorney General's Office. She comes to this role with over a decade of professional experience in education, social work, community advocacy, and public health, with an emphasis on the effects of trauma and abuse across the lifespan.

Monique previously served as Acting Director, Deputy Director and VAWA Program Coordinator for the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force and the Violence Against Women Act Program. In these roles, she led State Task Force initiatives, including the development of TraffickProofSC, the state's award-winning human trafficking prevention education curriculum. Moreover, Monique coordinated statewide trainings for law

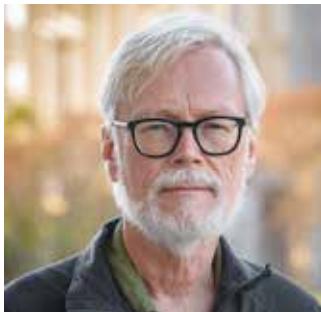
enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and other service providers on the topics of human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault, teen dating violence, stalking, and harassment. Over the years, Monique provided technical assistance to Sexual Assault Response Teams, Domestic Violence Coordinating Councils, and Human Trafficking Regional Task Forces statewide. Since 2019, Monique has also coordinated and managed the annual Silent Witness Program to honor victims of domestic violence homicides.

Prior to joining the South Carolina Attorney General's office, Monique served as a Teach for America corps member, teaching middle and high school math in Colleton and Clarendon Counties. Her background includes working as a psychotherapist for children and families, providing residential care to unaccompanied and system-involved youth, and supporting victims of domestic violence seeking emergency housing.

Monique is a charter member of the COLA City Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc., a national service organization focused on uplifting women and serving teens through their Top Teens Program. She has also served in several other academic programs and community organizations, including being selected as a University of South Carolina Graduate Civic Scholar and serving as a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She is the former vice-chair of the Board of Directors at the Hive Community Circle, a survivor-led, survivor-driven support organization helping women and girls in South Carolina overcome the trauma of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking.

On the 10th Anniversary of Teach for America South Carolina, Monique was spotlighted for her impact as a 2014 corps member and her current work in domestic violence and sexual assault. Monique is a 2022 recipient of the Service Award from Columbia Fashion Week and was recognized as Best and Brightest 35 and Under by Columbia Business Monthly in 2022.

Monique is a native of Greenville, SC. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in Professional Writing from Winthrop University and dual Master degrees in Public Administration and Social Work from the University of South Carolina.



**Marc Cardwell** is the Graphic Designer for the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force. In his role, Marc is responsible for creating

awareness campaign materials, including posters, banners, flyers, stickers, online graphics, and other related materials. He also maintains the State Task Force website, contributes graphics for social media sites, designs the annual reports, and will be the lead on a new Task Force podcast.

He is a seasoned graphic designer with over 25 years of expertise in advertising agencies, in-house marketing departments, and freelance work. His creative portfolio spans a wide range of projects, including logos, annual reports, flyers, and dynamic social media graphics. Beyond his professional accomplishments, Marc has made impactful contributions to the design community. As a former board member of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, he played a pivotal role in fostering creativity and collaboration within the industry. With an extensive background in both traditional and digital design, Marc consistently delivered visually striking and strategically sound solutions for his clients.

His dedication to community extends to his role as a former Cub Scout leader, where he imparted valuable skills and mentorship to young minds.

Marc graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design from the University of South Carolina.



**Veronica Smith** is a Human Trafficking Program Coordinator for the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force. She provides

support to state-level subcommittees and regional task forces in the Upstate area of the state. Veronica is the lead on labor trafficking for the Task Force as well as the point person for the development of Spanish language resources including trainings and public awareness materials.

Prior to this role, Veronica served at Lutheran Services in Columbia as part of a multidisciplinary team that provided direct services to refugees. She transitioned from Program Assistant and Case Manager for victims of Human Trafficking, to Medical Coordinator, and ultimately became a Case Manager for unaccompanied minors. In her latter position, Veronica oversaw reunification of minors with their families in the United States and worked in collaboration and under the guidelines of the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Veronica also served as a full time Medical Interpreter for Prisma Health. Simultaneously, she served as a Spanish teacher for St. Peter's Catholic school where she taught children of all ages. Veronica gained extensive experience as an English teacher in Mexico, teaching students of all ages before moving to South Carolina nearly 20 years ago.

Veronica earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Sonora, located in Northern Mexico, where she served as an intern for the Research Center in Nutrition and Development (Centro de Investigación en Alimentación y Desarrollo, AC in Hermosillo, Mexico) participating in field studies involving farm workers, with a focus on human development and social vulnerability.



**James Massie** is a Human Trafficking Program Coordinator for the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force. He provides support to

state-level subcommittees and regional task forces in the Lowcountry area of the state. James is the lead on piloting the state's first specialized juvenile court for human trafficking victims, presents on the topic of human trafficking within the Lowcountry, and facilitates human trafficking related special projects with a statewide reach.

Prior to this role, James served as the Douglas County (GA) Juvenile Courts Program Manager where he ensured the safety, permanency, and wellbeing of foster care children. He was responsible for facilitating meetings with community-based case managers and health care coordinators to focus on children with complex needs and then monitoring the appropriate services. James was a member of the Douglas County Multidisciplinary Team and coordinated Child Parent Psychotherapy and Combined Parent-Child Cognitive Behavioral Therapy trainings for clinicians in the Atlanta Metro Area. He was a member of the Court Improvement Team of Douglas County Juvenile Courts. He served as an active member of the Children in Court protocol team and juvenile courts representative in the local Community Outreach Resources for Excellence organization.

He has been a mentor to youth and volunteered countless hours of his time to community service throughout his career.

James graduated from Bowie State University in Bowie, MD with a Bachelor of Science in Social Work and earned a Master of Social Work from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, FL. James graduated with honors from both universities.



**Kamron Singleton** is a Human Trafficking Program Coordinator for the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force at the Office of

the Attorney General. In his role, Kamron supports the Pee Dee area of the state and the Task Force Healthcare and Direct Services (Adult Focus) Subcommittees. Kamron is also the lead on statewide initiatives at the intersection of human trafficking and healthcare, including physical, mental, and behavioral health. He will also be working with South Carolina's NGOs to develop support services for adult victims of sex and labor trafficking.

Prior to joining the Task Force, Kamron worked in public health, community outreach, and program management. His work in public health included fostering grassroots relationships with community stakeholders, establishing formal partnerships between medical agencies and social service providers, and managing grant funding requirements.

Kamron's experience also includes ensuring the use of effective disease intervention strategies and tracking community health progress. His work related to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) risk reduction included educating high-risk individuals about safe practices to avoid contracting the virus and other sexually transmitted infections.

Kamron graduated from the University of South Carolina with a dual Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Psychology. His education coupled with his background in public health, program coordination, and community outreach positions Kamron well to apply his knowledge and experience toward improving the response to human trafficking in our state.



**Blake Easter** is a Prevention Education Program Coordinator for the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force. He is

responsible for supporting efforts in the Upstate and Midlands areas of the state. In this role, he is responsible for successfully implementing TraffickProofSC (TPSC) in middle schools, high schools, and youth-serving groups/organizations. In collaboration with the Prevention Education team, Blake designs, implements, and evaluates TraffickProofSC and other relevant programming and outreach opportunities. He is also the lead on topics related to trauma and education as well as work with special populations.

Prior to joining the Task Force, Blake taught social studies and special education for nine years. He also led efforts to introduce his school's first social-emotional learning curriculum. In that capacity, Blake conducted weekly lessons on self-awareness, goal setting, healthy relationships, and more. In 2023, Blake was awarded Teacher of the Year from his school leadership.

Blake is certified as a Restorative Justice Education Facilitator from RJ Ed. He holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology with a concentration in Social Work from the University of South Carolina Aiken and a master's degree in Trauma-Informed Education from Columbia College.



**Ashley Bishop** is a Prevention Education Program Coordinator for the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force. In her role, Ashley is focused on the

use of TraffickProofSC for system-involved youth. Additionally, she will be developing a curricula and Train the Trainer program for agencies who serve system-involved youth.

Prior to this role, Ashley was in public education for 10 years. As a teacher, Ashley worked with students across the Midlands teaching Social Studies and Geography in grades 6-8 in Richland, Lexington, and Lee Counties. She received several awards including Teacher of the Month in 2016 and was nominated for Teacher of the Year in 2022 and 2023.

Ashley graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in History with a minor in Art History from Winthrop University and a Master in Divergent Learning from Columbia College.



*Melanie Smith* is the Program Coordinator for Grants and Certification within the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force. In this role, Melanie

supports the implementation of the South Carolina Safe House Certification Program, assisting specialized human trafficking service providers across the state in obtaining Safe House Project certification for their residential and nonresidential programs. She also helps coordinate the FY25 Residential Programs for Minor Victims of Human Trafficking Grant Program, which is designed to expand residential services for minor victims of human trafficking.

Prior to joining the State Task Force, Melanie spent three years as the Legal Assistant in the Civil Litigation section of the South Carolina Attorney General's Office. Her professional background also includes experience in banking, healthcare, social work, and education.

Melanie earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Liberty University.



*Megan Raymer* is an Assistant Deputy Attorney General in the Special Victims Prosecution area of the General Prosecution Unit at the Office of the

South Carolina Attorney General. She is the Human Trafficking Prosecutor for the section.

Prior to her current role, Megan was the Violence Against Women Act prosecutor where she worked domestic violence, criminal sexual conduct, human trafficking, stalking, and harassment cases throughout the state of South Carolina. Megan also prosecuted homicides, police misconduct, and other criminal offenses. She is passionate about training law enforcement, prosecutors, and service providers about the prosecution of human trafficking and other special victim crimes.

Megan earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of South Carolina with majors in Finance, Economics, and Global Supply Chain and Operations Management. She is a graduate of the University of South Carolina's School of Law. During law school, Megan participated in the Domestic Violence Clinic where she represented individuals seeking protection from domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking through emergency civil litigation. Megan is a member of the South Carolina Bar.



*Chris Brunswick* is the Data and Research Analyst for the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force. In this role, Chris is responsible for leading

the development of the state's first integrated data collection system for human trafficking. Chris is also the lead for the Data Research and Management Subcommittee.

Prior to joining the Task Force, he built a portfolio comprised of various analytical and web development projects ranging from simple data analysis to complex computer vision tasks with a full user-interface.

Chris earned a bachelor's degree in Applied Mathematics from the University of South Carolina and a Master of Data Science from Eastern University. Chris is in the process of acquiring a certificate in Full-Stack Web Development from Midlands Technical College.

With an extensive educational background in mathematics, statistics, and data science, he aims to apply his unique skillset to support the anti-human trafficking efforts in South Carolina.



*Matthew Benfield* is the Program Coordinator for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Programs at the South Carolina Office of the Attorney

General. In his role, Matthew develops training for various professional sectors about matters related to the VAWA crimes, including domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, harassment, and human trafficking. He is also responsible for coordinating the annual Silent Witness ceremony, providing public awareness, supporting statewide sexual assault response teams and domestic violence coordinating councils, attending regional human trafficking task force meetings, and updating the state domestic violence and sexual assault protocols.

Matthew graduated from the University of South Carolina with a Master of Social Work degree in May 2024. While studying for his masters, Matthew was a graduate assistant for the International Student and Scholar Support (ISSS) Office on campus and a Graduate Intern with the VAWA Program.

## Other Funded Positions

The State Task Force funds one intern position per semester. In 2025, the Task Force hired and onboarded Olivia Tiseth, an undergraduate intern from the University of South Carolina. In her role, she conducts research on special projects, assists with developing human trafficking resources for the website, and supports community outreach, public awareness, and special initiatives. The Task Force also funds two additional positions within the Office of the South Carolina Attorney General's Office Administration Division. One position is assigned to the Information Technology Section as an IT Consultant providing support via the helpdesk. The other position is in the Human Resources Department, in the role of Recruitment Coordinator. Both professionals, along with their department counterparts, provide ongoing support to the Human Trafficking Unit as its staff lead statewide efforts to combat the crime in South Carolina.



**Glynna Fogle** is the Human Trafficking Victim Advocate in the Victim Advocacy Division at the South Carolina Attorney General's Office. In this

role, Glynna advocates for minor and adult human trafficking victims throughout the state of South Carolina. She is responsible for assisting victims of human trafficking through the criminal court process during prosecutorial and post-adjudication matters as required by statute. She also supports victims throughout court proceedings and collaborates with assigned prosecutors and investigators on each case.

She received her Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of South Carolina. Glynna spent a decade in the medical field as an experienced healthcare administrator, focused on providing quality medical services to patients and their families. Following her work in this field, Glynna served as a victim advocate at the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office for four years. In this role, Glynna educated victims on their legal rights, helped them understand court procedures, identified resources, and coordinated services to support victims.



**Drew Tocheny** is the Human Trafficking Investigator in the Special Victims Prosecution area of the General Prosecution Unit at the South Carolina Office of

the Attorney General. He is a seasoned investigator with over 20 years of experience in law enforcement, specializing in digital forensics, cybercrime, and complex criminal investigations. Having served with the New York State Police, Drew has worked in various high-level roles, including the Major Crime Unit, and Computer Crime Unit, where he led intricate investigations involving violent crimes, financial fraud, child exploitation, and cybercrime. With expertise in digital forensics, OSINT, and IoT investigations, Drew became a trusted specialist in the field, frequently involved in search warrants, court testimony, and case management.

A passionate advocate for public safety and technology, Drew is also a skilled public speaker, delivering presentations on internet safety, digital forensics, and online accountability to both professional and community audiences. His leadership experience includes mentoring fellow officers, training teams on cutting-edge forensic techniques, and managing complex, multi-faceted investigations. With a background in psychology (B.S. from Binghamton University), Drew brings a unique blend of analytical, technical, and interpersonal skills to his work, making him an asset to both the South Carolina Attorney General's office and the communities he serves.

## Vacancies

The State Task Force has three vacant positions. In 2026, the Task Force will recruit and hire a Deputy Director, Human Trafficking Program Coordinator for the Midlands Area, and a Program Assistant for Training and Outreach. The Deputy Director will provide leadership and oversight for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Program and other key Task Force initiatives. The Human Trafficking Program Coordinator will serve as a liaison to the Survivor Advisory, the adult and minor Direct Services Subcommittees and will also support four regional task forces in the Midlands Area. The Program Assistant for Training and Outreach will support statewide training and outreach for the State Task Force and other special projects.

# 2025 Human Trafficking Task Force Initiatives

**8** Goals Set for 2025

**5** Original Goals Accomplished

**2** Additional Goals Achieved

# 2025 Human Trafficking Task Force Initiatives

## Advocate of the Year Award

In January 2025, the State Task Force presented its inaugural Advocate of the Year Award to former Senator Katrina Frye Shealy in recognition of her steadfast leadership and legislative advocacy. Senator Shealy's efforts played a significant role in advocating for policies that have shaped South Carolina's anti-human trafficking landscape and enhanced protections for victims and survivors.

## #SCWagsforAwareness Campaign

The State Task Force launched the #SCWagsforAwareness campaign to increase public awareness of human trafficking through a creative, community-engaged initiative. The campaign encouraged participation from pet owners, law enforcement departments, state agencies, and other community organizations across South Carolina. Attorney General Alan Wilson announced the "Best in Show" winner via the State Task Force's social media accounts.

## \$6.5 Million Human Trafficking Grant Program (In Progress)

In FY 2025, the State Task Force established the Residential Programs for Minor Victims of Human Trafficking Grant process, as part of the \$6.5 million Human Trafficking Grant initiative. The Task Force completed the initial grant design and letter-of-intent process and formally established a Grant Review Committee. Following the letter-of-intent process, 10 programs were invited to submit full grant applications. The solicitation workshop is scheduled to be announced early in 2026.

## Learning Management System (In Progress)

The State Task Force continued to research a Learning Management System (LMS) platform to centralize, store, and deliver human trafficking training resources. The LMS will support victim service providers, prosecutors, healthcare professionals, law enforcement, and multidisciplinary partners. In 2025, the Task Force identified and met with three potential LMS platforms and anticipates selecting a system for implementation in 2026.

## Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference

In collaboration with the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission, the State Task Force hosted the Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference. The two-day, multi-state convening was held in Columbia on July 30th and 31st. The conference brought together more than 300 attendees representing four professional tracks: healthcare, direct services, legal/prosecution, law enforcement, and community outreach. The event strengthened cross-state collaboration and enhanced multidisciplinary coordination across the region.

## Statewide Data Collection System (In Progress)

The State Task Force continued advancing efforts to establish a statewide human trafficking data collection system. In 2025, the Task Force conducted research to identify potential funding sources to support system development and engaged subject-matter experts to inform its best-practice recommendations. Additionally, the Task Force interviewed direct service providers to identify priority research topics, data elements, and programmatic data collection methods.

## State Task Force Podcast

The State Task Force developed the framework for its official podcast, designed to elevate awareness, share best practices, and highlight multidisciplinary perspectives in combating human trafficking. The inaugural episode is scheduled for release in 2026.

## Certification of Human Trafficking Service Providers

Under a 2018 unfunded legislative mandate, the State Task Force is required to certify specialized direct service providers serving human trafficking victims. In March 2025, the Task Force launched the South Carolina Safe House Certification Program, resulting in the certification of four specialized direct service organizations in Greenville, Richland, Berkeley, and Charleston Counties. Additionally, the Victim Service Provider-Human Trafficking Professionals (VSP-HT) Program certified 15 new service providers statewide. Certification of specialized service providers will remain a priority in 2026.

# 2025 Advocate of the Year Award

*In January, the inaugural Advocate of the Year Award was presented to former Senator Katrina Frye Shealy for her steadfast commitment to legislation that ultimately changed the anti-human trafficking landscape in South Carolina. The Task Force thanks the former Senator for her commitment to protecting children and adolescents in our state.*



Elected in November 2012, Senator Katrina F. Shealy was the only woman in the South Carolina Senate at that time. During her 2024 legislative session, Senator Shealy was one of only five women serving in the South Carolina Senate. While in the Senate,

Senator Shealy served as Chairman of the Family & Veterans' Services Committee and sat on the Finance, Corrections & Penology, Rules, and Labor, Commerce & Industry Committees in the Senate. She was also a member and past chair of the Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children, co-chair of the State Suicide Prevention Coalition, the State Child Fatality Advisory Committee, and the State Domestic Violence Advisory Committee. Senator Shealy was also the former chair of the Southern Legislative Conference Human Services and Public Services Committee and of the National Foundation for Women Legislators.

Senator Shealy is the founder of Katrina's Kids, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, which strives to give "Every Chance to Every Child" in foster care and group homes. She has been a champion of children's and women's issues for many years, having formerly served

as the Chairman of the Board of the South Carolina Friends of Juvenile Justice, the Women's Advisory Board for Lexington Medical Center, and as a board member for the Girl Scouts of the Congaree.

An insurance executive, Shealy has been in the industry for more than 40 years. She is a licensed Life, Accident, and Health Insurance Agent and has held a Property and Casualty Insurance License since 1976 and a South Carolina Brokers License since 1993. Shealy works as an insurance consultant for Keenan Suggs in Columbia, helping other job-creating individuals and businesses daily. She is also the Brain Health Community Liaison at the University of South Carolina.

She is married to Jimmy Shealy and resides in Lexington, S.C. They have three daughters, five grandsons, and eight donkeys. They are active members of St. James Lutheran Church in Red Bank.



# SC WAGS for Awareness Campaign

To raise awareness, the Task Force launched the #SCWagsforAwareness social media campaign on January 1, 2025, to recognize Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The campaign was developed to reach individuals who may not otherwise be exposed to information about the crime. It was also designed for pet owners and their dogs to stay engaged throughout January. An event calendar was featured on the Task Force website with detailed prompts and challenges throughout the month. All photo entries were shared on Facebook and X, along with human trafficking information and statistics from the 2024 annual report. The 2025 Best in Show winner was Heather Pagan and her dogs, Remington and Winchester. Thank you to all of the pet owners and dogs who participated in this year's awareness campaign during the month of January.

SC WAGS FOR AWARENESS PHOTO CONTEST DAY  
Let's see those pups Wag for Awareness!  
Include your dog(s), the bag(s) and/or leash(es) for a chance to win a blue ribbon.

Throughout Human Trafficking Awareness Month, we will share 12 ways to help support anti-human trafficking efforts in South Carolina. Please share to help bring awareness!

9 Use your social media accounts to help bring awareness. You can share State Task Force posts and include #HumanTraffickingAwareness or #preventhumantrafficking to help spread accurate information.

Remember to call or text the National Human Trafficking Hotline if you suspect the crime or need support services. 888-373-7888 Text 233733

Join Attorney General Alan Wilson on February 7th at 10 AM when he announces Best in Show!

Throughout Human Trafficking Awareness Month, we will share 12 ways to help support anti-human trafficking efforts in South Carolina. Please share to help bring awareness!

Encourage middle and high schools to include the Traffickin' 4 SC prevention education curriculum in their classrooms. Go to the State Bank for a website to request a presentation at your local school. You can also sign up for the Traffickin' 4 SC newsletter online.

Use your social media accounts to help bring awareness. You can share State Task Force posts and include #HumanTraffickingAwareness or #preventhumantrafficking to help spread accurate information.

JANUARY IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH  
Join the #SCWagsforAwareness social media campaign today!  
Visit [humantrafficking.scag.gov](http://humantrafficking.scag.gov) for more information.



# South Carolina's Safe House Certification Program

The South Carolina General Assembly legislatively mandated the State Task Force to certify service providers who work directly with human trafficking victims and survivors. This requirement strengthened the state's efforts to develop and maintain trauma-informed and consistent care for minors and adults impacted by human trafficking.

Consequently, The State Task Force partnered with Safe House Project, a national non-profit providing certification, survivor support, and safe housing options for those who have been trafficked. Through this partnership, South Carolina piloted a statewide approach to evaluating and certifying residential and non-residential programs.

South Carolina became the first state in the nation to implement Safe House Certification for all

specialized human trafficking programs. This service delivery framework serves as a model approach to increasing access to standards-based, high-quality victim services statewide.

Each organization that completed the South Carolina Safe House Certification Program met rigorous standards for safety, survivor care, organizational readiness, and trauma-informed practices. As mandated by legislation, the certified programs are also listed on the Task Force's online resource directory for family court judges, law enforcement, and the general public.

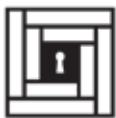
The certification process reflects the State Task Force's commitment to supporting victim-centered, trauma-informed services for all victims and survivors.

Organizations	Serves Sex Trafficking	Serves Labor Trafficking	Serves Adults	Serves Minors	Residential	Emergency Shelter	Independent Living Program	Community Based	Transportation	Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Substance Use Disorders Services	Legal Services	Coordination of Healthcare Services	Coordination of Dental Care	Employment	Education	Advocacy and Case Management	Family Engagement	Transitional Living
Doors to Freedom	●			●	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●	●		●
Jasmine Road	●		●		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Lighthouse for Life	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
The Formation Project	●	●	●				●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

*The services listed represent a general overview of what may be available at the time of this report. Please note that some services are age-specific (for minors or adults) and others are provided through collaborative partnerships rather than directly in-house. For the most accurate and comprehensive details, please contact the organization directly.*

**“We are incredibly grateful to South Carolina for its commitment to pursuing Safe House Certification for these programs. Attorney General Wilson’s leadership in requiring certification demonstrates his unwavering dedication to ensuring the highest quality of care for trafficking survivors. The programs that have achieved certification have shown extraordinary dedication—not just to meeting standards, but to creating environments where survivors can truly heal and rebuild their lives. South Carolina continues to set the standard for survivor-centered care, and we are honored to be part of this transformative work.”**

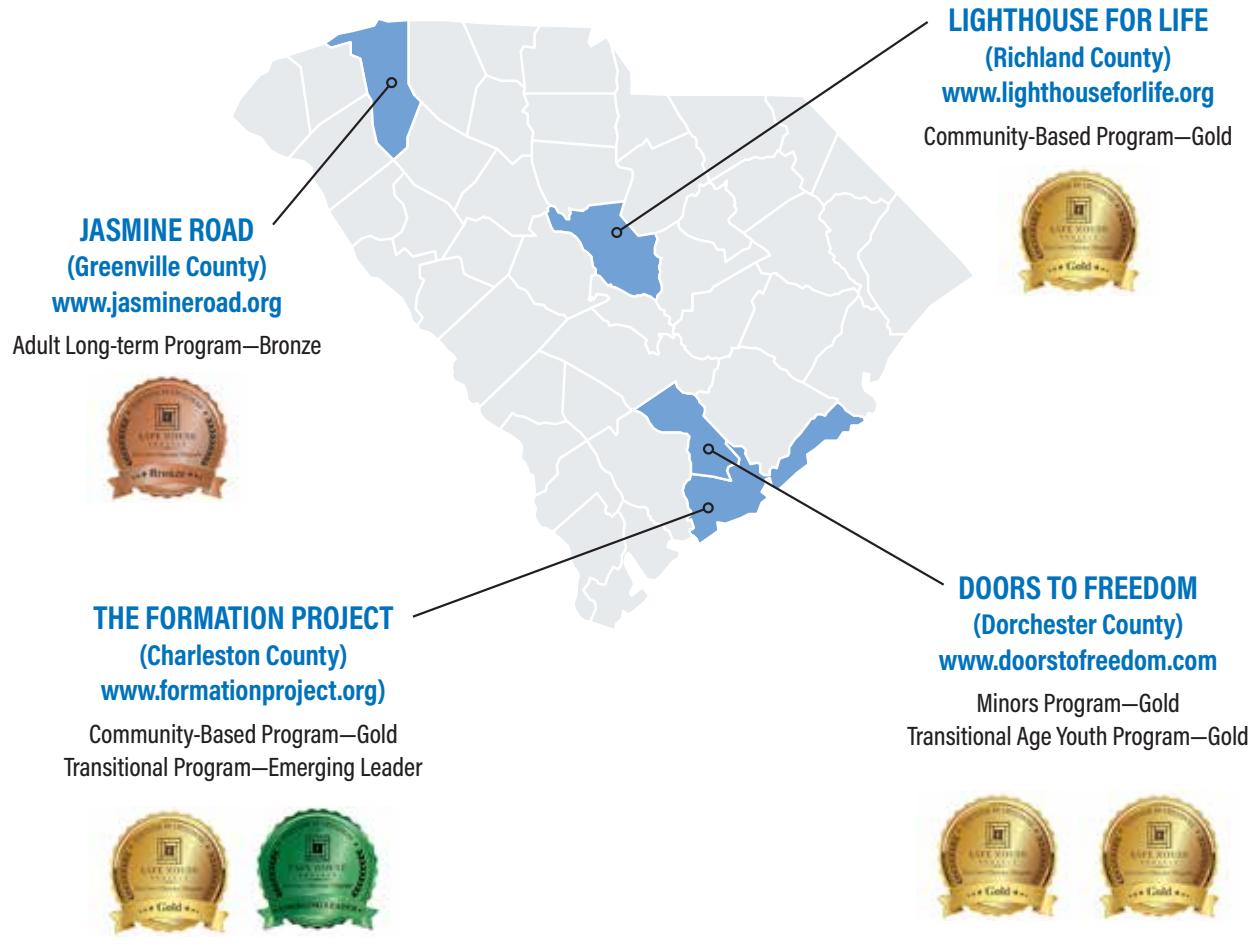
— Kristi Wells, CEO of Safe House Project



**SAFE HOUSE  
P R O J E C T**



**SOUTH CAROLINA  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
TASK FORCE**



**Gold Safe House Badge**  
Gold badges are reserved for programs offering the highest level of survivor care. Programs with a gold badge are meeting industry best-practices overall, and continually pushing themselves through self-assessment and survivor feedback to continue elevating their program. Certification is held for 3 years.



**Silver Safe House Badge**  
Awarded to programs providing the second highest level of care. Programs with a silver badge are offering program and services that meet many industry best-practices, with notable room for improvement. Silver badge recipients are committed to serving survivors and working toward continuous improvement in their standard of care. Certification is held for 2 years.



**Bronze Safe House Badge**  
Bronze badges are awarded to organizations achieving the industry's basic level of survivor care, but reflects minimal best-practices and has marked room for improvement. Certification is held for 1 year.



**Specialized Care Badge**  
Specialized Care Badges are awarded to programs seeking to serve all survivors, including those requiring specialized care. This badge is reserved for programs equipped to assist survivors with disabilities and other complex physical and mental health needs. Specialized Care Badge recipients are committed to providing special needs survivors care that meets industry best-practices.



**Emerging Leader Badge**  
Emerging Leader Badges are awarded to programs who have been operating a residential program for less than one-year and who have undergone a baseline review of their organization. Certification is held for 1 year.

*The badge descriptions above were taken from Safe House Project's website*

# TravelWatchSC

In 2024, the State Task Force launched the TravelWatchSC campaign to educate travelers in South Carolina about reporting human trafficking and accessing services. The initiative centers on partnering with associations and organizations within the transportation and tourism industries.

Phase one of the campaign targeted the air travel sector and established partnerships with South Carolina's major airports. Through this collaboration, digital signs and posters were displayed throughout airport facilities. Phase two expanded efforts to the trucking industry through a partnership with the South Carolina Trucking Association. The Task Force provided decals featuring the National Human Trafficking Hotline for placement on commercial trucks statewide.

Phase three of TravelWatchSC focused on public transit systems. This phase included a partnership with the Transportation Association of South Carolina and involved engagement with public transportation agencies in each of the four regions of the state. State Task Force staff delivered human trafficking awareness presentations to frontline workers and bus operators for COMET in the Midlands, COAST RTA in the Pee Dee, Greenlink in the Upstate, and CARTA and Tri-County Link in the Lowcountry. Attendees received tailored handout materials and items containing the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Updated hotline posters were also provided for placement at bus stations. Additionally, public transit agencies agreed to post interior bus advertisements promoting the hotline and to make educational materials available to passengers.

The State Task Force also delivered a human trafficking presentation at the Transportation Association of South Carolina 2025 Conference and Expo, held in Myrtle Beach in August. Attendees included public transportation managers, executives,

and partners from across the state. Through these combined outreach efforts, more than 200 transportation industry professionals have been trained so far this year.

The State Task Force will expand TravelWatchSC to include the hotel and restaurant industries. The Task Force is partnering with South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV) to create state-specific educational videos tailored to those industries. Once finalized, the Task Force will collaborate with the South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association to ensure the videos reach the targeted audiences and maximize statewide impact.



## TravelWatchSC

A collage of various human faces and a large eye, used as a background for the TravelWatchSC posters.

**Are you being pressured to do things you don't want?**  
**¿Le están presionando para hacer cosas que no quiere?**

**Human Trafficking Hotline**  
Línea Nacional Contra el Tráfico de Personas  
**888-373-7888 / text 233733**

**¿Le están presionando para hacer cosas que no quiere?**

**Are you being pressured to do things you don't want?**

**Si a usted o alguien que usted conoce se le está obligando, engañando o presionando a realizar cualquier actividad de sexo comercial o algún trabajo, y siente que no se puede ir,**

**Llame a la Línea Nacional Contra el Tráfico de Personas al 1-888-373-7888 para obtener ayuda y servicios. Las víctimas de tráfico de personas están protegidas bajo leyes federales y las leyes de Carolina del Sur.**

**Esta disponible 24/7**  
Número gubernamental  
Es confidencial y completamente  
Accessible en 170 idiomas  
Tiene la capacidad de prever ayuda,  
referencias a servicios como violencia  
doméstica, oportunidades de empleo e  
información general

**Línea Nacional Contra el Tráfico de Personas**  
**888-373-7888 / text 233733**  
[humantraffickinghotline.org](http://humantraffickinghotline.org)

**Available 24/7**  
Non-governmental  
Anonymous and confidential  
Accessible in 170 languages  
Able to provide help, referral to services  
such as housing, food and employment  
opportunities, and general information

**Human Trafficking Hotline**  
**888-373-7888 / text 233733**  
[humantraffickinghotline.org](http://humantraffickinghotline.org)

# Hispanic Awareness Campaign

To effectively combat human trafficking, outreach and awareness must intentionally engage and reach diverse language communities and cultures. In South Carolina, Spanish is the most commonly spoken language, other than English, with over 221,000 Spanish speakers statewide. In response, the State Task Force created the Hispanic Awareness Campaign to expand education and raise awareness about human trafficking within Spanish-speaking communities.

In 2025, the Hispanic Awareness Campaign prioritized outreach and collaboration with businesses, community organizations, and service providers that engage significant Spanish-speaking populations.

To honor Hispanic Heritage Month, the Task Force participated in Latin and international festivals throughout South Carolina to strengthen community engagement and broaden awareness. The Task Force distributed educational materials and shared information about human trafficking

at the Festival of the Americas in Walhalla, the Latin Festival in Greenwood, the Spartanburg International Festival in Spartanburg, and the Latin American Festival in North Charleston.

Promotional items translated into Spanish were distributed, including magnets, pens, koozies, keychains, informational cards, and flyers. These items were disseminated to equip attendees with information about human trafficking and the National Trafficking Hotline.



# New National Human Trafficking Hotline Posters

April 2025 marked the ten-year anniversary of the passage of state legislation (Section 16-3-2100) requiring the posting of information about the National Human Trafficking Hotline in designated establishments across South Carolina. The statute specifies the language that must appear on the posters and mandates that all required postings be available in both English and Spanish.

The State Task Force collaborated with its Survivor Advisory Subcommittee to redesign the posters in an effort to create more inviting imagery and incorporate language that is more relatable to individuals experiencing trafficking situations. Two versions of the poster were developed — one version featured photographs, and the other used artistic imagery. An accompanying informational handout was also created and distributed to businesses. The handout included an overview of the legislation, the definition of human trafficking, posting requirements, and guidance for obtaining additional posters.

To support implementation, the State Task Force disseminated approximately 800 posters and informational handouts to each regional task force for distribution to mandated establishments within their jurisdictions. Regional task forces were also given instructions for approaching businesses. They were encouraged to focus on adult businesses,



emergency rooms and urgent care centers, hotels and motels, smaller airports, and truck stops. Several regional task forces hosted poster distribution days to increase local outreach and ensure broad circulation of the new materials.

At the statewide level, the State Task Force coordinated distribution to the remaining mandated establishments. The Task Force provided posters and protective acrylic frames to cover the airport facilities in Columbia, Greenville, Charleston, and Myrtle Beach. The South Carolina Department of Transportation also received posters for all nineteen rest areas across the state. The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, through the State Labor Trafficking Subcommittee, oversaw distribution to agricultural labor contractors and transporters. Ongoing distribution efforts will continue to ensure that all mandated establishments statewide receive the updated posters.

Both versions of the poster and the accompanying business information handout are available for download on the State Task Force website: <https://www.scag.gov/human-trafficking/awareness-prevention-education/>. Individuals or businesses may also request printed posters by emailing [schttfnews@scag.gov](mailto:schttfnews@scag.gov)

## Under the state law, the following establishments are required to post notices:

- » Establishments that have been declared a nuisance for prostitution pursuant to law;
- » An adult business, including a nightclub, bar, restaurant, or another similar establishment in which a person appears in a state of sexually explicit nudity or semi-nudity, as defined by law;
- » Businesses and establishments that offer massage or bodywork services by any person who is not licensed under appropriate laws;

- » Emergency rooms within any hospital;
- » Urgent care centers;
- » Any hotel, motel, room or accommodation furnished to transients for which fees are charged in this State;
- » All agricultural labor contractors and agricultural labor transporters as defined by law;
- » All airports, train stations, bus stations, rest areas and truck stops

# Trunk or Treat

The State Task Force's Interfaith Subcommittee partnered with regional task forces to support the 3rd Annual Trunk or Treat initiative. Regional Task Forces collaborated with faith-based organizations and community groups across the state to expand human trafficking education and public awareness. These family-centered events provided an opportunity for regional task force members to engage with community members, promote the TraffickProofSC curriculum, collaborate with faith-based leaders, and highlight the impact of social media on grooming and recruitment tactics used in human trafficking.

In 2025, the State Task Force distributed 7,700 items to the regional task forces for the Trunk or Treat events. Items included sunglasses, orange stadium cups, glow-in-the-dark wristbands, candy, and bookmarks to educate youth and families about the realities of human trafficking.



2025 Trunk or Treat Event (10th Judicial Circuit Regional Task Force)

## Trunk-or-Treat locations:

County	Organization
Aiken	Millbrook Church
Anderson	Augusta Road United Methodist Church
Barnwell	YMCA Trunk or Treat
Beaufort	The Town of Port Royal
Hardeeville	Creative Church
Horry	Seahaven Youth Center
Horry	Carolina Forest Recreation Center
Horry	Pelican's Baseball Ballpark
Jasper	Jasper County Sheriff Office

County	Organization
Lexington	Fellowship Baptist Church Lexington
Oconee	Golden Grove Baptist Church
Oconee	Scenic Heights Baptist Church
Oconee	St. Mark United Methodist
Orangeburg	Orangeburg Sheriff's Office
Orangeburg	Jefferson High School
Richland	Trinity Baptist Church
Summerville	Church at Cane Bay



2025 Trunk or Treat Event (1st Judicial Circuit Regional Task Force)



2025 Trunk or Treat Event (Coastal Regional Task Force)

# 2026 Human Trafficking Task Force Initiatives

## Annual Advocate of the Year Award

In January, the State Task Force will honor South Carolina State House Representative Brandon Guffey for his leadership and advocacy to protect victims of sextortion. Representative Guffey's commitment to strengthening laws, raising public awareness, and prioritizing victim safety will have a lasting impact on South Carolina's response to minor and adult sexual exploitation. The Task Force recognizes its courage, dedication, and continued efforts to protect children and families across South Carolina and beyond.



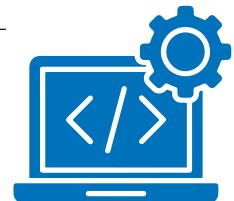
## \$6.5 Million Human Trafficking Grant Program

In 2024, the General Assembly advanced implementation of the \$6.5 million Human Trafficking Grant Program by completing the initial phase of the application process. Letters of intent were received and reviewed, resulting in the selection of ten programs invited to proceed to the full grant application stage. These selected programs represent a range of service providers focused on meeting the residential programming needs of minor victims of human trafficking. The Task Force will announce the date for the required Grant Solicitation Workshop in early 2026, continuing the next phase of the competitive funding process.



## Learning Management System

The State Task Force continues to advance its goal of launching a centralized online Learning Management System (LMS) to support training and professional development across multiple sectors. Scheduled to be available in 2026, the LMS will serve as a single, accessible platform for hosting, storing, and delivering human trafficking-related content statewide. The Task Force has begun identifying priority topics to be housed in the system, ensuring materials are aligned with sector-specific needs and trauma-informed best practices. Once implemented, the LMS will be one of many platforms the Task Force will utilize to expand access to high-quality training for law enforcement, prosecutors, healthcare professionals, educators, and other stakeholders. The training will also align with sector-specific continuing education requirements.



## State Task Force Podcast

The Task Force finalized the framework and production details for its official podcast, with a launch planned for early 2026. The podcast will serve as a platform for education, awareness, and dialogue, featuring a diverse lineup of international, national, and local guests, including survivor leaders and other subject-matter experts. Through these conversations, the podcast will highlight emerging trends, best practices, and collaborative efforts to strengthen South Carolina's response to human trafficking.



# 2026 Human Trafficking Task Force Initiatives

## Strengthening Sector-Specific Response

The State Task Force will continue to develop and coordinate sector-specific training for law enforcement, healthcare professionals, prosecutors, and direct service providers. Virtual and in-person training will be offered to enhance the distinct roles and responsibilities of each sector. Training topics will include victim identification, investigative strategies, prosecutorial considerations, and coordinated service delivery. By aligning training content with sector-specific needs, this initiative will strengthen multidisciplinary collaboration and enhance South Carolina's capacity to respond effectively to human trafficking.



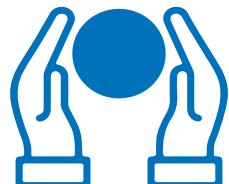
## Statewide Healthcare Response

The State Task Force, in partnership with HEAL Trafficking, will implement the healthcare response outlined in the State Plan through coordinated engagement with healthcare partners across South Carolina. Implementation will focus on collaboration with hospital systems, emergency departments, trauma centers, community health centers, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), behavioral health providers, school-based health clinics, and emergency medical services (EMS). This partnership will support the integration of trauma-informed, victim-centered protocols, revision of the state healthcare protocol, and delivery of healthcare-specific training to strengthen identification, response, and referral pathways for individuals impacted by human trafficking.



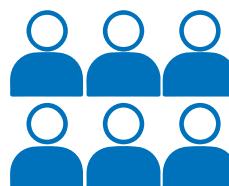
## Enhancing Access to Supplemental Services

The State Task Force will begin exploring the development of a supplemental victim service process to complement the South Carolina Safe House Certification Program. This initiative will strengthen the continuum of care for victims and survivors of human trafficking. This process will focus on identifying, coordinating, and promoting access to supplemental victim services, including legal advocacy, medical and behavioral healthcare, substance use treatment, education and workforce development, housing stabilization, transportation, and long-term case management. By establishing clear standards and referral pathways for these supplemental services, the Task Force aims to enhance coordination, reduce service gaps, and ensure specialized human trafficking programs are supported by a broader, trauma-informed network of providers statewide.



## Targeted Prevention for Vulnerable Populations

Vulnerable populations experience heightened risk of exploitation and barriers to identification and services. In response, the State Task Force will expand its focus on vulnerable populations with an emphasis on individuals with disabilities. This continued initiative will include targeted training for professionals, tailored awareness and outreach efforts, and strategic partnerships with disability service providers and advocacy programs across the state. The Task Force will also develop accessible outreach materials and awareness items to reinforce prevention messaging, increase visibility, and promote access to services for individuals with disabilities.



## Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference

**311**

### Attendees

The conference convened 311 professionals from across South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia, strengthening cross-state collaboration and regional capacity to combat human trafficking.

**135**

### Organizations

Participants represented a wide range of organizational sectors, including law enforcement, state agencies, service providers, prosecutors, healthcare professionals, educators, and other key community members.

**19**

### Conference Sessions

The conference featured a keynote address, a plenary speaker, and a plenary panel of international, national, and local subject-matter experts. Specialized professional tracks addressed law enforcement, direct services, healthcare, and community outreach.

**18**

### Vendor Tables

Vendor tables included organizations from South Carolina and North Carolina, providing attendees with access to resources, tools, and information about specialized and survivor-led organizations.

# Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference

## Conference Overview

In July 2025, the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force, in partnership with the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission, hosted the inaugural Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference in Columbia, South Carolina. The two-day conference was held July 30 –31, and coincided with World Day Against Trafficking in Persons on July 30th. The conference convened more than 300 professionals, survivor leaders, and advocates from across South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia, marking a significant milestone in regional collaboration to combat human trafficking.

## Conference Speakers

South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson, Chair of the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force, opened the conference by emphasizing the importance of coordination and shared responsibility in addressing human trafficking. He highlighted that trafficking is a complex crime requiring multidisciplinary strategies to protect victims and hold traffickers accountable. Participants represented a wide range of disciplines, including law enforcement, prosecutors, healthcare providers, service organizations, educators, community advocates, and survivor leaders. The conference agenda featured specialized tracks tailored to professional roles, allowing attendees to explore



emerging trafficking trends, share best practices, and strengthen cross-sector and cross-jurisdictional collaboration.

Programming included survivor-led sessions, expert panels, workshops, and networking opportunities designed to promote trauma-informed, victim-centered responses. Featured speakers included Dr. Robert Macy, President of the International Trauma Center; State Representative Brandon Guffey (SC House District 48); and Megan Lundstrom, CEO of Polaris and the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Additional national and international experts from organizations such as the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, A21, and the Human Trafficking Institute provided insight into trafficking dynamics and effective intervention strategies.

## Conference Impact

The inaugural Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference advanced regional efforts to prevent exploitation, enhance coordinated responses, and strengthen survivor support. By convening diverse stakeholders and centering collaboration and survivor-informed practices, the conference reinforced the Task Force's commitment to building a unified, informed, and resilient network to combat human trafficking across the region.



Attorney General Alan Wilson and Keynote Speaker, Robert Macy



Left to Right: Kwami Adoboe-Herrera, Representative Brandon Guffey, Donna Rice Hughes, Heather Weiss, Elliott Daniels, Megan Raymer, Monique Garvin

# Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference

## Presenters

The State Task Force would like to extend sincere appreciation to the following conference speakers and participating organizations whose expertise and leadership were essential to the success of the event:

- » SC Attorney General Alan Wilson, Chair of the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force
- » Dr. Robert Macy, International Trauma Center
- » Kwami Adoboe Herrera, Telios Consulting
- » Representative Brandon Guffey, House District 48
- » Amanda Gopal, The Hundred Movement
- » Brian Collins, Lancaster County EMS
- » Charlene Mooneyhan, Department of Homeland Security
- » Christine Long, North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission
- » Colin Trimble, U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division
- » Crystal Noble, Department of Juvenile Justice Dale Youngbee, Dale Consulting, LLC
- » Donna Rice Hughes, Enough is Enough
- » Dr. Pam Imm, The Courage Center
- » Elliott Daniels, U.S Attorney's Office, District of Columbia
- » Jenn Faro, Barnabas Horse Foundation
- » Joey Hehn, A21
- » Latiana Appleberry, NC Survivor Network
- » Laura Harbeson, Creative Counseling & Learning Solutions
- » Leonard Livreri, U.S Department of Homeland Security
- » Lindsey Lane, Human Trafficking Institute
- » Megan Lundstrom, Polaris
- » Megan Raymer, South Carolina Attorney General's Office
- » Monique Garvin, SC Human Trafficking Task Force
- » Natalie Lennard, McLeod Regional Medical Center
- » Robbie Croft, Department of Juvenile Justice
- » Roshani Parikh, South Carolina Law Enforcement Division
- » Sara Palmer, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- » Sergeant Mark Nales II, North Carolina State Highway Patrol
- » Shelby Thompson, Survivor Network NC
- » Sue McKinney, Barnabas Horse Foundation
- » Traci Klein, True Justice
- » Vanessa Payton, U.S Attorney's Office, District of Columbia



# Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference



## Training and Outreach

### 54 Trainings

Offered to those working in professional sectors integral in identifying human trafficking, responding to the crime, and providing quality services to victims and survivors.

### 2,178 Individuals Trained

Trainees included law enforcement, prosecutors, healthcare, direct service providers, and other stakeholders across South Carolina.

### 111 Presentations

Provided by the State Task Force staff and prosecutors at the South Carolina Office of the Attorney General.

### 4,672 Presentation Attendees

Attendees included educators, faith-based professionals, state agency staff, and others interested in learning more about human trafficking in our state.

# Training and Outreach

## Victim Service Provider Certification for Human Trafficking Professionals

The legislatively mandated Victim Service Provider Certification for Human Trafficking Professionals was offered once in 2025. The multi-day training was held in October with 15 individuals receiving their certification.

The State Task Force surveyed trainees that completed the basic core curriculum to gather input regarding the training. In 2026, the Task Force will offer additional training opportunities in a hybrid format. As services for minors are developed across the state, the Task Force expects to have larger enrollment in the VSP-HT trainings and may need to increase the number of training opportunities offered to specialized service providers.

The Task Force would like to thank the following instructors for their contribution to the VSP-HT training course. The wealth of information shared by these individuals helps to ensure the state-level certification is a continued success.

- » Aaliyah Simon, SC Network of Children's Advocacy Centers
- » Abdalis Toro, SC Department of Employment and Workplace
- » Ana Castellanos, SCCADVASA
- » Ari Foster, Renewed Path Counseling and Consulting
- » Blake Easter, SC Office of the Attorney General
- » ChristaBeth Turner, Doors to Freedom
- » Christina Toler, SC Office of the Attorney General
- » Christine Shaw Long, NC Human Trafficking Commission
- » Debbie Curtis, SC Office of the Attorney General
- » Linda Leneau, SC Office of the Attorney General
- » Megan Raymer, SC Office of the Attorney General
- » Monique Garvin, SC Office of the Attorney General
- » Nataki Brown, SC Office of the Attorney General
- » Ruth Brockman, SC Office of the Attorney General
- » Tricia Phaup, SCCADVASA



**“I felt like the presenters were all so passionate about what they do and that enthusiasm translated well into their presentations.”**

**“I enjoyed learning more about the judicial side of things pertaining to victim services.”**

**“Very informative and interactive.”**

**“Knowledgeable personnel and interactive training.”**

# Training and Outreach

## The State Task Force Welcomes International Guests

In partnership with the Columbia Council for Internationals, State Task Force staff welcomed 14 professionals from Africa, including, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Guinea, Lesotha, Madagascar, Republic of the Congo, Senegal, Sudan and Togo. Members of the group, with the assistance of three interpreters, spoke about their work in preventing and responding to human trafficking and related violent crimes.

The group included representatives of the following:

- » Legal Advisor and Head of the NGOS Observatory for Democracy and Human Rights, Ministry of Justice and Human Rights
- » Director of Cooperation and Mutual Legal Assistance at the Ministry of Justice
- » Departmental Deputy Director — Republic Police of the Littoral Department
- » Prosecutor, High Court Ouaga 2
- » Service Head, Central Judicial Research Unit, National Gendarmerie of Cameroon
- » Vice-Commander of the Judicial Investigation and Delegation Unit
- » President of the National Network of Organizations Combating Human Trafficking and Similar Practices (RENOLTEHPA)
- » Trafficking in Person Assistant Manager
- » Refugee and Migration Liaison Officer
- » Central Service for the Fight Against Cybercrime Ministry of Public Security
- » Judge, President of the Juvenile Court at the Brazzaville Regional Court
- » Investigating Judge at the Tambacounda High Court
- » Monitoring and Evaluation Officer for Cash Transfer & Security Project-NIDAA (Sudanese Call Organization)
- » Executive Director



# Training and Outreach

## State Task Force Outreach

The South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force staff, and prosecutors from the South Carolina Attorney General's Office, receive requests for presentations throughout the year. In 2025, staff and prosecutors provided 111 presentations in communities across the state. The presentations reached 4,672 attendees. In addition, State

Task Force staff, subcommittee chairs, and subcommittee members also provided outreach via special events and initiatives. The Task Force thanks stakeholders across the state for their efforts to engage communities on the topic of human trafficking. As the statewide data collection system is built out, the Task Force will gather data.



**Point of Contact:**  
Melanie Smith  
Program Coordinator for Grants and  
Certification  
South Carolina Office of the Attorney General  
[MelanieSmith@scag.gov](mailto:MelanieSmith@scag.gov)



# Training and Outreach

## Two-Day Advanced Law Enforcement Training

In 2025, the State Task Force provided four two-day Advanced Law Enforcement trainings for officers and LEVA's from across South Carolina. Participants completed an intensive two-day program addressing both foundational and advanced strategies for responding to labor and sex trafficking. The training covered critical topics such as trauma-informed policing, effective investigative processes, and equipping officers with the tools and knowledge to identify, address, and prevent human trafficking in their communities.

Fortis Tactical Systems led an intensive Trauma-Informed Policing session that examined adverse childhood experiences, the effects of trauma, and the importance of being trauma-informed. The State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) facilitated case studies of human trafficking cases to explore the complexity of the crime and relevant investigative strategies. Additionally, SLED agents trained participants on the use of case reporting tools and utilizing relevant resources. SLED agents also presented on the illicit massage industry. They shared information about local and national trends, the impact of culture on victimization, and network operations. Representatives from the respective local Child Advocacy Centers spoke about the South Carolina Child Abuse Response Protocol and emphasized the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration in responding to human trafficking.

Trainings took place in West Columbia, Columbia, Anderson and Lancaster. A total of 160 law enforcement officers attended the two-day training, that covered a wide range of topics. The agenda included an overview of human trafficking, trauma-informed policing, insight into the illicit massage industry, case studies, a review of the South Carolina Child Abuse Response Protocol, and the importance of interagency collaboration. Each training drew participants from the noted counties in South Carolina.



### The State Law Enforcement Subcommittee invites you to the **2025 ADVANCED HUMAN TRAFFICKING LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING**

An accredited course for law enforcement officers. No registration fee. Training will be accredited for CLEE and VSP hours, pending approval.

All trainings are from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

**West Columbia Training:** June 16 & 17  
[Register here](#) by 5.28.25, 5:00 pm

**Anderson Training:** October 20 & 21  
[Register here](#) by 10.1.25, 5:00 pm

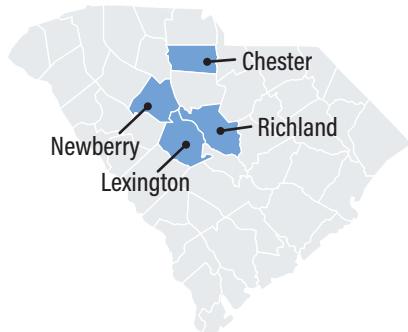
**Columbia Training:** December 1 & 2  
[Register here](#) by 11.12.25, 5:00



Melanie Smith  
[MelanieSmith@scag.gov](mailto:MelanieSmith@scag.gov)  
803-734-4859

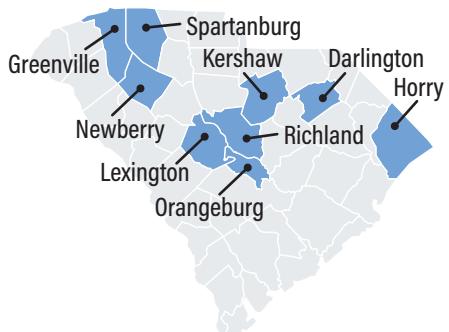


## Columbia Advanced Law Enforcement Training



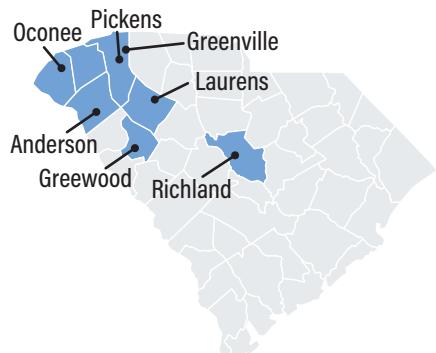
Total Number of Attendees	Law Enforcement Officers	Law Enforcement Victim Advocates	State Employees	Federal Employees
21	4	3	13	1

## West Columbia Advanced Law Enforcement Training



Total Number of Attendees	Law Enforcement Officers	Law Enforcement Victim Advocates	State Employees	Federal Employees
14	9	1	0	4

## Anderson County Advanced Law Enforcement Training



Total Number of Attendees	Law Enforcement Officers	Law Enforcement Victim Advocates	State Employees	Federal Employees
19	12	2	5	0

## Lancaster County Advanced Law Enforcement Training



Total Number of Attendees	Law Enforcement Officers	Law Enforcement Victim Advocates	State Employees	Federal Employees
104	104	0	0	0

# 9

## Statewide Conferences

Prevention Education staff shared expertise at conferences for multiple organizations, including: the South Carolina Association of School Administrators, Palmetto State School Counselors Association, South Carolina Association of School Nurses, and Health Science Educators

# 11

## Awareness Presentations

Provided by prevention education staff to 1,874 individuals including educators, school staff, parents, and community members

# 8

## Train-the-Trainer Sessions

Provided by prevention education staff to trainees from Child Advocacy Center staff, educators, administrators, and school district staff and community members

# 4

## Tabling Events

Prevention education staff participated in back-to-school events in Richland, Lancaster, Cherokee, and Lexington counties

# TraffickProofSC Prevention Education

## TraffickProofSC Highlights

### TPSC Phase II

In Phase II of TraffickProofSC (TPSC), a second prevention education curriculum will be developed to address the needs of youth in residential and community-based programs across South Carolina. The curriculum will be designed for youth with a broader range of lived experiences and vulnerabilities, with the intended impact of increasing awareness and identification of potential trafficking situations.

Implementation of this phase will include support for community-based programs, child-serving agency staff, and child advocacy centers. Additionally, school-based mental health professionals will be trained to facilitate this curriculum in small-group settings, expanding access to prevention education for vulnerable youth populations.

### Phase II will also include:

- » Development of Parent/Guardian Educational Videos
- » Expanded language accessibility, including Spanish language materials

### CAC Partnerships

Fifteen of South Carolina's seventeen Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) have partnered with the State Task Force to ensure the presence of at least one trained TraffickProofSC facilitator in their service delivery area. These partnerships have increased statewide facilitator coverage to 40 out of 46 counties in South Carolina. Local and state-level collaborations with CACs highlight the importance of coordinated prevention efforts and the availability of resources to youth across the state.

### TPSC Facilitations

In 2025, TPSC was facilitated in the following school districts: Beaufort, Calhoun, Charleston, Richland 1, Greenville, and Lexington 1. During this period, the prevention education team trained 73 school staff members statewide to serve as TPSC facilitators, further strengthening local capacity to deliver prevention education to youth.

## TraffickProofSC Overview

TraffickProofSC (TPSC) is a free prevention education curriculum designed for middle and high school students. Developed through a partnership with South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV), the curriculum educates students on the different forms of human trafficking, associated warning signs, and common methods used by traffickers to exploit minor victims. TPSC also provides guidance on how to respond if a student suspects that someone may be experiencing exploitation.

TraffickProofSC is included on South Carolina's Erin's Law resource list and supports the implementation of Gavin's Law.

### For questions related to TraffickProofSC, please contact a member of our prevention education team.

**Statewide:** Monique Garvin, Director  
[moniquegarvin@scag.gov](mailto:moniquegarvin@scag.gov)

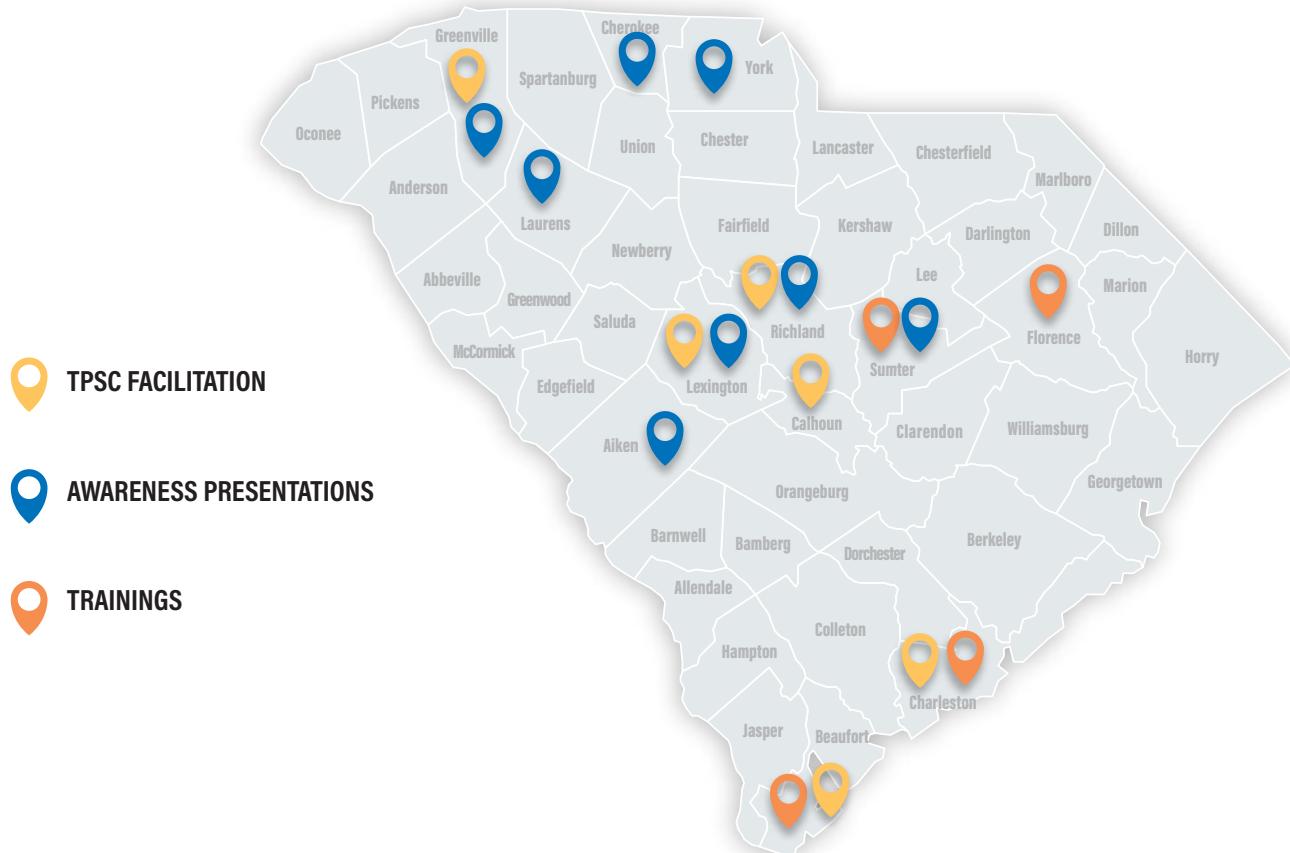
**Upstate and Midlands Areas:** Blake Easter, Prevention Education Coordinator [blakeeaster@scag.gov](mailto:blakeeaster@scag.gov)

**Low Country and Pee Dee Areas:** Ashley Bishop, Prevention Education Coordinator [ashleybishop@scag.gov](mailto:ashleybishop@scag.gov)



# TraffickProofSC Outreach and Awareness

TraffickProofSC presentations and facilitations are targeted toward school-based professionals and middle/high school students. This year's outreach efforts included TPSC presentations at statewide conferences, awareness presentations, Train-the-Trainer sessions, and other outreach events. The map below illustrates the Task Force's outreach and awareness efforts to nearly 2,000 students, educators, and community members.



## TPSC FACILITATIONS:

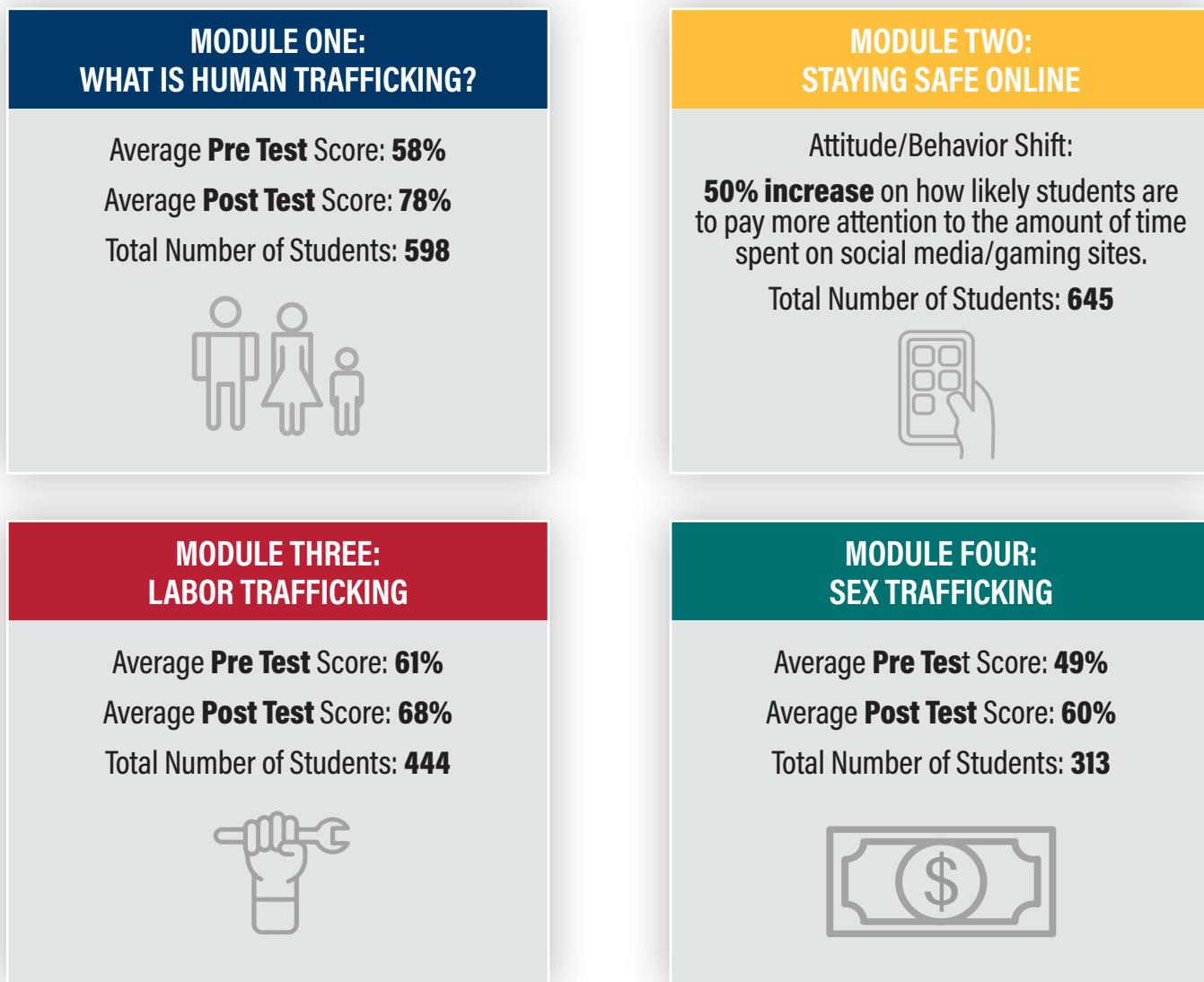
Beaufort County School District  
Calhoun County School District  
Charleston County School District  
Richland 1 School District  
Greenville School District  
Lexington 1 School District

## TRAININGS/AWARENESS PRESENTATIONS:

Charleston County School District  
Beaufort County School District  
Florence 1 School District  
Richland 2 School District  
Richland 1 School District  
Lexington 1 School District  
Lexington 2 School District  
Sumter County School District

# TraffickProofSC Impact and Outcomes

Prevention education is essential to the state's response to human trafficking. TraffickProofSC equips students with an understanding of common tactics used by traffickers and empowers them to seek help if they or someone they know may be at risk. By aligning this curriculum with existing education mandates, including Erin's Law and Gavin's Law, TraffickProofSC reinforces the importance of education and awareness to help young people stay safe both online and in their communities. In 2025, the State Task Force educated over 600 students in schools and communities across the state. The following data provides a snapshot of TraffickProofSC's prevention education impact.



## Key Data Highlights

- » 186% increase in students' ability to identify elements of trafficking (force, fraud, and coercion)
- » 38% increase in students' ability to define sextortion
- » 61% increase in students' ability to recognize tactics used by guerrilla traffickers
- » 25% increase in students' knowledge of illegal sexting
- » 18% increase in students' ability to recognize the role of fraud in labor trafficking

# Prosecution of Human Trafficking

## Next Steps in the Justice System

This year, the State Court convicted the first case of labor trafficking involving a minor. The case was investigated by the State Law Enforcement Division in Dorchester County. Between July 1, 2022 to March 9, 2023, the Defendant, Elvira Teodora Lopez Aguilar, forced her four minor children, between the ages of 11 and 15, to work without pay. This was first discovered by the children's school. The Defendant forced her children to work for a cleaning company at the Citadel Mall Movie Theater in Charleston County. She would make them clean the movie theater between 10pm until 2am, often 7 days a week. One of the children reported that the Defendant was paid for her cleaning work, but the children never got any of the money. Also, the children frequently missed school due to being so tired from working so much.

The children lived alone in a residence in Dorchester County while the Defendant, their mother, lived with her boyfriend in a different residence. The living condition of the children's home was deplorable: there were animal and human feces throughout the home and on bedding, insect infestations, minimal food, and inoperable toilets and light fixtures. If the Defendant was not satisfied with the children cleaning the home, she would withhold food from them as punishment. Aguilar pled guilty on February 4, 2025, to four counts of Trafficking in Persons, victim under the age of 18 and four counts of Unlawfully Placing a Child at Risk of Harm or Neglect. She was sentenced to ten years in prison.

While our current human trafficking law has not been tested in a labor trafficking jury trial, this investigation and conviction provide an indicator of cases to come. Our first trial convictions occurred within the past couple of years for sex trafficking of minors. A trial conviction from November of 2024 is now in the Court of Appeals. The 2024 trial was the first South Carolina human trafficking trial to convict a trafficker without victim cooperation. The documentation of any aspects of the trafficking must be continually pursued and reviewed by law enforcement. This process can take months or longer, depending on the volume of the material and where the material is

housed. The State must be able to lay a foundation for the documents, including everything from phone records to social media. The documentation needs to be admitted without physically bringing in a representative of each company. The business records exception is one of the mechanisms utilized for this type of evidence. This exception is key, as it allows the state to present its case within a reasonable time frame and at reasonable costs without requiring live witness testimony. This is an issue currently being addressed by several cases on appeal and is key to the successful prosecution of human trafficking cases.

In October 2025, the Attorney General's Office, Assistant Deputy Attorney General Megan Raymer and Senior Assistant Deputy Attorney General Heather Weiss spoke along with 15th Circuit Deputy Solicitor Scott Hixson, who also serves as a Special Assistant United States Attorney, about working together at the local, state and federal levels. The same digital evidence and testimony was a key point of the presentation. When the state and federal investigators work together and share expertise, this evidence can provide some of the best evidence in the trials. This highlights the necessity of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to be active on the State Human Trafficking Task Force to assist in open dialogue as we see the landscape of human trafficking continue to grow and change.



SCAG Special Prosecution, Heather Weiss and Megan Raymer

# Prosecution of Human Trafficking

## United States Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina

Throughout the country, United States Attorneys' Offices, which are components of the U.S. Department of Justice, prosecute defendants charged with federal human trafficking crimes, including labor trafficking, sex trafficking, sex trafficking of children, child exploitation, and other related offenses.

Prosecutors and victim assistance specialists also provide human trafficking victims services and ensure victims are accorded their rights throughout the criminal justice process.

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina is an active member of the State Human Trafficking Task Force.

In 2025, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina successfully prosecuted **7 human trafficking cases**, charging **17 defendants**. The cases involved at least **25 victims**, including adult and minor victims in the United States and abroad. One victim was as young as three years old, and another victim was an adult with a severe developmental disorder, both of whom were coerced into sex acts through physical restraint, physical force, and violence in exchange for money.

The prosecutions led to multi-decade sentences, restitution payable to victims, as well as supervision to follow imprisonment and sex offender registration requirements for defendants. The cases were a result of the office's work with partners at the FBI, Homeland Security Investigations, and numerous state and local law enforcement agencies and prosecutor's offices.

## Contacts

- » **Greenville:** Carrie Fisher Sherard, Assistant U.S. Attorney
- » **Columbia:** Elliott Daniels, Assistant U.S. Attorney
- » **Charleston:** Katie Orville, Assistant U.S. Attorney
- » **Florence:** Lauren Hummell, Assistant U.S. Attorney

## Attorney General's Office

The Attorney General's Special Victims Prosecution Area houses those responsible for prosecuting both sex trafficking and labor trafficking cases. These prosecutions would not be possible without the tireless efforts of the investigators and victim advocates who help prepare the victims and locate the witnesses needed to move forward to a successful resolution of the charges. Special Investigator Holly Siniard, retired, worked with the Task Force and Special Victims Prosecution to assist with special projects outside of traditional prosecution. Special Victims successfully prosecuted five defendants, including the first labor trafficking case and is currently involved in one criminal appeal. There are 12 cases that remain active after December 31, 2025.

## Contacts

- » Megan Raymer, Assistant Deputy Attorney General
- » Caroline Avant, Assistant Attorney General
- » Andrew Tocheny, Special Investigator for Prosecution



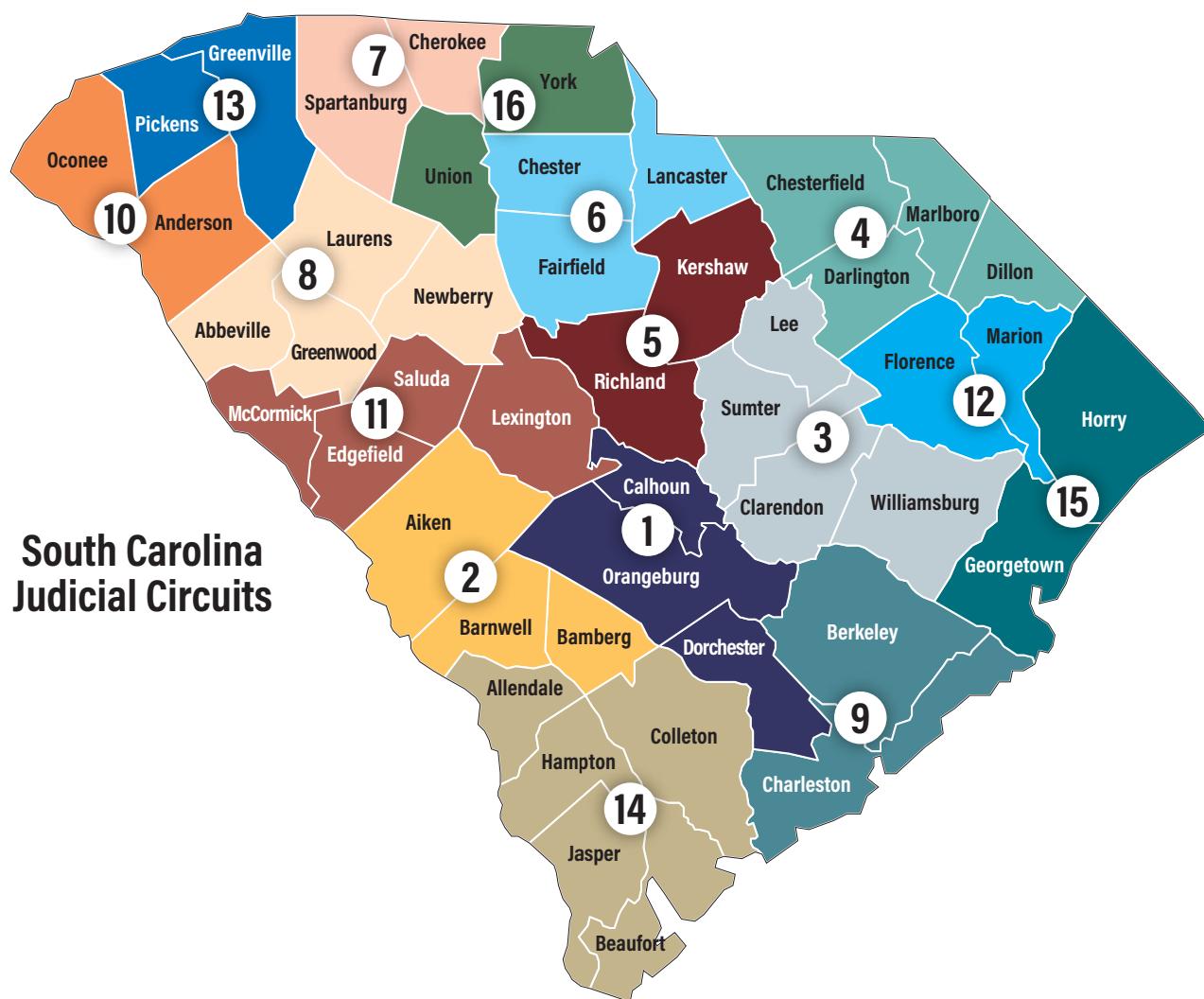
## Prosecution of Human Trafficking

## Solicitor's Office

Solicitors' Offices across the state designated prosecutors in both general sessions and family court to attend trainings and participate in regional task forces on human trafficking. These prosecutors work in conjunction with state and federal prosecutors and law enforcement on human trafficking investigations and prosecutions. Family Court prosecutors are working with juveniles who are identified as potential human trafficking victims. They see that the cases are handled in such a way that the juveniles receive proper services, and their cases are reviewed for any relationship to the trafficking situation.

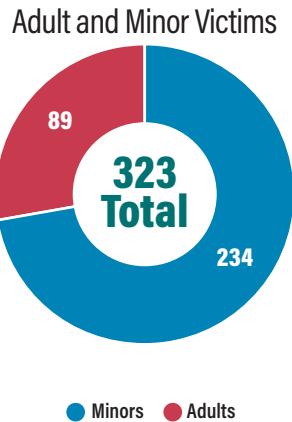
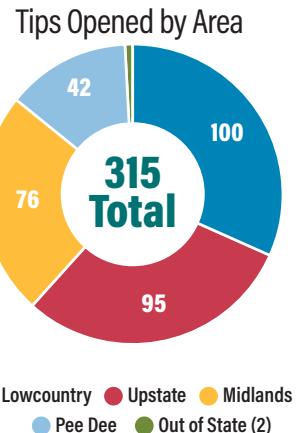
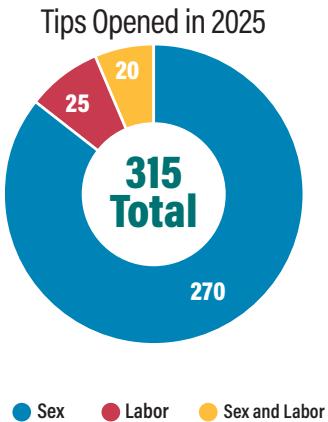
Human trafficking cases are complex and demanding cases to prosecute. Victim advocates

and investigators in the solicitors' offices provide an invaluable resource of bridging the advocacy from the initial law enforcement contact to the advocacy and communication required throughout the court process. Victims of human trafficking vary in number depending on the scope of the trafficker's crimes and the services needed to keep them safe, healthy, and ultimately prepared to go to court. Solicitors have committed to working together to bring justice for victims of human trafficking. In 2025, the Solicitors in Anderson, Charleston and Lexington Counties successfully prosecuted a human trafficking case. Several Solicitor's Offices have pending trafficking cases leading into 2026.



# South Carolina Specific Data

# South Carolina Law Enforcement Division Data



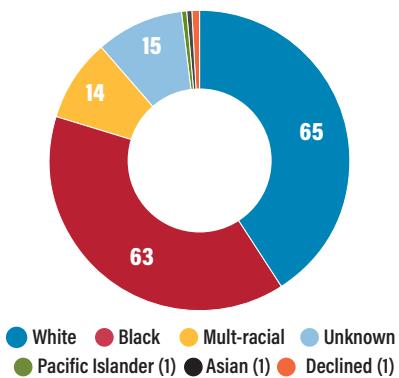
County	Number of Tips
ABBEVILLE	0
AIKEN	7
ALLENDALE	0
ANDERSON	12
BAMBERG	1
BARNWELL	2
BEAUFORT	7
BERKELEY	30
CALHOUN	0
CHARLESTON	30
CHEROKEE	2
CHESTER	1
CHESTERFIELD	3
CLARENDON	1
COLLETON	1
DARLINGTON	1

County	Number of Tips
DILLON	3
DORCHESTER	21
EDGEFIELD	1
FAIRFIELD	2
FLORENCE	5
GEORGETOWN	1
GREENVILLE	35
GREENWOOD	3
HAMPTON	1
HORRY	17
JASPER	4
KERSHAW	5
LANCASTER	4
LAURENS	6
LEE	0
LEXINGTON	27

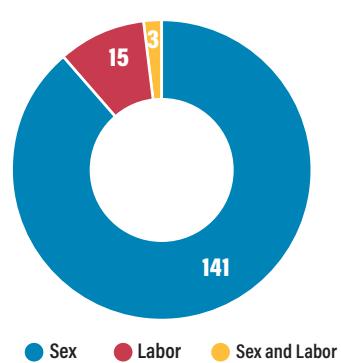
County	Number of Tips
MARION	3
MARLBORO	2
MCCORMICK	0
NEWBERRY	3
OCONEE	3
ORANGEBURG	3
PICKENS	3
RICHLAND	28
SALUDA	1
SPARTANBURG	19
SUMTER	5
UNION	2
WILLIAMSBURG	1
YORK	7
OUT OF STATE	2

# Department of Social Services Data

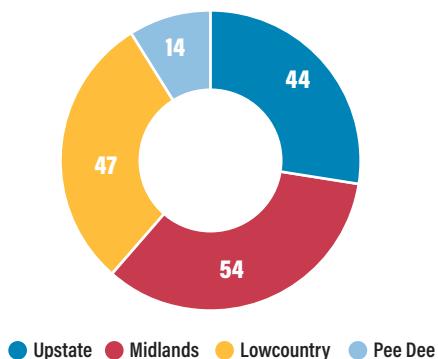
Minor Victim Identification by Race



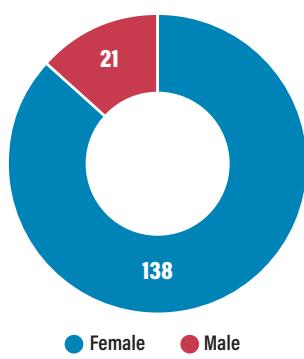
Minor Victim Identification by Type of Trafficking



Minor Victim Identification by Region



Minor Victim Identification by Gender



Minor Victim Identification by Age Group at Intake

Age	Number
0-2	2
3-5	2
6-8	4
9-11	9
12-14	34
15-18	108

**159**

Total  
Cases

# Department of Juvenile Justice Data

Of the 56 juveniles identified as human trafficking victims, each victim was involved with the Department of Juvenile Justice for at least one of the following charges. The list below reflects the point of system contact, with runaway emerging as the most prevalent charge.

Runaway, Probation Violation, Assault and Battery (3rd degree), Incorrigible, Contempt of Court, Resisting Arrest, False Information to Law Enforcement, Shoplifting, Possession of Alcohol, Possession of Marijuana, Trespassing, Petit Larceny, Assault and Battery (2nd degree), Making School Threats, Breach of Peace, Malicious Injury to Real Property, Malicious Injury to Personal Property, Grand Larceny, Burglary (2nd Degree).

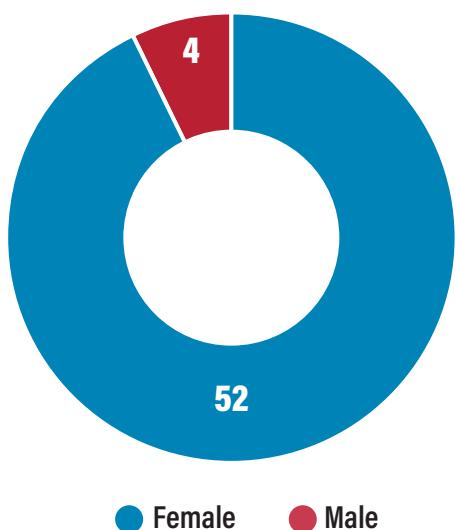
**56**

Total Cases

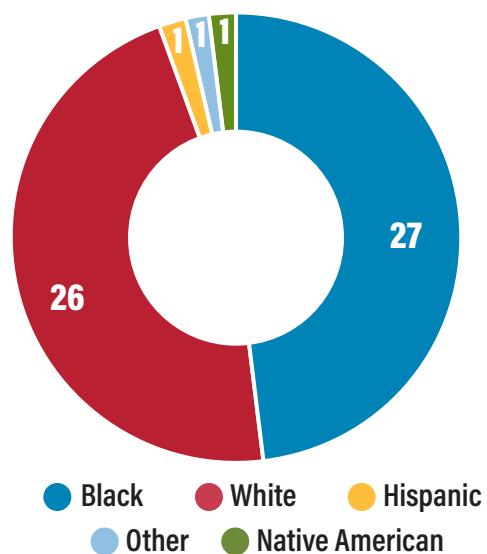
## Victims by County

Aiken	2	Cherokee	1	Greenville	5	Richland	7
Anderson	1	Dillon	1	Horry	4	Spartanburg	2
Barnwell	1	Dorchester	1	Kershaw	1	York	3
Beaufort	1	Edgefield	1	Laurens	1		
Berkeley	7	Florence	2	Lexington	7		
Charleston	5	Georgetown	1	Oconee	1		

## Broken Down by Gender



## Broken Down by Race



# South Carolina Courts Data

**As 2025 closes, 52 different defendants have a total of 84 charges pending for human trafficking in the South Carolina State Courts.**

Thirty-two human trafficking charges were closed in 2025, involving 17 defendants in 13 counties. Seven charges were closed by a guilty plea to human trafficking, convicting 4 defendants. This year there were no state level human trafficking jury trials. Nine of the 17 defendants had their human trafficking charges dismissed, however, 5 of the defendants pled guilty to other charges in exchange for the dismissal of the human trafficking charge, typically as a part of a plea agreement.

In 2025, 54 charges of human trafficking were brought by local and state law enforcement involving

32 defendants in 12 counties. Of the 54 charges, twenty-three counts were related to trafficking adults and thirty-one counts of trafficking minors.

While there were no human trafficking jury trials, it demonstrates the strength of the cases leading to guilty pleas and the better understanding of trafficking in the community. Several cases have been on trial dockets with defendants firing attorneys and getting continuances. While this is frustrating for prosecutors and law enforcement and unfair to victims who want some finality, it is the system. The oldest cases are from 2020 and 2021 and fall into these categories as well as being co-defendants to defendants who have pled or gone to trial. There is a high probability that these oldest cases will go to trial in 2026 and are already on the docket.

**Total HT Defendants Pending by County, end of 2025**

Anderson	1	Lancaster	2
Beaufort	3	Lexington	2
Berkeley	6	Marion	1
Charleston	9	Marlboro	2
Dorchester	2	Newberry	1
Florence	2	Orangeburg	2
Greenville	5	Richland	5
Horry	5	York	1
Jasper	3		

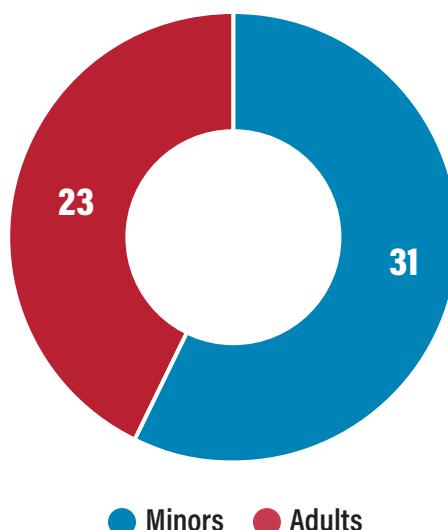
**Total HT Charges Opened in 2025 by County**

Berkeley	4	Lexington	3
Charleston	10	Newberry	2
Dorchester	2	Orangeburg	1
Greenville	9	Richland	5
Horry	10	Spartanburg	3
Jasper	4	York	1

**Defendant Cases Closed in 2025 by County**

Anderson	1	Newberry	1
Berkeley	1	Oconee	1
Charleston	1	Orangeburg	1
Dorchester	2	Richland	3
Jasper	1	Spartanburg	1
Lancaster	1	Sumter	2
Lexington	1		

**Total HT with Minor Cases vs Adults Charged in 2025**



# National and State Partnerships

# National Partnerships

## Administration for Children & Families

ACF promotes the economic and social well-being of families, children, youth, individuals and communities to be resilient, safe, healthy, and economically secure. The Atlanta Office coordinates the Region 4 Human Trafficking

Workgroup composed of state leaders from the eight southeastern states. Member states include South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky.



## National Compendium of State-Run Anti-Human Trafficking Initiatives

The National Compendium of State-Run Anti-Human Trafficking Initiatives is a group of professionals, primarily operating at the state level, who work on human trafficking issues and inform state-level policy decisions on how to address the crime. The National Compendium is designed as an opportunity for leaders to share ideas with one another to boost anti-human trafficking efforts both nationally and within their own states. It is led by the Colorado Human Trafficking Council under the Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Office for Victims Programs. South Carolina maintains membership in the Compendium and actively engages with other state leaders.

## National Human Trafficking & Disabilities Working Group

The mission of the National Human Trafficking & Disabilities Working Group (NHTDWG) is to promote a survivor-centered, collaborative approach steeped in disability and racial justice for the prevention of trafficking of people with disabilities and Deaf individuals and ensure an accessible and appropriate response to survivors. NHTDWG is a collaboration of professionals, self-advocates, and survivors from all around the United

States. The Working Group strives to create resources and to address gaps in research, social services, and legal services for individuals with disabilities who are at risk of trafficking or who may have experienced trafficking. The leadership and membership of NHTDWG is formed from experts and self-advocates from the anti-trafficking and disability communities.



## National Association of Attorneys General

Attorney General Alan Wilson, Chair of the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force, is a member of the National Association of Attorneys General and sits on the Association's Human Trafficking Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to provide a forum for state attorneys general to

collaborate on issues related to human trafficking and promote best practices aimed at combatting trafficking at the local, state, national, and international levels. The Human Trafficking Committee focuses on facilitating education, investigation, prosecution, victim services protection, prevention, and outreach in the human trafficking space; disseminating information on emerging issues and promising practices in the fight against human trafficking; and building alliances with international partner agencies and non-governmental organizations that share mutual goals.



## National Partnerships

### Polaris

The National Human Trafficking Hotline and BeFree Textline (the Hotline) is the nationwide anti-human trafficking hotline and resource center serving victims and survivors of human trafficking and the anti-trafficking community in the United States. Since 2007, it has been

run by Polaris, a nonprofit, non-governmental organization. The hotline provides human trafficking victims and survivors with access to critical support and services to get help and stay safe. They also equip the anti-human trafficking community with tools to effectively combat human trafficking. The hotline offers round-the-clock access to a safe space to report tips, seek services, and ask for help. Polaris also provides anti-trafficking trainings, technical assistance, state specific data, and capacity building support.



### Thorn

Thorn is a unique nonprofit leveraging technology to combat child sexual exploitation. They are partnered with international non-governmental organizations and technology volunteers to stop the spread of child

sexual abuse material and combat child traffickers who utilize the Internet in their crimes. Their work is guided by three principals: accelerate victim identification, equip platforms, and empower the public. In 2015, Thorn built a technological tool, Spotlight, to help law enforcement identify child sex trafficking victims and arrest their abusers. Currently, officers in all 50 states and Canada leverage the tool in their investigations and have helped identify thousands of child victims of human trafficking in the past five years. The technology identifies ten children per day on average, generating more than a 60% reduction in search time. Ultimately, Spotlight has equipped law enforcement to tackle more cases of child sexual exploitation within a shorter time frame.



### U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

USCRI administers the Trafficking Victim Assistance Program (TVAP) for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office on Trafficking in Persons.

TVAP helps foreign national survivors of human trafficking achieve HHS certification and provides trauma-informed, person-centered, comprehensive case management services, facilitating timely access to vital services necessary to stabilize and re-establish their ability to live independently. Services include emergency assistance, safety planning, basic needs (food, clothing), and access to legal services, housing, health, education, language instruction, and other needed resources.



# National Partnerships

## Soul Survivor Ink

Soul Survivor Ink (SSI) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit focused on helping survivors of human trafficking and prior gang affiliation by assisting them in the removal of “branding” tattoos and scars. SSI partners with organizations nationwide to refer survivors to certified and trained affiliate tattoo artists and technicians while ensuring survivors’ safety and privacy. The goal is to support survivors in their emotional, spiritual, and physical healing process through the elimination of “branding” reminders. SSI works with the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force to identify tattoo artists and technicians interested in participating in the program while promoting the available services to victims and survivors across the state.



## HEAL Trafficking

HEAL trafficking is the global leader and the leading non-governmental organization dedicated to ending human trafficking through system-wide change in healthcare. HEAL’s work spans the globe, equipping healthcare professionals with the training, research, and tools needed to prevent and respond to human trafficking. HEAL Trafficking addresses human trafficking as a public health issue through a comprehensive approach focused on Health, Education, Advocacy, and Leadership. By emphasizing these areas, HEAL aims to foster systemic change, support survivors, and prevent trafficking. HEAL’s evidence-based practices and commitment to survivor-centered, trauma-informed care ensure that healthcare professionals and stakeholders are equipped to recognize, respond to, and prevent human trafficking.



## Safe House Project

Safe House Project is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to ending human trafficking by increasing survivor identification, enhancing access to comprehensive survivor services, offering professional training, promoting survivor empowerment, and advocating for legislative change to support trafficking survivors.



# State Partnerships

## South Carolina Beer Wholesalers Association

The purpose of the South Carolina Beer Wholesalers Association is to provide leadership which enhances the independent malt beverage wholesale industry; to advocate on behalf of its members before government and the public; to encourage the responsible consumption of beer; and to provide programs and services that will enhance members' efficiency and effectiveness.



## South Carolina Hospital Association

The South Carolina Hospital Association is committed to making South Carolina one of the nation's healthiest states by helping our hospitals and health systems provide the best care possible. They advocate for sound healthcare policies and legislation, facilitate collaboration to tackle problems that none of us could solve alone, find and share innovations and best practices, and provide data, education and business solutions to help our members better serve their patients and communities. The Association comprises approximately 100 member hospitals and health systems and 900 personal members.



## South Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association

With roots that date back to 1947, the South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association was formed in 2012 when the South Carolina Hotel & Motel Association and the South Carolina Restaurant Association merged into a single organization. SCRLA is a statewide, non-partisan trade organization. The mission is to promote, protect and educate the foodservice and lodging industries of the state and to ensure positive business growth for our members. SCRLA strives to represent the best interest of its members on small business issues, hospitality and tourism concerns and towards the protection of South Carolina's quality of life.



## South Carolina Trucking Association

As a non-profit trade association, the South Carolina Trucking Association serves as the voice of the trucking industry in South Carolina since 1933. Membership has grown from 17 dues paying members in 1936, to a high point of almost 900 companies by the mid-nineties, to about 600 members today. The association's carrier members range from small, family-owned businesses with only a few vehicles, to large, national companies with major terminal facilities throughout South Carolina, the southeast and the nation. Small businesses comprise the majority of SCTA membership.



**“Our work is strengthened through close collaboration with national and state partners who share a commitment to protecting victims and holding traffickers accountable. These partnerships ensure sustainability, safeguard best practices, and allow us to respond to trafficking through strategy, resource-building, and meaningful impact.”**

— Director Monique Garvin, South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force

## State Partnerships

### **South Carolina Indigenous Women's Alliance**

The South Carolina Indigenous Women's Alliance (SCIWA) exists to recognize, unify and provide support and empowerment to all women of indigenous origin residing within or from the state of South Carolina.



### **South Carolina ETV**

South Carolina ETV (SCETV) is the state's public educational broadcasting network, comprised of 11 TV stations, eight radio stations, and a statewide tower network that serves schools, hospitals, and emergency management teams. SCETV provides educational experiences and strengthens communities while working to create a stronger, more connected, and informed South Carolina. SCETV provides national and local content to classrooms via internet services Knowitall.org and PBS Learning Media. SCETV also provides teacher training and re-certification in face-to-face and online settings.



**“SCETV and the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force’s partnership brings together state agencies that share a dedication to elevating community safety by leveraging their respective skills and expertise to inform our citizens about the importance of preventing human trafficking crimes. Working closely with SCHTTF’s knowledgeable subject matter experts, ETV provides production facilities as well as experienced production and script writing staff in the creation of meaningful training resources that engage youth in recognizing key indicators of human trafficking and prevention methods. It is gratifying to experience the passion our respective agencies bring to the project and richly rewarding to work together for the betterment of South Carolina.”**

— VJ Allred, Director of Instructional Design and Technology  
South Carolina ETV and Public Radio

# State Partnerships

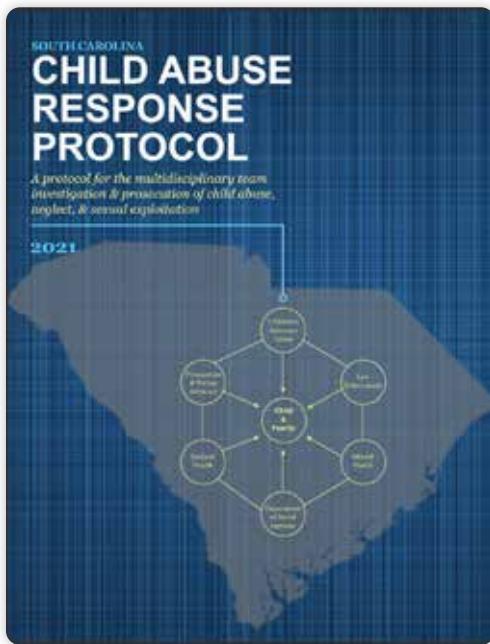
## Network of Children's Advocacy Centers

The South Carolina Network of Children's Advocacy Center (SCNCAC) is a non-profit membership organization that is accredited by the National Children's alliance. SCNCAC is the statewide leader in the response to child abuse in South Carolina. There are 17 primary Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) in our state as well as 14 satellite CACs.



In 2018, SCNCAC began a collaboration with the South Carolina Children's Justice Act Task Force to develop a statewide child abuse protocol. The goal was to create a tool to formalize the use of CACs and Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) in South Carolina's response to child abuse. In 2021, Governor McMaster signed the South Carolina Child Abuse Response Protocol bill into law. This legislation requires that in the investigation of a known or suspected crime against a child, a MDT must follow the protocol. This includes cases of human trafficking involving minors. The procedure is listed in section three, Joint Investigations (LE & DSS) and Special Issues.

The SCNCAC offers online training that is self-paced and consists of approximately 3.5 hours of instruction. If you are a professional that is involved in responding to the needs of minor sex trafficking and/or labor trafficking victims, please complete the training available on their website.

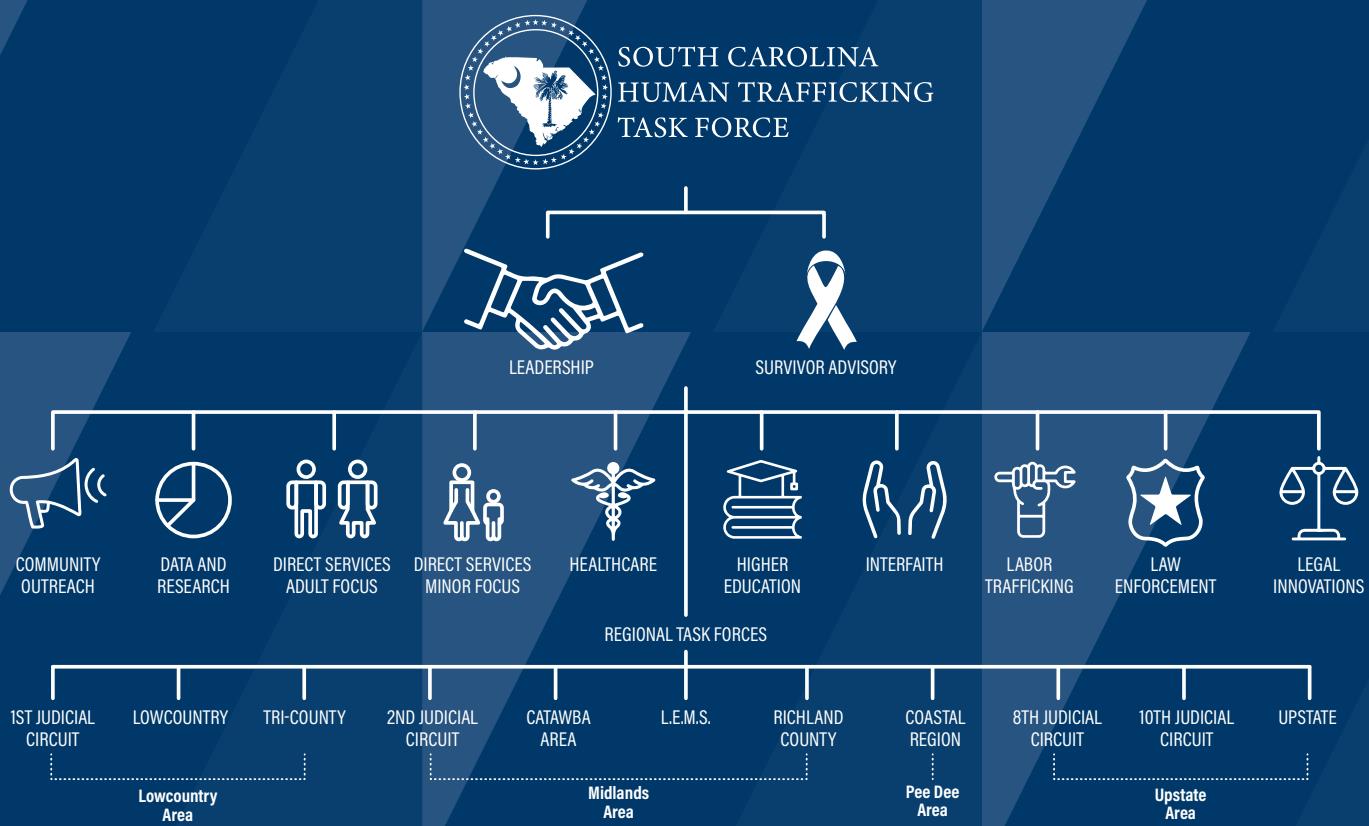


**“A child is a victim of trafficking in persons as defined in Section 16-3-2010, including sex trafficking, regardless of whether the perpetrator is a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child’s welfare. Identifying a child as a victim of trafficking in person does not create a presumption that the parent, guardian, or other individual responsible for the child’s welfare abused, neglected, or harmed the child.”**

—SC Code Ann. § 63-7-20 (6)(b)

*The above information was taken from the South Carolina Network of Children's Advocacy Center's website.*

# Human Trafficking Task Force Infrastructure





## Leadership Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Leadership Subcommittee includes members positioned to support statewide human trafficking initiatives, legislative requests, and system-level improvements with the goal of effectively preventing and responding to human trafficking in South Carolina.



## 2025 Highlights

### *Human Trafficking Grant Program*

South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force Residential Programs for Minor Victims of Human Trafficking Grant was launched in January 2025. The program supported the development of residential services for minor victims of both sex and labor trafficking. During the inaugural year, the State Task Force established a Grant Review Committee, issued a Request for Intent Applications, and created a Grant System portal to receive and manage submissions securely. This program represents a significant advancement in expanding residential services for minor victims across the state.

### *South Carolina Safe House Certification Program*

The South Carolina General Assembly legislatively mandated the State Task Force to certify service providers who work directly with human trafficking victims and survivors. The Task Force partnered with Safe House Project to launch a trauma-informed, standards-driven model for evaluating residential and non-residential providers. As the first state in the nation to mandate a statewide certification, South Carolina reinforced its commitment to victim-centered, trauma-informed services for all survivors.

### *Human Trafficking Conference*

The South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force, in collaboration with the North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission, hosted a two-day regional conference in Columbia. The conference event convened over 300 attendees from South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia. The conference featured international, national, and local presenters and included four professional tracks focused on law enforcement, healthcare, direct services, and legal/prosecution. Based on the success of this year's event, South Carolina anticipates hosting the conference again in 2027.

## 2026 Priorities

### *Human Trafficking Grant Program Distribution*

The South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force will continue advancing services for minor victims of human trafficking by supporting the development and/or expansion of programming through a \$6.5 million appropriation from the General Assembly. Ten programs have been invited to participate in the grant solicitation workshop in 2026. Following

the workshop, eligible programs may apply for funding, and the Task Force will distribute funds to support at least four specialized residential restorative programs for minor victims. This grant is a significant step toward closing the service gaps and enhancing statewide capacity to meet the needs of minor victims of human trafficking.

### *Learning Management System*

The State Task Force will continue to assess the training needs of member organizations to develop sector-specific training and resources. In 2026, the State Task Force will prioritize developing sector-specific training, with an emphasis on law enforcement, healthcare, prevention education, and direct services. To ensure high-quality and consistent training across sectors, the Task Force will launch a Learning Management System to streamline access to materials and track completion. The Task Force will also engage its advisory council of subject-matter experts to guide the development of sector-specific training content, public awareness materials, and resources.

### *Legislative Amendment*

The State Task Force remains committed to amending the 2012 legislation to remove the Department of Health and Environmental Control and replace it with the newly established Department of Public Health. Additionally, the Task Force would like to see additional state agencies added to the membership. The South Carolina agencies would include the Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Children's Advocacy.

### **Task Force Liaison:**

Monique Garvin

Director

SC Office of the Attorney General

[moniquegarvin@scag.gov](mailto:moniquegarvin@scag.gov)



## Survivor Advisory Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Survivor Advisory Subcommittee provides survivor-informed recommendations to the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force to enhance statewide programs and services, while identifying existing and potential barriers and opportunities to support survivors.



## 2025 Highlights:

### *Subcommittee Begins Convening*

The Survivor Advisory Subcommittee (SAS) was restructured in 2024 to include four volunteer survivor seats representing each of the four areas of the state (Upstate, Midlands, Pee Dee, and Lowcountry) and the Subcommittee Chair. Meetings were held quarterly to coincide with the dates of the State Human Trafficking Task Force meetings.

### *New Human Trafficking Hotline Posters*

The Survivor Advisory Subcommittee provided guidance on a newly designed human trafficking hotline poster that was released in April. The widely distributed poster was updated with new graphics and revised language in an effort to improve the tone of the message, while retaining legislatively mandated information.



### *Self-Care at the Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference*

In July, the State Task Force hosted a Human Trafficking conference in Columbia. The Survivor Advisory Subcommittee helped plan a Self-Care Reflection Room. The reflection room featured mood lighting, sound machines, calming fragrances, blankets, coloring, candy, and sensory items. The space created a quiet oasis where attendees could step away from the conference's activities and content.

### *Representation on the State Human Trafficking Grants Review Committee*

In 2025, The State Task Force launched a grant program and accepted applications from South Carolina service providers looking to fund residential programs for minor human trafficking victims. To ensure that survivor voices are incorporated in the review process, one Survivor Advisory Subcommittee member was asked to serve on the grants review committee.

### *Planning for Peer Support Programming*

In October, members from the Survivor Advisory Subcommittee and staff from the State Task Force

met the NC Survivor Network to discuss peer support programming for survivors of human trafficking.

## 2026 Goals:

### *Ongoing Input and Ideas*

The Survivor Advisory Subcommittee will continue to provide input and guidance for requested State Task Force goals. The subcommittee will also voice any new suggestions for enhancing programs to the leadership of the State Task Force.

### *State Task Force Newsletter*

The Survivor Advisory Subcommittee members will incorporate lived experience viewpoints into the State Task Force newsletter. The subcommittee will provide newsletter content and ideas for a segment dedicated to survivor leaders.

### *Survivor Engagement Guidance*

The Survivor Advisory Subcommittee will work with State Task Force staff to provide State Task Force members with a survivor-centered engagement guide. The guide will provide survivor-centered best practices to community members when engaging with leaders with lived experiences.

### *Survivor Peer Support*

The subcommittee will continue conversations and planning options to offer opportunities for human trafficking survivors to support each other outside the scope of the Survivor Advisory Subcommittee.

## **Subcommittee Chair:**

Heather Pagan, Survivor Support Director,  
Lighthouse for Life

## **Subcommittee Members:**

Upstate Representative: Ciara Cerqua  
Midlands Representative: Sarah Caine-Martin  
Pee Dee Representative: Sara Marie Johnson  
Lowcountry Representative: Camille Arnold

## **Task Force Liaison:**

Monique Garvin  
Director  
SC Office of the Attorney General  
moniquegarvin@scag.gov



## Community Outreach Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Community Outreach Subcommittee guides public awareness and community outreach efforts for South Carolina's regional human trafficking task forces. The subcommittee aims to ensure the provision of accurate information related to human trafficking definitions and crime specific data and consistent messaging.



## 2025 Highlights:

### *Regional Representation*

The Subcommittee is comprised of representatives from each of the eleven regional task forces. Members served as liaisons between their region and the state subcommittee to help facilitate statewide initiatives at the local level.

## *Presentation Facilitators*

A Train-the-Trainer session was held in March to allow additional regional task force chairs to become facilitators of the state task force human trafficking awareness presentation. With a total of 17 trained facilitators, each regional task force has at least one, enabling general presentation requests to be fulfilled at the regional level with consistent messaging.

## *Resource Handouts*

The State Task Force equipped each regional task force with brochure holders and branded tablecloths to utilize at outreach events in the community. Bulk quantities of resources were printed and delivered to regional task forces, including a State Task Force brochure, a myth/fact card, and a trafficking red flag table card geared towards youth. Regional Task Force members also made special requests to the State Task Force for tailored promotional items for special events.

## *New Hotline Posters*

The State Human Trafficking and mass printed new Human Trafficking Hotline posters this year. In April, regional task forces received posters and were asked to help distribute them to mandated establishments in their region, focusing on adult businesses, urgent cares and emergency rooms, hotels and motels, truck stops, and small airports.



## 2026 Priorities:

# *Human Trafficking Awareness Month 2026*

The Subcommittee requested printed yard signs from the State Task Force to spread awareness and advertise the Human Trafficking Hotline. Signs were ordered for each regional task force for distribution to the sheriffs' departments and children's advocacy centers within their region. The yard signs will be distributed and used for Human Trafficking Awareness Month in January 2026.

## *Updated Awareness Presentation*

The Community Outreach Subcommittee will provide input on the current awareness presentation to develop a modified version for 2026. The Subcommittee will also assist the State Task Force staff with data collecting and procedural challenges surrounding community presentations, attendees, and evaluations.

### *Community Presentations and Awareness Events*

The Community Outreach Subcommittee has set a goal of facilitating the updated presentation in each of the eleven regional task force areas in 2026. Each regional task force will actively seek opportunities to participate in at least one awareness event throughout the year.

## **Subcommittee Chair:**

Dr. Pam Imm  
The Courage Center  
Task Force Liaison  
[Drpamimm@gmail.com](mailto:Drpamimm@gmail.com)

## Task Force Liaison:

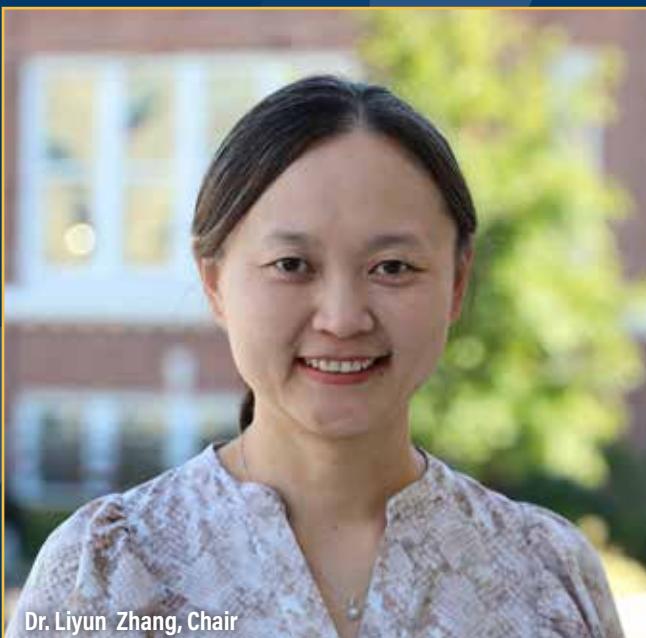
Blake Easter  
HT Program Coordinator  
SC Office of the Attorney General  
[blakeeaster@scag.gov](mailto:blakeeaster@scag.gov)



## Data and Research Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Data and Research subcommittee collects, analyzes, and interprets relevant data to understand the implications of human trafficking, enhance service provision, inform prevention and intervention strategies, and provide policymaking recommendations related to human trafficking and its intersection with other issues.



## 2025 Highlights:

### *Subcommittee Expansion*

The Data Management and Research Subcommittee expanded its membership to strengthen its analytical capacity and broaden multidisciplinary expertise. Members joined from Clemson University, the University of South Carolina, the Columbia Police Department, and the State Law Enforcement Division. Members have various data and research backgrounds, including economics, crime prevention and intervention, and industrial engineering.

### *Safe House Project Certified Program Interviews*

The Data Management and Research Subcommittee conducted interviews with the first cohort of programs that completed the Safe House Project Certification. These interviews examined each program's data sources and related documentation. Information collected will assist the Subcommittee in creating a custom, centralized catalog of data points to standardize screening tools, data collection methods, and uniform definitions related to human trafficking. Understanding data sources also helps identify potential challenges, ensuring data provisioning from a data source to a centralized repository is realistic and feasible.

### *Data Collection System*

The State Task Force continues to collaborate with the Data and Research Subcommittee to establish the appropriate data infrastructure to support modern uniform data reporting. The Task Force's Data Analysis continues to facilitate the system's implementation through the strategic alignment of stakeholders, processes and procedures, technology, and appropriate funding sources.

## 2026 Priorities:

### *Literature Review of Existing Human Trafficking Research*

The Data Management and Research Subcommittee will conduct a comprehensive review of existing human trafficking research. This review will outline major research themes, examine commonly used methodologies, identify gaps and limitations, and provide direction for future research. The findings will support the State Task Force's long-term strategic planning and ensure initiatives are informed by the most current evidence.

### *Data Collection and Analysis*

The Data Management and Research Subcommittee will strategically obtain insights through analyzing publicly available datasets and research findings. These insights will be translated into a data product that supports the State Task Force's evidence-based decision-making.

### *Collaboration with Subcommittees*

The Data Management and Research Subcommittee will collaborate with other State Task Force Subcommittees to identify speakers and subject-matter experts who can present on emerging data and research priorities. Broadening the Subcommittee's access to diverse viewpoints will enhance its understanding of state research needs and improve data analytics access for other Task Force Subcommittees.

### **Subcommittee Chair:**

Dr. Liyun Zhang, Director of Trainer Development and Research, USC Children's Law Center  
Zhang349@mailbox.sc.edu

### **Task Force Liaison:**

Christopher Brunswick  
Data and Research Analyst  
SC Office of the Attorney General  
christopherbrunswick@scag.gov

**“Data cannot be considered in isolation. A well-funded, well resourced, collaborative data ecosystem is needed to support greater understanding and analysis of human trafficking at the global level.”**

— Tech Against Slavery



## Direct Services: Adult Focus Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Direct Services Subcommittee, with an Adult Focus, helps coordinate service providers across the state to better respond to the needs of adult victims and survivors through improved communication and information sharing; and helps shape the State Task Force initiatives through reference to best and emerging practices in the field.

## 2025 Highlights

### *Certification of Specialized Services*

Through the South Carolina Safe House Certification Program, the State Task Force certified three adult-serving programs statewide. Three programs were added to the online resource directory in Greenville, Richland, and Charleston Counties to help victims, service providers, and the court identify specialized programs serving adult victims. The State Task Force will work with specialized programs to develop a range of supplemental services for adult victims to support the Task Force's continuum-of-care model.

### *Resource Mapping*

The State Task Force began developing a formal process to solicit input from mandated member agencies, state subcommittees, regional task forces, direct services organizations, and other community organizations across South Carolina. The Subcommittee will identify relevant sectors and programs to help with the creation of a supplemental certification process. This service framework will elevate the quality and consistency of service providers working with adult survivors.

### *Sector-Specific Training*

The State Task Force hosted a two-day conference with a professional track focused on direct services. The training offered education and insight to minor and adult-serving agencies. Topics covered included understanding the scope and continuum of services in South and North Carolina, the intersection of the juvenile justice system and human trafficking, best practices when working with victims of human trafficking, and alternative therapy treatment to support survivor healing.

## 2026 Priorities

### *Subcommittee Recruitment*

Adult survivors of human trafficking have multiple pathways to screening and identification. Given the complexity of their needs, service providers must collaborate to provide holistic care across both residential and community-based settings. Recognizing this, the Subcommittee will expand its membership to include professional sectors that offer supplemental services to work alongside specialized programs.

### *Supplemental Certification Process*

The Supplemental Certification Process will support agencies in delivering high-quality non-residential or specialized trafficking services. The process will align with multidisciplinary response models and trauma-informed practices to uphold strong systems of care. The Subcommittee will begin to establish eligibility and evaluation criteria, define core service areas, and provide guidance to help organizations develop and implement practices that reflect the distinct needs of trafficking victims across diverse service settings.

### *Support Adult Access to Supplemental Services*

The Subcommittee will assist the State Task Force in expanding access to supplemental services for the well-being of adult survivors of human trafficking. These supplemental services will include behavioral and mental health care, preventative and routine medical care, substance use treatment, legal assistance, housing security, employment readiness, childcare, and other resources to strengthen a survivor's path to sustainable independence. Collaboration among service providers will help identify unmet needs, streamline referral pathways, and reduce barriers to care and services for adult survivors.

### **Task Force Liaison:**

Monique Garvin  
Director  
SC Office of the Attorney General  
moniquegarvin@scag.gov



Conference attendees learn about the intersection of trafficking and substance abuse.



## Direct Services: Minor Focus Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Direct Services Subcommittee, with a Minor Focus, aims to support children and adolescent victims by identifying system improvements and intervention strategies, formalizing recommendations, and advocating for specialized resources to assist at-risk and confirmed minor victims of human trafficking.



Kristin Dickson, Chair

## 2025 Highlights

### *Sector-Specific*

Through the South Carolina Safe House Certification Program, the State Task Force certified one residential program for minors in the state. The program has been added to the online resource directory in Berkeley County. This collaboration represents a critical step toward ensuring all specialized programs serving minor victims of trafficking align with best trauma-informed best practices.

### *Sector-Specific Presentations*

The Subcommittee provided presentations to a diverse range of agencies, including the Department of Social Services, residential shelters, and school districts, serving more than 160 direct service professionals to better support vulnerable youth. The Subcommittee also presented at three statewide conferences geared toward youth-serving organizations and school-based mental health programs, reaching an additional 105 attendees. These statewide engagements broadened awareness, improved practitioner competency, and strengthened the statewide network of professionals responding to child and youth exploitation.

### *Sector-Specific Professional Development*

The State Task Force hosted the inaugural Human Trafficking in the Carolinas Conference in 2025, bringing together professionals from South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia. Direct Services was one of the dedicated professional tracks for the conference, reflecting the Task Force's commitment to supporting practitioners who work directly with victims.

## 2026 Priorities

### *Restructure Subcommittee Membership*

The Direct Services for Minors Subcommittee will be restructured to strengthen regional and statewide coordination and to ensure representation from the agencies most critical to serving minor victims of trafficking. This restructuring will formally include regional task force chairs, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Social Services, law enforcement partners, and agencies that provide specialized services to minor victims.

### *Develop Coordinated Regional Goals*

The Subcommittee for Minors Subcommittee will develop targeted goals that strengthen coordinated service delivery and improve early identification and response protocols for minor victims of human trafficking. Through this goal-setting process, the subcommittee will ensure that all partners operate with a shared framework, enabling consistent, coordinated, and victim-centered responses to minor victims of trafficking.

### *Support Access to Supplemental Services*

The Subcommittee will support the State Task Force in increasing access to a broad range of supplemental services that promote stability, long-term recovery, and healthy development of minor victims of human trafficking. These supplemental services may include behavioral and mental health, routine and preventive medical care, family and caregiver support, life skills and independent living, and other day-to-day resources that strengthen a youth's overall well-being. By working with partner agencies and regional task forces, the Subcommittee will help identify unmet needs, streamline referral processes, and reduce barriers to timely and consistent support.

### **Subcommittee Chair:**

Kristin Dickson  
Program Manager  
SC Network of Children's Advocacy Centers  
kdickson@cac-sc.org

### **Task Force Liaison:**

Monique Garvin  
Director  
SC Office of the Attorney General  
moniquegarvin@scag.gov

**“Survivors of human trafficking require long-term, comprehensive services that address safety, health, legal needs, and economic stability.”**  
— U.S Department of Justice,  
Office for Victims of Crime



## Healthcare Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Healthcare Subcommittee provides trauma-informed, evidence-based recommendations to medical providers and their agencies to best respond to the needs of trafficking victims seeking services in South Carolina.

## 2025 Highlights:

### *Healthcare Subcommittee Liaison*

Kamron Singleton was hired as the Healthcare Subcommittee Liaison, serving as the primary point of coordination for healthcare-related antitrafficking initiatives statewide. In this role, Kamron will support regional and statewide healthcare partners, coordinate healthcare education and training, and implement the statewide healthcare strategic response.

### *Healthcare Subcommittee Restructured*

The Healthcare Subcommittee was restructured to include an advisory committee, composed of healthcare professionals representing each of the strategic response areas. This restructuring strengthens statewide collaboration, ensures the Subcommittee benefits from regional expertise, and promotes consistent guidance on healthcare protocols and best practices related to identification and response to potential trafficking in medical settings.

### *HEAL Training*

The Task Force partnered with HEAL Trafficking to provide Train-the-Trainer sessions to Regional Task Force members serving on local Healthcare Subcommittees. These trainings equipped providers with practical tools to identify potential indicators of human trafficking and to respond to disclosures appropriately. The partnership enhances the capacity of medical professionals to serve as first responders in trafficking identification and survivor support.

## 2026 Priorities:

### *Healthcare Roundtables*

The Healthcare Subcommittee will host regional healthcare roundtables to strengthen collaboration among hospitals, clinics, and community partners. The roundtables will provide a multisector forum of healthcare providers to share information and resources. Each roundtable will gather feedback from frontline professionals and identify strategies to improve the healthcare systems' capacity to recognize, respond, and report potential cases of human trafficking.

### *Revised Healthcare Protocol*

The Healthcare subcommittee will finalize and implement an updated statewide healthcare protocol designed to strengthen consistency in screening, identification, reporting and trauma-informed care across medical settings. The revised protocol will provide clear guidance for healthcare professionals, improve coordination of patient services, and ensure survivors receive appropriate and responsive support.

### *Sector-Specific Training Plan*

Following the implementation of the updated statewide healthcare protocol, the Subcommittee will develop sector-specific trainings that align with the new guidelines. These trainings will equip healthcare providers with practical instruction on implementing the protocol guidelines in medical settings. Building trainings around the revised protocol will ensure consistent practice for medical professionals and strengthen the statewide response to trafficking within the healthcare system.

### **Subcommittee Leadership:**

Upstate Area Liaison: Angelia Chambers  
Bon Secours St. Francis Health System

Pee Dee Area Liaison: Shannon Scott  
McLeod Regional Medical Center

Low County Area Liaison: Erin Hart  
Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC)

### **Task Force Liaison:**

Kamron Singleton  
Human Trafficking Program Coordinator  
SC Office of the Attorney General  
[Kamrongsingleton@scag.gov](mailto:Kamrongsingleton@scag.gov)



## Higher Education Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Higher Education Subcommittee collaborates with post-secondary institutions to coordinate a strategic response to human trafficking with an emphasis on tertiary level awareness, prevention education, training, and resource development.

## 2025 Highlights:

### *Higher Education Engagement Plan*

The State Task Force drafted a Higher Education Engagement Plan focused on three key areas: training, course integration, and campus-wide awareness. The plan is designed to equip faculty and staff with foundational knowledge, embed human trafficking content across relevant academic courses, and promote coordinated prevention messaging throughout college and university communities.

### *Network Building*

The Higher Education Subcommittee compiled a directory of point people at colleges and universities across the state who demonstrated interest in developing anti-trafficking responses on their campuses. Each person within the network will provide campus-informed input on the development and implementation of efforts within their respective academic communities. This network of community stakeholders will enhance the regional and statewide integration of anti-trafficking strategies on postsecondary campuses.

### *TraffickProofSC Expansion*

The State Task Force partnered with the SC Technical College System to reach students enrolled in their Dual Enrollment Programs statewide. Targeting dual enrollment educators to become TraffickProofSC facilitators will increase the State's reach to high school students and campus student groups. Expanding engagement with youth navigating both secondary and postsecondary learning spaces also creates earlier prevention and intervention opportunities.

## 2026 Goals:

### *Foster Student Engagement*

The State Task Force will focus on fostering student engagement by encouraging the formation of student-led initiatives, peer education programs, and awareness campaigns to promote student ownership and sustainability. The goal is to engage student leaders and equip campus communities with the knowledge to recognize signs of trafficking, understand how to respond appropriately, and connect with local and statewide resources.

### *Enhance Campus Visibility*

The State Task Force will develop a comprehensive, adaptable toolkit designed to support colleges and universities in launching and sustaining campus-wide human trafficking awareness campaigns. Through collaboration with Violence Prevention and Title IX staff, the Task Force also aims to integrate anti-trafficking awareness into relevant programming and initiatives across college campuses.

### *Increase Access to Prevention Education*

To foster more informed and proactive campus communities, college campuses, university professors, and campus police will have the opportunity to become trained TraffickProofSC facilitators. The expansion of qualified trainers will broaden access to evidence-based human trafficking education and embed prevention strategies into higher education responses and campus safety operations.

### **Task Force Liaison:**

Ashley Bishop  
Prevention Education Program Coordinator  
SC Office of the Attorney General  
ashleybishop@scag.gov

**“College-aged youth are uniquely vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation as they navigate their entry into adulthood, increase online exposure, and manage evolving identities. Without prevention education, traffickers are more adept at exploiting these factors to their advantage. Targeted outreach to this population is crucial in South Carolina’s response to human trafficking.”**

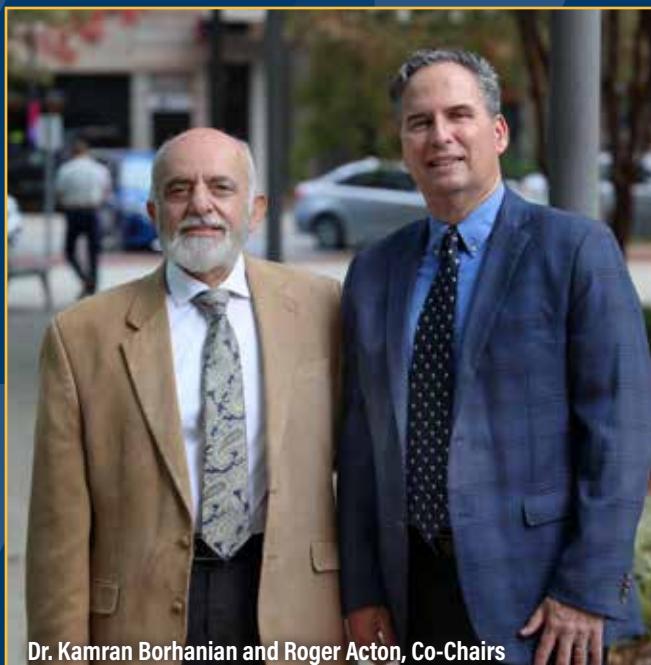
— Director Monique Garvin, South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force



## Interfaith Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Interfaith subcommittee will assist in developing human trafficking protocols and trauma-informed practices within houses of worship and will coordinate state and regional anti-human trafficking trainings and awareness efforts with members of the faith community.



Dr. Kamran Borhanian and Roger Acton, Co-Chairs

## 2025 Highlights:

### *3rd Annual Trunk-or-Treat Initiative*

The Interfaith Subcommittee hosted its 3rd Annual Trunk-or-Treat Initiative. Each regional task force participated in family-friendly events across the state to educate youth and families about the realities of human trafficking. The initiative strengthened local partnerships, increased outreach to faith-based communities, and enhanced awareness of available anti-trafficking resources.

### *Interfaith Train-the-Trainer*

The Interfaith Subcommittee launched the Interfaith Train-the-Trainer Program, preparing regional Interfaith chairs to deliver sector-specific Human Trafficking awareness presentations to faith-based audiences independently. The Program provided trainees with a human trafficking presentation, catered to places of worship covering key indicators of trafficking, pathways to victimization, reporting, and the role faith communities play in prevention and support. Fourteen participants completed the training, which established at least one trained facilitator in each regional task force. Expanding this training statewide strengthens local engagement and builds direct, sustainable relationships with and faith-based communities and leaders.

### *Inaugural Interfaith Roundtable*

The Interfaith Subcommittee convened its first Interfaith Roundtable in Orangeburg. This gathering united faith leaders, community members, and regional task force representatives to discuss collective strategies for prevention and survivor support. The roundtable promoted open dialogue, encouraged collaboration, and positioned faith leaders as advocates for anti-trafficking education and outreach. Several participants expressed interest in expanding the human trafficking presentation to their own places of worship, while others requested information on joining the Interfaith Subcommittee.

## 2026 Priorities:

### *Statewide Interfaith Roundtables*

The Interfaith Subcommittee will host additional Interfaith Roundtables in each of the state's four areas. These gatherings will provide faith leaders with opportunities to explore collaborative strategies, share prevention strategies, and learn effective ways to educate their communities about human trafficking. Roundtables will also function as planning spaces for future initiatives, foster strong community engagement and coordinated statewide efforts.

### *Faith Leader Trainings*

The Interfaith Subcommittee will continue expanding training opportunities for faith-based leaders and will explore training topics that support victim-centered programming. These trainings will equip faith leaders to recognize signs of trafficking, respond appropriately to victims who disclose within their congregations, and strengthen their role as trusted community partners in prevention and support efforts.

### *Faith-Based Outreach and Engagement*

Members of the Interfaith Subcommittee will participate in community and faith-based events throughout the year. Participations in these events will build and strengthen relationships with congregations, community organizations, and local leaders.

This engagement will increase opportunities for collaboration, broaden public awareness, and support sustained network building across the state.

## **Subcommittee Co-Chairs:**

Roger Acton, Faith-Based Victim Services Program Director

South Carolina Victim Assistance Network

[roger@scvan.org](mailto:roger@scvan.org)

Dr. Kamran Borhanian, Retired Physician

The Bahá'í Faith and Interfaith Partners of South Carolina

[borhaniank@gmail.com](mailto:borhaniank@gmail.com)

## **Task Force Liaison:**

James Massie

Human Trafficking Program Coordinator

South Carolina Office of the Attorney General

[jamesmassie@scag.gov](mailto:jamesmassie@scag.gov)



## Labor Trafficking Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Labor Trafficking Subcommittee aims to increase community awareness and trainings to direct service providers on the typologies of labor trafficking, the identification of national and foreign-born adult and minor victims, and the development of sector-specific best practices and resources.



## **2025 Highlights:**

### *Advocacy and Multidisciplinary Collaboration*

The Labor Trafficking Subcommittee hosted a roundtable with state and federal partners in Columbia. The roundtable convened Task Force leadership, programming staff, and special prosecutors from the South Carolina Attorney General's Office. Other attendees included representatives from Homeland Security Investigations, the State Law Enforcement Division, The Department of Justice, The Department of Employment and Workforce, and the United States Attorney General's Office. During this meeting, attendees discussed collaborative and multidisciplinary responses to Labor Trafficking, with an emphasis on awareness, victim advocacy, and resource development.

### *Community Partnerships*

The Labor Trafficking Subcommittee partnered with the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism to disseminate and display informational materials about worker rights and Labor Trafficking prevention. The materials were designed to be posted in nine Welcome Centers, along the state's major highways, including I-20, I-26, I-77, I-85, and I-95.

The Labor Trafficking Subcommittee partnered with the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce to distribute Human Trafficking Hotline posters throughout agricultural work sites in the state, reaching transporters, contractors, and worker housing locations.

### *Public Awareness*

To increase labor trafficking awareness, the Subcommittee provided presentations at Regional Task Force meetings and several Law Enforcement Training sessions. The Subcommittee also disseminated information on labor trafficking at various outreach events and disseminated Hotline posters to agricultural work sites in all four areas of the state.

### *Language Accessibility*

The Labor Trafficking Subcommittee translated awareness materials in Spanish to reach Hispanic populations across the state. To further ensure language accessibility in other communities, the Task Force also identified additional foreign languages most commonly spoken in South Carolina and began expanding its library of multilingual resources. This

effort improves access to information and strengthens victim identification and reporting, regardless of language barriers

## **2026 Priorities:**

### *Sector-Specific Awareness and Training*

The Labor Trafficking Subcommittee will develop sector-specific awareness and training focused on equipping community organizations with the knowledge and tools needed to identify indicators of labor trafficking in diverse settings. Trainings will emphasize recognizing industry-specific vulnerabilities, understanding civil remedies available to support migrant workers, and strengthening trauma-informed responses among healthcare professionals and victim advocates.

### *Language Accessibility for Labor Trafficking*

The Labor Trafficking Subcommittee will translate and distribute Labor Trafficking-specific materials in the six most common foreign languages spoken in South Carolina. The Task Force will explore translating existing resources will be translated into German, Chinese, French, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Russian. These translated resources will ensure information is accessible to unique communities throughout the state.

### *Labor Trafficking Guide for Victim Advocates*

The Labor Trafficking Subcommittee will develop a Labor Trafficking Guide for South Carolina Victim Advocates to increase victim identification and enhance service provision to survivors of Labor Trafficking. This guide will outline common indicators, screening approaches, reporting tools, and available state and federal resources.

## **Subcommittee Chair:**

Abdalís Toro

State Monitor Advocate

South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce

AToro@dew.sc.gov

## **Task Force Liaison:**

Veronica Smith

HT Program Coordinator

South Carolina Office of the Attorney General

veronicasmith@scag.gov



## Law Enforcement Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The Law Enforcement Subcommittee is committed to the prevention of human trafficking and effectively responding to the crime in South Carolina. Through collaboration and accountability, the subcommittee facilitates sector specific training, assists law enforcement and social services agencies with ongoing investigations, promotes victim-centered responses, and provides public outreach to communities across the state.



## 2025 Highlights

**Gang-Facilitated Human Trafficking Training**  
Special Agent Jade Roy from SLED provided an in-depth analysis on the intersection of gang activity and human trafficking. Through case review and analysis, this training equipped officers to understand recruitment patterns, behavioral indicators, and other red flags that are frequently overlooked with early encounters with victims. This training increased officers' capacity to detect trafficking dynamics, respond appropriately, and support victim-centered investigations across the state.

### ***Two-Day Law Enforcement Training***

The Law Enforcement Subcommittee partnered with Fortis Tactical Solutions to host advanced human trafficking trainings. This two-day training reached law enforcement officers in Anderson, Charleston, Lancaster, Lexington, and Richland Counties. Sessions focused on improving officers' ability to identify indicators of human trafficking, apply trauma-informed investigative techniques, and strengthen interagency communication.

### ***Expanded Training Access***

The Law Enforcement Subcommittee broadened access to its advanced trainings by extending participation beyond specialized human trafficking investigators to include Law Enforcement Victim Advocates and First Responders. This expansion highlights the need for a coordinated, multidisciplinary response from professionals in related fields who may encounter victims during their earliest point of contact.

**“The Law Enforcement Subcommittee coordinates targeted law enforcement training to strengthen officers' ability to accurately identify human trafficking and respond with a victim-centered lens. Consistent training information improves local and state investigations to both protect victims and hold traffickers accountable.”**

— Lieutenant Jade Roy, Human Trafficking Unit, South Carolina Law Enforcement Division

## 2026 Priorities

### ***Sector-Specific Law Enforcement Training***

The Law Enforcement Subcommittee will enhance their training catalog to provide general and specialized law enforcement training. Topics will include emerging trafficking trends, evolving digital platforms, new recruitment tactics, and investigation techniques for labor and sex trafficking. Tiered training opportunities will be available for specialized human trafficking investigators, other law enforcement officers, first responders, and additional relevant fields.

***Strengthen Law Enforcement Network and Reporting***  
The Subcommittee will restructure its membership by strengthening its network of specialized human trafficking investigators across the state and the southeast region. Statewide and regional network building will position the subcommittee to promote the South Carolina Law Enforcement Tip Reporting Hotline. This goal will improve reporting accuracy, foster collaboration with local stakeholders, and increase identification and response to human trafficking across the state.

### ***Improve Victim Support Systems***

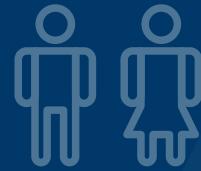
The Subcommittee will continue collaborating with victim service organizations to strengthen referral processes and support services for survivors identified during investigations and utilize the Child Abuse Protocol toolkit to reinforce best practices for supporting victims of human trafficking.

### ***Subcommittee Chair:***

Lt. Jade Roy  
Human Trafficking Unit  
SC Law Enforcement Division  
jroy@sled.sc.gov

### ***Task Force Liaison:***

James Massie  
HT Program Coordinator  
SC Office of the Attorney General  
jamesmassie@scag.gov



## Legal Innovations Subcommittee

### *Purpose:*

The purpose of the Legal Innovations Subcommittee is to promote judicial programs that address the needs of trafficking victims and survivors navigating the criminal and family court systems.



Dr. Aleksandra Chauhan, Chair

## 2025 Highlights

### *Video for Parents and Guardians*

The State Task Force, in partnership with South Carolina ETV, began development of a unique video to be used by the RISE court and the community to inform parents and guardians about the crime of human trafficking, both sex trafficking and labor trafficking. The video will include an overview of the laws in South Carolina and the impact of the crime on young people. This partnership will appropriately address parents, guardians, and others to identify and support minor victims as they progress through the program or other appropriate treatment.

### *Steps Toward Standing up the Court*

The subcommittee is collaborating with the Human Trafficking Institute (HTI) and the Children's Law Center to identify necessary personnel, statistics and goals for the RISE court proposal. The subcommittee continues to work within the South Carolina Courts to determine how and where it will fit and how and when it could be feasible to begin the process of a pilot program. It is necessary to be measured in progress to be certain there is funding when the time is right to move forward with the court to provide restoration for minors in South Carolina who have experienced human trafficking or are at-risk of being trafficked.

## 2026 Priorities

### *Formalize the Framework and Funding*

In 2026, the Subcommittee will formalize the framework for the RISE Court pilot program. Using the formalized framework with the support of the court system and its recommended timing, the subcommittee will seek funding sources to support staffing, infrastructure, and other resources for the specialized human trafficking court for minors.

Members of the Legal Innovation Subcommittee will identify grant opportunities for the RISE Court pilot program and draft proposals. Additional funding opportunities will also be discussed to ensure the successful launch.

### *Training and Education for Prosecutors and Defense Counsel*

In 2026, the subcommittee will provide support and outreach for trainings facilitated by the Attorney General's Office with local prosecutors to cover

legislative and court updates through the Stop Violence Against Women Act Grant and legal conferences to stay on top of the changing legislation and court rulings.

### *Legislative Goals*

The subcommittee will work with the legislature to continue supporting legislation allowing cases to be tried in a reasonable time frame and within reasonable budgets. In 2026, the legislature will be asked to look at updating the state law to continue to mirror the updates to the federal certified business records as the digital landscape grows and evolves.

### **Subcommittee Chair:**

Dr. Aleksandra Chauhan  
USC Joseph F. Rice School of Law  
chauhana@mailbox.sc.edu

### **Task Force Liaison:**

James Massie  
HT Program Coordinator  
South Carolina Office of the Attorney General  
jamesmassie@scag.gov



# Advisory Council

Historically, the anti-human trafficking field has acknowledged that sex and labor exploitation can happen anywhere and to anyone. While this is true, it is also important to recognize that some populations are more vulnerable to human trafficking than others. While no one factor guarantees that an individual will be trafficked, vulnerabilities can serve as routes to human trafficking victimization.

In 2021, the State Task Force formalized an advisory council to improve the response to the crime and fully address vulnerabilities to human trafficking.

The Advisory Council also enhances the State Task Force's ability to address the ongoing need to continue educating members of the community about best and emerging practices relevant to South Carolina's anti-human trafficking efforts.

Below is a list of prioritized focus areas. The Task Force is dedicated to maintaining partnerships with subject matter experts in these fields. Additionally, the State Task Force will continue its efforts in 2025 to develop initiatives that bring awareness of human trafficking to diverse populations and support efforts to prevent victimization.

**Mental Health**

**Transportation**

**Aging Population**

**Individuals with disabilities**

**Hospitality**

**Substance Use Disorders**

**Indigenous populations**

**Technology**

**Finance**

**People of color**

**LGBTQIA+**

**Runaway youth**

**Unhoused populations**

**Language accessibility**

**Cultural competency**

If you are a professional working in one of these fields and would like to be involved in statewide efforts, please contact Director Monique Garvin at [moniquegarvin@scag.gov](mailto:moniquegarvin@scag.gov).

# Regional Task Forces



## 1ST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chairs

Chief Chandra Mcpherson-Gibbs,  
Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office  
cmcpherson@orangeburgcounty.org

### Law Enforcement

Lenel Smith, Director of Victim Services  
Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office

### Healthcare

Charlene Pruitt, Department of Nursing  
at Claflin University

### Community Outreach

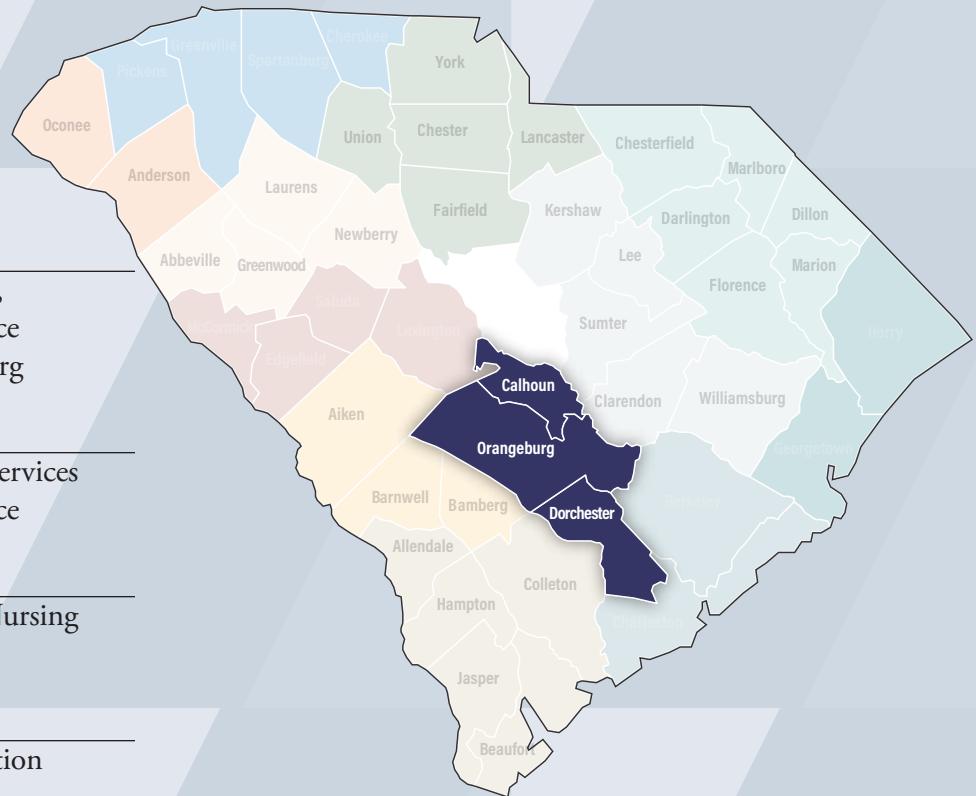
Shanika Aiken, S.A.F.E. Organization

### Direct Services

Ty 'Ionna Gillam, Edisto Children Center  
CASA Family Systems

### 2026 Meeting Dates

January 27th  
May 19th  
September 22nd  
December 15th



Chief Chandra Gibbs, Chair

## 2025 Highlights

- » The 1st Judicial Circuit Regional Task Force hosted its first public regional task force meeting at Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College. Attendees included Sheriff Ravenell, and representatives from South Carolina Department of Public Health, South Carolina Regional Housing Authority No.3, Orangeburg County School District, Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office, Orangeburg's Family Health Center, and other community partners.
- » The regional task force hosted an Interfaith Roundtable on Human Trafficking, bringing together faith-based leaders across the community. Participants from Kingdom Builders International Church, Kingdom Life Church and Ministries, Life Cathedral, Brown AME Chapel, and other faith-based organizations. Faith leaders convened and explored ways for faith communities to become more actively involved in prevention and victim support efforts.
- » The regional task force identified their subcommittee chairs for Law Enforcement, Healthcare, Direct Services, and Community Outreach. Regional Task Force leadership met to establish and define goals to strengthen coordination and service delivery within the circuit.



Orangeburg Sheriff Leroy Ravenell and James Massie

- » The regional task force collaborated with faith-based organizations throughout the First Judicial Circuit, participating at the Jefferson High School and Orangeburg Sheriff's Office Trunk or Treat. These events distributed information and engaged the public in discussions about human trafficking prevention and awareness.

## 2026 Priorities

- » Increase Regional Task Force membership
- » Develop Local Multisector Training
- » Foster Professional and Community Partnerships
- » Attend Community Awareness and Outreach Events



1st Judicial Circuit Regional Task Force Public Meeting



## 2ND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chairs

Lt. Eric Kirkland, Co-Chair,  
Barnwell County Sheriff's Office  
ekirkland@barnwellcountysheriff.net

Eleanor Hunter, Co-Chair,  
Aiken Department of Public Safety,  
ehunter@cityofaikensc.gov

### Community Outreach

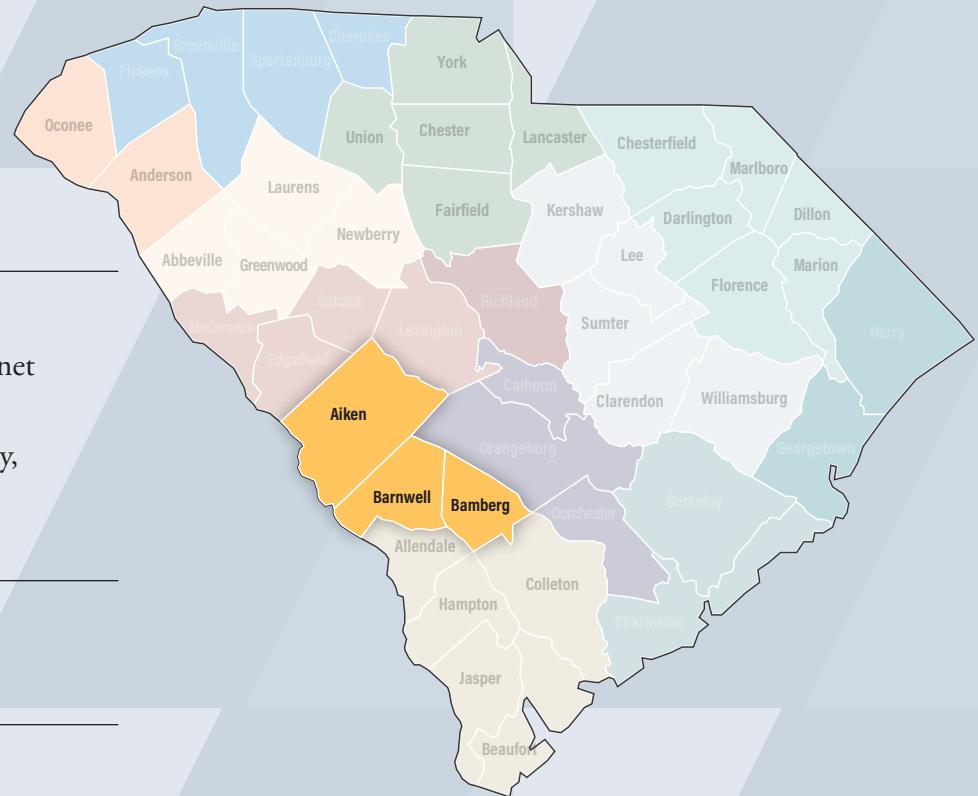
Sheila Silon, Barnwell County  
Health Department

### Interfaith

Dr. Crystal Ratliff, Pineview  
Baptist Church

### 2026 Meeting Dates

February 20th  
May 29th  
August 21st  
November 13th



Eleanor Hunter, Co-Chair

## 2025 Highlights

- » Detective Eleanor Hunter with Aiken Department of Public Safety, joined Lt. Eric Kirkland with Barnwell County Sheriff's Office, as a Co-Chair of the 2nd Judicial Circuit Regional Human Trafficking Task Force.
- » Meetings were held quarterly, and locations alternated between Aiken and Barnwell counties. Meeting locations included the Aiken Public Library, Barnwell County Sheriff's Department, and Aiken Department of Public Safety. Meeting presentation topics included The Courage Center and substance abuse treatment services, non-citizen children and DSS, and SLED Human Trafficking Unit's case trends in South Carolina.
- » The regional task force recognized Human Trafficking Awareness Month in January by hosting a proclamation ceremony at the Children's Advocacy Center of Aiken County, where the Mayor of Aiken read the proclamation.
- » Two regional faith-based trunk-or-treat events were held in Aiken and Barnwell in October.



## 2026 Priorities

- » Fill Vacant Subcommittee Chair Positions
- » Attend Community Awareness and Outreach Events
- » Expand Training and Professional Development Opportunities



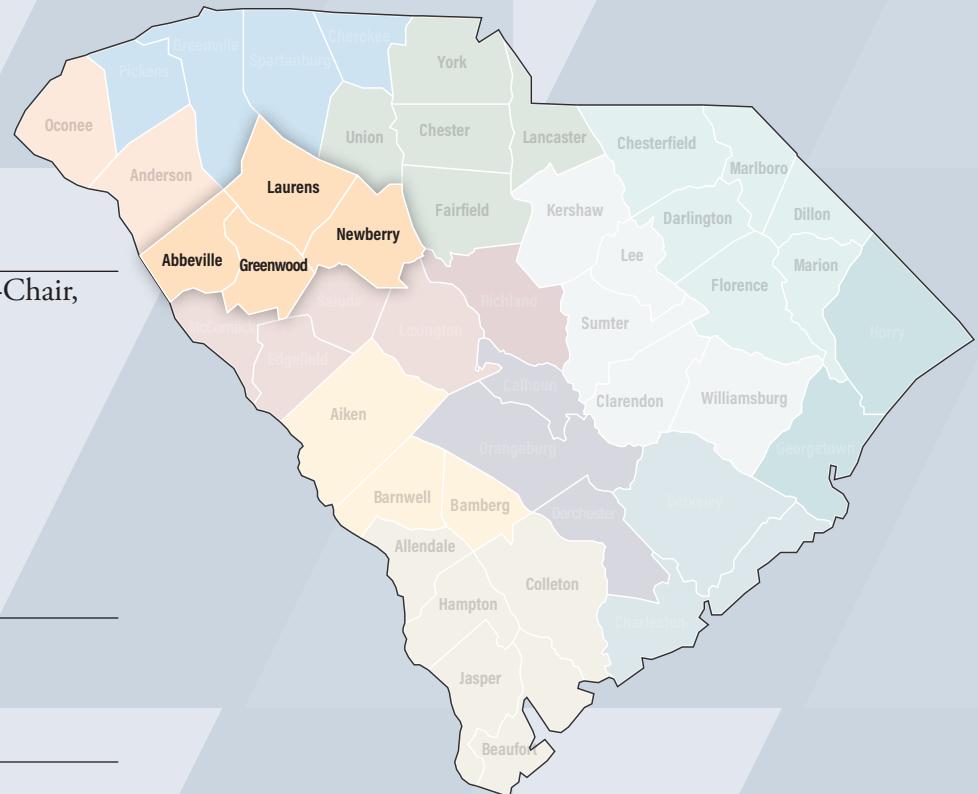


## 8TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chairs

Investigator Windy Chappell, Co-Chair,  
8th Circuit Solicitor's Office  
Wchappell@greenwoodsc.gov

Deashedra Wakefield, Co-Chair,  
Victim Services Manager  
Beyond Abuse  
swakefield@beyondabuse.info



### Community Outreach

Catie Young, Greenwood County  
Sheriff's Office

### Direct Services

Alice Hodges, Meg's House

### Law Enforcement

Reynolds Satterfield, SC Department of  
Probation, Parole & Pardon Services

### Healthcare

Jessica Jacobs, Carolina Health Centers

### 2026 Meeting Dates

March 19th  
June 18th  
September 24th  
December 17th



Deashedra Wakefield and Windy Chappell, Co-Chairs

## 2025 Highlights

- » The 8th Judicial Circuit Regional Task Force meetings were held virtually and in person at Piedmont Technical College in Greenwood. These meetings included presentations from various community members and a review of recent suspected trafficking cases. The case review presentation invited input and participation of service providers and other community advocates.
- » The task force participated in Trunk or Treat events at St. Mark United Methodist Church and the Uptown Boo Bash in Greenwood County.
- » Human Trafficking Hotline posters were distributed in different businesses and mandated locations in the Greenwood area.



2025 Trunk or Treat Event

## 2026 Priorities

- » Create Social Media Accounts for Increased Outreach
- » Attend and Create Awareness Events in the Community
- » Identify Specific Language Accessibility Needs in the Area



SCWags for Awareness



## 10TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chair

Lieutenant Anna Orr, Chair  
Oconee County Sheriff's Office  
aorr@oconeelaw.com

### Community Outreach

Nivia Miranda, School District of  
Oconee County

### Direct Services for minors

Crystal Noble, SC Department of  
Juvenile Justice

### Interfaith

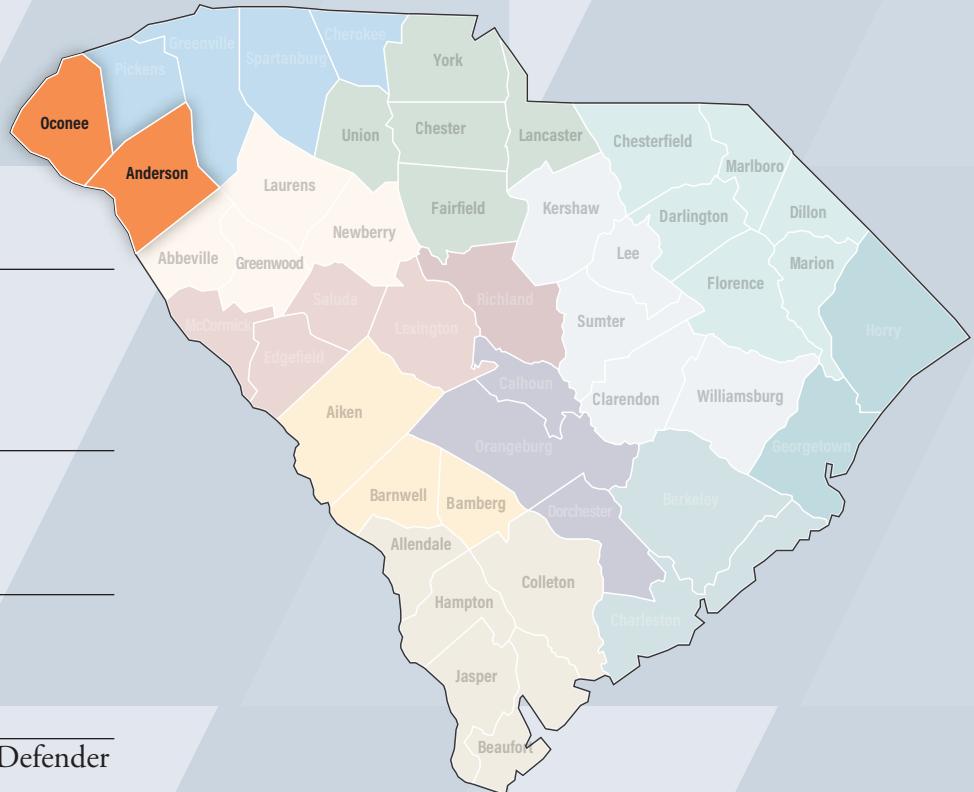
Joey Oppermann, Oconee Public Defender

### Healthcare

Misty Lee, SC Department of  
Public Health

### 2026 Meeting Dates

March 27th  
June 26th  
September 25th  
December 7th



Lt. Anna Orr, Chair

## 2025 Highlights

- » The 10th Judicial Circuit Regional Human Trafficking Task Force was launched in May 2025. Meetings were held both virtually and at the Oconee Sheriff's Office. The meetings included presentations from victim assistance organizations as well as task force updates.
- » The task force participated in the Oconee National Night Out event, raising awareness and reaching youth along with parents in the community to further the educate on myths and red flags surrounding human trafficking.
- » The regional task force collaborated with the State Task Force to attend the Hispanic Heritage Festival in Walhalla.
- » The task force participated in Trunk or Treat events at St. Mark United Methodist Church, Scenic Heights Baptist Church, Golden Corner Baptist Church Westminster Mason Lodge in Oconee County, and Grace Episcopal Church in Anderson County.

## 2026 Priorities

- » Increase Visibility, Awareness and Education through Continued Outreach
- » Establish an Event Calendar to Increase Community Presence and Participation
- » Revamp the Contact List for Local Programs, Facilities and Victim Resources Available
- » Identify Specific Language Accessibility Needs in the Area



Oconee County Sheriff Mike Crenshaw and Lt. Anna Orr, Chair



SCHTTF and 10th Circuit Regional Task Force Leadership



## CATAWBA AREA REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chairs

Sergeant Brandon Avidon, Co-Chair  
Rock Hill Police Department  
Brandon.Avidon@cityofrockhill.com

Lisa Glazebrook, Co-Chair  
CAC Coordinator  
Safe Passage  
Lglazebrook@safepassagesc.org

### Community Outreach

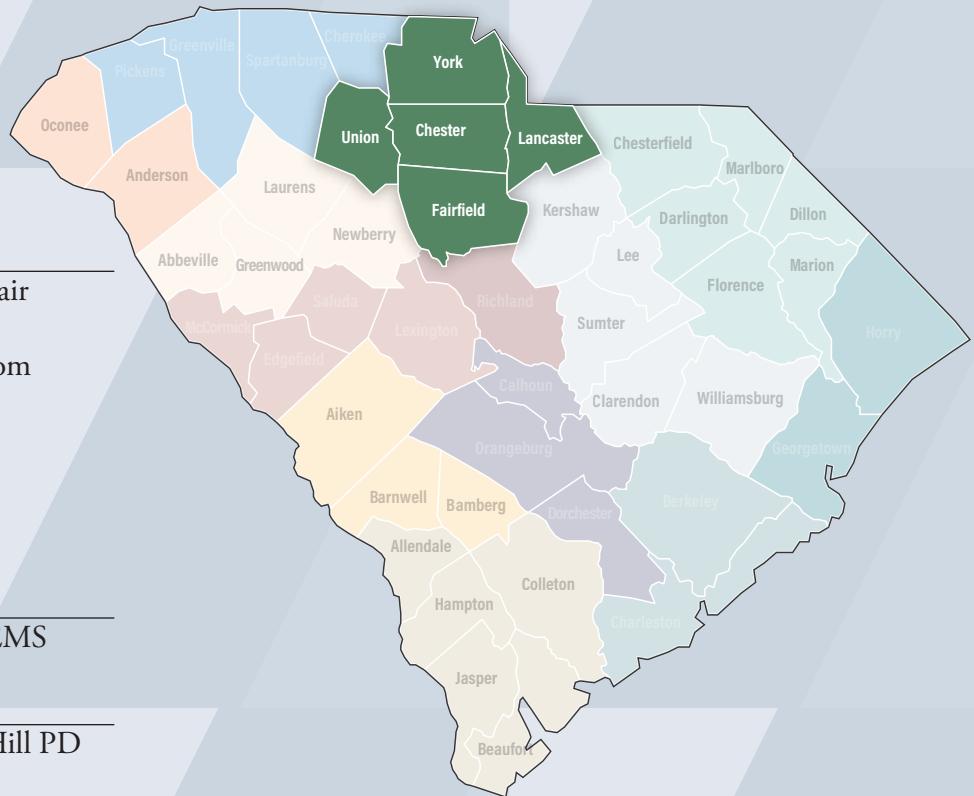
Brian Collins, Lancaster County EMS

### Law Enforcement

Sergeant Brandon Avidon, Rock Hill PD

### 2026 Meeting Dates

February 12th  
May 14th  
August 13th  
November 12th



Lisa Glazebrook and Detective Brandon Avidon, Co-Chairs

## 2025 Highlights:

- » The Catawba Area Regional Task Force met quarterly and rotated counties for meeting locations. Members convened at Lancaster County Sheriff's Office, Rock Hill PD, and Gateway Conference Center. Meeting presentation topics included labor trafficking, the Handle With Care Program, local service provider overviews, and the role that religion can play in preventing exploitation.
- » The chair of the Community Outreach Subcommittee continues to provide relevant information and news on the task force's Facebook page.



Catawba Area Regional Task Force meeting

- » The regional task force hosted a Canvas the Community Day in June to distribute the new Human Trafficking Hotline posters. There was participation in all five counties in the region and over 112 establishments were visited.
- » In July, members of the regional task force, in partnership with Lancaster County Sheriff's Office, provided a human trafficking awareness event for the community in Indian Land.

## 2026 Priorities

- » Grow Regional Task Force membership
- » Review and Enhance Action Plan
- » Identify Specific Language Accessibility Needs in the Area
- » Increase Awareness Through Continued Outreach



Poster Day at the Catawba Area Regional Task Force Public Meeting



## COASTAL REGION REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chair

Captain Sherri Smith, Chair  
Horry County Sheriff's Office  
Smithsh@horrycountysc.gov

### Public Education/Outreach

Ron Harrison, State Constable

### Interfaith

Shelbia Wiley, Executive Director  
Engaging Minds Services

### Direct Services

Kelly Mason, Children's Recovery Center  
Beverly Wilhelm, Coastal  
Carolina University

### Higher Education

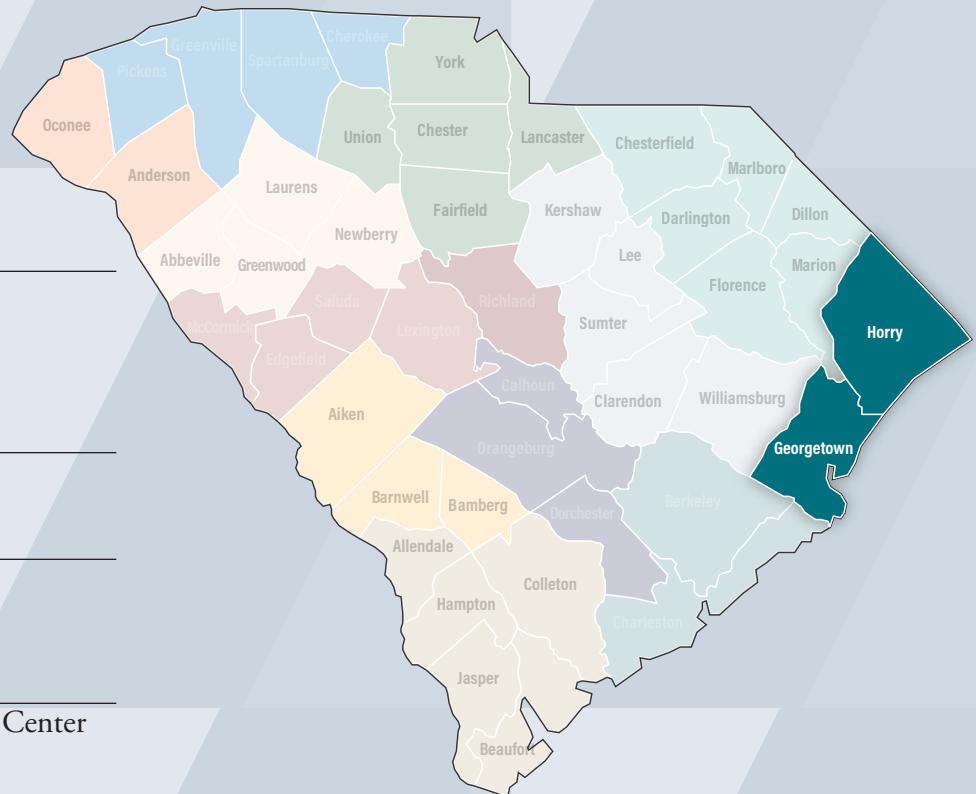
Beverly Wilhelm, Coastal  
Carolina University

### HealthCare

Natalie Lennard  
McLeod Health

### 2026 Meeting Dates

January 13th  
March 24th  
June 30th  
August 25th  
November 24th



## 2025 Highlights

- » The Coastal Region Human Trafficking Task Force, in collaboration with Engaging Minds Services, successfully hosted the annual Coastal Region Human Trafficking Conference. The event brought together law enforcement, healthcare professionals, government officials, and community leaders to address emerging trends and strengthen collaborative responses to human trafficking within the coastal region of South Carolina.
- » The task force actively participated in both the Spring and Fall Bike Week Rallies, distributing educational materials and engaging with attendees to raise awareness about human trafficking and available local resources. These outreach efforts aimed to inform the public and prevent potential exploitation during high-traffic community events.
- » Members of the regional task force's Interfaith Subcommittee partnered with community organizations to host a Trunk or Treat event, combining family-friendly engagement with education on trafficking prevention and community safety.
- » The task force provided Human Trafficking Awareness Training to Horry Telephone Cooperative employees, equipping staff with the knowledge to identify indicators of trafficking and report concerns responsibly within their workplace and customer interactions.



Spring Bike Rally in Myrtle Beach



Captain Sherri Smith and Horry County Sheriff's office tabling for back to school event

- » In partnership with Coast RTA, the task force delivered targeted training to public transit drivers to help them recognize signs of human trafficking and understand appropriate reporting procedures. This initiative strengthened the community's front-line response network.
- » Regional Task Force Chair Sherri Smith and the Healthcare Subcommittee Chair Natalie Lenard co-facilitated a healthcare training for area nurses, healthcare providers, and first responders, with support from Access Labs. This training focused on improving identification and response within healthcare settings.
- » In October, a regional faith-based trunk-or-treat event was held at Pelican's baseball Ball Park and Carolina Forest Recreation Center in Horry County.

## 2026 Priorities

- » Expand Community Engagement and Outreach
- » Strengthen Recruitment and Task Force Membership
- » Expand Training and Professional Development Opportunities
- » Enhance Collaboration Across Subcommittees and Regions
- » Increase Access to Resources and Support Services



## L.E.M.S. REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chair

Chief Daniel Ruggiero, Chair  
Columbia Metro Airport Department of  
Public Safety  
d.ruggiero@flycae.com

### Community Outreach

Lindsay McDade, Cayce Fire Department

### Direct Services

Jennifer McGee, Dickerson Children's  
Advocacy Center

### Healthcare

Shellie Keisler, Prisma Health

### Law Enforcement

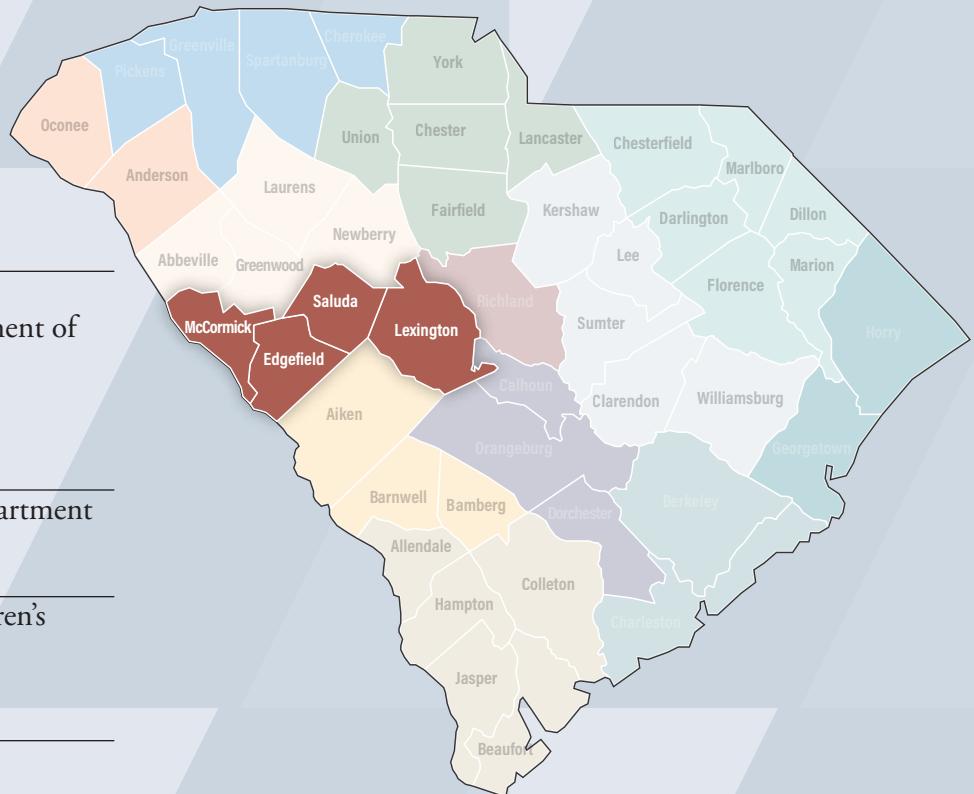
Aimee Lutz, Victim Advocate  
Lexington Police Department

### Interfaith

Pastor Luis Cruz, Saluda Church

### 2026 Meeting Dates

February 10th  
May 12th  
August 11th  
November 10th



Chief Daniel Ruggiero, Chair, with K9 Gauge

## 2025 Highlights

- » The LEMS Regional Task Force convened bi-monthly at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport. The meeting presentation topics covered a range of subjects, including child labor laws, services at Lighthouse for Life, the Handle With Care Program, the Dickerson Children's Advocacy Center and its services, and an update on current healthcare-related legislation.
- » The regional task force hosted their third booth at the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic in March to display human trafficking awareness materials. In partnership with the Richland County Regional Human Trafficking Task Force, volunteers staffed the booth throughout the three-day event, which attracts approximately 40,000 attendees.
- » In August, the regional task force hosted a Human Trafficking Poster Distribution Day. Members from all four counties in the region participated in the initiative to distribute new posters to over 100 establishments.
- » The regional task force partnered with Kittiwake Baptist Church to provide outreach, education, and resources to the traveling State Fair workers in October. For two days, volunteers served meals, personal care bags, and distributed Hotline information to employees.
- » The regional task force also partnered with the Cayce Fire Department, and therapy mini horses, Muffin and Mila, to reach State Fair attendees. Volunteers engaged with visitors and members to provide human trafficking awareness informational cards and items.



Outreach at Kittiwake Baptist Church



Chief Daniel Ruggiero, Lindsay McDade and Muffin

- » In October, two regional trunk-or-treat events were held in Saluda and Lexington Counties. Lexington County Trunk or Treat was held at Fellowship Baptist Church and Town of Saluda Trunk or Treat.

## 2026 Priorities

- » Expand Community Outreach and Awareness
- » Recruit Additional Subcommittee Chairs
- » Strengthen Healthcare and Systems Engagement
- » Increase Visibility



Outreach to traveling State Fair workers



## LOWCOUNTRY REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chairs

Lieutenant JoJo Woodward, Co-Chair  
Jasper County Sheriff's Office  
jwoodwardjr@jaspercountysc.gov

Erinn McGuire, Co-Chair  
14th Solicitor's Office  
emcguire@scsolicitor14.org

### Direct Service/Victim Services

Michelle Fraser, 14th Circuit Victims  
Services Center

### Law Enforcement

Investigator Angela Serrano, Hardeeville  
Police Department

### Healthcare

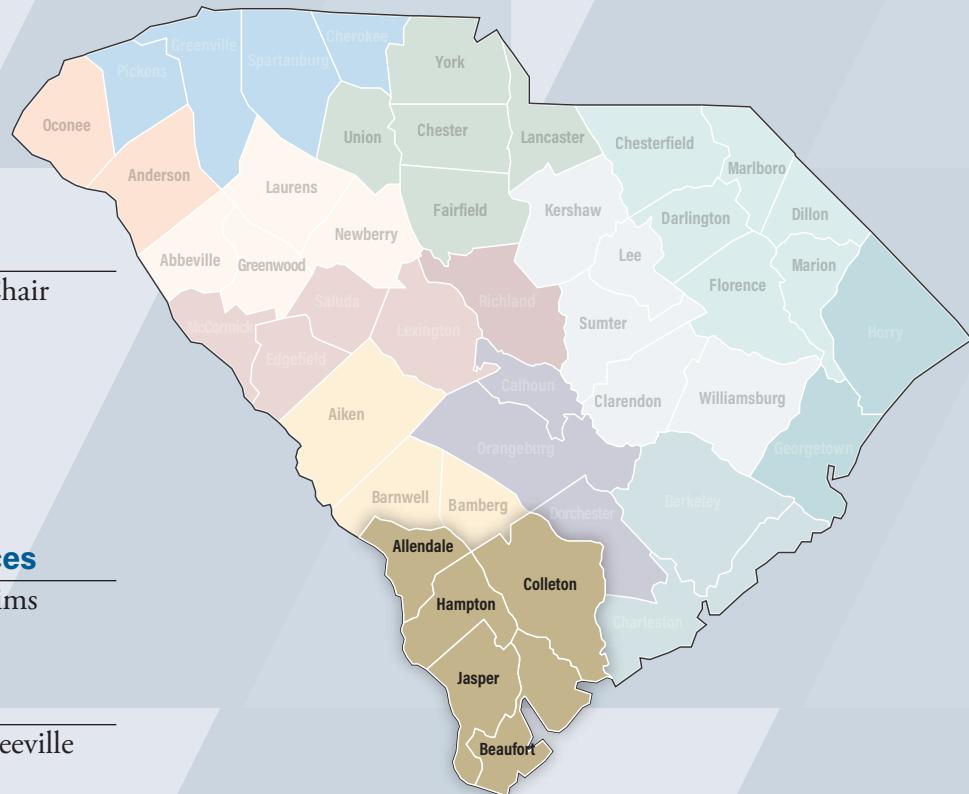
Jennifer Talley, 14th Circuit Victims  
Services Center

### Community Outreach

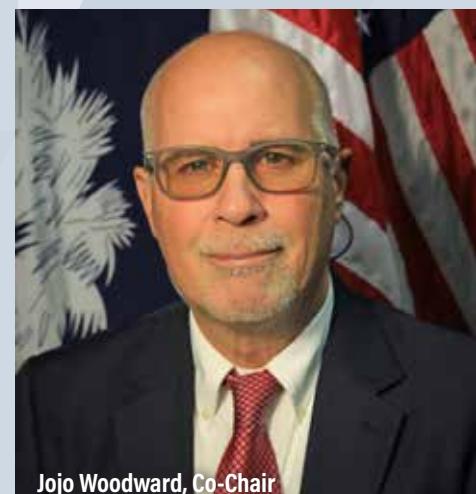
Rachel McBride, The Helianthus Project

### 2026 Meeting Dates

January 26th  
April 27th  
August 24th  
October 26th



Erinn McGuire, Co-Chair



Jojo Woodward, Co-Chair

## 2025 Highlights

- » The Lowcountry Regional Task Force hosted its fifth consecutive Annual Community Address, featuring updates from the South Carolina State Task Force Director.
- » The task force welcomed Jennifer Talley as the new Healthcare Subcommittee Chair and Rachel McBride as the Community Outreach Subcommittee Chair. Jennifer Talley serves as the Safe/SANE Coordinator for the 14th Circuit Victims Service Center. Rachel McBride is the Founder and Executive Director of The Helianthus Project, based in Beaufort, South Carolina. Both bring extensive experience and expertise in victim advocacy, trauma-informed care, and community education.
- » The regional task force collaborated with faith-based organizations throughout the Lowcountry, participating in The Town of Port Royal, Creative Church, and Jasper County Sheriff's Office Trunk or Treat events, to distribute information and engage the public in discussions about human trafficking prevention and awareness.

» Members of the task force volunteered at numerous community events across the region, including Port Royal Oktoberfest, PACAF, SC National Night Out, and other outreach opportunities, sharing educational materials and raising awareness about the impact of human trafficking in local communities.

## 2026 Priorities

- » Expand the Lowcountry Regional Task Force Annual Resource Fair
- » Provide Sector-Specific Trainings
- » Increase Community Awareness and Outreach
- » Develop Multidisciplinary Partnerships





## RICHLAND COUNTY REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chair

Jennifer Mason, Chair  
Anti-Human Trafficking Project  
Coordinator  
Richland County CASA  
mason.jennifer@richlandcountysc.gov

### Education & Awareness

Jennifer Douglass

### Law Enforcement

Captain Brittany Jackamonis,  
Richland County Sheriff's Department

### Survivor Support

Emily Pridgen, Pathways to Healing

### Interfaith

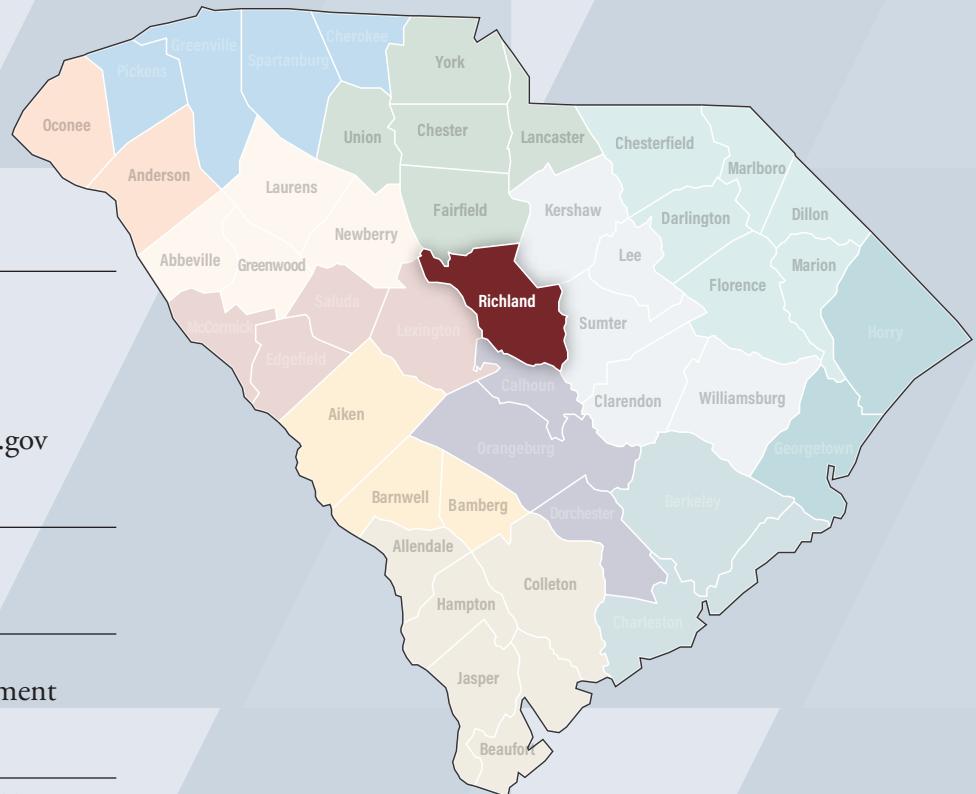
Ida Thompson, Retired Teacher

### Legislation & Advocacy

Robert Healy, Legislative Roundtable

### 2026 Meeting Dates:

January 16th  
March 20th  
May 15th  
July 17th  
September 18th  
November 13th



Jennifer Mason, Chair

## 2025 Highlights:

- » The Richland County Regional Task Force met bi-monthly in Columbia. Meeting presentation topics included human trafficking and the LGBTQ+ community, trauma-informed and survivor-centered care, familial trafficking, Department of Labor and the Balcazar case, and motivational interviewing.
- » In March, the Task Force continued their partnership with the LEMS Regional Human Trafficking Task Force to staff a human trafficking awareness booth at the Sportsmen's Classic on the State Fairgrounds in Columbia.
- » In October, a regional faith-based trunk-or-treat event was held in Trinity Baptist Church in Richland County.



2025 SCWAGS for Awareness Campaign

## 2026 Priorities

- » Increase Community Awareness and Outreach
- » Recruit Additional Subcommittee Chairs
- » Enhance Collaboration Across Subcommittees and Regions



2025 SCWAGS for Awareness Campaign



## TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

### Regional Task Force Chairs

Exec Dir Brooke Burris, Esq., Co-Chair  
The Lincoln Tubman Foundation,  
bburris@tricountyhttf.org

Lauren Knapp, Co-Chair,  
Counter Threat Project Coordinator,  
Charleston County Department  
of Public Safety,  
lknapp@charlestoncounty.org

### Child Services

Nicole Hoffman, Kay Phillips Child  
Advocacy Center  
Rachael Garrett, Dee Norton Child  
Advocacy Center  
Millicent Fowler, Kay Phillips Child  
Advocacy Center  
Ivy DeAngelis, The Formation Project

### Healthcare

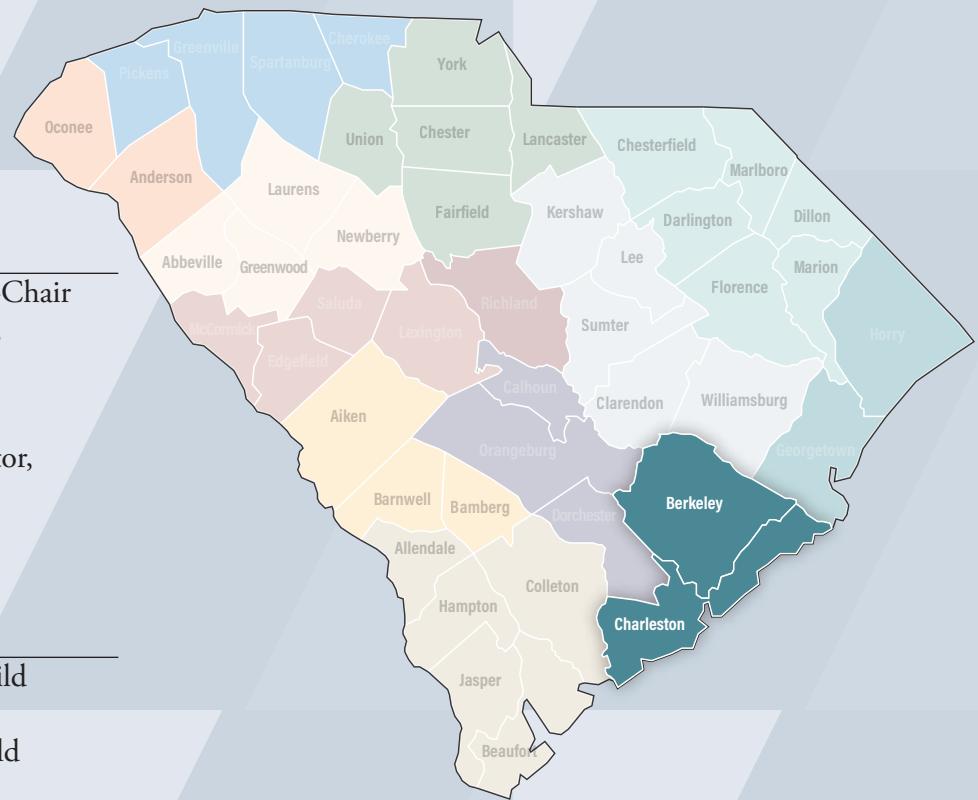
Erin Hart, Medical University of  
South Carolina  
Melissa Crapse, Medical University of  
South Carolina

### Law Enforcement

Lieutenant Jade Roy, South Carolina Law  
Enforcement Division  
Kelly LaPlante, 1st Circuit Solicitor's Office  
Kamila Szymczynska-Sas, Berkeley County  
Solicitor's Office

### Legal Innovations

Anne Ross, Charleston Pro Bono Legal  
Services, Lincoln Tubman Foundation  
Emily Guerrero, Nelson Mullins



### Community Outreach

Jessica Goodwin, South Carolina Victim  
Assistance Network

### Research & Data

Dr. M. Kristen Hefner, Ph.D., Department  
of Criminal Justice at The Citadel  
Dr. Leslie Hill, Ph.D., Department of  
Criminal Justice at The Citadel

### 2026 Meeting Dates

January 23rd  
April 17th  
July 17th  
October 16th

## 2025 Highlights

- » Two official proclamations were secured from the City of Hanahan and the Town of St. George, reinforcing the importance of addressing human trafficking at local and regional levels.
- » Subcommittees delivered a wide range of sector-specific training, including a session for 44 judges, public interest attorneys, and solicitors; a session for 18 Summary Court and Magistrate Judges; and six CLEE- and VSP-eligible law enforcement trainings reaching 116 officers. These sessions strengthened the region's collective response to human trafficking by increasing awareness, enhancing professional expertise, and equipping key sectors with the tools to identify and support victims.
- » 24 victims were identified in the Charleston County Jail through the jail screening tool, which is currently being validated for efficacy by the Tri-County Research and Data Subcommittee.
- » The regional task force established a regional, cross-disciplinary information-sharing protocol, including a formalized data-collection agreement with the S.C. Law Enforcement Division (SLED) Human Trafficking Unit.
- » The Healthcare Subcommittee led legislative advocacy for H.4343, which mandates human trafficking training for healthcare workers.



Tri-County Regional Task Force meeting, North Charleston City Hall

- » The Fairy Godparent Project (FGP), a partnership with the Dee Norton Child Advocacy Center, reached its one-year milestone. All youth in need of sponsors at Dee Norton are currently matched.

## 2026 Priorities

- » Advocate for Human Trafficking Legislation for Healthcare, Law Enforcement, and Survivors
- » Increase Sector-Specific Training for Law Enforcement, Healthcare Providers, Attorneys, and Other Advocates.
- » Enhance the Youth Advocacy Certification Program, Including a Student-Led Capstone.



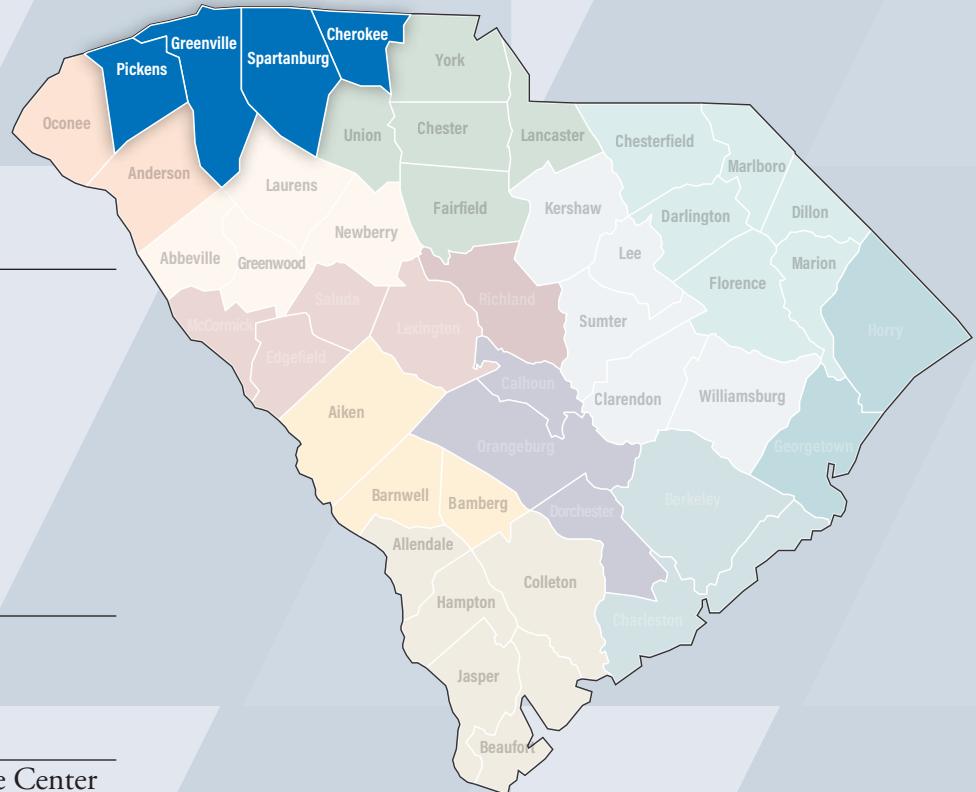
Co-chairs Brooke Burris and Lauren Knapp announce Nicole Hoffman of the Kay Phillips Child Advocacy Center as the 2024 Groundbreaker Award winner.

Tri-County Regional Task Force meeting, Summerville, SC





## UPSTATE REGIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE



### Regional Task Force Chairs

Ashley Villani, Co-Chair,  
Residential Program Manager  
Jasmine Road  
ashley@jasmineroad.org

Captain Alia Paramore, Co-Chair,  
Greenville Police Department  
aparamore@greenvillesc.gov

### Community Outreach

Jane Olson, SC Department of  
Juvenile Justice

### Direct Services for minors

Krista Eichelberger, Julie Valentine Center

### Labor Trafficking

Gregory Somers, U.S. Equal Employment  
Opportunity Commission

### Interfaith

Carrie Nettles, Julie Valentine Center

### Law Enforcement

Sergeant J Wehrly, Greenville Police  
Department

### 2026 Meeting Dates

March 13th  
June 12th  
September 18th  
December 11th



Ashley Villani and Captain Alia Paramore, Co-Chairs

## 2025 Highlights

- » The Upstate Regional Task Force meetings were held in person at Grace Church, Pickens County Museum of Art & History, and Bon Secours Hospital Meeting Room. These meetings included presentations from members of the task force, service providers in the Upstate area, state subcommittee chairs and statewide organizations as well as updates from subcommittees.
- » A hybrid modality for quarterly meetings was established to support member needs.
- » The regional task force created an Instagram account to enhance their online presence.
- » The task force participated in Trunk or Treat events at Open Hearts United Methodist Church, Disciples United Methodist Church, First Baptist Inman and Augusta Road United Methodist Church, all in Greenville County.



SCWags for Awareness Event

» The regional task force hosted a Human Trafficking Poster Distribution Day. Human Trafficking posters were distributed in Greenville and the surrounding areas.

» The task force welcomed a new Direct Services for minors' subcommittee chair.

## 2026 Priorities

- » Review and Enhance the 2026 Action Plan
- » Grow the Direct Services Subcommittees Membership
- » Refine Healthcare Subcommittee Goals
- » Increase Social Media Outreach



HBCU event in Greenville, SC



2025 Trunk or Treat Event

## 12 Ways to Help Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts in South Carolina

1

Help members of your community learn about the signs of human trafficking by hosting an awareness presentation at your business, house of worship, or civic group. Visit [humantrafficking.SCAG.gov](http://humantrafficking.SCAG.gov) to schedule a presentation from a member of the State Task Force.



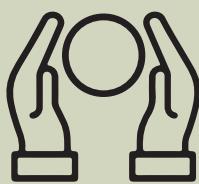
2

If you suspect that an incident may be human trafficking, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 or text 233733. In an emergency, call 911 for local law enforcement.



3

Donate items to a human trafficking program that may need hygiene products, food, clothing, old cell phones or other items to support survivors.



4

Volunteer your time to a program in your community. Non-profits can benefit from volunteers coordinating fundraisers, collecting items for survivors, and assisting with basic office tasks.



5

Encourage middle and high schools to include the TraffickProofSC prevention education curriculum in their classrooms. Go to the State Task Force website to request a presentation at your local school. You can also sign up for the TraffickProofSC newsletter online.

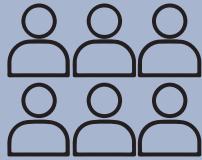


6

If you are a parent or guardian, learn more about how traffickers target young people by accessing reliable resources online.



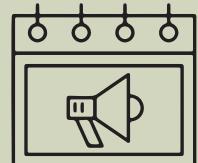
**7** Encourage after-school programs and youth groups to request a TraffickProofSC presentation at [humantrafficking.SCAG.gov](http://humantrafficking.SCAG.gov).



**9** Use your social media accounts to help bring awareness. You can share State Task Force posts and include #humantrafficking awareness or #preventhumantrafficking to help spread accurate information.



**8** If you are a member of a faith community, get involved in your regional task force interfaith efforts, host an awareness event, or collectively support a local non-profit working with victims and survivors.



**10** If you are in law enforcement, healthcare, or direct services, request sector-specific training from Task Force members who work in your professional field. Visit [humantrafficking.SCAG.gov](http://humantrafficking.SCAG.gov) to make the request.



**11** Sign up for the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force newsletter to learn about training opportunities, outreach efforts, regional task force meetings, and other pertinent information.



**12** Join a regional task force to help prevent human trafficking and better respond to the needs of victims in your community.



# Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the contributions made to the 2024 Annual Report by the following people:

## South Carolina Office of the Attorney General

*Monique Garvin, MSW, MPA*  
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SC Human Trafficking Task Force

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SC Human Trafficking Task Force

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Upstate Area

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Human Trafficking Program Coordinator  
Lowcountry Area

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Schools, Community, and Parents

*Ashley Bishop, MEd*  
Prevention Education Coordinator  
System-Involved Youth and State Agencies

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SC Human Trafficking Task Force

*Heather S. Weiss, JD*  
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Prosecution

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Robbie Croft, Liaison for Juvenile Victims of Human Trafficking

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Robin Anderson, Program Manager, Anti-Trafficking Unit, Child Welfare Services Division

**The South Carolina Office of the Attorney General would also like to thank the State Task Force Subcommittee Chairs, Regional Task Force Chairs, and partner organizations who contributed information for the 2025 Annual Report.**

If you have questions about the 2025 South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force Annual Report or any related inquiries, please contact:

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