



2022 ANNUAL REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION The State Task Force was legislatively mandated in 2012 under S.C. Code Ann. 16-3-2050 (B)(1). It leads a strategic, multi-disciplinary approach to combat human trafficking in South Carolina. The law dictates that the Task Force will submit annual reports, inclusive of findings and recommendations, to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate. This document summarizes the Task Force’s key findings in the 2022 Annual Report. (<https://www.scag.gov/human-trafficking/data-reports>)

STATE TASK FORCE RESPONSE With 11 mandated member agencies, two appointed non-governmental organizations, nearly 800 individual members, 12 subcommittees, an advisory council, and nine regional task forces, the Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force is committed to continually improving anti-trafficking efforts across the state of South Carolina.

FINANCIAL APPROPRIATION In 2022, the South Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$1.7 million in recurring funds to the Office of the South Carolina Attorney General’s Human Trafficking Task Force. The funds will be used in the prevention of the crime, support to state subcommittees and regional task forces, the development of a data collection system and its ongoing use, prosecution of human trafficking cases, multi-sector training, and public awareness. The financial appropriation positions the Task Force to execute its strategic response across South Carolina.

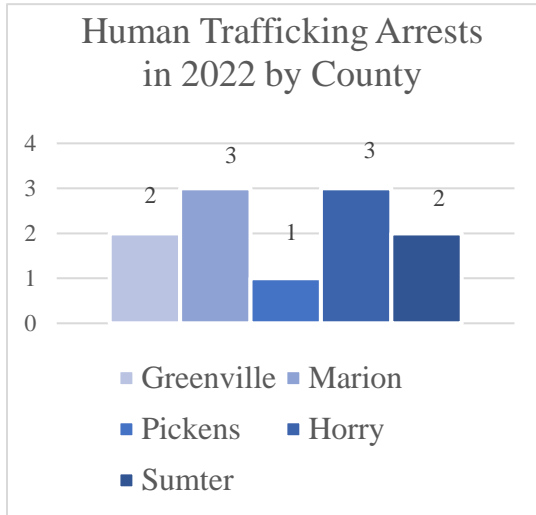
DETERMINING THE MAGNITUDE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN SOUTH

CAROLINA The partnership between The South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force and The National Human Trafficking Hotline continues to emphasize the need to report potential cases of human trafficking in South Carolina. The Task Force’s promotion of The National Hotline streamlines a process to determine the magnitude of the crime, ensures the deliverance of information to law enforcement and prosecutors, and ultimately vets the direct service providers who protect, support, and serve victims of human trafficking.

Number of Trafficking Situations by County	
County	# Of Situations
Greenville County	18
Charleston County	14
Richland County	13
Horry County	12
Spartanburg County	5
Aiken County	3
Lexington County	3
York County	3

In 2021, The Task Force set out to bring awareness and lift capacity in the response to labor trafficking cases, prevention education, and service provision. Human trafficking cases are being reported the most in Greenville, Charleston, Richland, Horry, and Spartanburg Counties. The data also shows there was a 450% increase in victims for labor trafficking, and a 44% increase of victims who identified as Latino/Hispanic.

The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) supported 416 human trafficking victims from 440 cases throughout South Carolina in 2022. Of the total number of victims, 399 were minors, while 17 were adults. They led four commercial sex operations to combat human trafficking in regions around the state, resulting in the arrest of 13 sex buyers.



COURT DATA: PENDING AND CLOSED In 2022 23 different defendants had charges for human trafficking, some with more than one charge, totaling 34 charges of human trafficking in the South Carolina State Courts. One defendant pled guilty in 2022 to three charges of human trafficking, while 19 charges were dismissed in exchange for the plea. The defendant was sentenced to five years in prison, credited for serving 185 days; and the remainder suspended to probation for three years. The first jury trial involving human trafficking of a minor in state court resulted in a conviction in Lancaster County. The case was prosecuted by the Attorney General’s Office. The defendant was sentenced to life in prison

without the possibility of parole due to this conviction and his prior record. A total of 32 cases were closed in 2022, 28 were dismissals.

STATE TASK FORCE SUBCOMMITTEES Given the General Assembly’s financial appropriation of recurring funds in 2022, the State Task Force is positioned to enhance the coordination and implementation of the State Plan through the concerted efforts of the State-level Subcommittees and Regional Task Forces. Both groups are composed of multisector community members and organizations in an effort to combat sex and labor trafficking at the local and state level. With increased staff at the State Task Force, human trafficking program coordinators have been assigned to each of the four areas and the state-level subcommittees. They will provide ongoing assistance and support to the leadership of each workgroup. To ensure consistency and sustainability of these efforts, the Task Force will formalize the support in two phases: 1) Capacity Building and Strengthening, and 2) Prevention Education, Public Awareness and Outreach, Professional Training, Resource Mapping.

TASK FORCE INITIATIVES The South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force is eager to launch several new initiatives in 2023. The initiatives are Communications, Labor Trafficking, Specialized Service Provider Certification, Resource Mapping, Technical Support, Specialized Human Trafficking Court for Youth, Higher Education, Prevention Education, and Training and Special Events.

