

SOUTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE NEWSLETTER

Special Edition | January 2020



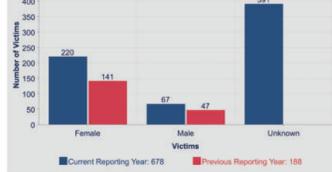
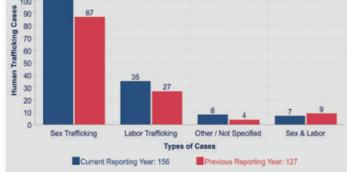
WELCOME

January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. We designed this issue to provide an overview of the Task Force's 2019 accomplishments, celebrate the work of our Task Force partners statewide, and share Task Force initiatives planned for 2020. As we begin a new year, we would like to thank Task Force members for their tireless efforts to combat human trafficking and support victims in our state. We are looking forward to continuing this work with you in 2020!

2019 ANNUAL REPORT OVERVIEW

The State Task Force leads a strategic, multi-disciplinary approach to combating human trafficking in South Carolina. The collaborative approach includes efforts from mandated and non-mandated state agencies, state and federal law enforcement, nonprofits, faith leaders, community volunteers, professionals in medicine and education, and survivors. 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.

The 2019 Annual Report detailed a number of new developments and initiatives in South Carolina's anti-human trafficking movement. First, data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline revealed a 360% increase in the number of victims recorded in South Carolina. The number of human trafficking cases reported in the state increased to 156, up from 127 in the previous reporting year. This growth is in large part due to the efforts of Task Force partners throughout the state in promoting the hotline number. Furthermore, the top five counties for reports in South Carolina shifted from the previous year. The top county in South Carolina is now Horry County, followed in order by Greenville, Richland, Dorchester, and Charleston counties.



The data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline reflect an increase in labor trafficking in South Carolina. In order to better protect and serve labor trafficking victims in the state, the Attorney General's Office will host the State Task Force Labor Trafficking Roundtable in 2020 to convene key stakeholders whose work intersects with the crime and who can provide support services for victims. The State Task Force will also create informational materials in English and Spanish to increase awareness of labor trafficking, inform the public of its signs, and provide the hotline number to victims. Additionally, the State Task Force recognizes the statewide need for increased short and long-term shelter space for all victims and survivors. The Task Force will continue prioritizing this need through the implementation of its state level certification for direct service providers to ensure safe, high quality services for trafficking survivors.

The Task Force also announced the launch of the Interfaith Subcommittee to support those in the faith community in their efforts to combat human trafficking and provide support to victims and survivors. The development of this subcommittee will improve the State Task Force's ability to forge partnerships with faith organizations statewide and unify interfaith anti-human trafficking efforts in South Carolina.

Furthermore, the Prevention and Outreach Subcommittee identified prevention education in schools as a key component of state anti-human trafficking strategy and created a chart outlining the prevention education curricula it recommends. The Task Force encourages educators and administrators across South Carolina to review the recommended curricula and choose one to implement in their school or after-school programs to equip their students with the awareness and skills needed to protect themselves and their peers from potential human trafficking incidents.

The State Task Force made great strides in 2019 in combating human trafficking in South Carolina. The Office of the South Carolina Attorney General would like to thank all the members of the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force for protecting community members, advocating on behalf of victims/survivors, educating members of the public and professional fields through numerous trainings and presentations, and supporting efforts to guarantee quality program services. Together, we continue to make progress in combating human trafficking in our state.



The Attorney General & Task Force members in the Statehouse for the release of the Annual Report.



Task Force members stand behind one of many SC Beer Wholesalers Association trucks that feature posters with the National Human Trafficking Hotline number to help bring awareness this month.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association

In 2019, the State Task Force formalized its partnership with the South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association (SCRLA) with the intention of increasing awareness of human trafficking to SCRLA's members and equipping the hospitality industry to respond to potential trafficking incidents within their establishments.

South Carolina Beer Wholesalers Association

The South Carolina Beer Wholesalers Association (SCBWA) became a formal partner of the State Task Force in November 2019. The Task Force and SCBWA will collaborate to distribute posters statewide, train distributors on human trafficking and safe response protocols to potential trafficking incidents, and bring awareness of the crime throughout January.

CELEBRATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT

This year, the anti-human trafficking community celebrates the 20th anniversary of the 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). The TVPA was the first comprehensive law in the U.S. to address human trafficking. It created the "3P" framework for focusing anti-human trafficking efforts: prosecution of traffickers, protection of victims, and prevention of the crime. Congress reauthorized the TVPA in 2003, 2005, 2008, 2013, 2017, and 2018.

To read the TVPA, visit <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-115s1862enr/pdf/BILLS-115s1862enr.pdf>.

#WEARBLUEDAY: BLUE CAMPAIGN

National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is recognized annually on January 11th. In honor of this day, the Department of Homeland Security's Blue Campaign hosts #WearBlueDay, where people take pictures of themselves wearing blue clothing and post on social media to raise awareness for human trafficking. As pictured below, Task Force members throughout South Carolina participated in this day and related awareness events.

Office of the South Carolina Attorney General



Upstate Human Trafficking Task Force

With the Greenville County Sheriff's Office



Queue says #WearBlueDay



Sgt. Willow #WearBlueDay



Ladies of SID #WearBlueDay

Coastal Region Human Trafficking Task Force



Tri-County Human Trafficking Task Force

With the Charleston County Sheriff's Office & Kiawah Island Sanctuary Hotel Security



Foothills Human Trafficking Task Force

With Chair Maria Torres-Green



2020 HIGHLIGHTED INITIATIVES

The State Task Force is starting off the year with a number of targeted initiatives. While this is not a comprehensive list of projects, the topics below represent key areas of focus in 2020.

- Minimum Standards for Service Provision**
 In 2020, the State Task Force will write and release the Minimum Standards for Service Provision, which will detail best practices for the service serving trafficking victims.
- Youth Engagement & Prevention Education**
 The Task Force will continue discussing and promoting human trafficking prevention education in schools. The Task Force will also launch its Higher Education Initiative to engage college-aged youth on the issue of human trafficking.
- Labor Trafficking Awareness & Training**
 Having identified awareness & training as a growing issue in South Carolina, the Attorney General's Office will host the 2020 State Task Force Labor Trafficking Roundtable. The Task Force will also work to develop bilingual education materials and labor trafficking-specific trainings.
- Interfaith Engagement**
 The Task Force will grow its Interfaith Subcommittee to involve faith communities statewide in anti-human trafficking efforts. This will help to unify existing efforts to combat trafficking in interfaith spaces.
- Data Collection**
 Through the Data & Research Subcommittee and in partnership with the Office of Trafficking in Persons (OTIP), the Task Force will take steps toward the development of a statewide database for human trafficking.
- Standardized, Sector-Specific Trainings**
 The State Task Force will work with its partners statewide to continue expanding human trafficking training to all of South Carolina's industries. Through its partnerships with SCRLA and SCBWA, the Task Force will also focus trainings in the hospitality and beverage industries.

UPCOMING EVENTS

State Task Force Meetings

March 6th, June 5th, September 4th, and December 4th

All State Task Force Meetings will be held at the West Columbia City Hall, 200 12th Street, West Columbia. To receive email updates before meetings, please send your contact information to Megan Rigabar at meganrigabar@scag.gov.

Regional Task Force Meetings

Upstate Human Trafficking Task Force
 January 23rd (10AM, Prisma Health, Greenville, SC)
 April 17th, July 17th, and October 16th (10AM, United Way of Greenville, SC)

Richland County Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force
 January 17th, March 20th, May 15th, July 17th, September 18th, and November 20th. All meetings are held from 10AM-12PM at 2500 Decker Blvd., Columbia, SC 29206.

Tri-County Human Trafficking Task Force
 February 28th, May 15th, August 14th, and November 13th.

Lowcountry Human Trafficking Task Force
 January 22nd, April 22nd, July 22nd, October 4th, and October 21st.

Regional Task Force Events

Richland County Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force
 Movie Review & Panel Discussion on January 29th from 6-8PM at the Richland Library-Main Auditorium.

Tri-County Human Trafficking Task Force
 Community Awareness Training on January 25th at the Women's Missionary Society, Greater St. James AME Church-Summerville.

Lowcountry Human Trafficking Task Force
 Community Address on January 22nd from 10AM-12PM in the Bluffton Library-Large Conference Room.

Foothills Human Trafficking Task Force
 Shine Light on January 31st from 6-8PM at Carolina Wren Park.

CONTACT

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