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HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH

I-81 Corridor Human Trafficking Working Group Forms

Special Agent in Charge Adam S. Lee of the Richmond Division of the FBI announces the formation of the I-81 Corridor Human Trafficking Working Group, hosted by our Winchester Resident Agency.

Human trafficking exploits the vulnerable and is typically perpetuated by force, fraud, coercion, or threat of some legal process. Human trafficking may be categorized by any one of the following:

- Domestic Sex Trafficking of Adults - persons are compelled to engage in commercial sex acts,
- Forced Labor – persons are compelled to work in some sort of service or industry (examples include sweatshop factories, migrant agricultural work, restaurant work, hotel/resort housecleaning, construction and landscaping),
- Domestic Servitude – persons compelled to engage in domestic work for families or households, or
- Sex Trafficking of Adults and Children - when one is compelled to engage in commercial sex acts in the United States. Matters of domestic juvenile sex trafficking are handled by the FBI's Violent Crimes Against Children Section.

Indicators of human trafficking may include: no control over travel documents or finances, increasing debt, others speak for them, living where they work, locked into the residence, not free to leave or contact family members/friends, someone always watching/guarding, family is threatened, and they are instructed on what to say if questioned by law enforcement.

There is a difference between Smuggling and Human Trafficking...

Smuggling (Immigration)

- Persons consent to smuggling
- Contract ends after crossing the border
- Only the need to physically move "customers"
- Always international
- Crime against the border

Trafficking (Civil Rights)

- Victims do not consent to these situations
- Continued exploitation of a person for labor/services
- Crime against individuals fundamental rights
- Domestic victims held captive in their own country
- Crime against a person

Often victims are identified by self-reporting, law enforcement's response to an incident, or information received by a non-government organization, church or community service provider. At the moment, law enforcement agencies partnering in this endeavor include the Clarke County Sheriff's Office, the Frederick County Sheriff's Office, the Hagerstown Police Department, the Shenandoah County Sheriff's Office, the Strasburg Police Department, the Winchester Police Department, the Winchester Commonwealth Attorney's Office, the Western District of the United States Attorney's Office, the Drug Enforcement Administration and of course the FBI. As this working group grows, it seeks to include non-government organizations, faith-based community members and appropriate service providers.

If you have any information about a person or persons involved in human trafficking please contact local authorities or send a tip to <https://tips.fbi.gov>.

Resources:

- Text HELP to 233733 (BEFREE)
- National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC)
 - 1-888-373-7888 or <http://traffickingresourcecenter.org/report-trafficking>

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