



Exploring the Intersections between Local Government and Human Trafficking: The Local Government Focus Group Project

Margaret F. Henderson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
The Focus Groups	3
The Basics	4
Definition	4
Environmental Conditions That Can Enable Trafficking	5
Common Working and Living Conditions of the Victims	5
Physical and Behavioral Indicators of the Victims	6
The Twenty-Five Business Models of Human Trafficking	7
Reporting Human Trafficking: Discussion Guide for Developing Protocols	11
Who Might See Indicators of Trafficking?	11
What Are Indicators of Potential Trafficking?	11
What Should We Do if We Witness a Dangerous Situation?	11
What if We Are Uncertain We Are Seeing Trafficking?	12
Discussion Guide to Develop Protocols for Response When Staff See Indicators of Trafficking	12
Training Options	13
Conclusion	14
Appendix: Map of North Carolina Rapid Response Teams	14

Introduction

In 2017, the Washington-based [Polaris Project](#), a global leader in the struggle against modern slavery, analyzed data derived from the more than thirty-thousand calls made to the National Human Trafficking Hotline (888.373.7888) between December 2007 and December 2016. In its report, Polaris describes twenty-five strategies traffickers use to make money off of other human

beings through fraud, force, or coercion.¹ Polaris refers to these strategies as “typologies,” but the term business models is used here to emphasize the fact that these abusive schemes exist because they are profitable to the traffickers.

Some of these business models operate under the cover of legitimacy and require governmental permissions or inspections to operate. Others may themselves be legitimate but be associated with a subcontractor who is a trafficker. Because trafficking can be physically isolated or hidden in plain sight, the twenty-five business models provide a useful framework for conveying the many different forms of trafficking as well as indicators that it might be taking place. (Each business model is described below in the section titled “The Twenty-Five Business Models of Human Trafficking.”)

Many North Carolina communities are making progress in designing strategies for direct intervention in service of the victims of human trafficking. For example, much of the state is served by 10 voluntary multidisciplinary Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) comprising governmental and nonprofit staff who provide intense support services during the first 72 hours of intervention. (A statewide map of areas covered by the RRTs is presented in the Appendix.) These teams are usually made up of staff from law enforcement, departments of social services, health care facilities, rape crisis centers, and shelters.

Another statewide effort, [Project NO REST](#), works to strengthen systems of intervention and response to human trafficking with particular interest placed on the child welfare system. As part of this larger effort, the Local Government Focus Group Project, conducted by the Project NO REST team, held a series of group discussions with local government officials for the purpose of exploring whether and/or how public staff outside of law enforcement, social services, and public health might be tapped as additional resources for observing the indicators of trafficking. Inasmuch as local government staff interact with people in their homes, at their businesses, and in public spaces as part of their daily work, might they be able to expand a

1. The Local Government Focus Group Project, conducted by team members at the UNC School of Government and Project NO REST, was supported by Grant No. 2015-VA-GX-0019, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice; and by Grant No. 90CA1822-01, awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau, and the Governor’s Crime Commission.

This completes a series of three *Public Management Bulletins* (PMB) by Margaret F. Henderson addressing the increasingly prevalent problem of human trafficking. “Human Trafficking in North Carolina: Strategies for Local Government Officials,” PMB No. 12 (October 2017), introduces the issue and provides global as well as local context for its growth. “Ten Questions about Local Governments: A Primer for Anti-Human Trafficking Advocates,” PMB No. 14 (May 2018), explains how government works at the local, state, and national levels, and offers advice to community advocates on how to seek help from local government officials in addressing the issue. This bulletin focuses on the business models (or strategies) traffickers use to manage their human trafficking enterprises and reports on focus group discussions with local government officials in the state to determine how greater awareness of these business models and their various signs within the community might be incorporated into their daily work.

Margaret F. Henderson directs the Public Intersection Project, teaches in the Master of Public Administration program at the UNC School of Government, facilitates public meetings, and works with Project NO REST, a statewide anti-human trafficking project sponsored by the UNC School of Social Work. She can be reached at margaret@sog.unc.edu and at 919.966.3455.

See the full report, *The Typology of Modern Slavery: Defining Sex and Labor Trafficking in the United States*, at polarisproject.org/typology-report.

community's capacity to stop human trafficking by learning how to identify and report its hidden as well as unhidden signs? That is the question this project set out to answer.

The Focus Groups

In January and February 2018, four focus groups were conducted: two with county staff from Rockingham and Pitt counties and two with municipal staff from Greensboro and Chapel Hill. The feedback was consistent and encouraging. All four groups identified service areas in which local government staff could benefit from anti-human trafficking skills training and confirmed their interest in learning more about how they might be of assistance.

A total of twenty-seven staff participated in the focus groups representing the following departments or roles: finance, field operations, code compliance, neighborhood development, solid waste, water resources, environmental health inspections, police department attorney, police department social worker, inspections, library, fire department, emergency services, register of deeds, public utilities, tax assessor, economic development, public health, and manager. Focus group size ranged from 4 to 10 participants who were asked to verbally respond to the facilitators' semi-structured probes.

A majority of participants received a link to the Michigan State Police public service announcement (PSA) video *Look Again* and were asked to view it prior to the session. (The short video, which focuses on service industry workers, can be viewed on [YouTube](#).) As the video opens, service workers are shown going about their regular tasks, such as utility work, spraying for bugs, installing home equipment. The PSA then rewinds to highlight several possible indicators of trafficking that the workers failed to notice: a child being hurried into an unmarked van; window bars installed from the inside; a padlocked, inside door with a nearby clipboard displaying an apparent work schedule. The PSA was successful in conveying how local government staff might be *seeing*, but not *recognizing*, indicators of trafficking.

Discussions within the focus groups were animated, with the key findings broken down as follows:

- Any governmental staff who are in or near homes and businesses for any reason (emergency response, inspections, reading meters, collecting solid waste, etc.) have the potential to observe indicators of trafficking. Regardless of their purpose for being at a particular location, any local government staff member can observe and report suspicious signs.
 - Focus group participants requested information and training that would enable staff to identify the indicators of trafficking.
- Libraries could play a critical role in several ways, in particular, the following:
 1. *Building public awareness*: Library staff can arrange book or resource displays on the topic, provide contact information for local service providers, and work one-on-one to share resources with those who might need intervention. Libraries can be an especially strong ally during Human Trafficking Awareness Month in January.
 2. *Connecting with vulnerable populations*: Homeless people often spend time in libraries, as do low-income people and those who do not have Internet access at home. Runaway teens might use library resources to communicate with friends or family or to problem-solve. Homelessness, social isolation, and fiscal stress present points of vulnerability that traffickers exploit.

3. *Providing computer/Internet access:* Both local residents and people passing through a community use library computers, but the intentions underlying their use vary according to the user. Traffickers and their customers might try to connect with each other, patrons might try to view pornography or other online sites, and victims might use computers to search for possible avenues for intervention.

- Emergency responders of all kinds who enter businesses and homes on a daily basis could potentially recognize the warning signs of trafficking. Emergency circumstances might have made it impossible for traffickers to hide, disguise, or otherwise manage the indicators.²
 - Emergency medical technicians need to understand the circumstances under which HIPAA compliance or any other professional expectation of confidentiality would limit their ability to report indicators.
 - This subject is currently under debate within the medical field and is affected by state laws relating to mandatory reporting. It is possible, however, that the indicators of potential trafficking at a given site would have nothing to do with the person receiving the health care services and could be reported by the responder.

The following sections provide “the basics” of human trafficking, what it is and how its indicators and victims might be recognized. This information was discussed by the focus groups in line with the following points:

- These lists of conditions related to human trafficking are well-informed but do not claim to be comprehensive, as the forms, dynamics, and impacts of trafficking vary widely and are constantly evolving.
- Traffickers, customers, and victims can look like any of us.
- Although we may not be aware of this fact, all of us have inadvertently purchased products and/or services that were made or provided by trafficked people. This is particularly the case in the areas of technology, food, and clothing.
- The presence of a single indicator does not mean that trafficking is taking place, but the presence of multiple indicators likely means that a report is warranted.

The Basics

Definition

Human traffickers force, fool, or frighten others into performing labor or sex acts for profit. Trafficking can involve labor or sex trafficking of adults or minors, foreign-born or domestic citizens. Regardless of the form of abuse, the common feature is that traffickers exploit individuals’ vulnerabilities for their own gain.

Since traffickers as well as their customers and victims can look like any of us, it is important to be able to identify the actual circumstances in which trafficking might be happening rather than to focus on stereotypical images of who might be involved.

2. The emergency might be immediate, as in the case of a car wreck, or long-term, as in the aftermath of a hurricane. For information related to identifying trafficking in post-disaster situations, check out this toolkit from the City of Houston (humantraffickinghouston.org/toolkits/emergency-disaster-response-toolkit).

Environmental Conditions That Can Enable Trafficking

Look through this list of physical and economic characteristics, and check off the ones that are present in your community:

- tourist destinations,
- large public events,
- seasonal farm work,
- online advertising opportunities,³
- interstate highways,
- truck stops,
- highway rest stops,
- military bases,
- factories,
- international borders.

These community features create opportunities for traffickers to market, transport, harbor, or connect victims with sex and labor buyers.

While the prevalence of any of these environmental conditions varies from place to place, some are present in every municipality and county in the state. The local conditions that are present inform the type of trafficking that is likely to be happening there. All focus groups reported the presence of at least three environmental conditions in their communities that can enable trafficking.⁴

Common Working and Living Conditions of the Victims

The following is a list of situational characteristics that might indicate trafficking is happening. These characteristics range from the overt (advertisements for sex) to the subtle (covered windows). Trafficked individuals or groups

- are not free to leave or come and go as they wish;
- provide sexual acts or work in exchange for services/benefits;
- are under 18 and provide paid sex acts;
- are managed by a pimp or other person who will not leave them alone;
- are unpaid or paid very little by cash and off the books;
- work long or unusual hours;
- are not allowed breaks, rest, or adequate food or have unusual restrictions placed on them at work;

3. On April 6, 2018, Backpage, a classified ads website, was shut down as part of a plea agreement with its CEO, Carl Ferrer, who pled guilty to conspiracy, money laundering, and facilitating prostitution. He and other Backpage officials face state and federal charges in Texas, Arizona, and California. The *Washington Post* story on Ferrer's arrest is available at [washingtonpost.com/news/true-crime/wp/2018/04/13/backpage-ceo-carl-ferrer-pleads-guilty-in-three-states-agrees-to-testify-against-other-website-officials/?utm_term=.76f4599bc5eb](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/true-crime/wp/2018/04/13/backpage-ceo-carl-ferrer-pleads-guilty-in-three-states-agrees-to-testify-against-other-website-officials/?utm_term=.76f4599bc5eb). Congressional lawmakers used the example of Backpage as a rationale for introducing both the Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA) and Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA). The intention of the bills is to fight online sex trafficking.

4. While most local government staff will be able to identify any local conditions that enable trafficking, economic development staff hold useful, untapped knowledge about the details: how many tourists visit and where they stay, who owns the strip malls that rent spaces to the massage parlors, how many unskilled workers live or work locally, etc.

- owe a large debt and are unable to pay it off;
- are recruited through false promises concerning the nature and conditions of the work;
- live or work in places that feature tinted, boarded up, or barred windows; barbed wire; security cameras; locked doors and gates; or anything else that limits sight or physical access.

Physical and Behavioral Indicators of the Victims

Individual victims might display one or more of the following conditions:

- exhibit fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid behavior;
- are unusually afraid or anxious when law enforcement is mentioned or an officer is present;
- avoid eye contact;
- appear malnourished or skinny;
- appear to lie about their age or identity or about their employer;
- show signs of physical or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, torture, or exposure;
- have branding tattoos;
- have no access to health care;
- have recurrent sexually transmitted infections or pregnancy tests;
- claim to be “just visiting” or are unable to clarify where they live;
- cannot identify where they are or what city they are in;
- have no sense of the date or the time;
- have very little personal property;
- wear the same clothes all the time or clothing that is inappropriate for the season;
- act in sexually provocative ways;
- are not allowed to speak for themselves or without the presence of a third party;
- are overly attached to one person or have one person who is overly attached to them;
- stay in constant contact with a third party via texting or phone calls;
- possess multiple phones or hotel room keys;
- have no freedom to leave or come and go as desired;
- have no freedom to communicate with friends or family;
- are paid mostly in cash;
- are not in control of their own money and have no financial records or a bank account;
- are not in control of their own identification documents;
- have few or no personal belongings;
- are not allowed adequate food or sleep;
- are allowed no breaks at work;
- have a large debt that cannot be repaid.

No single indicator “proves” human trafficking is taking place, but any of these indicators warrant extra attention, in general. The presence of multiple indicators should generate immediate evaluation of the risk.

The Twenty-Five Business Models of Human Trafficking

As part of the focus group discussions of the business models used by traffickers, participants provided feedback and ideas on how local government staff might interact with human trafficking enterprises and what local staff might be able to identify potential signs of its existence.⁵

1. **Escort services** is a broad term used in the commercial sex trade and refers to commercial sex acts that primarily occur at a temporary indoor location, such as a motel or residence. The traffickers deliver the victims to the sex buyers, transferring across locations to meet demand. Online advertising platforms enable the transactions.

Potential areas of interaction:

 - hotel inspections,
 - first responders to emergency calls,
 - water/sewer/solid waste management.
2. **Illicit massage, health, and beauty businesses** present a façade of legitimate spa services, concealing that their primary function is the sex and labor trafficking of women trapped in the location. They appear to be single operations but often are controlled as part of larger networks.

Potential areas of interaction:

 - new business or building inspections,
 - response to complaints,
 - water/sewer/solid waste management.
3. **Outdoor Solicitation** occurs when traffickers force victims to find buyers in outdoor, public settings, such as a particular city block or truck or rest stops along major highways.

Potential areas of interaction:

 - law enforcement,
 - first responders to emergency calls.
4. **Residential brothels** might be run by networks of coordinated traffickers; private households might be used informally for commercial sex. Advertising might be through word of mouth or covert business cards as well as through online advertising.

Potential areas of interaction:

 - inspections,
 - parking violations,
 - response to noise complaints,
 - water/sewer/solid waste management.
5. **Domestic workers** often live within their employers' households and provide such services as cooking, cleaning, and caretaking for children, the elderly, or the infirm.

Potential areas of interaction:

 - residential care inspections,
 - water/sewer/solid waste management.

5. The complete report from which this section derives, *The Typology of Modern Slavery: Defining Sex and Labor Trafficking in the United States*, is available for download from the Polaris Project at <https://polarisproject.org/typology-report>.

6. **Bars, strip clubs, and cantinas** might be fronts for both sex and labor trafficking. There are variations on the type of trafficking as well as the connection to the traffickers.

Potential areas of interaction:

- bar checks for occupancy or pyrotechnics,
- environmental health inspections,
- water/sewer/solid waste management.

7. **Pornography** is a product enabled by modern technology. The victims can be children or adults. They can be overtly controlled and trafficked or be tricked into being photographed by intimate partners or caregivers.

Potential areas of interaction:

- reports to law enforcement,
- complaints from library patrons about others using computers to view sexually oriented web content.

8. **Traveling sales crews** are moved between cities and states, going door-to-door to sell fraudulent products, such as magazine subscriptions. Young salespeople, in particular, are rarely fully compensated, work long hours, and are unable to leave.

Potential areas of interaction:

- law enforcement,
- business registration functions.

9. **Restaurants and food service sites** of all kinds have been documented as taking advantage of language barriers, in particular, when labor trafficking.

Potential areas of interaction:

- environmental health inspections,
- recycling programs with ABC permits,
- water/sewer/solid waste management.

10. **Peddling and begging rings** involve traffickers who, posing under the guise of a seemingly legitimate charitable or religious organization, claim to provide trips or enrichment services to “at-risk youth.” They sell candy or baked goods, or solicit donations on streets or in shopping centers.

Potential areas of interaction:

- licensing and enforcement of panhandling ordinances,
- law enforcement.

11. **Agriculture and animal husbandry** industries sometimes engage trafficked victims, particularly in the more labor-intensive harvesting processes. Trafficking can happen at multiple levels along the complex labor supply chain of recruiters, managers, contractors, subcontractors, growers, and buyers.

Potential areas of interaction:

- Cooperative Extension on-site services.

12. **Personal sexual servitude** takes various forms of activity and payment. Victims may be sold, forced to marry, or coerced to engage in sex in order to have basic needs met, such as in the case of runaway homeless youth.

Potential areas of interaction:

- libraries being used by vulnerable populations,
- register of deeds.⁶

6. Staff within the register of deeds office might witness indicators of forced marriages.

- 13. Health and beauty services** provided in seemingly legitimate nail and hair salons or spas can be exploiting foreign-born workers who were recruited under false pretenses, live in isolation under heavy monitoring, and may lose control of their identification papers.

Potential areas of interaction:

- licensing or quality control functions handled by state agencies,
- water/sewer/solid waste management.

- 14. The construction industry** generates a complex labor supply chain that can involve trafficking through the roles of direct employers, recruiters, contractors, or smugglers. The abusive actions can range from the physical (denying necessities, such as water or safety equipment) to the fraudulent (misrepresented visa contracts or working conditions.)

Potential areas of interaction:

- inspections related to building, septic, storm water, engineering, fire, and planning functions,
- water/sewer/solid waste management.

- 15. Hotels and hospitality** industries might employ trafficked victims who are manipulated through false recruitment, debt bondage, or other forms of economic abuse. If the trafficker is a contractor, the hotel may not be aware of the abuse.

Potential areas of interaction:

- all inspections,
- first responders,
- water/sewer/solid waste management.

- 16. Landscaping** businesses that traffick foreign-born men, primarily, to work in maintaining public or private grounds, use strategies that range from fraudulent recruitment to misrepresented work contracts or conditions.

Potential areas of interaction:

- zoning,
- code enforcement,
- tax licensing,
- solid waste convenience centers.

- 17. Illicit activities** operated by criminal syndicates in illegal industries can exploit people for profit with the same levels of force, fraud, and coercion as in any legitimate labor industry.

Potential areas of interaction:

- law enforcement.

- 18. Arts and entertainment** functions, such as modeling, athletics, dancing, or performance groups, may employ fraudulent recruiting, economic abuse, or psychological manipulation. In terms of exotic dancing, in particular, both labor and sex trafficking can be involved.

- 19. Commercial cleaning services** operated by business owners, rather than networks, can employ fraudulent recruitment or economic abuse as tools of manipulation. Exploitation can include exposure to hazardous cleaning chemicals without proper protective equipment.

20. Factories and manufacturing in food processing, clothing, and shoe manufacturing are especially vulnerable to labor abuse and trafficking, based on the reports to Polaris. A wide range of manufacturers were reported, including factories producing electronic devices and vehicles.

Potential areas of interaction:

- first responders,
- fire code inspectors,
- water/sewer/solid waste management.

21. Remote interactive sexual acts are live commercial sex acts simulated via remote contact between the buyer and victim through technologies such as webcams, text-based chats, and phone sex lines.

22. Carnivals have been reported for labor exploitation and trafficking of workers who operate rides, games, or food stands as well as for assembling and disassembling carnival equipment. The lack of sleep from working long hours can generate workplace accidents, potentially affecting both the staff and customers. Carnival companies may contract with state or county fairs.

Potential areas of interaction:

- law enforcement,
- parks and recreation departments,
- engineering, fire, environmental health inspections.

23. Forestry and logging exist in another complicated labor supply chain. Traffickers have been reported as management or crew leaders. In addition to using fraudulent recruitment and economic abuse, these traffickers can exert additional control due to the isolated work settings.

Potential areas of interaction:

- N.C. Forest Service staff,
- Cooperative Extension on-site services.

24. Health care settings, such as nursing homes or in-home service care, enable trafficking and exploitation of migrant workers through their complex work chains and often isolated work settings.

Potential areas of interaction:

- first responders,
- fire and environmental health inspections,
- area agency on aging staff,
- water/sewer/solid waste management.

25. Recreational facilities—such as amusement parks, summer camps, golf courses, or community swimming pools—may mislead recruits through promises of free transportation to and from work, fairly priced housing, and a living wage. Young adults on J-1 visas are particular targets.

Potential areas of interaction:

- environmental health inspections,
- water/sewer/solid waste management.

Reporting Human Trafficking: Discussion Guide for Developing Protocols

The purpose of this section is to provide a discussion and decision-making guide for organizations or governmental departments to use in designing reporting protocols for staff or volunteers to follow when they see indicators of human trafficking. The purpose of reporting is to make a referral that will generate further investigation, as well as intervention, if deemed appropriate.

Referral options include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Report to the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1.888.373.7888.⁷
- Report directly to local law enforcement.
- Report directly to a member of the local Rapid Response Team (RRT).
- If children, a disabled adult, or an elder adult appear to be being abused, report directly to the county department of social services.

Since community resources, philosophies, and likely outcomes from reporting vary widely—as do the situations that staff might observe—there is no single “right” way to address the challenge. Professional codes of ethics and legal requirements, such as HIPPA compliance for health care workers, can also inform expectations for reporting.

Who Might See Indicators of Trafficking?

One primary group of potential observers would be those who enter homes or businesses for any reason: to provide emergency response or in-home care, or to perform inspections for any reason. Workers who go near homes and businesses to read meters or collect recycling, for example, might also observe indicators of trafficking. Another important group of potential observers are those who work in public spaces, such as libraries, or near hubs of transportation, such as airports, railway stations, or bus stops. Finally, any staff who work in reception areas or waiting rooms might also witness indicators of unhealthy or suspicious relationships.

What Are Indicators of Potential Trafficking?

While any of the indicators, on their own, can be the result of dynamics unrelated to trafficking, close attention should be paid to indicators that show up repeatedly at a particular site or in combination with others on the list. (Refer to the above sections in this bulletin on the common working and living conditions and the physical and behavioral indicators of victims.)

What Should We Do if We Witness a Dangerous Situation?

If someone appears to be in immediate danger for any reason, related to trafficking or not, call 911. *Do not try to intervene.*

7. The National Human Trafficking Hotline will provide crisis response, make a referral to the closest community resources, and enter the information from the call into a national database, which serves to build our collective understanding about how and where trafficking happens in the United States. A training publication, “What to Expect When You Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline,” is available at https://polarisproject.adobeconnect.com/_a983384736/p8gk0st7jmd. Reports can be made by phone, email, or online. Callers can choose to remain anonymous or share their contact information.

What if We Are Uncertain We Are Seeing Trafficking?

If a staff member or volunteer sees an indicator of trafficking but is unsure whether or not the situation actually warrants a report, do not attempt to investigate on your own to gain more information. Instead, err on the side of reporting, and share both the reasons for your concern and your uncertainty.

Discussion Guide to Develop Protocols for Response When Staff See Indicators of Trafficking

Step One

- Clarify whether there are existing legal requirements for your profession that would affect or inform the protocol you develop for reporting indicators of human trafficking.
- Remember that *everyone* in North Carolina is required by law to report child abuse/neglect and abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a disabled or elder adult to law enforcement or the department of social services.

Step Two

- Clarify the sequence of events for internal reporting.
 - First, discuss and clarify whether the person who sees the indicators should
 1. Report to a supervisor first, then file a report about the indicators witnessed;
 2. First file a report about the indicators witnessed and then inform a supervisor; or
 3. File a report about the indicators witnessed without informing a supervisor unless certain conditions are met. Deciding what those conditions should be is up to the organization. (Examples: What if the report was validated by law enforcement? What if the report involved a person or place of some prominence in the community? What if the report is likely to be covered in news stories or social media, etc.)
 - Second, decide what the supervisor should do with the information in terms of reporting up the hierarchy. Decide whether it matters if the report is validated by law enforcement or others.

Step Three

- Clarify protocols for reporting to an external stakeholder. When designing this part of the protocol, it is useful to become informed about the current capacity of or interest in using local resources.⁸ Local law enforcement might have staff who focus on investigations of human trafficking, or they might be unaware and ill-prepared to address such a case. Local service programs, such as shelters, might either specialize in providing direct services to victims of trafficking, have the potential to do so but lack experience with this population, or be unprepared to offer services or to make referrals.

Option 1: Call in a report to the National Human Trafficking Hotline (Polaris) at 888.373.7888 or visit their website at <https://humantraffickinghotline.org>. They will take responsibility for passing the report on to your local authorities. The person reporting does not have to figure out whom to call, and the report is included in ongoing data collection,

8. If there is a Rapid Response Team (RRT) in or near your community, you might want to consult with them in the process of designing your protocols. To learn more about Rapid Response Teams in North Carolina, see the Appendix and check out the following web page: <https://encstophumantrafficking.org/resources/nc-groups>. Members of these RRT's provide direct services and intervention in the first 24 to 72 hours of victim contact.

which adds to our collective knowledge about the number and types of trafficking that occur in North Carolina and across the United States.

Option 2: Call the law enforcement agency that is responsible for the site at which the indicators are observed.

Option 3: Call your local Rapid Response Team. There might be a single point of contact, or there might be multiple people who can receive, evaluate, or respond to a report.⁹

Option 4: If children, a disabled adult, or an elderly person appear to be being abused or neglected, call the county department of social services.

Step Four

- Once protocols to be put into action when staff or volunteers see indicators of trafficking are established, develop a plan to share them across your organization, as appropriate. Encourage staff to educate themselves and attend in-person or online training opportunities.

Step Five

- In the event that staff do see indicators and report them to external authorities, debrief to assess how well the protocols worked and if adjustments are necessary.

Training Options

Options for on-site staff training vary according to the community. Local Rapid Response Teams, typically comprising professionals from law enforcement, social services, rape crisis centers, shelters, health care providers, and other allied professionals, often have members who provide training. (See the Appendix.)

The following statewide organizations can also provide the training or offer options for referrals:

- North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault (nccasa.org)
- Project NO REST (projectnorest.org)
- North Carolina Coalition Against Human Trafficking
(web page is currently under construction; Facebook page is active at [facebook.com/nccaht](https://www.facebook.com/nccaht))
- North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission
(ncdoj.gov/Help-for-Victims/North-Carolina-Human-Trafficking-Commission.aspx)
- North Carolina Council for Women
(ncadmin.nc.gov/advocacy/women/human-trafficking)

The above organizations also host or participate in training events and conferences that local government staff might benefit from attending. All of these organizations are willing to support city or county efforts to build awareness among staff.

Below are three of many online training options. Each contains basic information about the indicators or trafficking as well as options for reporting.

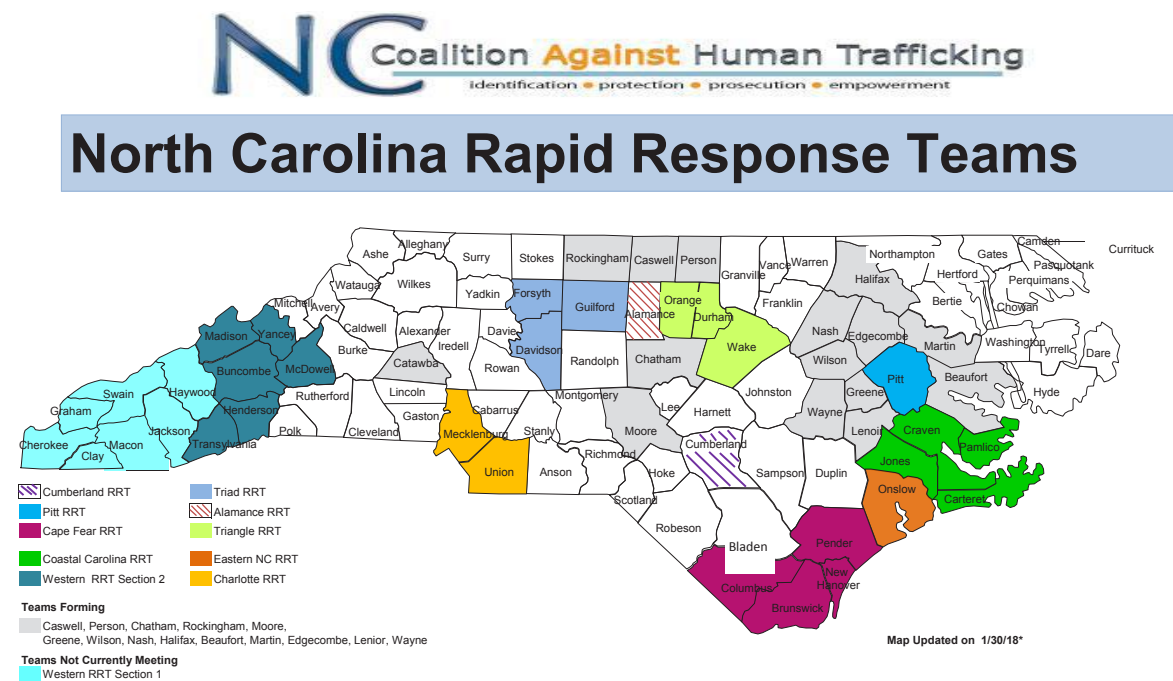
9. Rapid Response Team (RRT) contact information can be found at the following web page: <https://encstophumantrafficking.org/resources/nc-groups>. RRT information can also be found through local law enforcement.

- SOAR (Stop, Observe, Ask, Respond: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/training/soar-to-health-and-wellness-training>). This curriculum is designed for health and social services staff who work directly with victims but also provides useful information for professionals who are not likely to have client contact.
- Training options from the National Human Trafficking Hotline are available at <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/material-type/online-trainings>.
- A free online course conducted by the Stanford University is Human Trafficking Awareness for the General Public (<https://online.stanford.edu/course/human-trafficking-awareness-general-public>).

Conclusion

The question to ask is not “Does human trafficking happen in my community?” Given the prevalence and variations of the problem, the inquiry should instead begin with “What forms of human trafficking take place here?” By building awareness among local government staff about the indicators of trafficking, the community’s capacity to strengthen its systems of intervention and response will be enhanced.

Appendix: Map of North Carolina Rapid Response Teams



Note: This map was last updated January 30, 2018. A Rapid Response Team (RRT) can be a good source in designing local protocols. More information about anti-human trafficking efforts in North Carolina can be found at <https://encstophumantrafficking.org/resources/nc-groups>.

© 2018 School of Government. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Use of this publication for commercial purposes or without acknowledgment of its source is prohibited. Reproducing, distributing, or otherwise making available to a non-purchaser the entire publication, or a substantial portion of it, without express permission, is prohibited.

For permissions questions or requests, email the School of Government at copyright_permissions@sog.unc.edu.

Other School bulletins can be accessed on the Publications page of our website: sog.unc.edu/publications.