



# LABOR TRAFFICKING: DEFINITIONS, PREVALENCE & INTERSECTIONS WITH TAT

*A special thanks to the Berger North  
Foundation for their support of TAT's  
Law Enforcement program.*



# TAT'S MISSION



TAT stands committed to educate, equip, empower and mobilize members of key industries and agencies to combat human trafficking.

# TAT SECTORS



TRUCKING

SHIPPING &  
LOGISTICS

TRANSIT

MOTORCOACH

SCHOOL  
TRANSPORTATION

LOCAL  
DRIVERS

ASSOCIATIONS

LAW  
ENFORCEMENT

ENERGY

DEALERSHIPS

GOVERNMENT  
AGENCIES

TRUCK  
STOPS


# LABOR EXPLOITATION & TRAFFICKING

## Labor Exploitation

Labor exploitation in the United States refers to the **unfair or illegal treatment of workers** by employers, often involving various forms of **mistreatment** such as underpayment of wages, denial of benefits, unsafe working conditions, long working hours without proper compensation, and other **forms of abuse** .

## Labor Trafficking

Labor trafficking involves the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of **force** , **fraud** , or **coercion** , for the purpose of subjection to **involuntary servitude** , **peonage** , **debt bondage** , or **slavery** .



*Labor exploitation can escalate into labor trafficking when **force, fraud or coercion** is used to compel individuals to work under exploitative conditions.*


# LABOR EXPLOITATION & TRAFFICKING

## Labor Exploitation

- Underpaying or not paying workers (including delayed payment)
- Overworking employees (e.g., working incredibly long hours, no access to necessary rest/breaks)
- Providing unsafe or unsanitary working conditions
- Working without proper permits or certifications

## Labor Trafficking

- Debt bondage
- Deprivation of basic needs
- Forced confinement/control of movement
- Physical and/or sexual violence
- Threat of arrest or deportation (e.g., controlling employee's legal identification or documentation)
- Threat of violence to employee or employee's family members/ friends



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# LABOR TRAFFICKING ON A GLOBAL SCALE

## GLOBALLY, THERE ARE OVER 50 - MILLION VICTIMS OF MODERN - DAY SLAVERY.

Of 50 million victims of modern-day slavery

- ▶ 27.6 million are in **forced labor**  
*(what we would consider HT in the United States)*

Out of the 27.6 million victims of forced labor

- ▶ **63% are in private economy sectors other than commercial sexual exploitation**  
*(the closest to labor trafficking in the United States)*
- ▶ 23% are in forced commercial sexual exploitation
- ▶ 14% are in state-imposed forced labor

*International Labor Organization*



## HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS A \$150 BILLION CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.

Of the estimated US\$ 236 billion,

- ▶ Over **one-third** resulted from **forced economic exploitation**  
*(what we would consider closest to LT in the U.S.)*

*International Labor Organization*



<https://www.ilo.org/publications/major-publications/global-estimates-modern-slavery-forced-labour-and-forced-marriage>

<https://www.ilo.org/publications/profits-and-poverty-economics-forced-labour-0>

# LABOR TRAFFICKING IN THE U.S.

- ▶ Labor trafficking and labor exploitation in the U.S. are vastly underrecognized.
- ▶ Out of 240 U.S. citizens at high risk of labor trafficking victimization (i.e., in abusive labor situations), **69% did not seek help**.



<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/statistics>

<https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/308903.pdf>

<https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/302157.pdf>

# VENUES/INDUSTRIES

- Restaurants
- Agriculture
- Construction
- Bars/nightlife scenes
- Gas stations
- Convenience stores
- Hotels/motels
- Domestic labor
  - Nannying/au pair
  - Housekeeping
  - Cooking
- Landscaping
- Painting
- Hairstyling
- Retail/Traveling Sales
  - Magazine Sales
- Tech/engineering
- Forced begging
- Education
- Dance halls
- Massage parlors/spas
- Manufacturing
  - “Sweat shops”
- Automotive repair
- Fishing
- Canning
- Meat- packing
- Janitorial services
- Administration
- Delivery services
- Trucking
- Healthcare
  - Assisted living
- Traveling carnivals





# KEY TAT INDUSTRIES

Survivors interviewed by TAT mentioned specific settings/industries that could have played a role in their exit from labor trafficking:

- ▶ **Public transit/transportation**
- ▶ **Bus terminals/stops**
- ▶ **DMV office**
- ▶ **School**
- ▶ **Travel centers/truck stops**
- ▶ **Gas stations/convenience stores**
- ▶ **Rideshare/cab services**



# HOT SHOT DRIVERS



## WHAT LABOR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS WILL NOT RESPOND TO

Being asked outright if they are a victim of human trafficking or if they are being forced to do the work. Most victims will say no.

Using a rapid -fire questioning method with information -gathering or asking about the potential trafficker.

Using the same force, fraud and coercion tactics as traffickers (e.g., threatening arrest or deportation); this hinders your ability to get victims to open up about their victimization.

Asking about their general safety or their family's safety IF you are not able to offer them services in that moment. While many victims are physically forced or threatened to be in a certain situation, there is not a readily safe alternative.

## WHAT LABOR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS WILL RESPOND TO

Build rapport and create a comfortable atmosphere where victims are willing to share information. Use a LE-approved translation service, if needed.

Inquire about their current route and what their hours are like. Victims have cited several instances where they have been forced to drive 50 hours in a single trip to meet a customer deadline.

Ask about their immigration status in the United States and if their company is helping them in this process. This should be non -threatening and non -adversarial. In some cases, the company is involved but in a harmful manner. Attorney fees and documents can lead to the withholding of pay checks and debt bondage.

Ask about their confidence and safety in their role as a truck driver. Many individuals are not adequately trained to drive these types of equipment and feel they are putting the general public at risk. Any faltering response to driver confidence should be taken as a red flag.

# QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL LABOR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

- When you aren't driving this truck, where do you stay?
- Do you live with your employer?
- Does your employer charge you rent for where you live? Take it out of your pay?
- Why are you working so many hours/days?
- How did you find this job?
- Do you owe money to your employer? How much?
  - What is this debt for (job finding fee, documents, lodging, food)? What are you paying off?
- If you have any fines for inspection violations, are you paying them or does your employer pay them?
  - If your employer pays the fines, do they make you pay that "debt" back?
- If your truck is towed for any reason, are you responsible for picking the equipment up from the tow yard?
  - If not, who is responsible for retrieving the towed equipment?
  - Who pays the tow yard fine? If your employer pays it, are you expected to pay them back?
- Do you receive paychecks for your work? How often do you get paid? Are you paid by check or cash?
- Are you allowed to see or talk to your family?
- Do you get breaks? How often and how long?

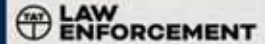
# QUESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL LABOR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, CONTINUED

- Do you get days off? How many days per week? Month?
  - What happens if you ask for time off?
- Who owns this truck?
  - *If they are paying for it, ask about the lease. How long have they been paying on it? Is it deducted from their paycheck? What else is deducted from their paycheck? How much money are they taking home per paycheck?*
- What happens if you get sick or need to take time off?
- Are you free to find another job with another employer?
- What happens to you if you don't work? Does anyone hurt you or your family members? Are you threatened?
- Was the pay, nature of work, hours and/or work environment different from what was promised to you during recruitment for this job?
- Have you been told that you will not be believed if you try to seek help from the police or other authorities?
- Have you been instructed to lie to police or authorities by your employer?

# GUIDANCE FOR INSPECTORS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT



## GUIDANCE FOR QUESTIONING POTENTIAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS



*Human trafficking is the exploitation of human beings through force, fraud or coercion for the purposes of either commercial sex or forced labor wherein a third party (the trafficker) is making a profit. Human trafficking also occurs when a minor (anyone under the age of 18) engages in commercial sex (the exchange of a sex act for something of value); there does not need to be a third party involved for this to be a trafficking situation.*

Labor and sex trafficking victims have been identified in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. Trafficking occurs in rural, suburban and urban areas. Thanks to the accessibility of the internet, victims are also recruited, exploited and advertised online.

### SEX TRAFFICKING

Sex trafficking victims have been exploited in street-based prostitution, legal and illegal brothels, strip clubs and through pornography.

### LABOR TRAFFICKING

Labor trafficking victims have been exploited in a variety of places, including construction sites, the agricultural sector, domestic work (e.g., cooks, nannies, housekeepers), the food service industry and the trucking industry.

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While both labor exploitation and labor trafficking involve the mistreatment of workers, labor trafficking specifically entails the use of **force, fraud or coercion** to exploit individuals for labor or services, whereas labor exploitation may involve unfair or illegal treatment of workers without involving coercion or force.

*Labor exploitation can escalate into labor trafficking when coercion, force or fraud is used to compel individuals to work under exploitative conditions.*



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING INVESTIGATION

A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO MAKING THE CASE

KIRSTA LEEBURG MELTON

 CRC Press  
Taylor & Francis Group



# FREE LE HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRAINING MODULES