



**Interagency Task Force
on Human Trafficking**

2017 Annual Report

**New York State
Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking
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This report is submitted by the New York State Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking as required by Section 483-ee (c) of the New York State Social Services Law. It details the activities undertaken by both the Interagency Task Force and member agencies to fight human trafficking throughout New York State.

Representatives from two state agencies – the Division of Criminal Justice Services and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance – serve as co-chairs of the Interagency Task Force and staff from those agencies support its work.

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Contents

Overview.....	3
Interagency Task Force Activities.....	4
Future Activities of the Interagency Task Force.....	9
Attachment A:	10
Attachment B:	15

Overview

The Interagency Task Force provides guidance on protocols and best practices for training and outreach, gathers data, and evaluates approaches to increase public awareness about human trafficking. It was created in 2007, the year New York State enacted legislation to target sex and labor trafficking and support its victims.

Representatives from the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) serve as co-chairs of the Interagency Task Force, which also has representation from the Department of Health (DOH), the Office of Mental Health (OMH), the Department of Labor (DOL), the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), the Office of Victim Services (OVS), the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV), and the New York State Police (State Police).

Following the New York State Legislature's reauthorization in 2016, the Interagency Task Force focused on developing and supporting training to improve awareness efforts statewide among its members and their constituents, working to improve collaboration at state, local, and federal levels and meeting the comprehensive needs of human-trafficking victims. That year also marked a turning point in the State's fight against human trafficking: It was the first year that agencies other than law enforcement could submit referrals to the State, which confirms human-trafficking victims so that they are eligible for assistance and services. This change resulted in OTDA and DCJS receiving a 150% increase in referrals from the previous year. In 2017, the pace continued close to the same rate of 2016, indicating that the extension of referral sources was the linchpin to the higher level of reporting. The Interagency Task Force will continue to exercise its authority to address the needs of this increasing and deserving population.

As required by the reauthorization, the Interagency Task Force met three times in 2017: April 19, September 11, and November 27. Topics addressed included the Interagency Task Force's obligations under recent changes in the law; ways to enhance responses to labor trafficking; work to combat child sex trafficking; and the OCFS role in implementing Safe Harbour, a child welfare-led system response to enhance the identification of, and service delivery to, trafficked, exploited, and at-risk youth.

In addition to outlining the Interagency Task Force's duties, New York State Social Services Law Section 483-ee (b) requires that the Interagency Task Force collect and organize data detailing the nature and extent of human trafficking throughout the state. Attachment A includes a summary of that data.

Interagency Task Force Activities

The Interagency Task Force engaged in collaborative and individual agency efforts to respond to human trafficking in New York State.

Member Collaborations

Strategic Plan

In 2016, the Interagency Task Force implemented a Strategic Plan that identified three primary areas of focus for its activities: raising awareness, identifying victims and providing services, and legislative and programmatic advocacy.

Human Trafficking Awareness Training and Manual

One outgrowth of the Strategic Plan was the creation of Human Trafficking Awareness Training (known as Human Trafficking 101) and accompanying instructor's manual, which is designed for use by any of the agencies that comprise the Interagency Task Force, as well as by any local agency or community organization interested in educating constituents on the issue.

While five agencies – OVS, DOL, OCFS, OTDA, and DCJS – created the training, the entire Interagency Task Force provided critical advice and comment to arrive at the final product. The training covers essentials of detecting trafficking: indicators, characteristics, vulnerable groups, and the victim referral and confirmation process coordinated through DCJS and OTDA.

Interagency Task Force agencies have used the training independently and in conjunction with other ITF members.

Basic Course for Police Officers: Human Trafficking Curriculum Update

New York State requires municipal police officer recruits to complete the Basic Course for Police Officers, which is developed and approved by the State's Municipal Police Training Council. The independent Council has eight members appointed by the Governor and is responsible for ensuring that the course remains current and relevant to the needs of village, town, city, and county police agencies and their new officers. DCJS provides staff support to the Council.

As part of a comprehensive review of the Basic Course, DCJS evaluated the existing two-hour block of instruction that focused on human trafficking, drawing on the expertise of Interagency Task Force members and other established and reputable professionals in the field.

The review resulted in recommendations that were accepted by the Council at its meeting in June 2017, including detailing strategies for law enforcement agencies regarding victim detection and interviewing and prospective indicators of trafficking.

The Council, with the consultation of and input from several Interagency Task Force agencies, also developed and approved a Human Trafficking Model Policy to provide guidance to law enforcement agencies on recognizing, communicating with, and assisting human-trafficking victims.

In addition to working with Interagency Task Force members on the policy, which was adopted in 2016, the Council benefitted from collaboration with the District Attorneys Association of the State of New York, the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police, the New York City Police Department, the Law Enforcement Training Directors Association of New York State, the New York State Sheriffs' Association, the New York State University Police, and the Worker Justice Center of New York State.

Also during this period, Interagency Task Force members offered trainings hosted by member agencies; participated with other professionals in panel discussions in conjunction with screenings of documentaries on human trafficking; represented the Interagency Task Force at regional task forces across the state; and attended numerous community outreach/education programs focused on increasing awareness and providing services for trafficking victims.

Regional Task Forces

Four regional task forces have developed as outgrowths of the state's Interagency Task Force: North Country, Capital District, Central New York, and Southern Tier. Each regional task force includes representatives from law enforcement, advocates, and service providers. These groups meet separately and include participation from members of the state Interagency Task Force, which is dedicated to ensuring the efficacy of these groups. In 2017, the Southern Tier Task Force was revitalized and now includes a New York State Police representative as co-chair. These regional task forces seek to address local needs and provide networks of contacts to address any unique needs of trafficking victims. State Interagency Task Force members also support federal Bureau of Justice Assistance-funded task forces in Western New York and Brooklyn through various trainings and collaborations.

Youth Subcommittee

New York's Safe Harbour for Exploited Children Act (Social Services Law § 447-a [1]) defines a sexually exploited child as any person under the age of 18 who has been subject to sexual exploitation because he or she (a) is the victim of sex trafficking, (b) engages in prostitution, (c) is a victim of compelling prostitution, or (d) engages in a sexual performance or pornography. The law seeks to ensure services for these children, including short-term safe housing, programs for runaway and homeless youth, and community-based services (Social Services Law § 447-b). OCFS guides and hosts the Interagency Task Force's Youth Subcommittee and has provided leadership and direction related to the Safe Harbour law and services and support for sexually exploited children. In its role as the Director of the Safe Harbour Program, OCFS has expanded in counties statewide and calls on Interagency Task Force members to assist with training, education, and implementation. OCFS oversees the independent programs in these counties, providing necessary guidance and experience but permitting and encouraging the creativity and flexibility to meet the unique needs of local jurisdictions.

Individual Member Agency Efforts

Division of Criminal Justice Services and Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

As Interagency Task Force co-chairs, representatives from these agencies direct the Interagency Task Force's focus and goals by planning and determining content of meetings and oversee the provision of services for, and support to, victims of human trafficking. In addition, these agencies annually train more than 1,000 law enforcement personnel, service providers, and advocates.

The co-chairs participate in regional task forces; work and collaborate with state, local, and federal partners; and assist, where necessary, throughout the state to address issues involving human trafficking.

These agencies also oversee the referral process for human-trafficking victims under Social Services Law § 483-cc. When a law enforcement agency or social/legal services provider identifies a victim of human trafficking, that agency or provider submits a referral form that is transmitted electronically to both agencies. On receiving that referral, OTDA and DCJS consult with the agency or provider about the case. DCJS, in consultation with OTDA, then determines whether the referral should be confirmed. If that occurs, the victim may be eligible for services through the New York State Response to Human Trafficking Program (RHTP). OTDA oversees RHTP which provides for a coordinated approach and comprehensive case management services to victims. The program operates in three regions that cover all of New York State, with contract provider agencies serving each targeted geographic area. Through these efforts, trafficking victims receive a broad range of services, including healthcare, counseling, job placement, and basic food, clothing, and shelter.

See Attachment A for referral process statistics.

New York State Police

The New York State Police continues to collaborate with DCJS to train sworn law enforcement personnel statewide regarding human trafficking laws. Additionally, State Police members have been assigned to multi-agency Human Trafficking Task Forces and participate on anti-trafficking committees.

The agency's Special Victims Unit (SVU) recently began receiving, vetting, and disseminating the OCFS Child Sex Trafficking Victim Form (OCFS 3992). With the SVU overseeing the receipt of this form, the unit is now better able to ensure that incidents of suspected human trafficking are being reported to law enforcement agencies. They are also better able to document and track child sex trafficking. Prior to receiving the OCFS 3992, the SVU worked with OCFS to revise the form to capture more accurate information to aid law enforcement with investigations of suspected human trafficking.

Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

In 2016, OASAS implemented "The Intersection of Sex Trafficking, Trauma, and Substance Abuse," an online training to help providers assess trafficking and recognize signs and effects. To date, 763 certificates of completion have been issued. OASAS also hosted a 2016 training by the Interagency Task Force's co-chairs that was extremely well received. Additionally, from March through June of 2016, OASAS conducted a treatment program survey in the online County Planning System to collect information on the victims of human trafficking who were using OASAS treatment programs.

Department of Labor

DOL annually trains its frontline staff on human trafficking issues, conducts community outreach statewide covering workers' rights, trains attorneys regarding immigration, addresses farmworker concerns, and investigates during field visits to educate farmworkers regarding labor rights and labor trafficking victim services. DOL issues U visa certifications, participates in the regional task forces, and lends its expertise to such projects as updates to the Basic Course for Police Officers and development of the Human Trafficking Model Policy.

Office of Children and Family Services

OCFS contributed to the development of the Interagency Task Force's Strategic Plan, hosts and guides the Youth Subcommittee, contributed to the Human Trafficking 101 training and manual, and collaborated with the State Police's Special Victims Unit to develop a system to notify law enforcement when child trafficking victims are identified through child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

In addition to its serving as a base for Interagency Task Force members' involvement with the Safe Harbour project, OCFS also consistently issues informational letters and supports independent projects that address trafficking.

Office of Victim Services

OVS provides substantial financial relief to crime victims and their families. The agency accepts a notice of human trafficking victim confirmation from OTDA, in lieu of a police report, to verify a trafficking victim's status and eligibility for assistance. The agency also requires the local victim assistance programs it funds to indicate whether applicants are also trafficking victims.

The agency currently provides funding to 222 local programs, 140 of which provided services to more than 2,500 human-trafficking victims during federal fiscal year 2017. OVS contributed to the Human Trafficking 101 training and manual; serves, in addition to DOL, as the pending legislation contact to assist the Interagency Task Force with anticipating implementation of prospective legal mandates; and trains its staff on human trafficking issues.

Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

OPDV has presented with other Interagency Task Force members at trainings and promotes human trafficking awareness on its website and on social media platforms. In 2017, it conducted trainings for the New York State Council on Adolescent Pregnancy, Domestic Violence and Systems Training for domestic violence service providers statewide, and the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

Department of Health

In June 2017, the Health Department began offering Human Trafficking 101 training, available in person and online across multiple DOH sites, to increase awareness among DOH health and human services employees and public health professions.

The training focuses on defining human trafficking, identifying potential victims, and understanding the state's Victim Referral Process. Participants are challenged with identifying potential entry points and/or partners for whom the training could be beneficial. To date, more than 60 staff have completed the training in person, and it remains available through the DOH (agency-specific) Learning Management System that is free and available to the public. In all, 203 individuals have completed the training, with 66 individuals currently enrolled.

Office of Mental Health

OMH operates state psychiatric centers and regulates, certifies, and oversees more than 4,500 community-based mental health programs operated by local governments and nonprofit organizations. These programs provide inpatient, outpatient, emergency, community support, residential, and family care services statewide.

In keeping with the mission of the Interagency Task Force, OMH will continue to educate state-certified programs on how to identify victims of human trafficking and the process for referring them to support services. The OMH Division for Children and Families also serves as a member of the Safe Harbour Steering Committee to promote public awareness, advanced training for caseworkers and law enforcement personnel, and community education on emergency services and referrals for trafficked children and youth.

Future Activities

The Interagency Task Force will continue to identify programs – in consultation with experts, service providers, and representative organizations engaged in addressing human trafficking – designed to assist local, state, and federal law enforcement in the prevention, protection, assistance, and service of human-trafficking victims.

Members remain committed to exploring and implementing necessary enhancements, whether included in the Interagency Task Force’s strategic plan, prompted by enacted legislation, or requested by service providers or advocates.

Regional Task Force Expansion

In 2017, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of New York, in collaboration with the Worker Justice Center of New York and the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, worked to expand the four New York State Regional Task Forces to include Joint Investigative Teams. These teams consist of local, state, and federal law enforcement professionals who could enhance the activities of the task forces. Because law enforcement is no longer the sole source of victim referrals to the state, these teams will play an important role in keeping law enforcement abreast of issues that may develop in any particular region and provide potential prosecutorial support.

In addition, the State Interagency Task Force members will continue to participate in these regional task forces and will continue to include representatives from other disciplines in future meetings to further encourage communication and to share information about best practices for preventing trafficking, protecting and assisting victims of trafficking, and prosecuting traffickers. Members of the ITF will also continue to collaborate and cooperate with local, state, and federal entities, in addition to nongovernmental organizations in furtherance of the ITF’s duties and responsibilities.

Attachment A: Data

Response to Human Trafficking Program Statistics (11/1/2007-12/31/2017, Source: OTDA)

Demographics

Total Confirmed Victims: 1,022

Female: 896

Male: 90

Transgender (self-identified): 36

Adult (18 years and older): 749 (includes 2 adults of unknown age)

Minor (younger than 18 years): 273

Overview of Referrals¹

Confirmed Victims: 1,022

Referrals Not Confirmed: 57 (includes 11 duplicates and 4 withdrawals by referral source)

Total Referrals: 1,088

Referrals Pending Determination: 9

Offense

Sex Trafficking: 803

Labor Trafficking: 178

Victims by Region

Significantly more than half of the confirmed victims are from outside New York City.

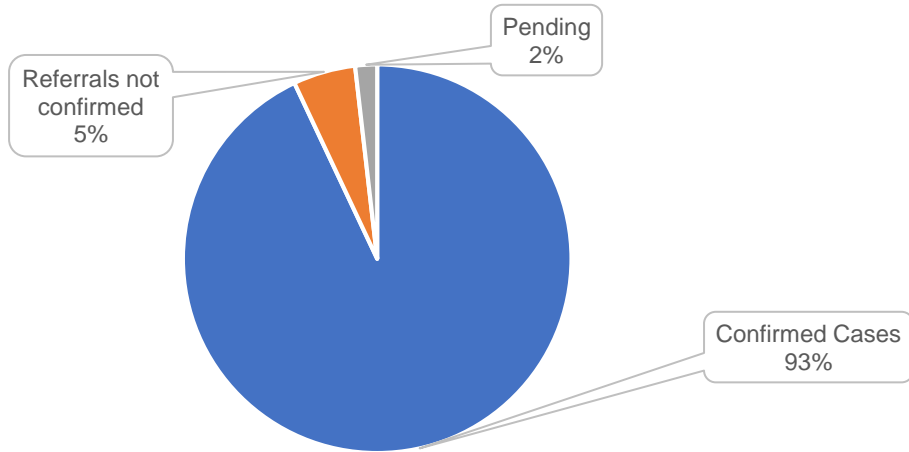
Notes:

In the charts that follow, the “Metro” region represents the following counties: Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester counties.

Disposition of charges brought at arrest or arraignment by county is available on request from DCJS: (dcjsstats@dcjs.ny.gov).

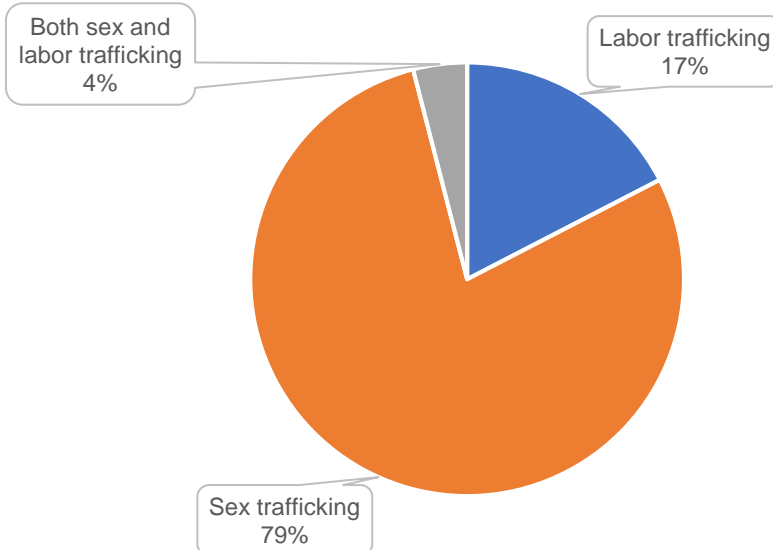
Overview- RHTP Statistics Since 2007

Total referrals as of 12/31/2017: **1,088**

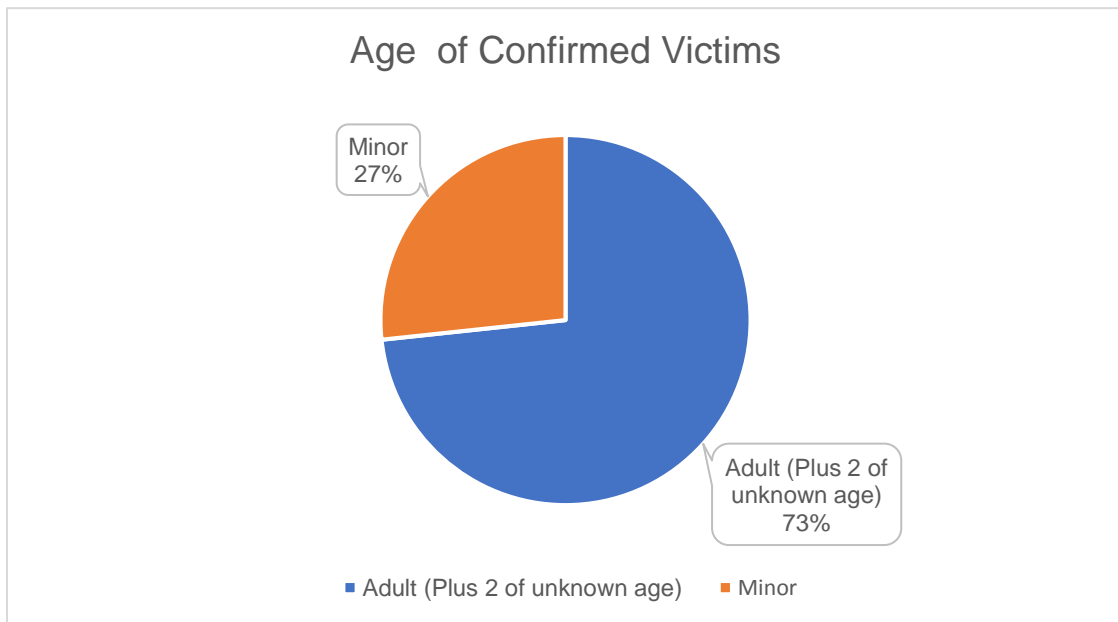
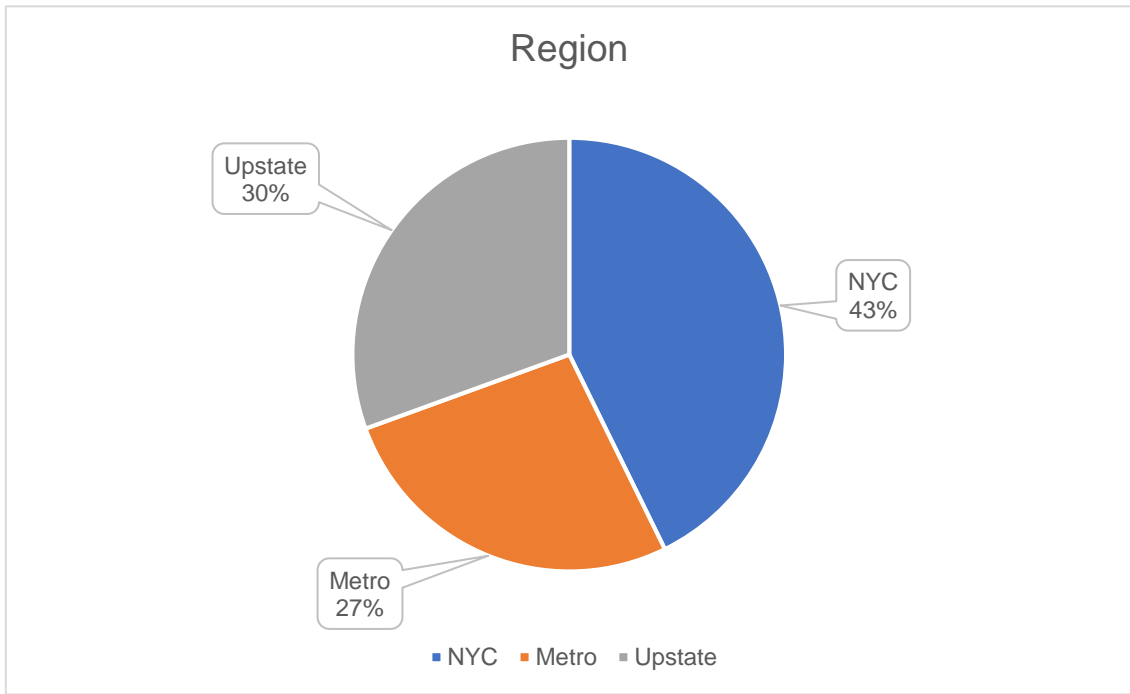


- Confirmed Cases
- Referrals not Confirmed (Includes 11 duplicates and 4 withdrawals by referral source)
- Pending

Confirmed Victims



- Labor trafficking
- Sex trafficking
- Both sex and labor trafficking



New York State Disposition of Arrests/Arraignments for Sex Trafficking (PL 230.34)

		ARREST YEAR										Total	
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017		
New York State	Total Arrests-Arraignments	16	19	27	67	67	57	70	54	68	82	527	
	Open, No Dispo Reported	1	0	3	5	1	9	1	11	30	73	134	
	Total Dispositions	15	19	24	62	66	48	69	43	38	9	393	
	Convicted-Sentenced	8	14	21	41	55	37	55	31	28	5	295	
	Convicted-Sentence Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Diverted and Dismissed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Covered by Another Case	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	6	1	2	17	
	Dismissed-ACD	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	
	Dismissed-not ACD	6	4	1	14	7	8	10	5	8	2	65	
	Acquitted	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	DA Declined to Prosecute	0	0	0	2	3	1	1	0	1	0	8	
	Other	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	
	Convictions to:	Sex Trafficking	0	4	10	6	12	15	16	12	9	3	87
		Labor Trafficking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Non-Trafficking Chg	8	10	11	35	43	22	39	19	19	2	208
	Sentences to:	Prison	7	8	13	24	38	22	42	20	17	3	194
		Jail	0	2	3	7	6	4	3	5	7	0	37
		Time Served	0	0	2	2	1	1	3	0	1	0	10
		Jail + Probation	0	0	2	2	2	2	1	2	0	0	11
		Probation	1	3	0	3	2	4	2	2	1	1	19
Fine		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	5	
Cond Discharge		0	1	1	3	4	3	3	2	1	0	18	
Uncond Discharge		0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

Note: Includes all events where a PL 230.34 charge appeared as a top or underlying arrest or arraignment charge.

Source: DCJS, Computerized Criminal History System (as of 02/16/2018).

New York State Disposition of Arrests/Arraignments for Labor Trafficking (PL 135.35 and PL 135.37)

		ARREST YEAR										Total	
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017		
New York State	Total Arrests-Arraignments	3	2	7	4	7	2	4	8	4	3	44	
	Open, No Dispo Reported	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	4	
	Total Dispositions	3	2	7	4	7	2	3	7	4	1	40	
	Convicted-Sentenced	3	0	5	4	6	2	2	4	4	1	31	
	Convicted-Sentence Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Diverted and Dismissed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Covered by Another Case	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Dismissed-ACD	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	
	Dismissed-not ACD	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	6	
	Acquitted	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	DA Declined to Prosecute	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	
	Convictions to:	Sex Trafficking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Labor Trafficking	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	3
		Non-Trafficking Chg	3	0	5	4	5	2	2	4	2	1	28
	Sentences to:	Prison	2	0	2	3	3	0	1	3	2	0	16
		Jail	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	4
		Time Served	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
		Jail + Probation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Probation	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	4
Fine		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Cond Discharge		1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	6	
Uncond Discharge		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Note: Includes all events where a PL 230.34 charge appeared as a top or underlying arrest or arraignment charge.

Source: DCJS, Computerized Criminal History System (as of 02/16/2018).

Attachment B:

Enabling Legislation and Interagency Task Force Composition

Chapter 74 of the Laws of 2007 established the New York State Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking (ITF).

As required by Section 483-ee (a) of New York State Social Services Law, the Interagency Task Force (ITF) is composed of 10 state agencies and 7 additional members.

The Interagency Task Force consists of the following State agencies: the Division of Criminal Justice Services (co-chair); the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (co-chair); the Department of Health; the Office of Mental Health; the Department of Labor; the Office of Children and Family Services; the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services; the Office of Victim Services; the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence; and the New York State Police. Additionally, Interagency Task Force membership must include four representatives from the New York State Legislature (two recommended by the Senate President and two by the Assembly Speaker); two representatives recommended by the New York State nonprofit organization receiving the largest share of State funds for providing services to victims of human trafficking; and one representative recommended by the President of the New York State Bar Association.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Collect and organize data on the nature and extent of trafficking in persons in the state;
- Identify available federal, state, and local programs that provide services to victims of trafficking, including but not limited to case management, housing, healthcare, mental health counseling, drug addiction screening and treatment, language interpretation and translation services, English language instruction, job training and placement assistance, post-employment services for job retention, and services to assist the individual and any of his or her family members to establish a permanent residence in New York State or the United States;
- Consult with governmental and nongovernmental organizations in developing recommendations to strengthen state and local efforts to prevent trafficking, protect and assist victims of trafficking, and prosecute traffickers;
- Establish interagency protocols and collaboration between federal, state, and local law enforcement, state and governmental agencies, child welfare agencies, and nongovernmental organizations;
- Evaluate approaches to increase public awareness about trafficking and make recommendations on such approaches;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of training programs on human trafficking that have been designed for law enforcement personnel, criminal defense attorneys, social service providers, and nongovernmental organizations and make recommendations for improving the quality and effectiveness of such programs;

- Measure and evaluate State progress in preventing trafficking, protecting and providing assistance to trafficking victims, and prosecuting persons engaged in trafficking;
- Convene any subcommittee necessary – provided such subcommittee has at least one member appointed by the Assembly Speaker, temporary Senate President, or Governor – to consider specific issues, including but not limited to federal, state, and/or local cooperation; juveniles and human trafficking; the importance of training and who should receive such training; how data are compiled and shared; and services for and treatment of domestic versus foreign-born victims; and
- Report to the Governor, the Assembly Speaker, the Assembly Minority Leader, the temporary Senate President, and the Senate Minority Leader no less than annually and issue such reports and recommendations as the Interagency Task Force deems necessary to carry out its duties and responsibilities.