



**Interagency Task Force  
on Human Trafficking**

# **2018 Annual Report**

**New York State Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking**  
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**New York State  
Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking  
2018 Annual Report**

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 information about the Task Force's activities and the individual agencies and their efforts 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.

**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
*Governor*  
State of New York

**Michael P. Hein**  
*Commissioner*  
New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

**Michael C. Green**  
*Executive Deputy Commissioner*  
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services

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## Overview

The New York State Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking coordinates all the state's Interagency activities regarding human trafficking. The commissioner or a designee from the state Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) co-chair the Task Force, which also has representation from the Department of Health (DOH), the Office of Mental Health (OMH), Department of Labor (DOL), the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS), the Office of Victim Services (OVS), the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV), and the New York State Police (NYSP).

Established in 2007, the Task Force emerged from state legislation enacted to target sex and labor trafficking and to support the victims of these crimes. Under this law, OTDA and DCJS began confirming human trafficking referrals from law enforcement so that victims would be eligible for assistance and services. The Task Force was reauthorized by the state Legislature in 2016. For the first time, agencies other than law enforcement could submit human trafficking referrals to the two agencies. As a result of this change, OTDA and DCJS experienced a 150 percent increase in referrals in 2016. Referral levels have remained consistent since this time. The Task Force will continue to exercise its authority to address the needs of trafficking victims.

In 2018, the Task Force met on March 26, Sept. 17, and Dec. 3. Topics of discussion included Task Force obligations under recent changes in the law; enhanced responses to labor trafficking in New York State; developments in child sex trafficking; and OCFS's role in implementing Safe Harbour: NY, a program that implements a system-level approach within existing child welfare and allied youth-serving systems.

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

## Interagency Task Force Activities

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

### Member Collaborations

In January 2018, the Task Force recognized Human Trafficking Awareness Month by co-hosting a screening of the award-winning human trafficking documentary, “Sands of Silence: Waves of Courage” with filmmaker Chelo Alvarez-Stehle and Virginia Isaias, a survivor featured in the film. In addition to the screening, Alvarez-Stehle and Isaias participated in a panel discussion along with Task Force members that engaged the audience. The event paired cutting-edge and nationally recognized expertise in the field with actual survivor testimony.

#### *Task Force Training and Outreach*

Task Force members spearheaded and participated in a number of initiatives, which included meeting with labor union representatives, working with other state agencies on training, and attending national conferences such as Safe Haven Network International’s “Not On My Watch!” conference in Brooklyn. In total, Task Force members hosted or participated in 30 training opportunities for more than 1,000 law enforcement officers, state agency staff and human service providers. The Task Force also participated in numerous community outreach and education programs, which were focused on increasing awareness and providing services for trafficking victims.

#### *Task Force Youth Subcommittee*

The New York State Safe Harbour for Exploited Children Act defines a sexually exploited child as any person under the age of 18 who has been subject to sexual exploitation because he or she is the victim of sex trafficking; engages in prostitution; is a victim of compelling prostitution; or engages in a sexual performance or pornography. This law seeks to provide services for exploited children, including short-term safe housing, programming for runaway and homeless youth, and community-based programming.

OCFS hosts the Youth Subcommittee and provides leadership and direction to the Safe Harbour program. The program utilizes Task Force members to assist with training, education and implementation. OCFS anticipates that all New York counties will engage in some level of Safe Harbour participation by 2020 and the agency continues to provide necessary oversight and experience to them. Counties, however, are also encouraged to be creative in their approach to human trafficking in order to meet the needs of their specific jurisdiction.

At the Task Force meeting in December 2018, OCFS presented “I Am Little Red,” a 10-minute animated short film aimed at middle school students, which addresses predatory issues such as human trafficking in a manner that connects with students in that age group. Local Safe Harbour programs have shown the film several times in school settings. Given the often-challenging issue of reaching these individuals, especially in the context of educational settings, the Youth Subcommittee found the film to be a promising educational tool.

### *Regional Task Forces*

There are four regional task forces, which are located in the North Country, Capital Region, Central New York, and Southern Tier. Each regional group meets separately and includes representatives from law enforcement, advocates and service providers. The Task Force lends support to these groups and is dedicated to ensuring their efficacy. Individually, the regional task forces seek to address needs specific to their area and provide a network of services to address the unique needs of trafficking victims.

The Southern Tier group was reinvigorated in 2018 and now includes a New York State Police captain as its co-chairman. This group also worked with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of New York on a case discussion that exposed the need for further interagency cooperation, training, and assistance with the service provider component of New York's civil human trafficking laws and regulations. This resulted in the development of a template for case reporting that can be used by task forces in other regions.

The federal Bureau of Justice Assistance also funds regional task forces in Western New York and the New York City area. Both are also supported by the state Task Force through various training opportunities and collaborations. Representatives from OTDA participate on the New York City task force, while DCJS representatives attend most upstate regional task force meetings.

### **Individual Task Force Member Agency Efforts**

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

These agencies direct the focus and goals of the Task Force, providing statewide coordination for delivering services to victims of human trafficking. Both agencies participate in regional task forces, collaborate with state, local and federal partners, and help address issues involving human trafficking throughout New York. Collectively, they offered 30 training opportunities that were attended by more than 1,000 law enforcement officers, service providers and advocates. Additionally, both agencies prepared training to assist medical service providers with implementing new legislation, Public Health Law § 2805-y, enacted to help detect human trafficking victims in health care settings.

DCJS and OTDA coordinate the referral process for human trafficking victims under New York's Social Services Law. When a law enforcement agency or service provider identifies a human trafficking victim, the referral source submits a referral form that is automatically transmitted to both agencies. The law requires consultation between the referral source, OTDA and DCJS. State regulations then provide a framework for DCJS to review the referral and, after consultation with OTDA, confirm whether the individual is a victim of human trafficking.

This confirmation enables the victim to access services through the [New York State Response to Human Trafficking Program](#). Established by OTDA when New York's human trafficking statutes were enacted, this program offers a coordinated, community-based approach and comprehensive case management to trafficking victims as they are identified through specified regions within New York State. Each region is served by contracted providers. Through these efforts, trafficking victims receive a broad range of services including health care, counseling, job placement, food, clothing and shelter. Between 2007 through 2018, there were 1,336 persons referred as possible victims of human trafficking, with 1,252 of them ultimately confirmed and found eligible for services. For more information on the demographics of these victims, please see Attachment A.

### *New York State Police*

The State Police collaborate with DCJS to train its personnel on human trafficking laws. The agency's Special Victims Unit ensures that incidents of suspected human trafficking are being reported to law enforcement agencies. The unit continues to receive and disseminate the Child Sex Trafficking Victim Form, which helps determine whether a child is a human trafficking victim. The unit previously worked with OCFS to revise the form to more accurately capture information to aid law enforcement during human trafficking investigations.

There have been 128 Child Sex trafficking investigation forms submitted and dispersed for investigation to local agencies since the unit took over the assignment of these investigations in January 2017.

### *Office of Addiction Services and Supports*

OASAS offered online training for services providers on how to assess trafficking and recognize its signs and effects. Entitled, "The Intersection of Sex Trafficking, Trauma, and Substance Abuse," the training was offered through the agency's website in 2018 and has resulted in 1,265 certificates of completion since initially being posted in 2016.

OASAS has also opened five additional Youth Recovery Clubhouses over the past two years in order to provide a restorative, non-clinical environment for youth struggling with addiction. The Clubhouses are built on a core of peer-driven supports and services that help youth progress in their recovery by encouraging a drug-free lifestyle. Youth Clubhouses offer a drop-in environment that may provide a safe space for young people affected by human trafficking. Given the link between substance use and human trafficking, OASAS plans to explore formally training Youth Clubhouse staff in raising awareness about human trafficking. This will allow OASAS to better understand how to meet the needs of youth who have been victims of human trafficking. In addition, OASAS prevention efforts include funding and support for evidence-based education programs; public awareness of alcohol, drug, and gambling problems; and community-based prevention.

### *Department of Labor*

DOL is continuing to combat labor trafficking throughout the state. These efforts include field visits in all industries – from agriculture to motels to warehouses – in order to investigate labor law violations, such as failing to pay the state's minimum wage, overtime, or owed wages. Additionally, individuals filing claims for prior unpaid wages are sometimes identified as trafficking victims. Complainants identified as potential trafficking victims are referred to social service providers through the statewide human trafficking victim confirmation process. The agency also issues U and T Visa certifications to crime victims who are immigrants and cooperate with investigations.

To ensure appropriate responses to potential trafficking victims, all frontline staff receive annual training on labor trafficking. This training includes understanding legal definitions, potential red flags for trafficking, where to refer victims, and what services are available. Identified victims are referred to the agency's Division of Immigrant Policies and Affairs (DIPA) for further screening, assistance with social services and other referrals.

DIPA conducts statewide “Know Your Labor Rights” community outreach presentations that include identifiers of labor trafficking and how to make a referral to the agency. This division has also trained immigration and employment attorneys statewide on identifying labor trafficking victims and available areas of service. In addition, this division participates in seven regional task forces, and co-chairs the labor subcommittee of the Brooklyn Anti-Trafficking Task Force.

#### *Office of Children and Family Services*

OCFS remains an active member of the Task Force and has participated in an ongoing dialogue with Task Force partners on a variety of topics related to labor and sex trafficking. OCFS previously presented to the Task Force on its work related to child trafficking and the Safe Harbour: NY initiative and continued to provide updates throughout 2018 about what has been accomplished since the inception of the program. The agency, in partnership with OTDA, created a youth subcommittee in 2016 to enhance Task Force efforts related to children and families. Subcommittee membership includes representatives from 12 executive agencies with a stake in supporting survivors and responding to perpetrators of trafficking in children and youth. These efforts resulted in OCFS contributing sample materials and subject matter expertise to partners at DOH as they considered developing youth-specific awareness materials for health care settings in spring 2018.

Deeper partnerships also emerged as a result of the subcommittee’s formation. For instance, OCFS and the Special Victims Unit of the New York State Police began discussing anti-trafficking responses together on a quarterly basis. Through these discussions, they developed a coordinated system to notify law enforcement when child victims of trafficking are identified through child welfare and juvenile justice systems. The agency and unit worked together to update a notification form to support recent federal mandates and to help law enforcement throughout the state investigate child trafficking cases and appropriately respond to victims. This partnership remains active and both agencies continued to collaborate on system and case level needs throughout 2018.

#### *Office of Victim Services*

OVS provides financial assistance to crime victims and their families. The agency simplifies the application process for human trafficking victims by accepting confirmation of their status through OTDA, rather than the police reports that are otherwise required to determine the eligibility of other crime victims. The agency also requires the 222 local victim assistance programs it funds to indicate whether applicants are also the victims of trafficking.

There were 185 agency-funded victim assistance programs that provided services to any self-reported victim of trafficking statewide during 2018. The agency continues to operate with a rebuttable presumption that human trafficking victims have suffered physical injury for purposes of establishing their eligibility for compensation. In fiscal year 2018, OVS received 43 personal injury claims and one essential personal property claim for human trafficking victims.

OVS has used the Task Force’s Human Trafficking 101 training as a guide to develop its own training, tailored to its staff. The agency is also developing a training plan for its victim assistance programs. OVS also joins DOL as a contact for pending legislation to assist the Task Force with prospective legal mandates.

#### *Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence*

In 2018, OPDV conducted training on the intersection of domestic violence and human trafficking, as well as training directly on human trafficking. OPDV continued to promote human trafficking

awareness on its website, with resources available for victims and professionals working with domestic violence and trafficking victims. Information about trafficking can also be found in the OPDV publication, “Finding Safety and Support,” a comprehensive guide for survivors and helpers with information about adult domestic violence, safety planning, and getting help from services, the police, and the courts. The publication can be ordered or downloaded through OPDV’s website.

#### *Department of Health*

In March 2018, [DOH issued a letter](#) to all hospitals and diagnostic treatment centers – including general clinics, dialysis and ambulatory surgery centers – about an amendment to the state’s Public Health Law requiring them to implement policies and procedures related to identifying, assessing, and referring human trafficking victims. The letter provided links for helpful resources and training materials for health care providers. The agency [launched a webpage](#) in July 2018 to raise awareness of human trafficking and to provide links for health care providers. The page will be updated with additional resources in the future.

In August 2018, the Greater New York Hospital Association and the Hospital Association of New York sponsored a webinar for health care providers on the changes. The webinar included Ruth Leslie, the agency’s director of the Division of Hospitals and Diagnostic and Treatment Centers; Chris Muller, Restore NYC’s director of Training and External Affairs; and Dr. Santhosh Paulus of Northwell Health’s Huntington Hospital. In addition, DOH updated regulations to reflect these changes to the Public Health Law throughout 2018. These regulations were presented at the agency’s Public Health and Health Planning Council meeting in December 2018 and subsequently adopted in June 2019.

#### *Office of Mental Health*

In keeping with the mission of the Task Force, OMH continued to support the efforts of state-certified programs on how to identify victims of human trafficking and ensure they are connected to necessary support services. The agency also promoted trauma-informed care training to service providers and law enforcement to help them better understand the plight of human trafficking victims.

Training on human trafficking topics was available to providers via OMH’s regional offices throughout the state. Outpatient program staff and others from the agency attended this training. Additionally, the agency’s Division for Children and Families continued to serve 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.

Human trafficking victims requiring mental health treatment can access care at one of the more than 4,500 community-based mental health programs under OMH, as well as the state-operated psychiatric centers. These programs offer inpatient, outpatient, emergency, community support, residential, and family care services to individuals requiring assistance.

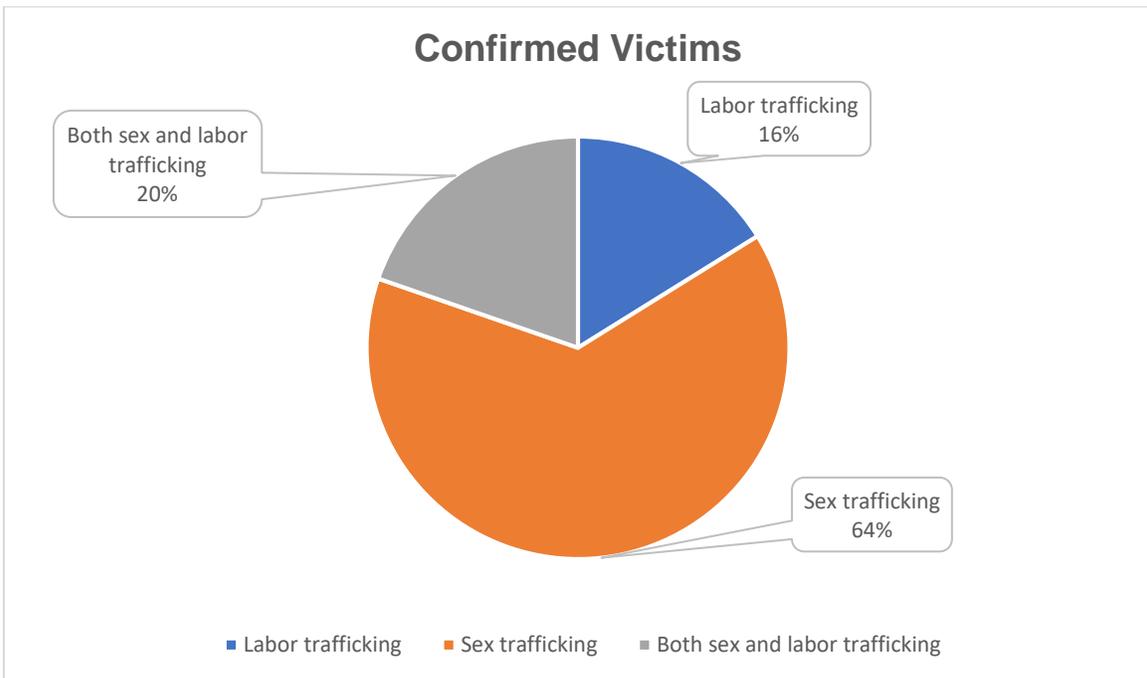
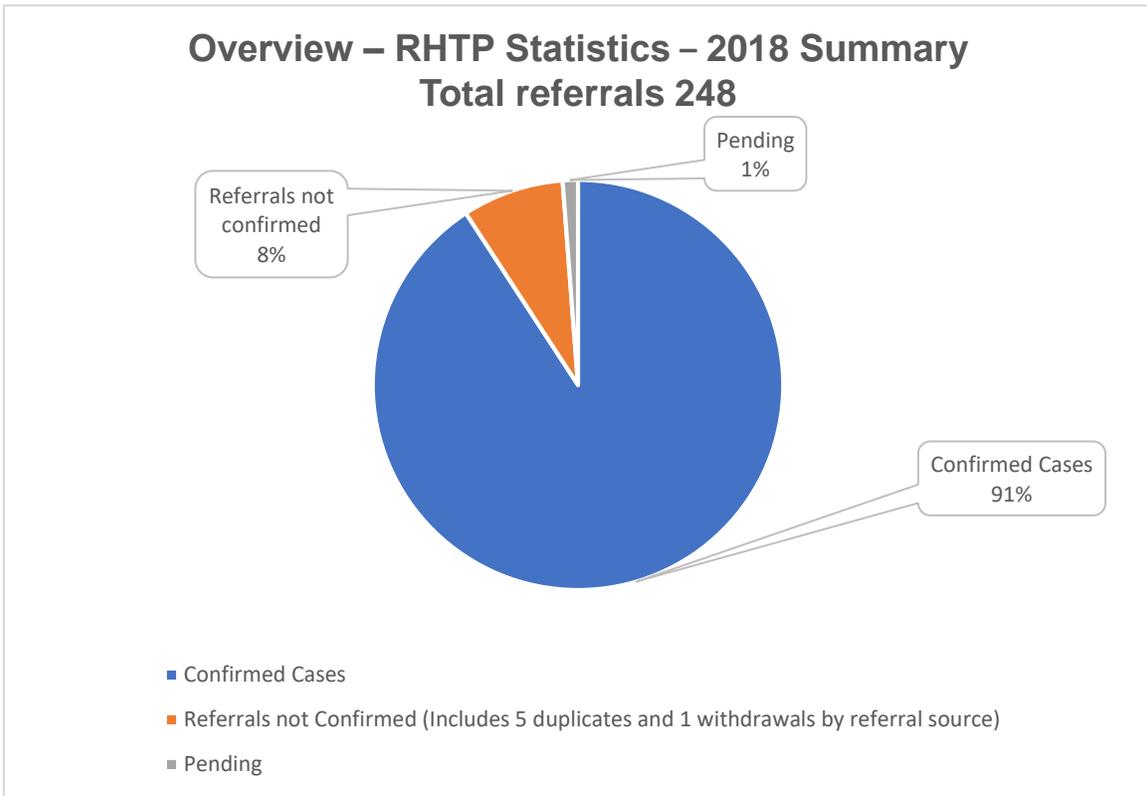
## Future Activities

In consultation with experts, service providers, and representative organizations dedicated to addressing human trafficking, the Task Force will continue to identify programs designed to assist local, state and federal law enforcement in the prevention, protection, assistance, and service of trafficking victims. The group remains committed to exploring and implementing necessary enhancements, whether prompted by its own strategic plan, enacted legislation, or the training needs of service providers.

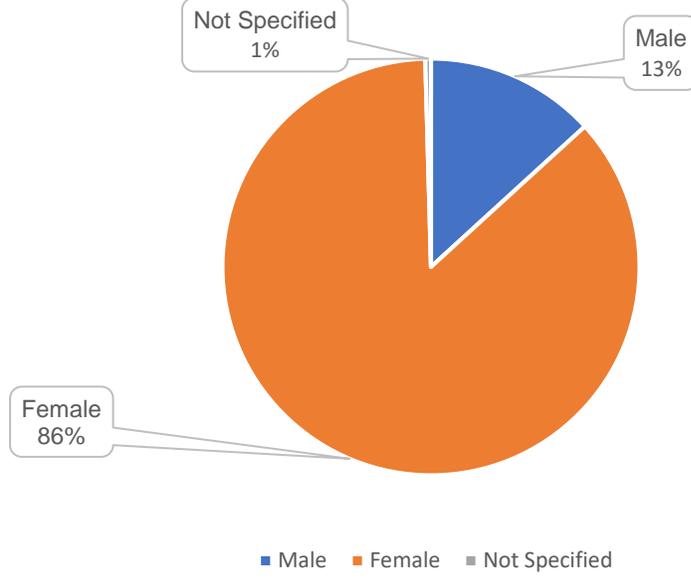
Changes to Public Health Law have considerably expanded the scope of efforts to combat human trafficking across New York State. The Task Force continues to explore various avenues to address the new requirements and has uncovered new areas that are uniquely impacted by them, such as hospital security strategies and health care provider cooperation/collaboration with law enforcement. In the future, the Task Force will take on these and similar yet-to-be discovered assignments.

Moreover, the Task Force is committed to the inclusion of representatives from other disciplines in future meetings to further encourage communication and information-sharing. Task Force members have collaborated and cooperated with local, state and federal entities as well as with nongovernmental organizations to determine the most efficient ways of fully implementing strategies for preventing and addressing human trafficking in New York State.

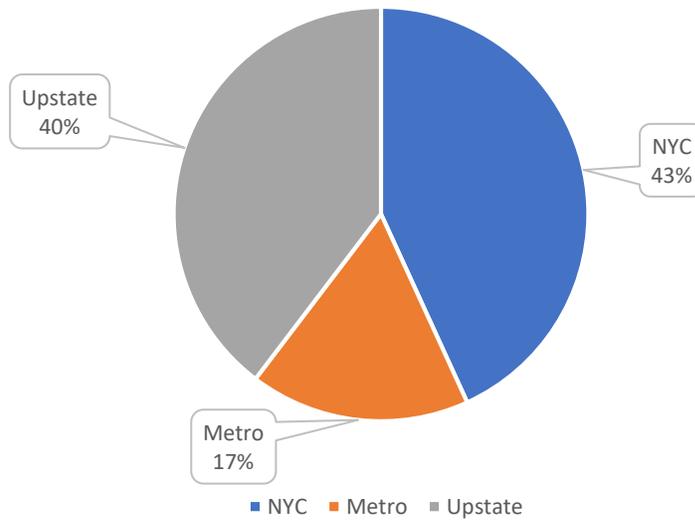
# Attachment A



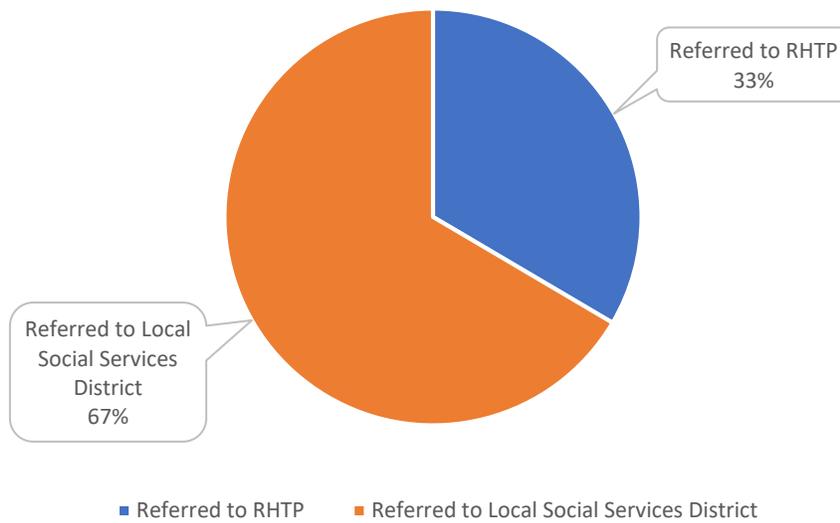
### Demographics of Confirmed Victims



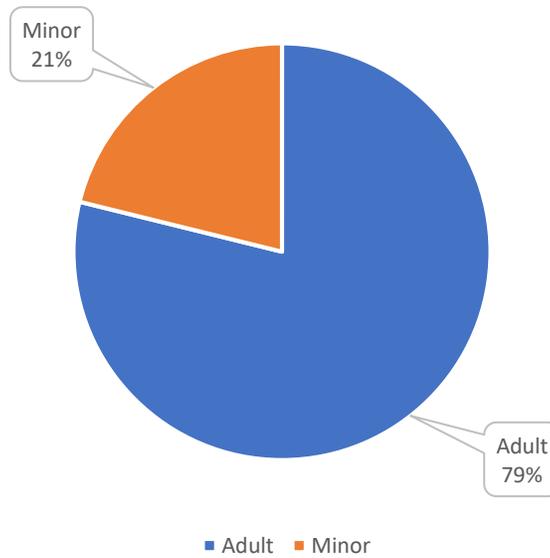
### Region



### Referral Status



### Age of Confirmed Victims



*Response to Human Trafficking Program Statistics (11/1/2007 – 12/31/2018, Source: OTDA)*

## **Demographics**

Total Confirmed Victims: 1,252

Female: 1,131

Male: 121

Transgender (self-identified): 43

Adult (18 years and older): 927

Minor (younger than 18 years): 325

## **Overview of Referrals**

Total Referrals: 1,336

Referrals Not Confirmed: 82 (includes 60 denials, 17 duplicates, 5 withdrawals by referral source)

Referrals Pending Determination: 2

## **Offense**

Sex Trafficking: 967

Labor Trafficking: 221

Both: 64

## **Victims by Region**

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

New York City: 530

Metro: 316

Upstate: 406

## **Notes:**

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

### 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	2018		
New York State	Total Arrests-Arraignments	16	19	27	67	67	55	70	52	67	87	110	637	
	Open, No Dispo Reported	2	0	3	6	1	5	1	4	14	40	91	167	
	Total Dispositions	14	19	24	61	66	50	69	48	53	47	19	470	
	Convicted-Sentenced	7	14	21	40	55	38	55	33	41	37	11	352	
	Convicted-Sentence Pending	0	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	0	
	Covered by Another Case	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	6	0	6	0	20	
	Dismissed-ACD	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	5	
	Dismissed-not ACD	6	4	1	14	7	9	10	7	10	4	7	79	
	Acquitted	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	DA Declined to Prosecute	0	0	0	2	3	1	1	0	2	0	1	10	
	Other	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	
	Convictions to:	Sex Trafficking	0	4	10	6	12	15	16	13	14	16	3	109
		Labor Trafficking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
		Non-Trafficking Chg	7	10	11	34	43	23	39	20	27	20	8	242
	Sentences to:	Prison	7	8	13	24	38	22	42	23	27	29	8	241
		Jail	0	2	3	7	6	4	3	5	7	3	1	41
		Time Served	0	0	2	2	1	1	3	0	1	0	0	10
		Jail+Probation	0	0	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	13
		Probation	0	3	0	2	2	5	2	2	1	1	1	19
Fine		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	5	
Cond Discharge		0	1	1	3	4	3	3	1	3	2	1	22	
Uncond Discharge		0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Other		0	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. Only counties which reported an arrest or disposition for these charges appear in the display.

Source: DCJS, Computerized Criminal History system (as of 3/22/2019).

**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	2018		
New York State	Total Arrests-Arraignments	3	2	7	4	7	2	4	8	4	3	1	45	
	Open, No Dispo Reported	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	
	Total Dispositions	3	2	7	4	7	2	3	8	4	3	1	44	
	Convicted-Sentenced	3	0	5	4	6	2	2	5	4	2	1	34	
	Convicted-Sentence Pending	0	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	0	
	Covered by Another Case	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Dismissed-ACD	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	
	Dismissed-not ACD	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	8	
	Acquitted	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
	DA Declined to Prosecute	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Convictions to:	Sex Trafficking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Labor Trafficking	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
		Non-Trafficking Chg	3	0	5	4	5	2	2	5	2	2	1	31
	Sentences to:	Prison	2	0	2	3	3	0	1	4	2	1	0	18
		Jail	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
		Time Served	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
		Jail+Probation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Probation	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	4
Fine		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Cond Discharge		1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	1	7	
Uncond Discharge		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

Note: Includes all events where a PL 135.35 or PL 135.37 charge appeared as a top or underlying arrest or arraignment charge. Only counties which reported an arrest or disposition for these charges appear in the display.

Source: DCJS, Computerized Criminal History system (as of 3/22/2019).

## 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.

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

The 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 Addiction Services and Supports; the Office of Victim Services; the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence; and the Division of State Police. Additionally, Task Force membership must include: four representatives recommended from the Legislature, two by the Senate President and two by the Assembly Speaker; two representatives recommended by the not-for-profit organization in New York that receives 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, health care, 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 non-governmental 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 non-governmental 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 non-governmental organizations, and make recommendations for improving the quality and effectiveness of such programs;

- Measure and evaluate the progress of the state in preventing trafficking, protecting and providing assistance to victims of trafficking, and prosecuting persons engaged in trafficking;
- Convene any subcommittee necessary, provided such subcommittee has at least one of the members appointed by the speaker of the assembly, temporary president of the senate 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 is compiled and shared; and services for and treatment of domestic versus foreign born victims; and
- The task force shall report to the governor, the speaker of the assembly, the minority leader of the assembly, the temporary president of the senate and the minority leader of the senate no less than annually, and it shall additionally issue such reports and recommendations as it deems necessary to carry out its duties and responsibilities.