



2022

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

HUMAN TRAFFICKING
ANNUAL REPORT



DAVE YOST
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL



DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

My fellow Ohioans,

Since 2019, when I first took office, I have made the fight against human trafficking a priority, creating the Human Trafficking Initiative to lead the way. HTI works to build awareness, empower Ohioans to take action in their communities, strengthen victim services, and ensure that traffickers and “johns” are brought to justice.

As president of the National Association of Attorneys General, I also have encouraged my colleagues to embrace this fight, for the problem is as challenging in other states and territories as it is in Ohio.

Success, however, begins with each of us.

Human trafficking thrives in the shadows but can infect legitimate industries, such as construction and food service. This is especially true of labor trafficking. Consequently, our success in this fight depends on citizens reporting suspicious activity wherever it happens.

Our nation has an important tool to inform local police and sheriffs, but it’s not being used to its potential. I’m talking about the federally funded National Human Trafficking Hotline, run by Polaris. The hotline reports tips from adult victims to law enforcement *only* if the victims give consent. Because this deprives law enforcement of crucial information, I and 35 other attorneys general have asked Congress to require the hotline to report *all* tips.

Sadly, evolving technology provides bad actors with increasing opportunities to exploit the vulnerable. Artificial intelligence is the newest frontier for abuse. Here, too, I’m working with the nation’s attorneys general to confront this threat: We’re asking Congress to establish a commission to determine how AI can be misused, especially against children.

The fight to end human trafficking is formidable, but it’s a fight we must win. As citizens of a country committed to the ideal of protecting the unprotected, we are morally obligated to get this done.

My office’s Human Trafficking Initiative is leading the fight in Ohio. The report that follows details HTI’s progress in 2022, but between the lines is a larger message: To the traffickers and johns who dare to exploit Ohio’s vulnerable citizens, your time is up. We’re coming after you.

Yours,



Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General

ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is the illegal use of vulnerable people to make a profit through sex work or labor, a societal scourge that is happening right now throughout Ohio. No community within our borders – whether urban, suburban or rural – is immune.

Ohio defines labor trafficking as “involuntary servitude” and sex trafficking as compelled sex activity for hire.

Sex trafficking can include prostitution, but prostitution does not necessarily constitute sex trafficking. The distinction is easily remembered as “2 vs. 3.” Unlike prostitution, sex trafficking must include a third-party beneficiary, meaning that someone besides the two people engaged in the sexual act is involved. Commonly, the third party – the one who profits – is a pimp, boyfriend or girlfriend, friend or relative.

When people think of sex trafficking, they often imagine a stranger – the third party referred to in Ohio law – pulling up in a van and kidnapping a young victim, or keeping a young woman locked in chains. These perceptions, however, are mostly myth. The vast majority of traffickers know their victims well. Many also know their victims’ families. Traffickers rely on building trust and a close relationship with their targets by filling the victims’ needs and, in the process, identifying vulnerabilities. Then they exploit those vulnerabilities to compel their victims into being trafficked.

Labor trafficking, too, is a problem throughout Ohio and the United States. Many people incorrectly believe that only undocumented immigrants are trafficked for labor, but it can happen to those who enter the country legally and to U.S. citizens. Furthermore, labor trafficking can happen within legitimate businesses – construction, food service, agriculture and others – where it hides in plain sight and makes it harder to identify.

People of any age, race, sex or socioeconomic status can fall victim to human trafficking, but certain factors make individuals more vulnerable. The nonprofit Polaris, which operates the U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline, identifies the following as significant risk factors:

- Substance use
- Mental health concerns
- Recent migration or relocation
- Involvement with the child welfare system
- Being a runaway
- Homelessness

AG YOST'S HUMAN TRAFFICKING INITIATIVE

In 2019, not long after winning the first of two terms as Ohio's 51st attorney general, Dave Yost identified the fight against human trafficking as a top priority of his administration. To that end, he created the Human Trafficking Initiative (HTI), whose mission is to end labor and sex trafficking statewide by building awareness, empowering Ohioans to join the battle within their communities, helping victims, and ensuring that traffickers and johns are brought to justice.

As part of the initiative, HTI team members collaborate with social service agencies, state and federal agencies, law enforcement agencies on all levels, nonprofit organizations and anti-human trafficking coalitions. They have conducted both basic and advanced training for such agencies as well as businesses, community groups, Rotary clubs and more.

Priorities of the HTI

Ending sex trafficking and labor trafficking in Ohio are priorities of the HTI, which on the broadest level aims to equip all Ohioans with the knowledge and resources to recognize the warning signs of human trafficking and report any suspicious activities to the authorities.

More specifically, the HTI team has established these strategies:

- Focus on prevention and education to stem the victimization of one human being for another's profit. These efforts include raising awareness among youths and young adults.
- Promote legislative policy to ensure that Ohio is doing what it can to fight trafficking.
- Assist and train task forces and prosecutors to build human trafficking cases and develop more task forces throughout the state.
- Understand barriers to wraparound services and identify next steps for survivors of human trafficking.
- Reinforce collaboration and discussion among Ohio stakeholders to strengthen and unify community responses to human trafficking.

Because resources and awareness vary widely throughout the state, the connections that the HTI team makes as it travels Ohio are extremely valuable. As team members learn of successes by certain organizations, they work with those groups to spread "best practices" to other communities so that all Ohioans can benefit from effective strategies and shared wisdom.

The HTI team

The members of the HTI team in 2022:

- **Jennifer Rausch**, legal director, focuses on education and helps task forces and prosecutors build better cases. She previously led the Special Victims Unit at the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office and continues to prosecute trafficking cases at the state and federal levels in her role at the Attorney General's Office (AGO).
- **Jomel Spurlock**, director of victim services, works to connect and strengthen human trafficking services throughout the state. Before joining the AGO, she worked as a victim advocate for the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force and the Salvation Army, as well as the Palm Beach County's State Attorney's Office.
- **Emily Billman**, anti-human trafficking coordinator, helps to identify gaps in victim services and spread awareness statewide. The 2019 graduate of Miami University leads street outreach teams in Columbus for the anti-trafficking organization Out of Darkness.

The Human Trafficking Initiative team offers multiple trainings, in-person and virtual, to spread the word about the fight against human trafficking. In 2022, the HTI team presented the programs to private companies, government agencies, law enforcement officers and prosecutors, social service agencies, community groups, student groups and others. In May 2022, members of the HTI team presented to an international audience at the 17th Annual Conference on Crimes Against Women. The HTI team presented the case study "A Near Miss: Prosecuting a Human Trafficking Recruitment Scheme." This case study explored the nuances of investigative and prosecutorial processes and courtroom outcomes in human trafficking cases. The case study also examined the case advocate's ability to work with the victim from the beginning of the investigation to the end of the court proceedings and beyond.

HTI offers these training programs:

Human Trafficking 101

Presenters explain human trafficking and how it happens. Attendees also learn:

- How victims are affected and who is vulnerable.
- Who traffickers are and how they operate.
- How misconceptions make people believe human trafficking happens only to other people in other places.
- What red flags to watch out for.
- How demand reduction can help.
- What improvements are being considered for Ohio laws and what those laws say now.
- How they can join the fight.

Advanced Human Trafficking Training

Presenters address:

- What law enforcement and prosecutors need to know.
- How experts are working with victims and survivors of human trafficking.
- What barriers and gaps in services exist.

- How to identify human trafficking victims.
- Why a multidisciplinary team is important.
- What other factors complicate investigations and prosecutions of human trafficking cases.

In April 2021, a new state law took effect that established the crime of engaging in prostitution.”

Previously, the state had a single statute addressing prostitution, one that generally penalized the seller of sex more than the buyer. Under the new statute (Ohio Revised Code Section 2907.231), those who engage in buying sex – commonly referred to as johns – are required to attend an education or treatment program “aimed at preventing (them) from inducing, enticing, or procuring another to engage in sexual activity for hire in exchange for the person giving anything of value to the other person.”

This requirement created the need for statewide standards for sex buyer education programs, commonly known as john schools.” The Ohio Attorney General’s “John School: Guidelines for Sex Buyer Education Programs” – created by the staff of the Human Trafficking Initiative, in consultation with outside experts – is intended as an aid for local jurisdictions looking to create new programs or to evaluate or improve existing programs.

The John School Fund, created by Attorney General Dave Yost in 2022, was intended to help support new and existing john school/sex buyer education programs with one-time awards of \$10,000 per applicant. Applicants were encouraged to be creative and collaborative in their proposals, working with organizations to develop programs that will create a paradigm shift in battling human trafficking. Only applicants from counties with populations exceeding 100,000 were eligible, and only one program per county received funds. The four successful grantees submitted applications that fulfilled the requirements outlined in “John School: Guidelines for Sex Buyer Education Programs.” Discussions about continuing the award program are ongoing.

HTI’s partners within the AGO

The fight against human trafficking is a highly collaborative effort involving the AGO, social service agencies, law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations and anti-human trafficking coalitions throughout the state. Within the AGO, the HTI team works with the following partners:

- **Attorney General’s Human Trafficking Commission:** The commission, the HTI team and outside partners work to develop methods for ending human trafficking. The commission meets quarterly and includes mission-focused subcommittees that meet monthly:
 - **Victim Services Subcommittee:** Recommends best practices for human trafficking programs looking to enact standards and practices that are culturally sensitive and trauma-responsive. Through advocacy, leadership and accountability, the subcommittee also emphasizes diverse representation in the field and the historically marginalized voices of human trafficking survivors. Goals include developing a statewide service matrix and strengthening Ohio’s response to labor trafficking. Recognizing the importance of state standards previously developed, the Victim Services Subcommittee worked throughout 2022 on the development of the human trafficking provider assessment and the Ohio Attorney General’s Human Trafficking Victims Services Matrix.
 - **Legal and Legislative Subcommittee:** Evaluates Ohio’s current laws on human trafficking, how those laws are implemented, and what legal training is available. Also focuses on what changes and legal trainings could improve the state’s response to human trafficking.

- **Public Awareness Subcommittee:** Provides guidance to state residents and anti-trafficking coalitions to increase knowledge about human trafficking in general, myths and misconceptions, and resources. Highlights for the subcommittee include the creation and publication of the “Human Trafficking 101 Best Practices Guide,” which will be posted on the Attorney General’s Office website.
- **Healthcare Subcommittee:** Aims to improve care of victims by promoting trauma-informed practices and increasing medical professionals’ awareness of trafficking. Goals include improving data collection, including through a pilot program at a small number of hospitals. Highlights include:
 - Creating “Policy and Procedure: Clinical Management of Human Trafficking Patient and/or Those at Risk for Exploitation,” posted on the AGO website. The guide was developed by Heather Wilde and Lara Wilken, with peer review provided by Human Trafficking Commission Ambassadors Annette Mango, Stephanie Rollins and Harold D’Souza, who are trafficking survivors.
 - Assisting with Central Ohio Trauma Systems’ revision of their internal protocol and EMS resource guide for the identification and care of trafficking victims.
 - Training (by the chair) of an entire dental office and developing an MOU through which the dentist agreed to provide services for residents of the Out of Darkness Safe Home.
 - Developing the script and debriefing guide for the first of two videos in a series on human trafficking education for healthcare providers. The first video will depict an obstetrician/labor-and-delivery scenario in which a “bottom girl” – an individual who at one point was trafficked but is now part of the trafficking organization – comes in with the patient. The second scenario will depict a primary care setting with a minor patient whose parent is the trafficker. All roles in the scenarios will be played by subcommittee members or nurses affiliated with members.
 - Creating an informational aid for the reverse side of nurses’ name badges to allow them to quickly identify red flags for human trafficking.
- **Research/Gap Analysis and Data Subcommittee:** Seeks to identify areas in which better data can improve Ohio’s response to human trafficking. Methods include searching out gaps or inconsistencies in collected data, establishing criteria for what makes credible data, and examining current databases to see how collection and dissemination can be improved. Attorney General Yost submitted a report to the subcommittee regarding the lack of human trafficking prevalence data in Ohio. An advisory group consisting of subcommittee members and researchers from across the state met and developed a recommendation for a pilot program on how best to gather prevalence data. Based on the advisory group’s recommendation, Attorney General Yost provided funding for a 2023 pilot project, with the University of Toledo (Human Trafficking & Social Justice Institute) leading the data collection efforts. In collaboration with Northern Ohio REACH (Regional Efforts Aimed to Combat Human Trafficking), the subcommittee is working on memorandums of understanding for participating agencies, a human trafficking screening tool to be implemented by all

participating agencies, and a database to collect the screening data. The pilot project is intended to serve as a model for prevalence-data collection in Ohio and nationwide. The subcommittee also has extensively explored the sources of vulnerability data in Ohio and is exploring ways to translate this research to enhance victim/survivor identification.

- **Demand Reduction Subcommittee:** Seeks to decrease social and legal tolerance for human exploitation, including shifting behaviors and values among Ohio's population and, in particular, among men, who drive the vast majority of the demand for sex trafficking. Other goals include supporting passage of relevant legislation, encouraging supply-chain transparency to ensure that state and private services are not bolstered by forced labor or child labor, and growing a network of actors to collectively push demand reduction.
- **Law Enforcement Subcommittee:** Focuses on issues that affect how Ohio's peace officers encounter and deal with cases of human trafficking. Goals include addressing trafficking issues within the hotel and lodging industry in Ohio, exploring how to improve trafficking-related data collection, and obtaining trauma-informed interview training for all human trafficking investigators in the state.

The Human Trafficking Commission's Advisory Council is made up of individuals with lived experiences, known as Ambassadors, whose guidance ensures that real-life situations inform the commission's work and help determine its impact. Many Ambassadors have joined the commission's subcommittees and HTI trainings.

- **Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OOCIC):** Led by the Attorney General, OOCIC provides structure and support to local law enforcement agencies in Ohio that have uncovered organized criminal entities within their jurisdictions. As a primary tool, OOCIC uses special task forces, which it forms by bringing together law enforcement agencies to combat the criminal enterprises. Multiple task forces target human trafficking in Ohio.
- **Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI):** BCI agents provide staffing, technical expertise and technological resources to human trafficking task forces and local law enforcement agencies. BCI's Special Victims Unit helps local authorities investigate and prosecute those who commit crimes against children, including human traffickers, sexual abusers and other offenders. Additional resources are provided through BCI's Cyber Crimes, Criminal Intelligence and Technical Operations units, including manpower for human trafficking investigations and prosecutions; forensic analysis; training and technical assistance; equipment loans; and victim advocacy. BCI also aggregates trafficking data reported by law enforcement agencies in the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway; the numbers are included in this report.
- **Ohio Peace Office Training Academy (OPOTA):** OPOTA trains law enforcement officers to identify and investigate human trafficking in Ohio. Since Ohio's Safe Harbor Law was enacted in 2012, all new peace officers have been required to participate in an OPOTA-approved course on human trafficking. The HTI team created a Human Trafficking 101 course for OPOTA Online and teaches a two-day, in-person class at OPOTA once a year.

Human Trafficking Summit

Given his priority on fighting trafficking, Attorney General Yost has committed his office to planning and presenting a statewide Human Trafficking Summit.

The third annual Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Summit took place Jan. 13, 2022. COVID-19 restrictions prompted the HTI team to plan an entirely virtual format. Despite the challenges presented by the online format, the summit grew exponentially in both registrants and workshops. Fifteen workshops were offered to 1,029 virtual attendees. The workshops were:

1. Charging and Prosecuting Without a Cooperative Victim: Tech-Driven, Trauma-Informed Case Building
2. Disrupting Illicit Massage Businesses and Human Trafficking in Ohio
3. Population at Risk: Sex Trafficking Among Transition-Age Youth
4. Trauma Bonding Among Survivors of Sex Trafficking
5. The Power of Prevention: Interrupting the Impact of ACEs
6. The 411 on Sex Trafficking and College Campuses
7. Valuing Survivor Care: Implementing Service Standards and Prioritizing Statewide Collaboration
8. Including the Powerful Presence of Human Trafficking Survivors Without Exploiting Them
9. Human Trafficking and People with Disabilities: A Deeper Look at Best Practices
10. The Missing Piece: Brain Injury Caused by Violence
11. Assessing Culpability: Context Before Conviction
12. Animal Abuse and Interpersonal Violence: A Common Correlation
13. Addressing Complex Trauma in Immigrant and Refugee Trafficking Survivors
14. Focus on What Works: Early Survivor Focus Group Insights into Successful Service Modalities
15. A Day in "The Life": Addressing Health Care Response and Medical Treatment in Human Trafficking

In addition, a plenary session was held on the topic of minor male victims of sex trafficking.

The keynote speaker was best-selling author, anti-trafficking advocate and survivor Cyntoia Brown-Long. The CEO and co-founder of the Foundation for Justice, Freedom, and Mercy (JFAM), Brown-Long was granted clemency by former Tennessee Gov Bill Haslam in January 2019 after serving 15 years of a life sentence for murder; she was arrested at age 16 while being trafficked.

Preparations for the 2023 Human Trafficking Summit began during the late summer of 2022. With the promise of Covid-19 concerns behind them, the HTI team began planning a hybrid in-person/virtual event for Jan. 26, 2023. The 2023 Human Trafficking Summit will put a special emphasis on labor trafficking, a key component of human trafficking that is frequently overlooked. Seventeen workshops with 39 live speakers will be offered. The keynote speaker will be Suleman Masood, an internationally renowned labor trafficking advocate and survivor who served on the U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking.

LEGISLATION

Several pieces of legislation focused on trafficking were introduced in 2022. HB 276, sponsored by Reps. Jean Schmidt and Jena Powell, was passed out of the House and referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill would create the new offense of receiving proceeds, thereby criminalizing the act of knowingly receiving or acquiring money or anything of value from someone engaged in sexual activity for hire. This offense would be a third-degree felony and a predicate offense for engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity. The intent of the bill is to provide additional offenses for traffickers that can potentially be proved without the victim's testimony.

HB 427, sponsored by Reps. Andrea White and Susan Manchester, passed unanimously out of both legislative chambers before being signed by Gov. DeWine on June 14, 2022. The now-effective language expanded the definition of "compel" as it currently exists for trafficking in persons and compelling prostitution, in recognition of the role that drugs and drug addiction often play in trafficking. This bill broadened the definition to include "furnishing or offering a controlled substance to the victim, or by manipulating the victim's controlled-substance addiction." Including this language directly in the Ohio Revised Code is a recognition of the many forms of control and compulsion that traffickers often use.

HB 390, originally sponsored by Reps. Marilyn John and Laura Lanese, closed a loophole in Revised Code Section 2933.82 by including trafficking in persons in the list of offenses for which the submission for testing by BCI of a collected sexual assault kit is mandatory. It also applies the evidence-retention timelines to these offenses.

SB 288, sponsored by Sen. Nathan Manning, was passed out of the General Assembly as a criminal justice omnibus bill.

HB 105, originally sponsored by Reps. Scott Lipps and Brigid Kelly, requires age-appropriate education on sexual abuse and human trafficking for K-12 students.

Companion legislation SB 183, sponsored by Sens. Teresa Fedor and Stephanie Kunze, and HB 319, sponsored by Reps. Tracy Richardson and Tavia Galonski, would have removed predicate offenses currently required to expunge a human trafficking victim's criminal record when charges resulted from their trafficking. SB 183 received four hearings in the Senate Judiciary Committee; HB 319 received one hearing in the House Criminal Justice Committee

LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

As noted, the fight against human trafficking in Ohio is a highly collaborative effort encompassing a wide range of resources statewide. For its part, the Ohio Attorney General’s Office offers investigative resources through regional human trafficking task forces that are overseen and supported by OOCIC, provides training to law enforcement officers through OPOTA, and provides case support through resources housed at BCI, including the Special Victims Unit and the Criminal Intelligence Unit. To help educate the public on the scope of the problem in Ohio, BCI annually reports statewide statistics on human trafficking, as provided by local law enforcement agencies.

Human trafficking task forces

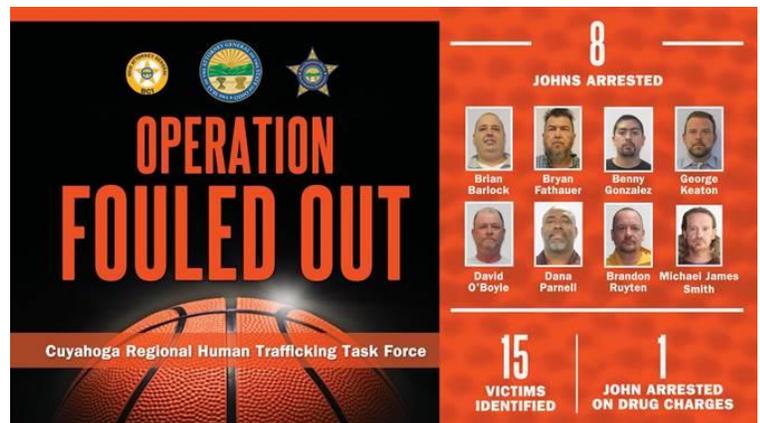
During 2022, six OOCIC human-trafficking task forces operated in the state: the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, with the Columbus Division of Police as the lead agency; the Cuyahoga Regional Human Trafficking Task Force, led by the Cuyahoga County Sheriff’s Office; the Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force, led by the Mahoning County Sheriff’s Office; the Miami Valley Human Trafficking Task Force, led by the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office; the Summit County Human Trafficking Task Force, led by the Summit County Sheriff’s Office; and the Southeast Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, led by the Washington County Sheriff’s Office.

Human trafficking tips come in through hotlines, emails, calls from concerned community members, parents, social service providers, law enforcement, and health care providers, among others. In 2022, task forces received 705 human trafficking tips, which led to 747 victim interviews and referrals for services. Ohioans have played a significant role in “See something, say something,” creating opportunities for victims to tell their stories and for traffickers to be held accountable through the work of our dedicated law enforcement teams.

Task forces and cooperating agencies persisted in bringing traffickers to justice, achieving these notable successes in 2022:

February

- The Cuyahoga Regional Human Trafficking Task Force conducted Operation Fouled Out during the NBA All-Star week. These operations were conducted over three days – Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evening – all prior to the All-Star Game, which was played on Sunday, Feb. 20, 2022. Eight men were arrested and cited for solicitation in Berea Municipal Court. Numerous women were encountered and offered social services. Additionally, several of the women encountered had been listed as missing persons or were rescued from a trafficker.



- Also in February 2022, detectives with the Southeast Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force continued working on a case involving Rusty Campbell, who was sought in connection with the trafficking of a juvenile as well as possible internet crimes against children (ICAC). Task force detectives testified

before a grand jury in Morgan County, where the suspects in this human trafficking ring were indicted:

- Rusty Campbell was indicted on five counts of human trafficking (first-degree felonies) and 25 counts of pandering obscenity involving a minor (F2).
- Dean Smith was indicted on four counts of unlawful sexual conduct with a minor (F3) and eight counts of pandering obscenity involving a minor (F2).
- Cody Dingey was indicted on a human trafficking charge.(F1).
- Caleb Clemens was indicted on a human trafficking charge (F1).
- Daniel Charles was indicted on a human trafficking charge (F1) and 10 counts of pandering obscenity involving a minor (F2).
- Tyler Matheney was indicted on two counts of human trafficking (F1) and three counts of pandering obscenity involving a minor (F2).
- Brian O’Neil was indicted on a human trafficking charge (F1).
- Matthew Haynes pleaded guilty to unlawful sexual conduct with a minor (F2).
- Dustin Harlow was convicted of unlawful sexual conduct with a minor (F3).



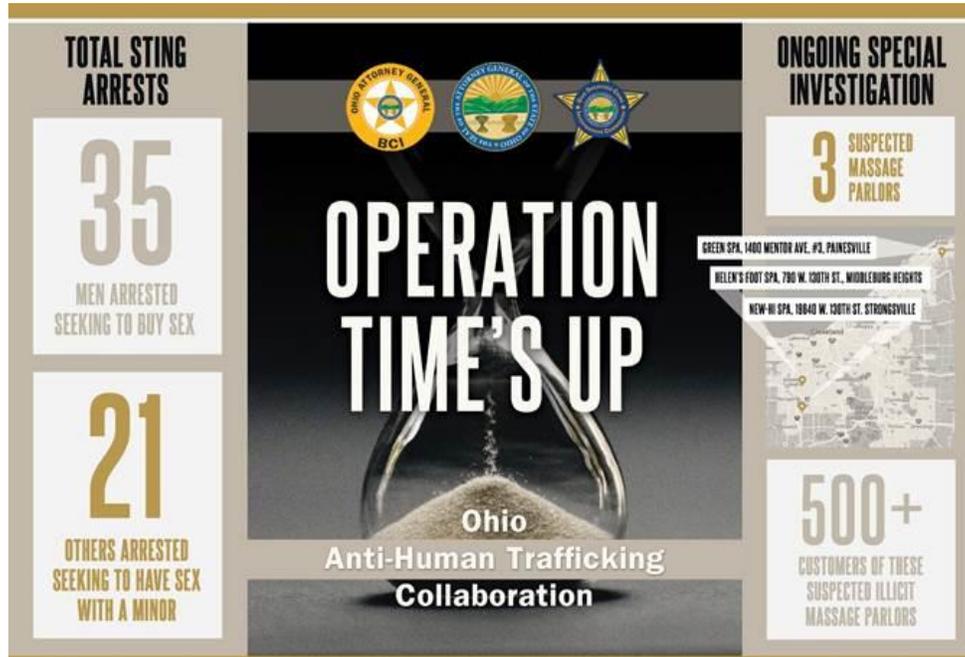
May

- Agents with the Summit Regional Human Trafficking Task Force conducted “john” sting operations, during which seven males were arrested for engaging in prostitution.
- The Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force conducted ongoing demand-reduction “john” stings, resulting in the arrest of 14 males on various soliciting-related charges.

August

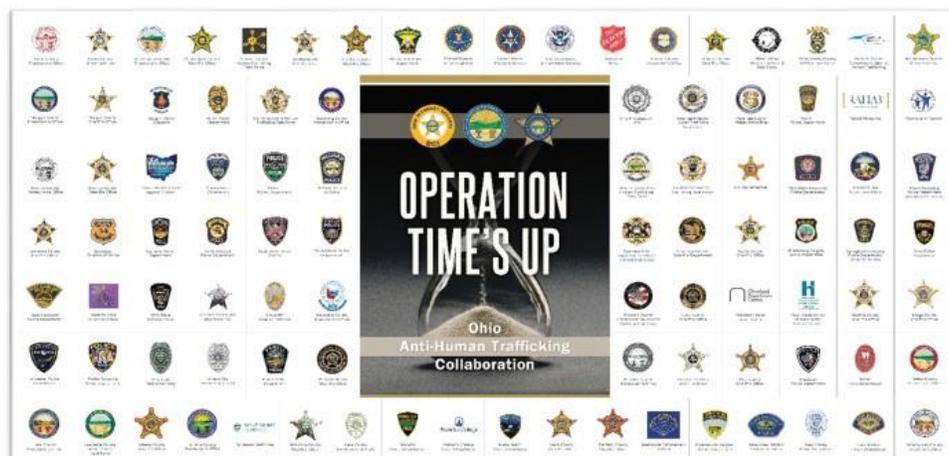
- Agents with the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Task Force created an online advertisement in which a fictional 15-year-old runaway sought an individual who would provide housing and pay for sex. A 42-year-old male employed by the federal government responded to the ad and agreed to meet the juvenile. Agents engaged in conversation with the suspect for several weeks before meeting and arresting him. The suspect provided a full confession and was charged with sex trafficking of a juvenile.

- Six OOCIC task forces participated in Operation Time's Up, targeting various facets of human trafficking throughout Ohio. The operation included more than 90 law enforcement, victim services and non-governmental agencies working together.



During the operation, the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force arrested three men on charges of trafficking in persons of a minor victim and an adult victim. The men had brought an underage female from the Toledo area to Columbus to engage in commercial sex. On Aug. 31, 2022, the three men were indicted on charges of trafficking in persons, compelling prostitution, and promoting prostitution. One of the arrests stemmed from a RICO warrant out of Georgia, a felony case.

Also during the operation, the Cuyahoga Regional Human Trafficking Task Force served multiple warrants in an ongoing case involving illicit massage businesses. These warrants resulted in the seizure of financial documents, business records, \$106,220 in currency, and digital wallets containing roughly \$25,000 in crypto currency. Various follow-up interviews were conducted, and admissions were obtained. Several preservation orders were served on bank accounts with a combined balance exceeding \$350,000.



October

- Detectives with the Southeast Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force assisted the Hocking County Sheriff's Office and the FBI with a human trafficking sting operation. Detectives began chatting with a sexually explicit truck driver from Massachusetts who believed he was communicating with a 15-year-old girl. The suspect was identified as 49-year-old Stewart Rebell, a registered sex offender. Detectives requested an arrest warrant for Rebell on charges of importuning (F4) and contacted the Massachusetts State Police, who located and arrested him.
- A concerned citizen advised the Cuyahoga Regional Human Trafficking Task Force that Delvon Jones had rented a room at a local hotel for more than a year, paying \$325 a week in cash. The citizen also told the task force that Jones rented a separate room at the hotel where his baby's mother lived. Based on the citizen's tip, the task force executed two search warrants — resulting in the recovery of two adult females, who were offered assistance and services, and the seizure of a loaded AK-47 and various drugs. Jones was eventually arrested on drug charges.
- In October 2022, four Columbus residents were charged in connection to a years-long investigation by the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force. The task force identified 27 potential victims and seized five firearms, more than \$200,000 in currency, and narcotics with a street value exceeding \$200,000. Among those indicted were Jami Marie Sherill, 33, and Anthony Eugene Tyrone Rogers (aka Antonio E. Rogers), 36. They were charged with engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, multiple counts of trafficking and possession of a fentanyl-related compound, trafficking and possession of cocaine, trafficking in persons, compelling prostitution and promoting prostitution. Ezra Reuben Bowers, 45, was charged with engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity. Crystal Layne Tippie, 36, was charged with engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, trafficking in a fentanyl-related compound, possession of a fentanyl-related compound, trafficking in cocaine, and possession of cocaine.

November

- The Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force continued ongoing demand-reduction "john" sting operations; 18 people were arrested for various prostitution-related offenses.

December

- As the result of an undercover investigation, agents with the Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force on Dec. 7, 2022, charged a man and two women, all from Connecticut, in connection with an Austintown sex operation. Tyshawn Adams, 43, was charged with trafficking in persons (F1), promoting prostitution (F4) and possession of drug paraphernalia (M4). Tanya Labarge, 36, was charged with soliciting (M3), and possession of drug abuse instruments (M2) and criminal tools (M1). And Melanie McCormack was charged with trafficking in drugs (F4) and possession of drug abuse instruments (M2). It was learned that Labarge, who had posted an ad on a known prostitution website, was working for Adams. She gave him all of the sex proceeds in exchange for narcotics. Victim advocates were brought in to speak to both women.
- On Dec. 7, 2022, Dawud Sami was indicted by a Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court grand jury on two counts each of trafficking in persons, compelling prostitution and promoting prostitution. In October 2022, the Cuyahoga Regional Human Trafficking Task Force received a report from the Cleveland Police Department regarding an adult female who said she had been assaulted by her former pimp. He was later identified as Sami, a rapper and music producer who owns a business known as Red Carpet Entertainment.

Ongoing throughout 2022:

- The Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force conducted ongoing demand-reduction sting operations throughout 2022. As a result, more than 150 men seeking sex were arrested for prostitution-related offenses.
- Human trafficking cases often include other illicit activity. In 2022, the task forces seized 68 weapons and many types of illicit drugs, including cocaine, crack cocaine, cocaine/fentanyl mix, methamphetamines, acetyl fentanyl, heroin, opioid pain pills, other prescription pills, psilocybin mushrooms and marijuana – a total of 4,442,44 grams with a street value exceeding \$433,433.

Law enforcement training

The Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy continues to train local law enforcement to identify and investigate cases of human trafficking throughout the state. Under Ohio's Safe Harbor Law, all new peace officers are required to take an OPOTA-approved course on investigating human trafficking.

Building upon the HTI updates to the OPOTA online course and the two-day HTI in-person human trafficking investigation course, HTI saw a significant increase in attendance for law enforcement human trafficking training. In 2022, a total of 3,088 Ohio peace officers and other law enforcement professionals completed the human trafficking course through OPOTA. That number encompasses 2,177 new peace officers who took the course as part of required basic training; 825 law enforcement officers who completed it through OPOTA Online, the academy's online classroom; and 86 who completed the course through a class led by an OPOTA instructor.

Law enforcement statistics on human trafficking

In 2020, the HTI team noted some inherent ambiguities in the reporting form that had been used for years by law enforcement and took steps to implement a new one. When the new form launched on OHLEG in March 2021, the HTI team informed law enforcement of the changes. As a result, agencies across the state were able to share additional information about the types of charges that are part of their human trafficking cases. These charges include engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, compelling prostitution, promoting prostitution, drug trafficking, child pornography, money laundering, domestic violence, felonious assault, rape, weapons under disability, theft, tampering with records and others.

Ohio law requires local law enforcement agencies to collect data on their human trafficking investigations and forward that information annually to the BCI. The following Ohio counties reported cases in 2022: Adams, Allen, Ashland, Athens, Auglaize, Butler, Clermont, Columbiana, Crawford, Cuyahoga, Defiance, Delaware, Erie, Fairfield, Franklin, Fulton, Geauga, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Highland, Huron, Jackson, Jefferson, Knox, Lake, Lawrence, Licking, Logan, Lorain, Lucas, Madison, Mahoning, Medina, Meigs Miami, Montgomery, Morrow, Muskingum, Ottawa, Perry, Pike, Portage, Preble, Putnam, Richland, Seneca, Shelby, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Tuscarawas, Vinton, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Williams, Wood, and Wyandot.

The data collected for 2022 indicates that law enforcement reported identifying 100 human trafficking suspects, leading to 55 arrests and 26 successful criminal convictions. It is important to note that many of those reported investigations are still open or ongoing, either with law enforcement or the court system.

Law enforcement agencies also reported the number of potential victims, traffickers and consumers/johns.

Females were the most commonly identified human trafficking victims reported by law enforcement in 2022. Across all categories, there were 167 potential victims identified, including 130 potential victims of sex trafficking, 28 potential victims of labor trafficking, and nine potential victims of both sex and labor trafficking.

Gender	Number of potential victims
Male	40
Female	123
Other	4
No gender listed	0

Age	Number of potential victims
12 & under	12
13-15	24
16-17	11
18-20	8
21-29	55
30-40	24
41-59	4
60-84	0
85 & older	0
Unknown	29

Race	Number of potential victims
White	61
Black	26
Asian/Pacific Islander	4
American Indian/ Native Alaskan	1
Hispanic	21
Multi-Racial	5
Other	11
Unknown	38

In 2022, 70 suspected buyers (johns) were identified by law enforcement agencies as consumers of sex trafficking connected to a human trafficking investigation. This number does not include those arrested during the various statewide stings in 2022. No consumers of labor trafficking were identified in 2022.

Gender	Number of suspected consumers
Male	70
Female	0
Other	0
No gender listed	0

Age	Number of suspected consumers
17 & under	0
18-20	1
21-29	6
30-40	3
41-59	8
60-84	2
85 & older	0
Unknown	50

Race	Number of suspected consumers
White	13
Black	4
Asian/Pacific Islander	0
American Indian/ Native Alaskan	0
Hispanic	2
Multi-Racial	0
Other	0
Unknown	51

Law enforcement agencies identified 131 suspected human traffickers in 2022, including 102 suspected of sex trafficking, 18 of labor trafficking and 11 of both sex and labor trafficking.

Gender	Number of suspected traffickers
Male	96
Female	35
Other	0
No gender listed	0

Age	Number of suspected traffickers
17 & under	1
18-20	2
21-29	29
30-40	53
41-59	35
60-84	0
85 & older	0
Unknown	7

Race	Number of suspected traffickers
White	42
Black	49
Asian/Pacific Islander	19
American Indian/ Native Alaskan	1
Hispanic	9
Multi-Racial	1
Other	6
Unknown	4

Social and economic factors can contribute to trafficking victimization. Law enforcement agencies identified these factors in 2022 cases:

- Criminal history: 17
- Drug, alcohol or other dependency: 37
- Homeless: 20
- Immigration status: 6
- LGBTQ youth: 0
- Poverty: 13
- Prior victim abuse: 22
- Runaway: 18
- Unsafe home: 11
- Unknown: 47

Trafficking can involve movement of victims across cities, states or the country. Law enforcement agencies identified these trafficking routes and modes of transportation in 2022 cases:

Trafficking routes

- Across city lines: 40
- Across county lines: 24
- Across state lines: 9
- Across country lines: 5
- Unknown: 18

Modes of transportation

- Motor vehicle: 58
- Airplane: 7
- Watercraft: 0
- Unknown: 38



DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

30 E. Broad St. 17th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
800-282-0515
614-466-5610
HTI@OhioAGO.gov

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov