



# FSA - Keeping You Safe

## Human Trafficking Safety Information

Human trafficking is an urgent issue in the United States and beyond, but it is tragically one that is often difficult to recognize. Knowing the truth about this crime is the first step toward protecting yourself and others. Here's what you need to know about human trafficking and how to stay safe.

### What is Human Trafficking?

There is a lot of misinformation out there about human trafficking, including myths like these:

- *Human traffickers only target strangers in a "snatch and grab" type attack.*
- *All human trafficking is sex trafficking.*
- *Human traffickers always detain their victims with physical force.*

In reality, all three of these statements are false. According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH), human trafficking is defined as "the business of stealing freedom for profit. In some cases, traffickers trick, defraud or physically force victims into providing commercial sex. In others, victims are lied to, assaulted, threatened or manipulated into working under inhumane, illegal or otherwise unacceptable conditions."

Instead of a random attack, many human traffickers choose a victim and try to create a false sense of trust before ultimately betraying them. Others look for those who are particularly vulnerable or who might not feel they have any other options. Because it is a "crime of many crimes," it can be harder to recognize than many people realize.

### Knowing the Red Flags

According to the NHTH, many human traffickers follow similar patterns and knowing these "red flags" can help you protect yourself and others. Remember, not all human trafficking situations will have these red flags, and just because you do see these signs, it does not mean that a trafficking situation is occurring. Think of it as guidance to help you evaluate a situation and use your own judgement.

A few of these red flags include:

- A partner or employer who comes on too strong and offers a job or living situation that seems too good to be true. For example – easy money for little to no work.
- They give an on-the-spot offer that will be lost if you do not agree immediately (could be for a relationship or a job).
- This individual is controlling, checks on you constantly, does not allow you to access your own money and attempts to isolate you from family and friends.

A few other characteristics of a potentially dangerous person include someone who is verbally, physically or emotionally abusive, acts out in jealousy and/or punishes you for not complying with their rules.

## Human Trafficking Safety Tips

Don't let the desire to be polite keep you from speaking up when something does not feel right. Trust your judgment. If someone or something is making you feel uncomfortable, in person or online, talk to a trusted friend or family member. Remember to be discerning. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

In addition to protecting yourself, it's important to be aware of others who may be in a dangerous situation. If you see someone who you believe may be displaying [the physical or verbal signs of a human trafficking victim](#), the NHTH recommends the following steps:

- Try to speak to the person you believe is being victimized in-person. They know their situation better than you do. Do not be judgmental in your language, and instead let them know that help is available if they need it.
- If you can't speak in person, try next to talk on the phone. Ask if they are alone (using yes or no questions) until you are sure they can talk freely. Establish a safe word for future communications that indicates they are alone.
- Ask what they need and what concerns they have for their own safety – do they need reporting, shelter, counseling, legal services, etc.

If you believe that you or someone else is in immediate danger – call 911.

## Stay Informed

Being informed about human trafficking safety can help you respond when faced with a potentially dangerous situation. Above all, be mindful of your surroundings, trust your judgement, and do not be afraid to ask for help if you feel uncomfortable. It's also important to have the contact information for your local law enforcement on hand - save it in your phone for easy access. [Click here to access FSA's directory](#) and find the contact information for your local sheriff.

*For more tips, please visit the Florida Sheriffs Association's Crime Prevention Tips: [flsheriffs.org/crime-prevention](https://flsheriffs.org/crime-prevention)*