

Identifying and Reporting Human Trafficking

HOSPITALITY

(Hotels/Motels)

Modified & Adapted from Guardian Group's Hotel Training

INTRO

Traffickers will use any method available to exploit a person or business. The hotel industry – a necessary and valuable business – has become an unwitting facilitator. In fact, hotels are the primary point of sale for the commercial sex industry.

The privacy a hotel room offers, with its easy access to the Internet and the escort services found online, creates a merger of anonymity and technology. For this reason it is key that the industry take the lead in the fight against human trafficking by equipping hotel staff to recognize and respond to it.

Every day, thousands of employees working in the hospitality industry witness manifestations of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation and fail to report it—**all too often because they do not recognize the signs when they see them.** Part of the problem is that there are few bright-line indicators. Rather, most evidence is contextual.

Not recognizing the signs of sex trafficking is one thing. If hotel employees do recognize the signs, however, and nevertheless allow the criminal activity to proceed on hotel property, then the hotel itself is effectively profiting from the trafficking.

In cases where hotel representatives or employees receive financial benefits for permitting these acts to occur, they are directly complicit in human trafficking and can be prosecuted and held criminally and civilly liable under existing federal and state law.



INDICATORS OF TRAFFICKING

All Staff

- A young person walks into the hotel looking for a room and appears nervous, scared, unsure or disheveled. They may have signs of physical abuse, suspicious marks, tattoos of a person's name, or is dressed inappropriately for their age or weather conditions
- A young person/minor is constantly watched, demeaned or controlled by another person, doesn't make eye contact with others, and/or appears to be with someone much older whom they call their "boyfriend" or "daddy."
- A young person/minor is with someone during school hours or late at night.

Front Door, Concierge, Valet

- A young person/minor is dropped off at a hotel. The driver waits in the parking lot. The young person/minor may visit frequently.

Front Desk & Lobby Staff

- A person/minor walks into a hotel lobby, and the front desk staff does not recall them checking in. The person then appears to be looking for the elevator and is unsure where to find their room.
- A young person/minor attempts to check into the hotel without identification, and has no personal possessions, or few possessions carried in a small or plastic bag at check-in. They may also be uncertain about personal information, such as their address and phone number.
- An adult woman or man checks into a room with a minor who does not appear to be his or her child, or the age difference seems inappropriate.
- Unregistered men come into a hotel at various intervals and visit the same room. These individuals may leave the room at odd hours, go into another room, hang around outside the room, in hallways or in the lobby, appearing to deliberately waste time or keep watch on the area.



Housekeeping Staff

- Housekeeping finds an apparently underage person or multiple underage children in a room unattended – this should trigger a call to police.
- Large stashes of sex paraphernalia and alcohol, dozens of used condoms in the trash, and large amounts of cash.
- They may grow suspicious if a room makes frequent requests for new towels or sheets or rejects maid service for an entire week, and even if denied access for the duration of a stay, they can still see what is left behind and make a determination about whether to report red flags to management or law enforcement.

Remember, observing a single “red flag” does not necessarily mean human trafficking is occurring, but seeing multiple indicators very likely does.

If employees observe suspicious trafficking activity, it is advisable that they record their observations and immediately notify the on -duty supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for notifying law enforcement.

OBSERVING WITH CAUTION

Small observations reported to the right recipient, the police or a manager can help rescue victims. However, it must be recognized that not all suspicious activity is of a criminal nature. When observing unusual activity, it is possible to draw the wrong conclusion. Employees should simply report their suspicions to the appropriate person (whether that is their supervisor or, in the case of a manager, the police) and, for their own safety, leave next steps to them.



All employees who observe suspicious activity should immediately notify their supervisors and explain to them what was observed. After notifying their supervisors, trained employees should complete an incident report prior to the completion of the shift in which the suspicious activity was observed. Decisions to call for local police assistance and the National Trafficking Hotline should be made by a supervisor or manager unless an emergency requires an immediate 911 response.

An employee should not attempt to confront or rescue a child or adult, as this could jeopardize the safety of the victim, hotel guests or the employee! Always call 911.

NATIONAL TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline toll-free number at 1-888-373-7888: Anti-Trafficking Hotline Advocates are available 24/7 to take reports of potential human trafficking.

Text the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 233733. Message and data rates may apply.

Chat the National Human Trafficking Hotline via www.humantraffickinghotline.org/chat

