



## BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION. YOU CAN...

- Submit a tip
  - Reporting a tip may help
- Learn the signs of human trafficking and report any potentially suspicious activity
- Discuss the signs within your communities
  - Faith-based organizations, schools, daycares, and other community service organizations and programs are at the forefront of potentially noticing changes in behavior or other unusual signs
- Help combat human trafficking

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery in which traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to control victims for the purpose of engaging in commercial sex acts or labor services against their will.

Millions of people are trafficked annually worldwide and victims can be any age, gender, nationality, or race, and can come from any socioeconomic class. Human trafficking is not just an international issue — it occurs in all states and U.S. territories, including West Virginia.

The West Virginia Fusion Center (WVFC), in collaboration with other organizations and local, state, and federal law enforcement is committed to identifying potential victims of human trafficking and linking them to crucial services and to providing free training and resources to partner agencies.

## TO SUBMIT A HUMAN TRAFFICKING TIP

Online: [go.wv.gov/TipsHT](http://go.wv.gov/TipsHT)

Email: [wvfusion@wv.gov](mailto:wvfusion@wv.gov)

Phone (Call): 1-888-373-7888\*

Phone (Text): “Be Free” or 233733\*

**GET HELP** \*The National Human Trafficking Hotline provides victim support, 200+ languages, and other resources.

**Dial 911** for immediate threats or emergencies.



See Something,  
Say Something™



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING HAPPENS HERE



Learn more about what you can do to combat human trafficking.



# ABOUT THE YOU CAN INITIATIVE

The purpose of the **YOU CAN** initiative is to bring awareness to human trafficking in the State of West Virginia.

The **YOU CAN** initiative is meant to bring to the forefront the difficult and sometimes uncomfortable conversations of this “hidden in plain sight” issue.

Although law enforcement officers are tasked with investigating human trafficking cases, WV citizens can still help.

## KNOW THE SIGNS

- Victims **lack** the **freedom** to leave their work or living conditions, often **escorted** when they travel, or **kept under surveillance** with their **communications limited or restricted**.
- Victims may exhibit signs of **abuse** (bruises, cuts, burns, scars, prolonged lack of healthcare or malnourishment, poor hygiene, poor dental hygiene).
- Victims **may exhibit** fear, anxiety, depression, nervousness, hostility, flashbacks, drug/alcohol addiction. Victims may also **avoid** eye contact.
- Victims may not have **control** of their own money or identification documents (e.g., ID, driver’s license, passport, etc.). Victims may have little **personal** possessions.
- Victims may have **inconsistencies** in their story. Responses seem scripted or rehearsed.
- Victims may be “**branded**” with tattoos, clothing, or jewelry to indicate someone else’s **ownership**.

One sign alone is not indicative of human trafficking, but multiple indicators may be a cause for concern.

**Be aware and let’s work together to stop human trafficking in West Virginia.**

**If you see these signs, YOU CAN submit a tip.**



Scan for additional resources and information.

## RISK FACTORS

Traffickers may target individuals for a variety of reasons, including those experiencing:

- economic hardship (e.g., financial instability or housing instability)
- lack of support/unstable home life
- substance abuse or addiction
- gang involvement
- unstable immigration status/ language barriers
- natural disasters
- political instability in home country
- psychological or emotional vulnerability (e.g., history of exploitation, low self-esteem, or bullying)

## FACTS

- Under US law, if a victim is **under the age of 18** and **involved in commercial sex**, they are a **victim** of human trafficking.
- The average age of minors targeted or victimized for human trafficking is **12 to 14** years old.
- Many sex trafficking victims were once in the **foster care system**.
- Victims may not see themselves as victims or be aware of **state and federal resources available to assist** them.
- Human trafficking is **significantly underreported** due to lack of **public awareness**.