

INCLUSION IN THE NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING REFERRAL DIRECTORY: GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

*This resource is intended for **direct service providers and indirect service providers** that are interested in being included in the National Human Trafficking Resource Center's (NHTRC) National Human Trafficking Referral Directory. The document outlines basic criteria and explains what to expect from inclusion in the Directory.*

APPLICATION

If you wish to be considered for inclusion in the Directory, please submit your application at: www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/directory-application.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) is a national, toll-free anti-trafficking hotline and resource center serving the anti-trafficking field in the United States. Among its core functions, the NHTRC serves as a mechanism for connecting victims and survivors, friends and family, advocates, service providers, and law enforcement to critical emergency and long-term social and legal services for victims and survivors of human trafficking across the United States and in the U.S. territories. For more information on the NHTRC, please visit www.traffickingresourcecenter.org.

The National Human Trafficking Referral Directory is a comprehensive, one-of-a-kind directory developed for the purpose of providing access to critical emergency, transitional, and long-term social services for victims and survivors of human trafficking, reporting cases of potential human trafficking to specialized law enforcement and government agencies, and connecting individuals with training and technical assistance and opportunities to get involved in their communities. The Directory covers all 50 states, Washington, DC, and U.S. territories.

The full internal version of the National Human Trafficking Referral Directory contains more than 3,000 unique records and is accessible only to NHTRC staff, for the purpose of coordinating victim service referrals across a variety of fields, and making reports of potential human trafficking to law enforcement and government agencies. The full internal version of the Directory is comprised of:

- NGOs, local hotlines and coalitions, providing direct services to victims and survivors of human trafficking, including immigration and other critical legal services, emergency and transitional shelter, case management and other critical social services;
- Local, state, and federal law enforcement, task forces, and fusion centers;
- Government agencies, including child welfare and juvenile justice;
- Organizations providing indirect services such as T&TA, outreach and awareness, and volunteer and internship opportunities;
- Organizations that focus on issues related to human trafficking, such as domestic violence, sexual assault, runaway and homeless youth, labor rights, immigration, and refugee services; and
- Contact information for individual staff within each agency or organization.

The NHTRC also maintains a [public online version](#) of the National Human Trafficking Referral Directory, which is intended to provide quick and easy access to emergency, transitional, and long-term victim service referrals and information on T&TA and engagement opportunities in communities across the U.S. The online format contains:

- Direct service providers from the full internal Directory that have a designated mandate, program, staff member, and/or funding to provide social and/or legal services to victims of human trafficking;
- Indirect service providers from the full internal Directory that have a **specific organizational or programmatic focus** on the issue of human trafficking;
- Organizations that have **opted-in to make their organization's profile publicly searchable via the online directory**. (Direct contact information for individual staff will not be made publicly accessible as part of your organization's profile on the online Directory).
- The Online Directory is available here: www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/referraldirectory

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WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE NHTRC

The NHTRC will:

- Respect your decision regarding whether a particular individual referred to your organization is eligible for services from your organization at this time. The NHTRC will not promise individuals contacting our hotline that they will be accepted for services by any referral organization.
- Brief you on the individual's stated needs and background, when authorized by the individual to share this information.
- Keep all internal contact information for your organization private, except where required by law. See the section below on *Privacy*.
- Track referrals made to your agency and make statistical reports available upon request.
- Provide technical assistance, support, and resources. Please contact the hotline or the [Program Specialist assigned to your region](#) to access these resources.
- Reach out to your designated point of contact on a bi-annual and as-needed basis to discuss the referral process, respond to your questions and feedback regarding the referral process or individual referral protocols, and make adjustments where appropriate. We also encourage you to contact the Program Specialist for your state to share this information whenever needed.

Important Considerations:

- Inclusion in the National Human Trafficking Referral Directory does not indicate an endorsement of any service provider or organization by the NHTRC. These organizations have simply met the minimum requirements for inclusion.
- The NHTRC cannot verify that an individual referred to your agency is a victim of human trafficking, is sober, does/does not have mental health needs, or is providing accurate information about his/her situation. The NHTRC engages in a basic trafficking, needs, and safety assessment in order to match callers with the referral agencies in their area that appear best-suited to meet their stated needs. We do not meet callers in person. To respect the privacy of the individual and minimize the potential for re-traumatization, the NHTRC requests only the minimal information necessary to provide a referral. Individuals frequently disclose information during intake that has not been disclosed to the NHTRC. If the NHTRC has information that may impact the safety of the individual seeking services and/or referral agency staff, we will share that information; however, referral agencies should be prepared to conduct a full trafficking and safety assessment upon receiving a referral from the NHTRC.
- The NHTRC will not disclose information about the individual seeking services to the referral agency without prior consent from the individual. Some exceptions apply in cases of alleged child abuse or imminent harm. Refer to the [NHTRC Confidentiality Policy](#) for additional information.
- Inclusion in the Directory does not guarantee that the NHTRC will refer to your organization in all cases or with any given frequency, as the referral process is tailored to meet the specific needs of each individual seeking services.
- The NHTRC cannot guarantee when or if an individual will contact a referral provided. Whenever possible, we will directly connect the individual seeking services to a referral agency via conference call; however, individuals also request to have referrals relayed over the phone, text message, or email for later use.
- The NHTRC cannot confirm if an individual has reached out to other organizations or is already being served by another organization. As victims and survivors of human trafficking require diverse services and support, and service availability varies from day to day, we may provide individuals with multiple referral options in a given area, or an individual may not have disclosed that he or she is already receiving services elsewhere.

METHOD OF REFERRAL

The method of referral may involve a live transfer via conference call from the hotline to the recipient organization (preferred method), provision of public contact information to the person seeking services, and/or the NHTRC contacting the recipient organization on the individual's behalf. The method of referral will depend on the stated preference of the person seeking services and the referral protocols between the NHTRC and the specific referral organization. Users of the online version of the Directory may self-refer to organizations without any direct communication with NHTRC staff.

MINIMUM INCLUSION CRITERIA

All organizations seeking inclusion in the National Human Trafficking Referral Directory must:

- ✓ Complete the [NHTRC National Human Trafficking Referral Directory Application](#), which requires the following:
 - Public contact information for the organization
 - Information about the organization's services and the populations that are eligible to receive services
 - Information for a point of contact at the organization to be used internally by NHTRC staff
 - Additional details regarding the organization's structure and operations, to be used internally by the NHTRC. For an explanation of why this information is requested and how it is used by the NHTRC, please see "Organizational Screening and Approval Process" below.
 - Whether the organization wishes to have its information accessible to the public through the online Directory or only by contacting the NHTRC.
- ✓ Have good standing within the local anti-trafficking community.
- ✓ Respond to periodic requests from the NHTRC to update the organization's record, confirm referral protocols, follow up on the outcomes of referrals, and address any issues/questions that may arise.
- ✓ Promptly alert the NHTRC of any changes that may affect referrals from the NHTRC. This includes but is not limited to changes regarding: capacity, hours of operation, available services, service area/jurisdiction, language capacity, key personnel, and any major funding streams that affect your services.
- ✓ If requested, provide letters of reference/support from other service providers, law enforcement, funders, and/or government agencies.

*Inclusion in the Directory as a **direct service provider** means that your organization will be provided as a referral for emergency, short-term, and/or long-term social and/or legal services for victims and survivors of human trafficking. An organization designated as a direct service provider in the Directory must:*

- ✓ Have capacity to provide one or more direct social and/or legal services and/or coordinate the provision of direct services to victims and survivors of human trafficking.
- ✓ Have demonstrated experience serving victims and survivors of human trafficking and/or related populations.
- ✓ Have a public phone number accessible by all NHTRC callers (24-hour capacity not required) **or** have a referral protocol in place with NHTRC staff.

*Inclusion in the Directory as an **indirect service provider** means that your organization will be provided as a referral for individuals who are seeking to get involved in local and national anti-trafficking efforts, find volunteer opportunities, and/or access training and technical assistance. Typically, individuals seeking direct social or legal services will not be referred to indirect service providers unless your organization has demonstrated an ability to coordinate direct services.*

ORGANIZATIONAL SCREENING & APPROVAL PROCESS

The NHTRC strives to connect trafficking victims and survivors, advocates, service providers, and law enforcement with critical social and legal services throughout the United States. The NHTRC does not endorse or conduct a formal evaluation of programs included in the Directory; however, we do request information from organizations to assist our staff in an initial screening process.

The screening process seeks to ensure that a baseline level of quality assurance criteria is met. These criteria include:

- ✓ The organization has sustainable managerial practices
- ✓ The organization engages in victim-centered practices
- ✓ The organization is equipped to provide services to human trafficking victims and survivors
- ✓ The organization is in good standing and collaborates with partners in their area
- ✓ The organization fulfills the minimum criteria for inclusion as outlined above.

The NHTRC Program Specialists covering each region will consider an organization's request for inclusion based on the organization's self-reported responses to the screening questions enumerated below. The NHTRC may contact the organization with follow-up questions as needed. The NHTRC may also request additional documentation and/or a letter of reference/support to verify the organization's experience working directly with victims and survivors of human trafficking, and/or other at-risk or related populations, and to confirm that the organization is in good standing within its field. The NHTRC cannot verify the accuracy of information reported by the referral organization.

The following section of this document explains each screening question from *Section 5: Organizational Details* of the [Directory application form](#), how responses are assessed, and examples of questions that NHTRC staff may ask of the referral organization to gather more information.

While some organizations in the Directory work exclusively on the issue of human trafficking, other organizations come from allied service areas that focus on related issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, runaway and homeless youth, labor rights, immigration, and refugee services. Therefore, there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers to the questions below, and answers are assessed in relation to the individual organization's service model.

1. Type of Organization

- 501(c)(3)
- Government Agency
- Other

Many organizations which provide services to trafficking victims are classified as not-for-profit agencies. 501(c)(3) organizations are required to keep financial and non-financial records, maintain a level of public transparency regarding their financial records, and have certain HR policies in place. The NHTRC must be able to verify an organization's 501(c)(3) status or similar articles of incorporation.

2. Organization is governed by a board of directors:

- Yes
- No

It is considered a standard practice of sustainable non-profit management that a board of directors provides strategic and fiduciary oversight of a non-profit's activities. Boards of directors also help organizational stability through fundraising and providing oversight of the executive director as well as key organizational policies, both financial and non-financial.

3. Organization has a formal non-discrimination policy covering clients and prospective clients who meet service eligibility requirements of that organization.

- Yes. Copy and paste policy here:
- No

We believe it is a promising practice for all organizations to have a formal non-discrimination policy.

4. How are services for anti-trafficking clients funded? (Check all that apply.)

- OVC Human Trafficking Victim Services grant
- HHS Trafficking Victim Assistance Program (per capita program)
- Other federal government anti-trafficking funding
- State-level anti-trafficking funding
- Private anti-trafficking funding
- VAWA funding
- LSC funding
- VOCA funding
- Other federal funding that is not specific to human trafficking
- Other state funding that is not specific to human trafficking
- Other private funding
- Other
- N/A

A stable funding base leads to the consistent and long-term provision of services, and reduces circumstances in which an organization stops serving trafficking clients due to lack of funding. Additionally, it is helpful for NHTRC Call Specialists to know which organizations have received certain grant funding when referring clients eligible for services under those grants.

The NHTRC Program Specialist may ask additional questions such as:

Does a trafficking client need to meet other qualifications in order to be eligible for services through your organization, or does the fact that the client is a trafficking victim or survivor qualify him/her for services?

Many organizations serve trafficking victims and survivors through organizational grant funding that is not trafficking-specific. In these circumstances, a trafficking victim or survivor may need to meet additional criteria to be eligible for services funded by the grant in question. This information can help the NHTRC direct trafficking victims and survivors more effectively to organizations in their area.

What is your funding (if “other” was selected)?

5. Organization has a formal confidentiality policy that protects a client’s personal information from being released to external parties without the client’s permission, unless required by law

- Yes
- No

We believe that trafficking victims and survivors have a reasonable expectation of privacy concerning their personal information and life experiences. Releasing even seemingly small amounts of information about a client without explicit consent violates individual privacy and may endanger a client. Therefore, we consider it a best practice for organizations to have a formal confidentiality policy which governs what type of information may be released about clients, to whom, and under which circumstances.

The NHTRC Program Specialist may ask additional questions such as:

Can you tell me about your organization’s policies related to retaining client information records?

We expect organizational policies and practices to be in line with any legal requirements and to encourage sensitivity regarding the impact that releasing information may have on a victim’s or survivor’s physical, emotional, and reputational safety. An organization that does not have a formal confidentiality policy may be required to implement a policy before being added to the Directory.

6. How are services provided to human trafficking victims?

- Services provided by a trafficking-specific staff member(s)
- All staff members provide anti-trafficking services
- Services to human trafficking victims are provided by volunteers with staff supervision
- My organization does not provide direct services

There are multiple safe, appropriate, and victim-centered methods of service provision. The NHTRC may ask additional questions to learn more about the organization’s service provision model, such as:

Who provides services?

We are interested in learning about the service provision model of the organization and the staffing structure set in place to implement that model. For example, if an organization provides emergency care/shelter services, and has a single staff member designated to respond to all trafficking clients, we may ask how the organization responds to referrals for trafficking services when that staff member is unavailable. If clients may also be served by staff members from other programs within the organization, we will ask how the organization ensures that all staff members possess sufficient expertise to respond to client needs.

7. If staff members receive training on serving victims and survivors of human trafficking, please enter notes.

8. If the organization screens all prospective clients for human trafficking during intake or as part of your service delivery, please provide details.

9. If the organization is a member of any relevant task forces, coalitions, or working groups, please provide details.

Promising practices in human trafficking victim services demonstrate that collaborative efforts between multiple service providers, government agencies, and law enforcement help to ensure positive outcomes for clients.

10. In the past year, has your organization served victims and survivors of human trafficking (in any direct capacity)?

- Yes
 - No/Not Sure
-

If your organization provides overnight shelter to clients, please complete the following additional questions:

11. How is shelter provided? Select all that apply:

- Onsite
- Offsite, but managed by your organization
- Via MOU with another agency
- Hotel/Motel points
- Community Placement
- Other

If you house clients outside of your agency, with which agency is your MOU?

Knowing which organizations coordinate services via MOU helps the NHTRC to estimate where key services are available. Additionally, this helps us recognize when callers may have had connections with your agency in the past.

12. If organization is licensed as a housing/shelter facility, please identify licensing agency:

We understand that licensing requirements vary by state; however, in most circumstance an organization operating a shelter should have some type of appropriate licensure. If the agency is not licensed, the NHTRC will speak with the organization to learn more about the licensing requirements and the reasons that the organization is not licensed. The NHTRC may ask for a copy of the license for verification.

13. If the organization is licensed to house minors who are not the dependents of an existing client (i.e. the minor is the primary client), please identify the licensing agency:

The NHTRC will only refer minors to facilities with a license to house minors. The NHTRC may also ask additional questions in order to inform the referral process, such as how minors who are under state or parental custody are placed in the program. If a shelter serving minors does not have appropriate licensure, the NHTRC will require that the program obtain licensure before being included in the Directory. The NHTRC will ask that the agency provide proof of appropriate licensure to house minors.

14. Type of facility providing residential care for minors (check all that apply)

- Emergency Shelter
- Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter
- Community-based Group Home
- Campus-style Group Home
- Secure Facility: a facility which has locked doors and/or barred windows to prevent residents from exiting.*
- "Staff Secure" Facility: a facility that is not physically locked from the outside and children can exit, but doors are secured from the inside and supervised by staff to deter residents from running away*
- Foster/Host Family Placement
- Other

* Definitions from *National Colloquium 2012 Report: An Inventory and Evaluation of the Current Shelter and Services Response to Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Victims*.

The NHTRC Program Specialist may ask additional questions such as:

Who may refer clients to your program?

Some residential services programs for minors require a referral through a specific government agency, law enforcement, or have another specialized referral procedure.

The following questions are for information purposes only as we attempt to collect accurate data on available shelter services for trafficking victims.

13: Total number of facility beds: _____

14: Number of facility beds that are reserved for victims of human trafficking and their dependents: _____

The NHTRC tracks the availability of emergency shelter and other housing services for trafficking victims around the country. Some programs are trafficking-specific or reserve a bed for trafficking victims; others serve trafficking clients along with other populations. This information helps inform reports on the availability of beds in a particular region.

PRIVACY

Each organization's record may contain both public and private contact and referral information. Any contact information designated as public by the referral organization will be made available to individuals contacting the NHTRC hotline. An organization may designate whether its public information is accessible through the online version of the National Human Trafficking Referral Directory or only by contacting the NHTRC hotline. Any internal contact information will be accessible only to NHTRC staff, except where required by law.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The NHTRC reserves the right to remove an organization from the Directory at our discretion, especially if there are allegations of misconduct, the NHTRC is unable to reach the designated point of contact after multiple attempts, or the organization no longer fulfills the minimum inclusion requirements. Any organization may likewise request to be removed from the National Human Trafficking Referral Directory at its discretion.

To apply for inclusion in the Directory please visit www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/directory-application.

If you have questions about the information in this document please [contact the Program Specialist for your state](#).