

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

COUNTERING HUMAN TRAFFICKING:

Year in Review

October 2021 to September 2022

PREPARED BY THE DHS CENTER FOR COUNTERING HUMAN TRAFFICKING
JANUARY 2023



Homeland
Security



Center for Countering
Human Trafficking

A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY



Every day, in countless ways, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) employees work tirelessly to combat human trafficking — a crime of exploitation with nearly 30 million victims in sex trafficking and forced labor conditions around the globe.

DHS's counter-trafficking work is guided by the goals and vision set forth in the *DHS Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, the Importation of Goods Produced with Forced Labor, and Child Sexual Exploitation*. We strive to realize these goals and vision every day, knowing that traffickers continue to coerce and exploit victims, and that victims need the protection and support DHS can offer.

The DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking (CCHT) coordinates and helps to lead the counter-trafficking efforts of 16 different offices and agencies across the Department. Launched only two years ago, the CCHT's leadership is already achieving significant results, including substantially more human trafficking investigations and arrests and greater victim support, like increased Continued Presence approvals, to name just a few of its accomplishments.

I want to thank the Congressional members and staff who recognized the CCHT as a driver of DHS counter-trafficking efforts and worked to enact the Countering Human Trafficking Act of 2021. By codifying the CCHT and allocating critical resources, the Act will play an important role in further strengthening the Department's mission to eradicate sex trafficking and forced labor in the United States and around the world.

I am proud of the tremendous achievements outlined in this report. I am in awe of the dedicated public servants who do this vital work each and every day. And I am grateful to the innumerable partners who work alongside us.

Sincerely,




Alejandro N. Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland Security

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE DHS CENTER FOR COUNTERING HUMAN TRAFFICKING



On behalf of the DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking (CCHT), I would like to commend all DHS personnel involved with countering human trafficking work for their outstanding efforts over the past fiscal year. I have the honor and privilege of seeing daily the variety of Department personnel collaborating through the CCHT – criminal investigators, agents, officers, victim assistance personnel, policymakers, training specialists, federal air marshals, immigration benefits adjudicators, trade specialists, intelligence analysts, and the Continued Presence team, to name a few. This report highlights their chief accomplishments and milestones and is a testament to the commitment and compassion of the DHS workforce and our many, many invaluable partners.

Now, where do we go from here?

Human trafficking is a complex global issue that requires a comprehensive strategy using every conceivable tool of government, industry, and communities to fight it. It is this philosophy that guides the CCHT as we seek to advance, support, and coordinate the Department’s efforts to combat human trafficking and the importation of goods produced with forced labor.

Over this coming year, the CCHT will implement the requirements of the Countering Human Trafficking Act of 2021, using the authorities and resources granted from the Act to support and advance DHS’s unified efforts to combat human trafficking. This includes:

- Improving and modernizing the systems and processes used throughout DHS related to our counter-trafficking mission;
- Supporting more human trafficking investigations with an emphasis on the victim-centered approach;
- Increasing DHS efforts to combat forced labor in supply chains, including by holding accountable manufacturers of goods produced with forced labor worldwide;
- Enhancing interagency collaboration and coordination, especially related to forced labor allegations and labor trafficking;
- Increasing support for research and data collection efforts to better understand the scope and dynamics of human trafficking, and to inform the development of more effective prevention and intervention strategies; and
- Continuing to develop robust training, outreach, education, and awareness programs.

It is critical for us all – whether in government, the private sector, or civil society – to take a collaborative approach to combating human trafficking, working together to focus our efforts and resources on areas where we can have the greatest impact. This fight remains one of our nation’s highest priorities, and DHS personnel are on the front lines every hour of every day.

I am proud of our accomplishments, confident in our strategy, and honored to serve as a member of the DHS team. We look forward to another successful and collaborative year.



Sincerely,

A blue ink handwritten signature of Cardell T. Morant.

Cardell T. Morant

Director of the DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking

CCHT integrates the efforts of 16 DHS component agencies and offices to advance counter human trafficking law enforcement operations, protect victims, and enhance prevention efforts by aligning DHS's capabilities and expertise.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement • Homeland Security Investigations

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement • Enforcement and Removal Operations

Transportation Security Administration | U.S. Coast Guard

U.S. Customs and Border Protection | Federal Emergency Management Agency

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services | U.S. Secret Service



Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers | Management Directorate

Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman

Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties | Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans

Office of Intelligence and Analysis | Science and Technology Directorate

Office of Inspector General | Office of Partnership and Engagement/Blue Campaign

COUNTERING HUMAN TRAFFICKING: Year in Review

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 6** : Stats at a Glance
- 7** : Introduction
- 8** : DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking
- 9** : This Report
- 10** : Identification and Screening
- 12** : Victim Protection and Assistance
- 15** : Investigations and Enforcement
- 20** : Training, Outreach, and Engagement
- 25** : What You Can Do
- 26** : Appendix: Acronyms

STATS AT A GLANCE: CCHT supports the work of these DHS offices and components.

HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS

765 human trafficking victims assisted

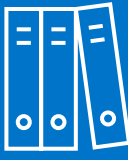


334 total Continued Presence approvals

♂ **135** male
♀ **199** female

79 sex trafficking 
255 forced labor 

90+ published intelligence products on sex trafficking and forced labor



RELATED TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING:

1,373 CASES INITIATED



3,655 ARRESTS



55 CCHT training and outreach events with **6,427** participants



638 CONVICTIONS



1,045 INDICTMENTS



U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

6 Withhold Release Orders issued



2 Findings issued



18 shipments detained under a Finding



BLUE CAMPAIGN

214,277 personnel trained on human trafficking through Blue Lightning Initiative partnerships



29 New Blue Lightning Initiative partnerships

UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES

T Nonimmigrant Status granted to **1,715** victims and **1,319** family members of victims

U Nonimmigrant Status granted to **10,051** victims and **7,503** family members of victims

67 external human trafficking trainings conducted with **8,237** participants



FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTERS

3,300+ law enforcement officers receiving human trafficking awareness training

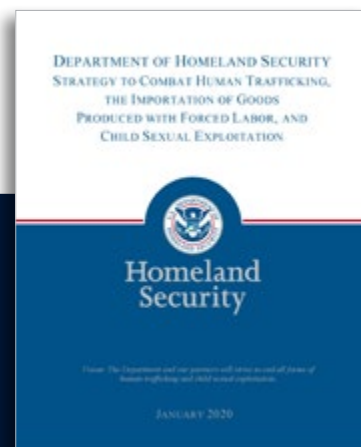







INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking is a crime of exploiting another person for compelled labor or commercial sex acts, typically through force, fraud, or coercion, or by inducing a minor under 18 into commercial sex. According to the United Nations' International Labour Organization, human traffickers victimize an estimated 28 million people worldwide, with 80% subjected to forced labor and 20% in sex trafficking.¹ The United States is no exception. Many trafficking cases in the United States involve workers in agriculture, landscaping, construction, factories, in homes as nannies or other domestic workers, restaurants, elder care, massage parlors, and more – essentially in jobs with low pay and few legal protections in the underground economy and the service industry.

Combating human trafficking is a top priority for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In 2020, the Secretary of DHS released the [DHS Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, the Importation of Goods Produced with Forced Labor, and Child Sexual Exploitation](#) (“the Strategy”). It represents the DHS vision to end this urgent humanitarian issue, articulates the Department’s long-term approach for combating these crimes, and serves as a framework to prioritize our resources and monitor progress.

THE STRATEGY OUTLINES FIVE KEY GOALS:



-  **1 Prevention.** Reduce the threat by providing information and resources to specific vulnerable populations, schools, and community groups.
-  **2 Protection.** Disrupt illicit activity by identifying and assisting victims toward stability and recovery.
-  **3 Prosecution.** Leverage DHS law enforcement and national security authorities to investigate, take enforcement action, and refer cases for prosecution.
-  **4 Partnership.** Build strong partnerships throughout the homeland security enterprise as force multipliers across the nation.
-  **5 Enabling DHS.** Harmonize and organize DHS programs to allow for maximum efficiency and effectiveness in addressing these threats.

¹ILO 2021 *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, Forced Labour and Forced Marriage*;
https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@ipecc/documents/publication/wcms_854733.pdf



DHS CENTER FOR COUNTERING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Strategy called for the Department to integrate efforts within and among DHS components to enhance their impact in the counter-trafficking mission space. Shortly after the release of the Strategy, the [DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking \(CCHT\)](#) was established.

The CCHT is DHS's first unified, cross-department coordination center for countering sex trafficking and forced labor, including the importation of goods produced with forced labor. It is a DHS-wide effort comprising 16 offices and components. The mission of the CCHT is to advance counter human trafficking law enforcement operations, protect victims, and enhance prevention efforts by aligning DHS's capabilities and expertise.

Guided by the Strategy, the CCHT integrates the efforts of every component within DHS involved in combating human trafficking. DHS efforts encompass criminal investigations, victim assistance, identifying and reporting human trafficking, external outreach, intelligence, and training. By integrating these many functions, the CCHT enhances every aspect of DHS's counter-human trafficking work.

The CCHT supports all of DHS by leveraging its subject matter experts to:

- Drive criminal investigations of forced labor and sex trafficking through coordinated intelligence and evidence-based strategies.
- Seek improvements to the delivery of victim protections, including victim-based immigration benefits, the national Continued Presence program for law enforcement, and robust identification.
- Increase human trafficking victim identification through training, nationwide public awareness, and screening tools.
- Incorporate proven and promising victim-centered practices into DHS policies and protocols.
- Strengthen trade enforcement against the importation of goods produced with forced labor.
- Assist procurement implementation and enforcement efforts to prevent and deter human trafficking in DHS acquisitions and contracts.

THIS REPORT

The annual *DHS Countering Human Trafficking: Year in Review* report highlights achievements and advancements made by DHS offices and components over the past fiscal year. This report covers FY 2022 (Oct. 1, 2021 through Sept. 30, 2022).

As DHS’s counter-trafficking actions fall into four primary areas, the achievements highlighted in this report are organized by these four functions:

- I. Identification and Screening.** Many DHS personnel hold public-facing jobs throughout the United States and are thereby well positioned to witness indicators of potential human trafficking, interact with potential traffickers and victims, and report suspicions to HSI, the investigative arm of DHS. Continued improvements to identification and screening lead to holding more traffickers accountable and more victims who are safe, stable, and offered protections.
- II. Victim Protection and Assistance.** The Secretary and the Strategy call for all of DHS to institutionalize a victim-centered approach, which places the crime victim’s priorities, needs, and interests at the center of the work with the victim. A victim-centered approach provides nonjudgmental assistance with an emphasis on self-determination while assisting victims in making informed choices, ensuring that restoring victims’ feelings of safety and security are a priority, and safeguarding against policies and practices that may inadvertently re-traumatize victims.² DHS also offers victim protections in the form of immigration options, including Continued Presence, T visas, U visas, Special Immigrant Juvenile classification, and Violence Against Women Act benefits (available regardless of gender). In criminal investigations, specialized victim assistance personnel inform identified trafficking victims of their rights as crime victims and make referrals to local community services to assist in their recovery.
- III. Investigations and Enforcement.** DHS uses every available administrative, civil, and criminal enforcement authority to hold human traffickers accountable. This includes more than 1,000 criminal investigations annually for sex trafficking, labor trafficking, and forced labor in imported goods. DHS also enforces the prohibition against the importation of goods produced with forced labor by issuing withhold release orders and formal findings. DHS also looks to ensure its own supply chain is clean by implementing contractual requirements, audits, and suspension and debarments within DHS acquisitions and contracts.
- IV. Training, Outreach, and Engagement.** DHS conducts a substantial amount of training for its employees worldwide as well as partners in local, state, federal, tribal, territorial, and foreign law enforcement. The training ranges from general awareness and identification to advanced enforcement and protection sessions. DHS also administers the Blue Campaign, the federal government’s flagship human trafficking public awareness campaign, with free printed materials, public service announcements, social media, and industry-specific toolkits, all with the goal of increasing identification and reporting to law enforcement. As counter-trafficking is most effective when undertaken with partners, DHS conducts an extensive amount of engagement within government, the private sector, NGOs, academia, and survivors.

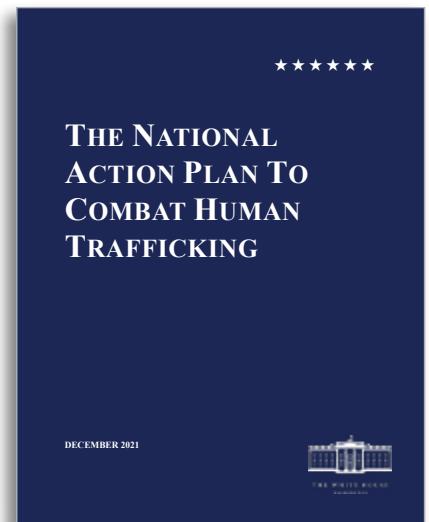
Please note this report also contains many links to publicly available reports, resource guides, public awareness materials, program descriptions, press releases, and more. The goal of the annual report is to help readers not only better understand the varied work of DHS, but also to utilize available resources in furtherance of their own counter-trafficking work.

²This definition was adapted from the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking*, available at [National-Action-Plan-to-Combat-Human-Trafficking.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/National-Action-Plan-to-Combat-Human-Trafficking.pdf) ([whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov)).

IDENTIFICATION AND SCREENING

DHS Multi-Year Effort to Work Toward Improved Screening Protocols

In response to the [White House National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking](#), DHS, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) continue to serve as co-chairs of a working group on improving human trafficking screening forms and protocols. In FY 2022, the group initiated a baseline analysis of screening tools currently used by federal officials who may encounter human trafficking victims in the course of their duties. The information gleaned from this working group will be used to improve screening efforts across the Department and guide DHS's work with DOJ to develop a victim-screening protocol for all federal counter-human trafficking operations.



USCIS Screening Efforts in Connection with [Uniting for Ukraine](#)



Beginning in April 2022, Uniting for Ukraine (U4U) provides a pathway for Ukrainian citizens and their immediate family members to come to the United States and stay temporarily in a two-year period of parole. Ukrainians participating in U4U must have a supporter in the United States who agrees to provide them with financial support for the duration of their stay. To ensure the safety of U4U parolees and to combat potential attempts by supporters to use

the parole process to conduct human trafficking operations, USCIS enhanced human trafficking screening and processes for evaluating potential supporters by developing risk-based criteria, reviewing the results of background checks of supporters, creating a reporting process in coordination with Health and Human Services (HHS), and developing a questionnaire drafted by the USCIS Fraud Detection and National Security division and shared with HHS staff, NGOs, and USCIS community relations officers. The new reporting system, along with the questionnaire, help HHS and NGOs identify vulnerable individuals to USCIS who are potential victims of human trafficking, with possible referral to law enforcement.

Improved Screening to Enhance Victim Identification

ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) plays a vital role in countering human trafficking because of the noncitizen population with whom they interact. This population could have been victimized prior to ERO engagement or any time during their immigration status adjudication. ERO identifies, screens, and responds to potential victims and traffickers within its detention centers. In FY 2022, to improve identification ERO supplemented its Risk Classification Assessment tool to include additional human trafficking screening questions for noncitizens in ICE custody.

ERO Potential Trafficking Leads Referred to HSI and the CCHT

ERO identifies potential human trafficking through two hotlines (the ERO Contact Center of Operations and the ICE Victims Engagement and Services Line), as well as by engaging with noncitizens. In FY 2022, this led to dozens of referrals to HSI. ERO personnel work closely with ICE intelligence and HSI to refer information for potential criminal investigation.

DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) Social Science Research Agenda on Labor Trafficking

During FY 2022, DHS S&T worked with the Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center (HSOAC) to develop a long-term research agenda focused on labor trafficking. The research will fill knowledge gaps and guide future social science research investments related to labor trafficking in the United States. The HSOAC has conducted in-depth stakeholder interviews and an exhaustive literature review to recommend key areas of research for a better understanding of labor trafficking crimes, which will inform screening, prevention, and outreach efforts.

VICTIM PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE

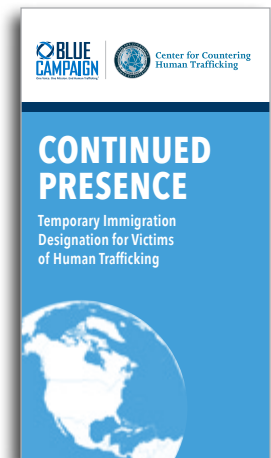
[Continued Presence \(CP\)](#) is a temporary immigration designation for individuals identified by law enforcement as human trafficking victims who may be potential witnesses or have filed federal civil actions. Recipients are eligible for federal benefits and services that provide victims with stability, a means of support, and protection from removal. When used by law enforcement, CP is a tool that helps increase the likelihood of success in human trafficking investigations and prosecutions.

CCHT Improvements to CP Program for Noncitizen Victims of Human Trafficking

This year, the CCHT CP team also:

- Transmitted to congressional leadership an OMB-cleared legislative proposal on CP based on extensive listening sessions with law enforcement and victim service providers. The proposal highlights statutory changes to CP that would provide much needed clarification and reduce barriers to ensure that CP is fully available, accessible, and used by law enforcement and civil attorneys to assist noncitizen victims.
- Led an initiative to create an online CP application system to streamline the process and eliminate the need for paper applications. The goal is to reduce the amount of time spent by law enforcement personnel submitting applications, by CCHT personnel processing those applications, and by victims waiting to receive CP.
- Engaged with more than 20 law enforcement associations and broadly circulated the [Continued Presence Resource Guide for Submitting Law Enforcement and Civil Attorneys](#).

This year, the CCHT CP team processed **337** CP applications and granted CP to **334** individuals, including extensions of prior approvals.



HSI Victim Assistance Efforts

In FY 2022, HSI increased its number of victim assistance personnel, including victim assistance specialists (VASs) and forensic interview specialists (FISs) to 99, a 40% increase from FY 2021. HSI identified and assisted 765 victims of human trafficking in FY 2022, up from 728 in FY 2021. HSI's Victim Assistance Program, through its dedicated VASs, provided 3,126 referrals for social services in local communities for 3,019 individuals involved in human trafficking cases. HSI FISs conducted 1,836 forensic interviews using trauma-informed, victim-centered approaches to elicit accurate and complete information while minimizing distress and were directly responsible for identifying 343 additional victims through this process.

Research to Action: The Victim-Centered Approach

The CCHT initiated a research project involving the review of evidence-based and promising practices in literature that implement a victim-centered approach in policies, victim identification and screening, and law enforcement operations. When the research is complete in FY 2023, the CCHT will use the findings to inform improvements, additions, and developments across DHS.

Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA) Advice and Training

ICE OPLA provided training to all new attorneys on law and policy related to victim-based immigration benefits. OPLA and CCHT also hosted nationwide training for all OPLA attorneys on human trafficking, reporting suspicions to HSI, and handling CP and T visas in immigration court. OPLA maintained points of contact in 25 OPLA field offices to advise and assist attorneys with immigration court cases involving victim-based immigration benefits.

T VISA

For victims of human trafficking

T VISA CONSIDERATIONS

- Must be in the U.S. on account of human trafficking
- Law enforcement declaration is encouraged but not required

U VISA

For victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, felonious assault, human trafficking, and other qualifying crimes

U VISA CONSIDERATIONS

- Qualifying crime must have occurred in the U.S. or violated U.S. law
- May apply from the U.S. or while abroad
- Must have law enforcement certification

VAWA

For victims of domestic violence and abuse

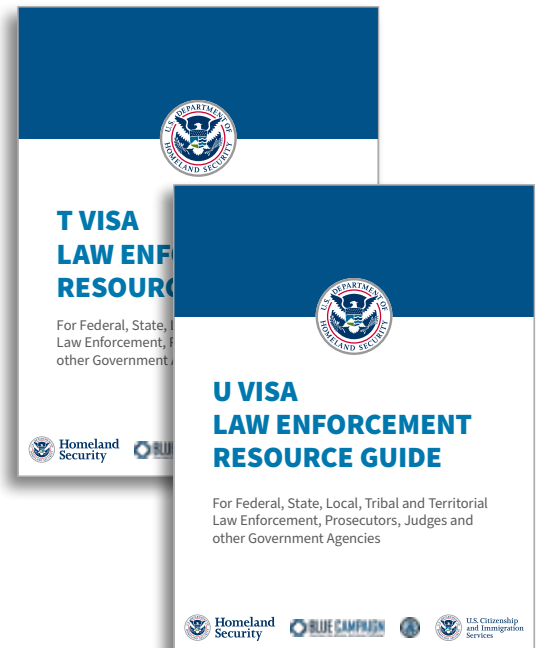
VAWA CONSIDERATIONS

- Have suffered battery or extreme cruelty perpetrated by your U.S. citizen or Lawful Permanent Resident spouse or parent or your U.S. citizen adult son or daughter
- Petitioners and perpetrators may be of any sex or gender

“U.S. Immigration Benefits for Noncitizen Crime Victims” <https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/U.S.%20Immigration%20Benefits%20for%20Noncitizen%20Crime%20Victims.pdf>

Updated U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Policy and Guidance

- In Feb. 2022, USCIS announced the publication of an updated [U Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide](#). The updated guide provides law enforcement and other certifying agencies best practices for the U visa certification process. It also clarifies roles and responsibilities of the certifying agency, the victim, and USCIS.
- In Oct. 2021, USCIS published the first standalone [T Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide](#). The resource guide responds to frequently asked questions regarding the T visa application process for certifying agencies, emphasizes that completing [Form I-914, Supplement B, Declaration of Law Enforcement Officer for Victim of Trafficking in Persons](#) is consistent with a victim-centered approach, and provides certifying officials with promising practices for approaching the certification process.
- Also in Oct. 2021, USCIS updated guidance in the USCIS policy manual on adjudicating applications for T visas, to include: establishing eligibility, physical presence, the age-based exemption from the



requirement to comply with law enforcement requests, and how the agency evaluates involuntary servitude claims. The guidance reduces barriers for noncitizen victims of trafficking, consistent with the intent of the Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000.

- In January 2022, to provide greater public transparency, USCIS published the [Characteristics of T Nonimmigrant Status Applicants Factsheet](#), which provides data on the number of T visa applications received since 2008, as well as the age, gender, top countries of birth, and states of residence of approved applicants.
- USCIS gathered input from the public on the 2016 Interim Final Rule *Classification for Victims of Severe Forms of Trafficking in Persons: Eligibility for “T” Nonimmigrant Status*, and is working towards finalizing the rule in FY 2023.

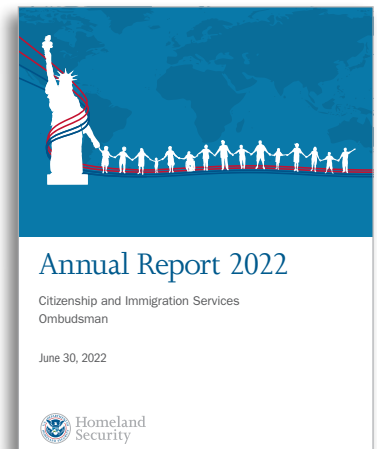
USCIS Grants of Nonimmigrant Visas to Victims

- In FY 2022, USCIS granted T nonimmigrant status to 1,715 victims, an increase of over 106% from FY 2021.
- USCIS reached the cap of 10,000 grants of U nonimmigrant status to victims of crime in FY 2022.

Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman (CIS Ombudsman) Reinforcement of Victim-Centered Approach

The CIS Ombudsman took steps to institutionalize the Department’s victim-centered approach within USCIS through internal training initiatives, standard operating procedures involving confidential cases, engagement with victim services organizations, and policy recommendations.

- During FY 2022, the CIS Ombudsman issued its [2022 Annual Report to Congress](#), including an article on the [U Nonimmigrant Status Bona Fide Determination process](#). The bona fide determination process allows USCIS to expeditiously provide eligible petitioners with employment authorization and deferred action and is proving an effective way of providing stability to victims while they await final adjudication of their U visa petitions.
- The CIS Ombudsman also updated the [FAQs on its website](#) and distributed a stakeholder message sharing tips on how to contact USCIS regarding pending T, U, or VAWA cases.



Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Support of Survey to Develop Victim-Centered Policy

TSA supported the National Outreach Survey for Transportation (NOST) in FY 2022. The NOST facilitated TSA customer-facing personnel’s voluntary input on counter-trafficking efforts in airports. Additional research will be used to develop insights to better understand the trafficking issue in the transportation environment, and to predict probability, tactics, and techniques rather than react to individual cases. TSA’s responses, along with thousands of other survey respondents, will be consolidated into a comprehensive report for the Department of Transportation (DOT), which will support the development of victim-centered policies and regulations. United Against Slavery conducted the survey as part of the [Combating Human Trafficking in Transportation Impact Award](#) granted by DOT.

INVESTIGATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Human Trafficking Investigations

As the principal investigative arm of DHS, the mission of HSI human trafficking investigations is twofold:

1. To proactively identify, disrupt, and dismantle cross-border human trafficking organizations and minimize the risk they pose to national security and public safety.
2. To employ a victim-centered approach, whereby equal value is placed on the identification and stabilization of victims, and on the deterrence, investigation, and prosecution of traffickers.

ICE HSI Criminal Investigations Statistics

- In FY 2022, HSI increased its number of [criminal human trafficking investigations](#) to 1,373 from 1,111 in FY 2021. These investigations encompassed cases related to sex trafficking and forced labor, including forced labor in the supply chain.
- Convictions increased more than 80%, to 638 in FY 2022 from 349 in FY 2021.
- Arrests increased more than 50%, to 3,655 in FY 2022 from 2,360 in FY 2021.
- Indictments increased to 1,045 in FY 2022 from 891 in FY 2021.



EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL HSI COUNTER-HUMAN TRAFFICKING INVESTIGATIONS:

- **HSI New York:** American singer, songwriter, and record producer Robert Sylvester Kelly (R. Kelly), who was [convicted of sex trafficking](#) women and children, was [sentenced to 30 years in prison](#) in June 2022, after having been found guilty by a federal jury in New York on nine counts, including sexual exploitation of children, forced labor, and Mann Act violations.
- **HSI Miami:** A joint HSI/FBI investigation into a South Florida sex trafficking ring yielded a [60-year prison sentence](#) for ringleader William D. Foster, who headed a sex trafficking organization that exploited dozens of women and girls during more than 20 years in operation. Foster was also ordered to pay over \$14 million in restitution to his victims and to forfeit over \$3 million in illicit proceeds.
- **HSI Savannah:** HSI Savannah, with assistance from the CCHT, successfully investigated a major labor trafficking organization exploiting the H2A temporary agricultural worker program. Under [Operation Blooming Onion](#), HSI executed 26 search warrants leading to 29 criminal arrests, 14 seized vehicles, 185 victims identified and assisted, and approximately \$749,416 in seized currency. Three defendants were convicted and sentenced for federal labor trafficking violations with more than 20 additional defendants indicted.
- **HSI Boise:** An investigation by HSI and federal, state, and local law enforcement partners, with assistance from the CCHT, resulted in the conviction of a Boise man on charges related to sex trafficking two women from Canada. In May 2022, the defendant engaged in the interstate prostitution of the women, primarily between Idaho and Washington, and was [sentenced to 77 months](#) in federal prison for transporting women for prostitution and money laundering.

CCHT Support for HSI Criminal Investigations of Human Traffickers

- The CCHT directly supported more than 70 HSI human trafficking investigations in FY 2022.
- CCHT coordinated with HSI in support of counter-trafficking operations related to the World Games in Birmingham, Alabama in the summer of 2022. HSI created and led a World Games Human Exploitation Task Force consisting of state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies, NGOs, and victim service providers. HSI personnel conducted human trafficking awareness training for hotel staff, volunteers, and athletes in anticipation of the games. The [task force arrested 61 individuals](#) for charges including sex trafficking, online enticement of a minor, and traveling to engage in sex with a minor. The task force also recovered 46 victims and seized nine firearms, as well as more than \$30,000 in counterfeit goods. The CCHT provided onsite personnel and funded travel for analysts from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) to provide subject matter expertise and increased analytical support.
- In May 2022, HSI issued the *HSI Human Trafficking Investigations Handbook*, providing uniform policies and procedures to be followed by HSI special agents when investigating human trafficking crimes.
- CCHT intelligence analysts produced 90 intelligence products during FY 2022, supporting a wide range of sex and labor trafficking cases, both domestic and international. Among them were a Virginia-based sex trafficking investigation, a Nevada-based labor trafficking investigation, and the investigation of a Utah-based sex trafficking organization operating in several states. CCHT intelligence support led directly to the arrest of a Florida sex trafficker, and the identification and assistance of multiple victims. CCHT analysts also supported investigations into forced labor in the supply chain, identifying key executives and providing information for further investigation by HSI case agents.
- The CCHT continued to support several high-profile investigations of companies that knowingly imported goods produced with forced labor into the United States to help bring those investigations to successful prosecution.

HSI Forced Labor Investigation Helps Prompt Improved Conditions for Overseas Workers

In July 2020, HSI Cleveland opened an investigation into a Fortune 500 company after receiving information from a non-governmental organization that forced labor was used in the manufacturing of its products. While no criminal charges were ultimately filed against the company, the investigation led to proactive measures by the company to compensate affected employees and to ensure that its factories do not permit the use of forced labor. In 2022, the company reached a significant remediation settlement with employees and negotiated a new collective bargaining agreement that now covers both foreign and domestic workers.

Successful HSI Collaboration with Foreign Law Enforcement

In April 2022, HSI and the government of the Philippines conducted a joint operation resulting in the arrest of a child sex trafficker and the identification of 11 victims of sexual abuse ranging in age from two to 18 years old. The subjects of the investigation had been providing child sexual abuse material to hundreds of foreign buyers for years.

Increased Arrests, Victim Identification, and Lead Generation Through Use of DHS S&T Analytical Tool

DHS S&T continues to develop a livestream tool, [StreamView](#), which provides an automated process to analyze massive amounts of data in a short period of time. StreamView, used in a limited capacity with HSI Portland, Maine, has already assisted special agents in helping over 53 human trafficking victims and making 32 arrests worldwide while providing hundreds of leads to national and international law enforcement.

WHAT IS A WITHHOLD RELEASE ORDER?

[19 U.S.C. 1307](#) prohibits the importation of merchandise produced wholly or in part by convict labor, forced labor, and/or indentured labor under penal sanctions, including forced or indentured child labor. CBP investigates allegations of forced labor in U.S. supply chains and issues Withhold Release Orders (WROs) that instruct personnel at ports of entry to detain shipments containing goods suspected of being made by forced labor. WROs are not outright bans. Pursuant to U.S. regulations, importers of detained shipments have an opportunity to demonstrate that the merchandise was not imported in violation of Section 1307 or to export their shipments.

Advancements in CBP's Detection and Interception of Products Made Through Forced Labor

- To enforce U.S. law prohibiting the importation of goods made with forced labor, CBP issued six WROs, two findings, and one modification to a WRO in FY 2022. CBP collaborated with industry and workers' rights organizations to modify a WRO against garment manufacturer Natchi Private Apparel Limited (Natchi). The WRO against Natchi was lifted after CBP determined that, within one month, the company had addressed all five of the International Labour Organization's indicators of forced labor identified in the WRO. Workers signed a collective bargaining agreement with the company, making this a highly successful collaboration between CBP, a foreign entity, and workers' rights stakeholders.
- The [Forced Labor Enforcement Task Force \(FLETF\)](#) – DHS-led task force of interagency partners dedicated to monitoring enforcement of the prohibition on importing goods made with forced labor into the United States – submitted three biannual reports to Congress in FY 2022. The FLETF is required by statute to issue biannual reports to Congress with updates on CBP's enforcement of the U.S. prohibition on the importation of goods made with forced labor.

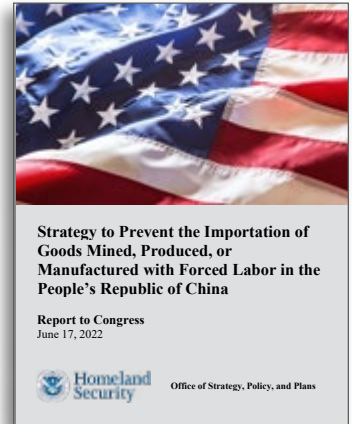


TSA's Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service (LE/FAMS) Support for Human Trafficking Investigations, Detection of Trafficking on Commercial Flights

TSA made critical contributions to DHS's counter-trafficking efforts throughout FY 2022. Providing key resources to support human trafficking investigations, LE/FAMS partnered with CBP, state and local law enforcement, and NGOs such as NCMEC, to identify flight routes exploited by human traffickers.

The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA)

- As chair of the FLETF, DHS led interagency efforts to develop the [Strategy to Prevent the Importation of Goods Mined, Produced, or Manufactured with Forced Labor in the People's Republic of China](#). Using input from multiple components, DHS submitted the UFLPA Strategy to Congress in June 2022 and made it available to the public on a newly launched [UFLPA website](#).
- Effective June 21, 2022, [UFLPA](#) established a rebuttable presumption³ that goods mined, produced, or manufactured wholly or in part in the People's Republic of China's Xinjiang region, as well as goods produced by certain entities identified on the [UFLPA Entity List](#), are prohibited from entering the United States.
- CBP participated in the development and implementation of the UFLPA Strategy. It also published internal CBP standard operating procedures, importer guidance, and website content, identified legal issues to chief counsel, and engaged with stakeholders to successfully implement the UFLPA.
- Twenty entities that produce goods made with forced labor in or from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) of the People's Republic of China were identified in the first [UFLPA Entity List](#). In accordance with the UFLPA, DHS continues to work with FLETF members to develop a process for recommending the addition, removal, or technical correction of entities to the List.
- The CCHT developed a joint initiative with the HSI Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Unit to conduct investigations and industry outreach, and to secure international cooperation in the investigation of human rights abuses and forced labor in the XUAR. The initiative involves outreach to at-risk industries, encouraging companies and importers to be vigilant to prevent forced labor from entering their supply chains in violation of the UFLPA.
- The CCHT also submitted a formal request through ICE for additional positions within HSI to support the anticipated increase in investigations of forced labor in the supply chain brought about by enactment of the UFLPA.



U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) Collaboration with the CCHT to Support Human Trafficking Investigations

USBP played a larger role in supporting human trafficking investigations in FY 2022 by collaborating directly with CCHT personnel and field agents nationwide. Information from CBP, for example, was used to identify members of a human trafficking network linked to the death of a migrant near Salt Lake City, Utah.

ERO Field Intelligence Leads Resulting in HSI, Foreign Partner Investigations

In the course of their duties, deportation officers were able to obtain and refer information to HSI from victims of human trafficking resulting in three successful HSI investigations. The referrals led to the arrests of human traffickers and the identification of multiple victims.

³The presumption applies unless the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) determines that the importer of record has complied with specified conditions and, by clear and convincing evidence, that the goods, wares, articles, or merchandise were not produced using forced labor.

- The first referral led to the identification and assistance of 15 victims from Venezuela and Colombia. The individuals were victims of a sex trafficking operation in Vienna, Austria, which Austrian police successfully dismantled. The five targets of the operation were convicted, with sentences ranging from four to six years in prison.
- As a result of the second referral, HSI arrested three noncitizens in Miami, Florida who were wanted for criminal prosecution in Mexico for human trafficking and sexual exploitation.
- The third referral led HSI to a noncitizen sex trafficker of a transgender individual.

Designation of Senior Accountable Official (SAO) to Prevent Human Trafficking in DHS Contracts

One of the top priorities in the [National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking](#) was the designation of an SAO responsible for preventing human trafficking in DHS acquisitions and contracts. In January 2022, Secretary Mayorkas designated the DHS chief procurement officer to assume this important role of ensuring effective implementation of anti-trafficking rules and promising practices in DHS acquisitions and contracts.

The DHS SAO established a multi-component team with expertise in contracting, procurement law, civil and criminal enforcement against human trafficking and forced labor, and suspension and debarment⁴. This team meets regularly to focus on information sharing, compliance, training, and appropriate coordination of suspension and debarment actions.

USCIS Language Support for Human Trafficking Investigations

USCIS's language specialists continue to play an important role in supporting investigations led by HSI and the subsequent prosecutions of human trafficking cases. In FY 2022, USCIS assisted HSI by transcribing and translating recordings and other materials into English. This translation work provided HSI and prosecutors with critical evidence necessary to move forward with prosecuting human trafficking crimes.

⁴Suspension and debarment refers to an action taken by DHS suspension and debarment offices to exclude individuals and entities from participating in government contracts, loans, grants, and other federal assistance programs. It must be supported by information sufficient to warrant a reasonable belief that a particular act or omission has occurred, and it is a powerful tool to guard against violations of anti-human trafficking laws and regulations in DHS contracts or acquisitions.

TRAINING, OUTREACH, AND ENGAGEMENT

CCHT Training and Stakeholder/Interagency Engagement

- The CCHT hosted 55 training and outreach events for approximately 6,427 law enforcement and public participants during FY 2022, more than doubling the number of participants from the prior year. Included were trainings for special agents, officers, program managers, analysts, victim assistance specialists, forensic interview specialists, and attorneys. Topics included human trafficking case studies, use of task forces in investigations, courtroom strategies, and engaging with victims and survivors, as well as training for DHS employees to increase awareness and understanding of the broad range of counter-trafficking efforts across the Department's components and offices.
 - In January 2022, the CCHT joined ICE OPLA to deliver a nationwide human trafficking training of OPLA attorneys for Human Trafficking Prevention Month.
 - In May 2022, the CCHT hosted its first annual DHS Human Trafficking Seminar – a two-day virtual training for DHS personnel who are part of the Department's mission to end human trafficking. The event featured over 30 presenters and was attended by nearly 600 DHS investigators, officers, program managers, analysts, victim assistance specialists, and attorneys, among others. Participants tuned in from around the country and around the world, including from the Caribbean, Turkey, and Guam. The seminar served as an opportunity to cross-train, stay on the cutting edge, and share evidenced-based, promising practices.
 - In July 2022, the CCHT delivered a live CP webinar for NGOs, service providers, and the general public in recognition of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.
 - In August 2022, the CCHT hosted Advanced Human Trafficking Training for investigators and others supporting human trafficking investigations. The training was held at HSI headquarters and streamed virtually, with approximately 80 personnel from HSI field offices and HQ attending in person, and an approximate daily average of 95 attending virtually. Topics included the state of HSI human trafficking investigations, sex trafficking and forced labor case studies, use of task forces in human trafficking investigations, courtroom strategies and preparation, victim interviewing, victims' rights law, the Continued Presence program, Blue Campaign resources, and engaging with victim and survivors. Presenters included HSI case agents, a forensic interview specialist, the Department of Justice Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit, Interpol, Wells Fargo, NCMEC, and a human trafficking consultant/activist with lived sex trafficking experience.
 - Seven training events were conducted in partnership with the Department of State International Law Enforcement Academy to train foreign counterparts in El Salvador, Hungary, Botswana, Ghana, and Thailand.
 - The CCHT provided [live quarterly webinars](#) on CP for local, state, federal, tribal, and territorial law enforcement entities. The training covered topics including how requesting CP strengthens a human trafficking investigation, how to prepare and submit a request, and recent improvements to the program.

55



CCHT training and outreach events

with 6,427 participants

- The CCHT CP team educated 1,105 attendees through CP training events throughout FY 2022.
- The CCHT is a key player on two counter-trafficking interagency initiatives. The CCHT director serves on the FLETF and is the DHS representative to the interagency [Senior Policy Operating Group \(SPOG\)](#). During FY 2022, CCHT personnel served on and chaired several SPOG standing committees and working groups. All SPOG efforts helped DHS to coordinate and work in collaboration with its interagency partners on topics including human trafficking identification and screening tools, victim services, public awareness, research, and more.

Blue Campaign Stakeholder Engagement, Outreach Materials, and Training

- The [Blue Campaign](#) acquired 43 new partners in FY 2022 in areas including aviation, colleges and universities, youth serving organizations, and campus and school resource offices.
- The Blue Campaign provided 117 human trafficking awareness presentations to more than 150,000 federal government, NGO, law enforcement, congressional, and public attendees.
- In FY 2022, the Blue Campaign created additional outreach materials, including a Human Trafficking Awareness Information Sheet for Code Enforcement Officers, a Human Trafficking Response Guide for School Resource Officers, and a [four-part animated video series for youth](#).
- The Blue Campaign translated its indicator and key tag cards into 38 additional languages and updated its transportation, faith-based and community leader, student leader, and hospitality [toolkits](#) with new images and content.
- The Blue Campaign also updated the DHS Employee Human Trafficking Training with new content on how DHS employees can recognize and respond to human trafficking.



Blue Campaign Online

- The Blue Campaign's [monthly digital newsletter](#) exceeded 100,000 subscribers in FY 2022.
- The Blue Campaign's digital ads resulted in 2.6 million clicks and 1,778 calls generated to the National Human Trafficking Hotline and HSI Tip Line via Blue Campaign's "Click to Call" campaign, whereby the tip line and hotline numbers appear in a Google search. With a single click, users can call either number from their mobile devices to report human trafficking.

Blue Lightning Initiative



In May 2022, the [Blue Lightning Initiative](#) (BLI) expanded its partner base to include foreign air carriers. The BLI is an element of the Blue Campaign led by DOT and CBP. The BLI trains aviation personnel to identify potential traffickers and human trafficking victims and report their suspicions to federal law enforcement. In FY 2022, the Blue Lightning Initiative added 29 new partners and trained more than 214,000 personnel.

CBP Website Updates Provide More Information on Forced Labor

To increase transparency, CBP enhanced the forced labor webpages on cbp.gov. CBP developed and published two infographics: [a map depicting the locations of active WROs and Findings](#) around the globe and a bar chart depicting WROs and Findings by year over the past three decades to educate the public and stakeholders on the issue.



Acquisition Workforce Training to Prevent Human Trafficking in DHS Contracts

Effective July 2022, all members of the DHS acquisition workforce are required to complete the continuous learning module, *Combating Trafficking in Persons*, every two years. This two-hour online training, available through the Federal Acquisition Institute, ensures members of the acquisition workforce are aware of human trafficking and forced labor and that they enforce the requirements of the Federal Acquisition Regulation to combat human trafficking and forced labor in federal contracts.

USCIS Language Services Support for Blue Campaign

USCIS's Language Services Section (LSS) performed a quality review of translations of public outreach materials related to counter-human trafficking efforts. LSS also assisted the Blue Campaign with the selection of culturally appropriate images for their outreach materials.

HSI Forced Labor Outreach and Targeting Initiative

Through its aggressive Forced Labor Outreach and Targeting Initiative (Operation FLORA) aimed at trade practitioners and employers, HSI conducted outreach throughout FY 2022 focused on identifying and investigating forced labor. The purpose of the campaign is to raise awareness about forced labor practices. In FY 2022, HSI International Operations conducted approximately 42 outreach events, reaching almost 9,000 individuals. For example:

- In March 2022, HSI Seoul conducted Operation FLORA outreach to the Dashihamkke Center, an NGO affiliated with the Seoul Metropolitan city government and the Korean Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, to support victims and survivors of sex and labor trafficking. Participants discussed HSI's role in investigating sex trafficking and forced labor, and issues including the exploitation and abuse of underage students. The Chief of the Dashihamkke Center agreed to cooperate with HSI Seoul and share information and resources pertaining to forced child labor and trafficking in the future.
- In August 2022, HSI Bangkok briefed on the [Angel Watch Center](#) (AWC) and child sex trafficking in support of Bali's Process Intensive Course on Measures to Address Human Trafficking. Managed by HSI, the AWC is a joint effort with CBP and the U.S. Marshals Service to target individuals who have been previously convicted of sexual crimes against a child and may be traveling overseas for the purpose of sexually abusing or exploiting minors. This course was organized by the [United Nations Institute for Training and Research](#).
- In August 2022, HSI Bangkok and HSI Dallas provided training to 80 public prosecutors and 17 Laotian police officials at the Organized Transnational Crime Workshop hosted by the U.S. Department of Justice.

DHS External Consultation on the UFLPA

Throughout FY 2022, DHS and FLETF partners hosted extensive consultations with private sector stakeholders and the public to support implementation of the UFLPA strategy. This included 180 comments received in response to a request for information through the Federal Register, 60 witnesses testifying at the public hearing, and various UFLPA focused webinars. DHS and FLETF partners also conducted listening sessions and outreach with industry stakeholders, international partners, and the public.

USCIS Outreach in Connection with Uniting for Ukraine

USCIS staff worked with DHS colleagues and international partners in developing webpage content and messaging to both supporters and beneficiaries to raise awareness of human trafficking concerns. USCIS continues to evaluate outreach needs for this program to ensure information on human trafficking and additional resources are available.

Increased Knowledge of Trafficking Indicators Among ERO Staff and the Detained Population

- In FY 2022, ERO made the Blue Campaign's ICE Human Trafficking Awareness training mandatory for all ERO staff.
- ERO and the Blue Campaign produced a human trafficking awareness video to be played in ERO facilities with the goal of educating noncitizens on the indicators of human trafficking and how to report them.

CIS Ombudsman Engagement

During FY 2022, the CIS Ombudsman met with 22 stakeholder organizations providing legal services to victims of domestic violence and hosted a listening session on U visa nonimmigrant status and bona fide determinations with a group of nonprofit organizations that provide services to victims of domestic violence.

Presentation at ASISTA Conference

In June 2022, multiple DHS components presented at the national [ASISTA](#) virtual conference titled "Immigration Practice & Policy for Survivors: What's New & What's Next." The event was an in-depth training for immigration advocates and attorneys who specialize in T visas, U visas, and VAWA petitions. The USCIS Office of Policy & Strategy and the CIS Ombudsman highlighted updates in USCIS policy and practice, and the ICE assistant director for policy and the principal legal advisor highlighted ICE policy and practice related to T visa, U visa, and VAWA recipients.

U.S. Secret Service (USSS) Education and Outreach to Combat Human Trafficking

The USSS doubled the size of its [Ambassador](#) program in FY 2022, bringing the total to 120. USSS Ambassadors are specifically trained by NCMEC to bring education and awareness to children and adults on personal and internet safety, including topics related to the prevention of child sex trafficking. Ambassadors provided a total of 363 presentations during FY 2022, reaching over 19,000 stakeholders — an increase of 676% over FY 2021.

Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) Training on Human Trafficking

FLETC trained approximately 3,300 law enforcement officers on the indicators of human trafficking and how to respond to suspected cases with a victim-centered approach. More than 2,997 of these were federal law enforcement officers attending one of FLETC's basic training programs.

DHS Webinar on Racial Equity

In recognition of Human Trafficking Prevention Month, the [DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships](#) and the Blue Campaign hosted a webinar in January 2022 titled “Engaging in Partnership: Addressing Racial Equity in Communities Vulnerable to Human Trafficking.” The virtual panel discussed the racial disparities related to human trafficking crimes, highlighting the impact on youth and vulnerable communities.

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Training Efforts

- USCG Pacific Area planned and developed its third forced labor and human trafficking tabletop exercise to hone the interagency response to the discovery of forced labor during inspection of a foreign fishing vessel outside of the [U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone](#). Participants included representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of State, DHS, and DOJ.
- In cooperation with the Blue Campaign, the USCG worked to revise and update its annual Human Trafficking Awareness Training during FY 2022. The new training module is slated to be implemented in FY 2023 and will reach approximately 12,000 USCG personnel, to ensure they recognize any instances of human trafficking encountered during the course of their duties.

Suspension and Debarment Program Training for DHS Staff

The DHS Suspension and Debarment (S&D) Program provided training for CCHT staff on S&D protocols and its role in preventing human trafficking in DHS acquisitions. The goal of the training was to ensure that individuals or entities charged with human trafficking and forced labor crimes are referred to the relevant component S&D offices to ensure priority actions are taken.

USCIS Internal Training on Human Trafficking

Since January 2022, USCIS has provided training to nearly 150 fraud detection and national security officers on best practices in sharing information on potential human trafficking cases to assist with the development of potential leads for referral to HSI and to support ongoing cases.

WHAT YOU CAN DO



Report suspected human trafficking to DHS law enforcement by calling the HSI Tip Line at **1-866-347-2423.**



Visit the [DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking](#) website to learn more about our Department-wide efforts to combat human trafficking.



Get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline by calling **1-888-373-7888** or texting **HELP** or **INFO** to **233733 (BEFREE)**.

Raise awareness of human trafficking in your community using DHS Blue Campaign resources on [DHS.gov/BlueCampaign](#) and follow DHS Blue Campaign on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter @DHSBlueCampaign](#).

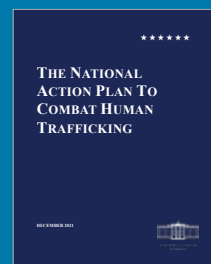


If you have information on goods produced with forced labor destined for the United States, provide it to [CBP](#) and the CCHT at info@ccht.dhs.gov.



Read the [DHS Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, the Importation of Goods Produced with Forced Labor, and Child Sexual Exploitation](#).

Read the [White House National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking](#).



APPENDIX: Acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| CBP | U.S. Customs and Border Protection |
| CCHT | DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking |
| DHS | U.S. Department of Homeland Security |
| DOJ | U.S. Department of Justice |
| ERO | Enforcement and Removal Operations |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| FLETC | Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers |
| HSI | Homeland Security Investigations |
| ICE | U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement |
| MGMT | Management Directorate |
| NCMEC | National Center for Missing and Exploited Children |
| NGO | Nongovernmental organization |
| NOAA | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency |
| OPE | Office of Partnership and Engagement |
| PLCY | Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans |
| S&T | Science and Technology Directorate |
| TSA | Transportation Security Administration |
| USCG | U.S. Coast Guard |
| USCIS | U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services |
| USSS | U.S. Secret Service |

