

*Protecting Ohio's Families*



Ohio Attorney General's Office

**2016**

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION

**ANNUAL REPORT**



**MIKE DEWINE**

★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★

OHIO **HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING**  
COMMISSION



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January 23, 2017

Dear Fellow Ohioans,

As we look back to 2016, it is encouraging to see how far we have come in the fight against human trafficking in Ohio.

One area of focus for 2016 has been on education. Our Human Trafficking Commission put together a document to assist schools and educators with starting a conversation within their communities about human trafficking. My office also required all law enforcement to obtain one hour of Continuing Professional Training on human trafficking and the commission assisted with the formation of a new course on human trafficking to be released later this year.

Commission members traveled to meet with many local anti-human trafficking coalitions across the state. At these meetings, the commission assisted with identifying gaps in treatment and developing connections to available resources, including crime victim assistance funding opportunities. Maintaining relationships with all of the coalitions and developing strong partnerships will again be a focus for the commission in the next year.

In 2016, the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force investigated the first case to be prosecuted as human trafficking by the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office. Thomas Williamson was sentenced to 15 years in prison for trafficking in persons. The charges were the result of an investigation into a human-trafficking scheme where three women were lured to Williamson's Reynoldsburg home, sexually and physically abused, and forced to perform slave labor.

I am proud to acknowledge the advances we made last year. Through continued collaboration, I am confident that 2017 will be another strong year in the fight against human trafficking in Ohio. Thank you to all of the commission members for their dedication and unwavering commitment to protecting our most vulnerable members of society.

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine  
Ohio Attorney General

## **Human Trafficking Commission Activities**

In 2016, the Ohio Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission hosted four quarterly meetings. Each meeting focused on a different topic area and brought together professionals and advocates from across the state and country. The commission is made up of six subcommittees that focus on individual and collaborative efforts to end the demand for trafficking in Ohio and provide improved services to the victims. Subcommittee members heard from speakers from many different professions including business, law enforcement, and health care.

### **Law Enforcement Subcommittee**

The Law Enforcement Subcommittee has representation from various federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. The subcommittee continues to identify innovative ways to address the problem of human trafficking across Ohio, including intelligence sharing, task force work and trainings among law enforcement and private businesses. The subcommittee continues to encourage the partnership between law enforcement agencies and victim service providers, grass-roots organizations and businesses in order to effectively perform these types of investigations. Subcommittee members also met with software companies to discuss new strategies to more effectively track criminals and assist victims. They met with representatives from the Polaris Project to see whether improvements can be made on how tips are received from the public and to better coordinate the sharing of information.

### **Legal and Legislative Subcommittee**

The Legal and Legislative Subcommittee worked on developing new legislation to strengthen Ohio's laws and protections for survivors of human trafficking. This work included extensive research of legislation from other states, discussions on gaps and missing pieces from current legislation, and interested-party meetings to determine the best route to address the identified gaps.

One piece of legislation enacted to specifically address the vulnerability of human trafficking victims is HB 359 Address Confidentiality (Duffey, Gonzales). This bill allows victims of human trafficking, stalking, domestic violence, and related crimes, to be able to register to vote and create other essential public records anonymously. This bill built on measures in HB 193 (Clyde, Fedor) and was enacted.

To combat human trafficking in Ohio, it is essential that law enforcement and the justice system effectively carry out new state laws and policies. For this reason, the Legal and Legislative Subcommittee focused on monitoring the implementation of House Bill 262 – the Safe Harbor Act of 2012 and House Bill 130 – the End Demand Act of 2014.

## **Prevention, Education, and Awareness Subcommittee**

The Prevention, Education, and Awareness Subcommittee collaborated with the University of Dayton's Human Rights Center to publish *Human Trafficking Prevention Education: Guidance for Implementation of Youth Programs* in August of 2016. The report outlines best practices for human trafficking prevention programs at schools and other youth-education venues. The guide highlights the importance of community readiness and staff preparation prior to any youth education, the need for collaboration with local anti-human trafficking coalitions, and addressing the special needs of at-risk youth. The report is available at [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking) and on the University of Dayton's website.

Several organizations and government agencies across Ohio and in other states have been given the guide to help them develop human trafficking prevention programs. Abolition Ohio, for example, is engaged in a youth prevention-education program covering all public and private middle and high schools in five counties in the Miami Valley. They are distributing the guide, along with several other resources, free of charge, to all school libraries in the area.

Looking ahead, the subcommittee is working in collaboration with the Demand Reduction Subcommittee to develop a guide on the prevention of victimization and perpetration activities. The subcommittee is also developing recommendations for training and awareness among health care and business professionals.

## **Research and Analysis Subcommittee**

The Research and Analysis Subcommittee recruited Ohio-based researchers and formed the University Collaboration Against Trafficking (UCAT) to respond to the state's need for human trafficking research. UCAT members have begun discussions to identify the scope and focus of the group's work.

## **Demand Reduction Subcommittee**

The Demand Reduction Subcommittee strives to reduce the culture of tolerance for, and economic advantage of, labor and sex trafficking in Ohio.

The subcommittee is exploring ways to work with, support, and empower local anti-human trafficking groups to incorporate demand reduction into their programming. This includes elevating awareness of and access to resources about: intervention with potential customers and traffickers; and community-wide education and awareness related to reducing the demand for forced labor and compelled commercial activity.

Current committee efforts include:

- The development of PowerPoint presentations with an overview of the demand reduction/primary prevention topic and more in-depth information on working with boys and men on prevention.
- Exploration of the implications of best practices from public health and the primary prevention of sexual and intimate partner violence. Recent efforts include mapping human trafficking prevention strategies for specific audiences onto the social ecological model, and incorporating a focus on maximizing protective factors and reducing risk factors for perpetration of trafficking.
- Preparing a 90-minute presentation for other human trafficking professionals on primary prevention of human trafficking.

Subcommittee members will continue to work closely with the Prevention, Education, and Awareness subcommittee to coordinate statewide human trafficking prevention training. The subcommittee maintains a bibliography of books and articles related to demand reduction/primary prevention of human trafficking. Previous completed documents include:

- “Demand Reduction: White Paper.” To read it, visit [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Files/Publications-Files/Publications-for-Victims/Demand-Reduction-White-Paper.aspx](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Files/Publications-Files/Publications-for-Victims/Demand-Reduction-White-Paper.aspx)
- “Demand Reduction: Conversation Piece.” To read it, visit [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Files/Publications-Files/Publications-for-Victims/Demand-Reduction-Conversation-Piece.aspx](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Files/Publications-Files/Publications-for-Victims/Demand-Reduction-Conversation-Piece.aspx).

## Victim Services Subcommittee

In late 2015, the Victim Services Subcommittee conducted a planning session to establish its direction for 2016. Through a review of existing gaps, challenges, and unmet needs in Ohio’s human trafficking response systems, the subcommittee prioritized two goals for immediate action. First, subcommittee members performed site visits to meet with anti-human trafficking coalitions. Second, the subcommittee focused on updating the child response protocol. A summary of progress:

- **Meetings with local anti-human trafficking coalitions:** In 2016, teams from the Victim Services Subcommittee visited 10 of the existing, proposed, or newly created coalitions in Ohio providing services to more than 20 counties. During these visits, reviewers and coalition leaders identified existing strengths and areas for future growth.
  - Strengths:
    - All of the coalitions are building an effective collaborative response to human trafficking.

- Child advocacy centers play an integral role in their communities and bring experience with a multidisciplinary team approach to victim services.
  - Many of the child advocacy centers have designated a person to lead human trafficking response efforts in their communities.
  - Child advocacy centers and human trafficking coalitions are seen as trusted leaders in human trafficking response.
- Areas for future growth:
  - Many of the coalitions led by child advocacy centers expressed a need to build their coalitions' capacity to assist adult survivors.
  - Many coalitions need additional staff to effectively manage coalition activities.
  - Some coalitions have struggled to partner effectively with local hospitals and medical providers to assist survivors, likely due to a lack of human trafficking awareness and training within the medical settings.
  - There is an ongoing need to train other key partners, including law enforcement and juvenile justice/court staff.

Coalitions noted the importance of establishing mutually beneficial and trusting relationships with the other key players in the community to ensure that their partners are using and referring to their child advocacy center and/or coalition for services and forensic interviews.

The reviewers were able to share a variety of resources with the coalitions, including information about applying for VOCA funding and connecting with hospital and other human trafficking training programs.

- **Update the Child Response Protocol Toolkit:** In 2013, a group of anti-trafficking advocates from around Ohio met with the Victim Services Subcommittee to develop a protocol for responding to child victims of human trafficking. Since that time, new developments such as the growth of Safe Harbor programs, increased access to legal assistance and leadership of the child advocacy centers has changed community response plans. In 2016, the subcommittee hosted four meetings attended by a total of 32 advocates from around the state to redesign and update the Child Response Protocol Toolkit.

The toolkit redesign is about 80 percent complete and is expected to be released to the Human Trafficking Commission in April 2017. When completed, the toolkit will include the following resources for communities seeking to build or strengthen their response to minor victims:

- Purpose
- Responding to minor victims before a community protocol is established
- Accessing training on human trafficking
- Identifying trafficked youth

- Red flags and indicators of the trafficking of youth
- Screening for human trafficking
- Building a local response protocol
  - Sample protocol for child victims of human trafficking
  - Narrative summary of partner roles
  - Summary of Ohio’s Safe Harbor law
  - Resources for foreign national and LGBTQ youths
  - Working with local law enforcement
  - Maintaining confidentiality in a multidisciplinary team
- Trauma-Informed Care Resources

The subcommittee will spend 2017 updating the Standards for Services to Trafficked Persons, and developing guides on coalition building and support. The standards highlight the ethical, media and program standards recommended for any organization providing services to trafficked persons. In light of the growth of services and providers in Ohio, the Victim Services Subcommittee has begun working to update the tool.

## Law Enforcement Updates

The Ohio Attorney General’s Office provides law enforcement with training through the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA), offers investigative resources through the regional human trafficking task forces, and collects local law enforcement human trafficking data to help the public understand the scope of the problem in Ohio. In this section, local law enforcement agencies report their identified cases of human trafficking, the regional task forces provide updated information on cases, and OPOTA states the total number of officers trained on human trafficking awareness in 2016.

- **Local Law Enforcement Human Trafficking Statistics:** Ohio Revised Code Section 109.66 requires local law enforcement to collect data on human trafficking investigations and forward this information to the Ohio Attorney General’s Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). According to the data collected in 2016, law enforcement reported 135 human trafficking investigations leading to 79 arrests and 28 successful criminal convictions.

Law enforcement agencies also reported the number of potential victims, traffickers, and buyers/johns they identified during the past year. Female victims of sex trafficking were the most commonly identified human trafficking victims reported by law enforcement during the past year. There were 151 potential victims of human trafficking identified, with 117 being female, 17 being male and 17 having no gender specified. Of the potential victims, one was age 12 or younger, 14 were 14 to 15 years old, 21 were 16 to 17 years old, 28 were 18 to 20 years old, 51 were 21 to 29 years old, 24 were 30 to 40 years old, and six were 41 to 59 years old. Six of the

potential victims did not have an age listed. Of the victims, 84 were identified as white, 32 victims were listed as black, 30 victims were listed as Asian/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Native Alaskan, and five of them did not have an ethnicity listed.

During the past year, law enforcement identified 170 suspected traffickers, including 160 potential sex traffickers and 10 potential labor traffickers. Of the suspected traffickers, 89 were identified as black, 60 were identified as white, and 21 were identified as Asian/Pacific Islander. Of the potential offenders identified, one was 14 to 15 years old, seven were 18 to 20 years old, 60 were 21 to 29 years old, 79 were 30 to 40 years old, and 15 were 41 to 59 years old. Eight of the potential traffickers had no age listed. Of the potential traffickers, 127 were identified as male, 28 were identified as female, and 15 did not identify a gender.

The number of suspected consumers or buyers/johns identified by law enforcement in 2016 was 102, all of which were identified as potential consumers of sex trafficking. There were two consumers identified as black and 100 did not list an ethnicity. Only two potential consumers had an age listed. One of the potential consumers was identified as 21 to 29 years old and one consumer was identified as 30 to 40 years old. There were 101 consumers identified as male and one was identified as female.

Trafficking can involve movement of victims across cities, states, or the country. Law enforcement identified a motor vehicle as the method of transportation in 132 cases and in three cases an airplane was identified as the method of transportation. In three cases, law enforcement listed the method of transportation as “other” than motor vehicle, airplane, or watercraft. In four cases, the method of transportation was listed as “non-applicable,” which most likely means that the case did not involve known transportation.

Finally, law enforcement agencies were asked to categorize the social and/or economic factors leading the victim to be trafficked. In 22 cases, law enforcement identified the underlying risk factor as “runaway and homeless youth.” In four cases, “truancy” was listed as a risk factor. The most number of cases reported risk factors identified “drug/alcohol/other dependency” (67). It is unclear whether the dependency existed before the suspected trafficking or during. “Oppressed, marginalized, and/or impoverished” was cited as an identified risk factor in 22 cases, and nine cases listed “other factors.”

- **Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force:** The Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force was created by the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OOCIC) as a law enforcement collaborative to investigate human trafficking cases in the central Ohio area. The task force was announced in August 2012 and is primarily composed of officers and agents from the Columbus Division of Police, the Franklin County Sheriff's Office, the Department of Homeland Security, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, the Powell Police Department, the Delaware County Sheriff's Office, the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Ohio, and the Delaware County Prosecutor's Office, in



partnership with the Salvation Army of Central Ohio. The Ohio Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) provides intelligence analysis and other assistance upon request. Cases of note:

- In March, a 42-year-old Columbus man who forced at least two women into commercial sex through physical abuse and exploitation of their drug addictions was sentenced to seven years in prison. A 34-year-old woman who helped run the operation, pleaded guilty in a separate hearing to promoting prostitution. The two women who came forward in the case said they were threatened and assaulted by the man, who supplied or denied them drugs and kept all the money from their prostitution work. The Columbus Division of Police conducted the investigation with the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force and the OOCIC. Raymont Moore was sentenced to seven years for attempted trafficking in persons. The case was investigated by the Columbus Division of Police, and the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, and prosecuted by the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office.
- Eric D. Chavis, 24, of Columbus, was sentenced in U.S. District Court to 15 years in prison for directing and distributing music videos depicting child pornography. Chavis pleaded guilty on June 7, 2016, to one count of conspiracy to produce child pornography. At the time of his plea, he admitted that he recorded sexually explicit video footage of three minor females and that he later edited that footage into "rap" videos. He admitted to posting the videos, as well as still images from the videos, on numerous websites. U.S. District Court Judge Michael Watson sentenced Chavis to remain under court supervision for 10 years after he completes his prison term. While on supervised release, Chavis must register as a sex offender anywhere he lives, works, or goes to school. Acting U.S. Attorney Benjamin Glassman commended the cooperative investigation by the Central Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force as well as Assistant U.S. Attorneys Heather A. Hill and Jessica H. Kim, who represented the United States in this case.
- Hui Li, 47, of Columbus was sentenced to one year and one day in prison in connection with running brothels at massage parlors she owned in Columbus and Dublin, Ohio. Documents filed with the court by the U.S. Attorney's Office prior to sentencing say that Li used online classified ad websites to advertise the massage parlors. She transported undocumented Asian women to and from her massage parlors each day to work as prostitutes. The women worked for 11 to 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Li pleaded guilty on Nov. 18, 2015, to one count of interstate travel to promote unlawful business and one count of hiring undocumented immigrants. Li, a naturalized U.S. citizen, was also sentenced to serve two years under court supervision after completing her prison term. Acting U.S. Attorney Benjamin Glassman commended the investigative work of the Ohio Attorney General's Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission

Human Trafficking Task Force. He also commended Assistant U.S. Attorney Heather A. Hill who represented the United States in the case.

- A federal grand jury charged J’Vonta C. Buckley, 25, of Columbus, with charges related to human trafficking and child pornography in an indictment returned in Columbus. He was charged with one count of sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion, which carries a potential sentence of 15 years to life in prison, one count of sex trafficking of a minor, which carries a potential sentence of 10 years to life in prison, one count of production of child pornography, which carries a potential sentence of 15 to 30 years in prison, and one count of possession of child pornography, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment. Investigators with the human trafficking task force discovered Buckley in December 2014 while conducting a sting on a backpage ad that they believed depicted a minor girl. Buckley was arrested on a warrant for a gun charge and served a sentence that ended Dec. 20, 2015.
- Michelle Feldman was sentenced in Franklin County Common Pleas Court to seven years in prison for attempted trafficking. Her boyfriend, Thomas Williamson, was sentenced to 15 years in prison for trafficking in persons. The charges were the result of an investigation into a human-trafficking scheme where three women were lured to their Reynoldsburg home; sexually and physically abused; and forced to perform slave labor. The case was investigated by the Reynoldsburg Police Department and prosecuted by the Franklin County Prosecutor’s Office.
- **Cincinnati Human Trafficking Task Force:** The Cincinnati Police Department, as part of the Southwest Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force and the Southwest Ohio Human Trafficking Working Group, received tips on more than 25 potential human trafficking cases. During the past year, three ongoing investigations brought four human traffickers to justice. Cases of note:
  - A Cincinnati couple was indicted and convicted in federal court for their part in trafficking two girls between Cincinnati and Indianapolis to engage in commercial sex.
  - Officers working with Tampa-area federal and local law enforcement investigated a Cincinnati man who was transporting women to Florida for the purpose of prostitution. The man was indicted on federal charges and arrested in downtown Cincinnati.
  - A woman was found to be trafficking a mentally challenged woman in an area hotel for commercial sex purposes and was indicted on a state human trafficking charge and is awaiting trial.

- Officers working with northern Kentucky investigators also rescued a 15-year-old girl, who was posted on an Internet escort site, in downtown Cincinnati.
- The Cincinnati Police Department, in cooperation with Hamilton County Municipal Court officials and social service providers, referred numerous women who are involved in commercial sex, to CHANGE court. CHANGE court is a specialty docket to provide supervised services to help those caught up in human trafficking to break the cycle of drug addiction and commercial sex. There are 17 women receiving services through the program. The collaborative effort of law enforcement, the courts, and victim service groups has impacted human trafficking in the Cincinnati area.
- **Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force:** In September, Attorney General DeWine and Mahoning County Sheriff Jerry Greene announced the formation of a new OOCIC task force that will work to combat human trafficking in the Mahoning Valley. The Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force is directed by Major Jeff Allen of the Mahoning County Sheriff's Office and includes representatives from the Austintown Police Department, Liberty Township Police Department, Mahoning County Prosecutor's Office, BCI, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Ohio Adult Parole Authority, and Mahoning County Children's Services.

Soon after forming, the task force arrested five suspected "johns" during a solicitation sting in Mahoning County. The suspects, who were all charged with a misdemeanor count of solicitation, were arrested after allegedly soliciting an undercover officer for sex after responding to an advertisement posted online.

- **Law Enforcement Training:** The Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) actively trains local law enforcement to identify and investigate cases of human trafficking in Ohio. The Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission implemented the Missing and Human Trafficking course as a part of the basic training curriculum in response to the Safe Harbor Law, which requires all new peace officers to receive human trafficking training. The training ensures that incoming law enforcement officers are armed with awareness about human trafficking and tools on how to investigate such crimes.

In 2016, 31,926 Ohio peace officers and other law enforcement professionals took part in and completed human trafficking training through OPOTA. Of this total, more than 1,230 were new peace officers who completed the human trafficking course as a part of their basic training. There were 30,538 law enforcement professionals who completed the human trafficking course made available through the online classroom of eOPOTA. Of this total, 23,949 completed an updated course developed specifically for officers' Continuing Professional Training. And 158 individuals completed the advanced, in-person human trafficking OPOTA training. The public can view these online courses by visiting: [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/HumanTrafficking) under the "Online Human Trafficking Training" tab.

## **Conclusion**

As Ohio continues to develop its response to human trafficking, the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Commission will remain on the forefront. By increasing communication between local coalitions and federal and state agencies, the commission will continue to identify the available services for survivors of human trafficking and make the local community response stronger. The next year will bring more opportunities to increase education and outreach across the state. Members will be speaking to new organizations and emphasizing the importance of identification and the collection of tips. Local advocates, service providers, law enforcement, and other professionals will continue to play an essential role in fighting human trafficking. The commission is confident that they can and will make a significant impact in 2017.



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**Human Trafficking**

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Annual Report

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