

HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION

**OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL**

**MEETING MINUTES December 9, 2024, | 10:00AM-12:00PM**

1. **Welcome and Introduction- Linda Powers**
2. In-person attendees introduced themselves
3. **Advisory Council Ambassador Updates:**
4. Mary Kate Waggoner indicted that the Ambassadors are presently discussing areas of focus they would like to see for the 2025 Human Trafficking Summit and different topics that they would like to see for breakout sessions as HTI will be putting out applications for breakout proposals early in 2025. We are also gathering with the Ambassadors for some vision casting 2025 and finishing out this round of Ambassadors. We are going to have Ambassador applications going out in the Spring so Summer 2025 will start the new class of Ambassadors which is also crazy to believe. Harold, Stephanie and Annette are doing their second term right now as Ambassadors, so unfortunately will be their last term with us as Ambassadors. We will see them around and they will continue to do amazing things and all the things they are involved in, and I know some of the Ambassadors are on the call so I will just open it up to them to see if any Ambassadors have anything they would like to share, updates wise.
5. There were no updates from Ambassadors.
6. **Subcommittee Updates:**
7. **Healthcare Subcommittee Chair Heather Wilder unavailable, Lilly Holderbaum, Chair Elect will speak instead:** Hello, I am Lilly Holderbaum and for those that do not know me I manage the Nursing Unit in Summit County with Akron General. I was invited to chair the Healthcare Subcommittee. I am taking over for Heather and she will be retiring in the fall. I am also our outgoing president for the international forensic nursing for our chapter. I have been able to serve with them for several years and this is an exciting opportunity that I look forward to and reporting out our priorities for 2025.

Linda Powers: Lily, do you have the goals or priorities that you are contemplating in 2025 for the Healthcare Subcommittee?

Lily: We are continuing our plans to create a poster for patients to report unsafe conditions. If they are feeling that they are in an unsafe situation and speak out when they are visiting the hospital setting. We are working on a way to communicate back to the healthcare staff any concerns. We are working on a consensus of language for that poster. We are possibly looking at a little pull tab that the patient can give to the provider. We are still looking at that process. There have been several discussions around that, and the next step would be educating our healthcare providers on the safety concerns. Another thing that Heather and I have been looking into is potentially when we are screening patients, and we see some community drivers and have some concerns we have some sort of messaging that goes through in our medical alert so follow-up caregivers can know what the next steps are. More to come on that.

1. **Law Enforcement-Co-Chair Matthew Hilbert**
2. *Matthew Hilbert*: Good morning. Thanks Linda. We did have a meeting about a month ago. It is nice we have a couple of new federal members that work for federal law enforcement agencies and local agencies as well who have not participated before. A bigger meeting than usual. We typically have only 5 or 6 people that hop on. We had about a dozen so there were some new faces in the meeting. Nothing real substantial to report out. The year end stat stuff. Task forces are getting OHLEG reports done. From OOCIC perspective we need to come up with our info for the AG’s annual report.

*Linda Powers*: I am glad to see the numbers are increasing. I know when Mary Kate and I are training law enforcement agencies we have been trying to push the fact that there is this law enforcement subcommittee and that you are sharing some of your intelligence information and resources within the law enforcement community. So, it is good to hear they are following up. We are trying to make sure we make those contacts with your subcommittee.

*Matthew Hilbert*: It is especially nice because a lot of the subcommittee members were task force members and the people who joined last month were not so that was really nice. People that are not necessarily doing this every day. They can get to meet people who are and get contact information and learn what’s going on.

*Linda Powers*: If it is helpful we will continue to do that for you.

*Matthew Hilbert*: Sounds good.

1. **Victim Services Subcommittee Co-Chair Rebecca O’Brian:** Michelle is unavailable today however we touched base about 2025 goals. We do have some exciting updates, so we were happily looking forward to this meeting. First, we did publish as a joint effort between the subcommittee and the Governors Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force a response protocol for child victims of trafficking. That is available online and a great resource for communities to build a multidisciplinary response to both identifying and responding to youth victims of trafficking. We had a wonderful working group who worked for a very long time on this document, and it was just a great resource. We are really excited to share it with our partners. The second update that we are excited about is that we are building more mechanisms, maybe like accountability for people who are applying to be on the service directory. Previously an organization could be on the service directory if they passed a self-assessment on the victim services standard. We have updated the process to not only pass that assessment but also an outline of training for staff or volunteers to receive. Also support from either local anti-trafficking coalitions or an anti-trafficking service provider that they are well connected to. The goal of that is to really ensure that they are all on the same page when we are interpreting the self-assessment. Sometimes there may be an organization that indicates they meet all the standards but maybe there is a member of the committee who says: “I have worked with that organization before, and I happen to know that they need more support in this area.” We can provide some tea for them. Another mechanism for community members to weigh in. We just want the directory to reflective of the anti-trafficking communities stamp of approval in Ohio. We will be meeting in February to do the group review for new applicants with the new protocols and for those entities that are being renewed. Renewal is every 3 years. No one is due yet. For those applying please have your training plan and a letter of support.

Mary Kate Waggoner: I want to let you and everyone who worked on the protocol that we are receiving some amazing feedback. We sent it out to the list serve and we are talking about it in trainings and folks are really excited about it. Even communities that have already built out a child response protocol, they are excited to assess and update and make sure they are meeting the latest and greatest. Thanks for all your work on this and I know there are folks in the room that worked on it too, so we really appreciate it. It is going to be a wonderful, updated tool for folks to use.

Linda Powers: Thank you so much and thank you for revising the standards for getting on the directory. We really appreciate that. That is an immense amount of work that your subcommittee does.

1. **Demand Reduction Subcommittee: Maggie is reporting this period for Tony Talbot: Working** groups are still piecing together the white paper. Hopefully we are on the home stretch but that is our main focus**.**

Mary Kate: Maggie, can you detail a little more about the content of the white paper for people that might not be familiar with what that is.

Maggie: The old one out on the website. We broke it down into three sections. We have labor as one, a section on sex trafficking and then we have a general section that introduces themes. We are talking about new concepts, theories and things like that. It walks people through an overview of demand reduction in a different format. It ties things together and has references. You can go to different resources that we put together.

1. **Public Awareness Subcommittee- Lara Wilken: Shout** out to the Public Awareness Committee members, obviously we could not do all this wonderful work without your expertise and insight. Of course we couldn’t do it without our wonderful Ambassadors. With that being said a couple of goals that we have for 2025, if you recall, we had sent out a survey previously to look at 2023 all the wonderful work being done by the commission and from that survey we were excited to learn that 66 of 88 counties in Ohio in the year of 2023 had received training on human trafficking. That is a reflection on all of your wonderful work. We will be sending a new survey to the rest of the Commission because we have new members coming on and hopefully, we will learn that all 88 counties have been covered. So that is the 2025 goal we have moving forward. In addition to that we are in the process of revamping/updating the public awareness materials that are currently on the HTI website for online safety. There is one that is specific to applications and one that is specific to parents, like tips for success in keeping their children safe. We are actively working on those documents and then our major goal that we are hoping to achieve in 2025 is we would like to create an online library of resources for the HTI webpage that will just be specific areas where people can go to their internet expertise or specialty and find relevant, up to date references and resources. The other major project that we would like to do is to create a community public awareness video. We want to make a simulation video that is more situational awareness, being cognizant of what is happening in your community and around you. You can be planning to see that survey coming soon. That is really it other than another heartfelt thank you to our committee members and to the rest of you.

*Mary Kate Waggoner*: Lara, there looks like there is a question to you in the chat from David.

*Lara*: For the 2023 Counties where there has not been training did, they have something in common? Do I have the ability to show my screen because I can actually pull the map up really quick if you would like so you can get a picture of what those counties are because some of them are clustered in one area. Is that a potential that I can bring up my screen?

*Mary Kate Waggoner*: Try sharing or we can change the permissions on our end.

*Lara*: It’s a good thing I know where it is. This is a great question Dave, thank you for enquiring.

Mary Kate Waggoner: While Lara is working on pulling that map up, I just want to share that the survey was limited to members of the human trafficking commission, so we know that we did not necessarily capture the scope of all the trainings that are taking place throughout Ohio for human trafficking. This was reported by our commission members in the survey.

*Lara*: David if you can see the map, there is one corner of the state that is lacking in training. It is almost like we have one corner at the top, one corner at the bottom and a few scattered. And again, as Mary Kate sad, this was specific to the work that our commission members are doing, not reflective of the work of all the coalitions that are out there. It is exciting to see that we are covering all of these counties in orange work that was done by our commission. That really speaks volumes about the passion, the commitment of our members here. Does that give you a better idea?

*David*: That is wonderful. Thank you. Very, very helpful.

*Linda Powers*: David, I want to add, Lara if it is okay, we have been trying to go ahead and hit those areas where, there was a concerted effort where those areas did not have training, getting training into those areas where there was not training and speaking with professionals as well as community members and schools in regard to human trafficking. So, we are trying to cover areas that were not receiving training in the past.

*Lara*: Linda, I wanted to add because I can see in the chat that Amy said this can be shared with the Ohio Coalitions. Great info to have. Well with your permission Linda and Mary Kate can we share this with them?

*Linda Powers*: Actually, the 2023 Annual Report is out on the Attorney General’s HTI website, and this map is contained within the annual report. The 2023 HT annual report has some of the stats for the state, what each of the subcommittees are working on in the year 2023 as well as that state map.

1. **Legal & Legislative Subcommittee-Linda Powers on behalf of Chair Samantha Solomon:**

Linda Powers: We had some discussions the other day, one of the things that Sam was looking for is some of the gaps that we are still seeing in some of the pieces of legislation and there were a couple of ideas that were thrown out in regard to some potential things to look for in the future. Now that we have the expungement bill passed and become effective on October 24, 2024, there is training taking place all over the state for survivors. There is a survivor training that is coming up in regard to “how to get through filing these motions for expungements” pro se. I know that Mya Simmick had put on a training with the Cleveland Collaborative to End Human Trafficking and Sam was also involved in that and that was specifically for the Judges that will hear these motions and the parameters of these hearings. That training was video taped so that Judges who could not attend the live training could view the training on their personal schedule.

*Anna Travis*: I am on the subcommittee, and we are looking for gaps in policy so if you have any ideas, you can email me too and that will be helpful with where we want to go next year and for our January meeting.

*Mary Kate Waggoner*: Emily had her hand up at one point. Do you have a question or something to add?

*Emily Dunlap*: No, I think you all have nailed it. We are celebrating and keeping an eye on linked up and formulating goals for next year.

Linda Powers: Once again, as Anna said please contact Anna or Sam in regard to any ideas that you may have where you are recognizing that there are gaps that needed filled in present legislation pertaining to human trafficking. I know they talked about bringing up nursing training requirements again.

*Emily Dunlap*: Yes.

*Linda Powers*: I know there was a long discussion about the requirement for HT nurse training in Ohio and looking at the original proposed bill that was put forth a couple of years ago and testing the atmosphere that exists now in regard to this issue. Maybe the atmosphere has changed a little in Columbus and there is a greater opportunity for passage this time around. The discussions were lengthy because there are many members sitting on the legal and legislative subcommittee that are medical professionals, and they raised mandatory HT training for nurses as a definitive gap in certification policies.

*Mary Kate Waggoner*: I want to add that some of the Cleveland Collab legislative folks are on the call; we have folks from the Governors office, we have folks from all different entities working things in the legal and legislative space so I think it would be helpful for everyone to have a picture of who kind of doing what so that we can divide and conquer or collaborate on these things. I know we all have a lot of the same goals, and we are seeing a lot of the same gaps so that would be helpful if there is something on your radar, we can plan accordingly with that in mind.

1. **Research, Data and Gap Analysis-Kirsti Mouncey**

*Kirsti Mouncey*: I am here Linda; I see Rosario Sanchez on the screen. But I think we are really excited to report that Rosario’s program has been funded for another year to collect really important statewide data on human trafficking prevalence. So, thank you to everyone that filled out the survey in support of this project and the support of the Ohio Attorney General for supporting this project. We continue to look at other projects around the state and other ways to collect data but certainly Rosarios project is the one we have had our eye on most and this committee is supporting the most. Rosario. if you could share a little bit about where you are at and share what is going on with your report.

*Dr. Sanchez*: I want to thank the Attorney General for funding us again for a second year. Some updates, we have completed all the amendments for the second year to the IRB. We are updating the focus adult screener to reflect what the findings from the first year. I obtained permission from Dr. Neff from Texas to add part of our validated compassionate care for convergence validity for our focus adult screener. We will be using a self-judgment on the screener and that will be the validation that we need on the adult screener. Also, I am conducting a focus group with five members of the Attorney Generals Ambassador Survivor Council. I had a nice talk with Annette Mango Friday, and she gave me some feedback that we want to add some high-risk questions to our focus adult screener. And that is what we are finding, a decision on the focus adult. We still are hoping to continue connecting with Christina La Pointe Jackson, Nancy Hashman and Stephanie. I am hoping to connect via email for feedback. They will be getting compensation-$50.00 Amazon gift card for a half an hour to forty minutes when they talk to me about additional questions for the focused adult screener. The MOUs were completed for the office of UT Research and Legal for agencies that we have already. We have Lutheran, Social Services, of Northwest Ohio that will cover Seneca and Sandusky Counties. We are just waiting for Ottawa County with Heid Troyer of the Department of Job and Family Services. So, we are waiting for Ottawa County to come in with a possible agency that we can partner with. We are aiming for 65 screeners for each county. For smaller counties and agencies, we are aiming for 35 screeners. We are in the process of putting all the contracts together for the ones that are going to be our web portal. First, Domestic Violence Services is going to cover Wood and Wyandot Counties. Crime Victim Services will cover Allen and Putnum Counties. We already have had a couple of meetings, and we are excited that we are getting outside vendors, and we are starting on the same page that we want for the portal. We are still waiting on UT Legal & Research office to give us a grant number to file our extension and to be covered by the IRB. Some of the focus youth and PATH. The other thing we are talking with Mercy Health about to partner with us to use the Youth focus screener. I know you guys are looking into the legal part, the one thing I will tell you is that there are two states, Michigan and Florida require trainings for licensure to have a human trafficking continuum. Maybe legal will profit from but also there is policy at the Journal of Academy of Nursing about nursing responding to health care and I was one of the authors and there is another paper that may back up that with the UN that I was also a part of from a global perspective of healthcare responding to human trafficking. Those protocols may be something that you look at for nursing and if I can help in any way, I would be more than happy to do that. My partner in crime is Amy Lagesse and she will give you an update on the focus youth screener.

Amy Lagesse: I also want to thank everyone in this meeting for the funding for another year. Not only did you fund focus adult screener but you funded focus youth and PATH. PATH is Partners Against Trafficking in Humans. The program that uses case managers to help survivors on their journey. So, I wanted you to know that with the funding through the Attorney General’s Office we were able to hire 3 part-time consultants. I am very excited, and we have that paperwork going and moving. What that means is we can partner with agencies and communities to run the PATH program. Although we will still be having that in place, we will have some of our own staff which will help us when Rosario’s adults come our way after her validation practices are completed, then the tool will be rolled out and we will be ready for more clients. If you have a relationship or are working with an agency that serves youth, their ages are 12-17 and would like a screener to use to find out if they have been likely been trafficked or are at risk of being trafficked, please call me or email me because I would love to work with you. We want to expand the youth screener to Sandusky, Wood, Ottawa, Seneca and Columbus, Cincinnati and Cleveland. Grace Haven in Columbus has agreed to work with us. I have contacted the Seneca County Juvenile Court. I have made some other contacts, but I am still looking for Wood, Ottawa and Sandusky Counties. Thank you, things are moving, and we are very excited. Another fabulous year for focused youth. We did add two more questions to our youth screener so if you are using our focused youth screener we have updated and added two new questions. We are in version #3 now. We have a question about familial trafficking and online exploitation. We are at 19 questions, so we are still a survey that moves quickly. Just in Lucas County we have 461 screeners completed in 2024 and with those numbers I have preliminary data that I have done myself and we have 20 youth enrolled in the PATH program from being identified from the focus youth screener. I can send a copy of the newest youth screener to Mary Kate.

Dr. Sanchez: I also want to add if there are any Ambassadors from the Advisory Council that would like to partner with us just email us. I want the Advisory Council to be notified of what we are doing monthly with the focus adult screener so that they know what we are doing and how their input has affected our research.

will keep you updated once that is uploaded and how to access it.

1. **HTI General Updates-Linda Powers:**

Mount Carmel has graciously agreed to host the HTC 2025 Quarterly meetings will at Mount Carmel Family Center. For those that have not come to these meetings in person it is a beautiful space right off the highway and offers free parking. I encourage you to attend in person because individuals stay after the main meeting to have discussion and expand their connections. It is a nice contact hour. The 2025 meetings will be on March 10, 2025; June 9, 2025; September 8, 2025, and December 8, 2025.

I also want to let you know that we have two tentative holds on the Summit for next year. One is at the Hyatt and the other is the Convention Center. The dates are July 30, 2025, and July 31, 2025. The 30th is International Human Trafficking Day so it would be nice to recognize International Human Trafficking Day. We are a governmental agency so we have to go through bid comparisons, however it will likely be the last week of July 2025 next year. As Mary Kate indicated we will be working with our Ambassadors to come up with a focus for the 2025 Human Trafficking Summit. We would like to get the proposals out no later than mid-February. We are excited about some things we are planning for the next Summit and hope that everyone can join us once again. We would like attendance somewhere between 750 and 850. The 2025 HT Summit will be in-person format once again as we had such wonderful feedback from the surveys indicating that attendees really preferred the in-person format.

We also wanted to touch base on the new human trafficking law enforcement hotline number as we had a question regarding who would be responding to a tip. We wanted to discuss the processing of tips received. When there is a tip coming into the hotline, it is going to BCI dispatch. Depending upon whether there is a crisis at the moment, depending upon whether it is a youth, depending upon whether there is a complaint located where there is no OOCIC Task Force, some of those cases will go to the investigators from the Special Victims Unit. The Special Victims Unit Investigators are located in the Northern part of Ohio and the Southern part of Ohio. If you are a hospital or an NGO and you have someone, come in and can ask to see their badges, ask to see their business cards. But it may not be law enforcement that is coming to talk with a survivor, it may be an Investigator from the Special Victims Unit who is with BCI to follow up on a tip they received through the hotline. Those investigators are law enforcement. So, it can be with Matt’s group over with the HT Task Forces, it could be a local law enforcement officer coming out as Matt had indicated earlier there are more officers coming forward and are becoming part of task forces or they are local entities that want to work on human trafficking cases. I just want you to know it may not be just an officer from a task force contacting you.

1. **In attendance:** David Corliss, Anna Travis, David, Rebecca Bundy, Chrissy Hughes-McAllister, Christina LaPointe Jackson, Liza Day, Annette Mango, Samantha Solomon, Katie Taylor, Karen Monroe, Sara Johnson, Leslie Potterton, Erin Meyer, Micayla Wilson, Karen Monroe, Donna Hoffman, Kwami Adoboe-Herrerra, Emily Dunlap, Jodi Stanton, Joey A. Compton, Celia Williamson, Kristy Mouncey, Alyssa Newell, Jasmine Meyers, Leyshon Roberts, Eric Matheny, Tracy Goss McGinley, Haleigh Young, Jill Jackson, Amy Henning, Jennifer Taber, Carol Wygant, Hannah Swift, Nancy Hashman, Rosario Sanchez, Cassandra Hartman, Thomas Beers, Ruth Downing, Julie Shroyer, Anna Travis, Karla Bloomingdale, Danielle Davis, Crystal Allen, Kathleen Hackett, Terri Hood-Brown, Jessica Toncler, Mary Kate Waggoner, Amy Lagesse, Josh Edwards, Becca Peckingpaugh, Anna Becks, Janis Karim, D. Barker, Latasha Brown, Lauren B., Matthew Hilbert, Jon Eric Sprague, Linda Powers, Kelly May, Rosa Beltre, Christi Bartman, Harold D’Souza, Dancy D’Souza, Chelsee Gaffney, Hannah Estabrook, Gwen England, Ruchelle Alleyne, Lilly Holderbaum, Naima Iim, Veronica Scherbauer, Kirsti Mouncey, Kelli Cary, Sarah Brown.