



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION

## OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

### MEETING MINUTES

June 25, 2020

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Jennifer Rausch began the meeting with introductions. The members of the Commission who were present (both video and on the phone) introduced themselves to the rest of the group.

At the beginning of the meeting, Jennifer Rausch reviewed the Human Trafficking Commission goals for the group and re-capped the 03/05 meeting. The 2020-2021 goals are focused on:

1. Coalition expansion and resource development
2. Updating the victim service standards
3. Focus on Labor Trafficking
4. Cultural Awareness

#### **HTI Updates:**

Please be on the lookout for our Human Trafficking Summit Proposal Requests. We are requesting proposals for both basic and advanced workshops to offer our attendees this year.

#### **Survivor Role Discussion**

- Ruth Downing stated that having a survivor dedicated to the healthcare subcommittee would be beneficial to their efforts. In general, understanding the need for survivor advice and council is crucial
- Tony Talbott stated a survivor voice should be a part of the Commission from the start. He suggested we send out an inquiry for sex and labor survivors
- Bhumika Patel stated that there should be transparency with survivors and that they should be presented with an option of participating, while letting them know that there may not be compensation
- Rosa Beltre said we must find a way to compensate survivors regardless. She asked the question if we have decided what the survivor pool would like and we should ensure that the survivor pool be diverse, inclusive and equitable. She also asked if we have defined what their roles would be, frequency of meetings or collaboration efforts they would be serving on.

- Tonya Folks and Tony Talbott mentioned we should look at how other states have framed survivor representation and shared information on the national survivor network: <https://nationalsurvivornetwork.org/>
- Harold D'Souza stated to compensate survivors in some capacity, even if it's not the full \$81 rate would be better than no compensation. We need to respect survivors both men and women. The members of the commission have the power to raise funds and empower survivors.
- Jomel Aird explained we should produce a written letter with the AG signatory for survivors if they need to give to their work or other obligations without having to disclose that they are survivors of human trafficking.
- The HTI team will be meeting with subcommittee chairs to finalize the role of survivors. Each subcommittee chair was asked to discuss with their subcommittees their thoughts and ideas to bring to the final discussion.

### **Subcommittee Updates**

#### **Demand Reduction Subcommittee – Chair: Tony Talbott**

Their subcommittee wants to expand their membership by increasing expertise and diversity and developing their vision and mission statement. They are creating an inventory of important resources and develop a list of other organizations and stakeholders working on demand reduction across the state. They will be working close with the Human Trafficking Task Force and the Ohio Network of Anti-Human Trafficking Coalitions. They are going to produce a set of guidelines and definitions for demand reduction activities and training material while engaging survivors in their work and ensure all recommendations are vetted by survivors.

Key takeaways:

- Mobilize stakeholders – promising materials for both and sex labor trafficking
- Demand reduction policy network
- Reduce forced labor through supply chain in Ohio
- Cultural shifts – reduce social tolerance for sexual exploitation and engaging men specifically

#### **Research/Gap Analysis and Data Subcommittee – Co-Chairs: Christi Bartman and Jesse Bach**

They will be conducting an analysis on available data on human trafficking in Ohio and identify the inconsistencies/gaps.

This includes the following:

- Identify end users of the data and their needs/potential use of the data
- Establish criteria to discern what constitutes credible research
- Parse current data availability by database, accessibility, etc. to determine if that data is collected but not shared or not collected and why
- Produce recommendations to fill those gaps with credible data needed by end users
- Determine the way to use this data going forward to dispel myths and introduce critical thinking skills that inform credible research/publications/decision-making
- Ensure as much attention is focused on labor trafficking as sex trafficking in data analysis and availability
- They want to ensure there is a clear consensus on research and data in Ohio.

#### **Public Awareness Subcommittee – Co-Chairs: Bhumika Patel and Amy LaGesse**

- The Public Awareness subcommittee is developing guidelines for Public Awareness materials. They will ensure all recommendations and materials are trauma informed and survivor centered.
- The subcommittee would like to evaluate current public awareness campaigns and then create recommendations based on those materials.
- The group would also like to develop specific public awareness materials for the AGO HT Commission and send a survey to the Ohio anti-trafficking coalitions to see what materials each coalition uses.

#### **Victim Services Subcommittee – Co-Chairs: Michelle Hannan and Kelli Carey**

The victim services subcommittee is based upon being culturally sensitive and trauma informed. They created their goals to reflect the overall goals of the Commission.

- Review and update standards by the end of the year by Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>
- Ensuring the standards are being disseminated at the beginning of 2021 and sent to all coalitions
- Statewide service matrix that is human trafficking based
- Focused on victim services to give quality referrals
- Strengthen Ohio's response to labor trafficking by establishing focus groups and gather data from the groups to inform specific legislation

### **Healthcare Subcommittee – Chair: Ruth Downing**

- They realize the data is inaccurate and they want to tag team with the research/data subcommittee.
- The subcommittee is working to create guidelines about how to ask about trafficking.
- The subcommittee will be evidence based and wants to focus on improving access to care in rural counties.
- Healthcare officials do not realize ICD 10 codes exist and the group would like to bring more awareness. They also want to help survivors find resources once they leave the hospitals

### **Law Enforcement Subcommittee – Chair: Detective Aaron Dennis**

- The subcommittee is working with HTI on law enforcement reporting their human trafficking numbers on OHLEG
- They want to better serve victims and get full-time investigators to have trauma informed training
- They are set to meet with the head of the Ohio Hotel Lodging Association because trafficking at hotels continues to be rampant in Ohio.

### **Legal and Legislative Subcommittee: Co-Chairs: Senator Fedor & Samantha Salamon**

- They are still finalizing their goals
- Hoping to work with the courts on legal aspects of human trafficking
- They want to give a survey and gather information from all the legal courts

### **Covid-19 Updates**

**Michelle Hannan, Salvation Army** – The hotline still working. It is hard for undocumented survivors and survivors without identification to become eligible for government relief efforts. Survivors still have food security in Columbus. For the time being they have halted their Drop-in Centers and jail visits, but are working on safety and modified versions.

**James Mackey, Cuyahoga Human Trafficking Task Force** – Meeting with SANE examiners and survivors over video conference. They have stopped their sting operations. The task force has conducted online posing as sex workers and will send a text to potential buyers telling them that they have been identified.

**Kelli Carey, RAHB ministries** – They are conducting online mentoring. The safe houses are operating the same, but have moved to full telehealth and teleconferencing. Their drop-in centers are open, but they are keeping it under 10 individuals at one time. On a case by case basis they

are slowly allowing 1 on 1 mentoring. They are seeing youth running away from home because of COVID-19 and RAHAB is trying to be a place for these youth to come.

**Magistrate Blair, Empowerment Court** – Their Juvenile Docket has been struggling because it is hard to get the youth back in and engage them when it is all video conferencing. They are not being drug tested so they are working to find a way to do that safely. They are also working to go into the homes for contact visits.

**Bhumika Patel, PCSAO** – Will be offering a webinar series by the end of July

**Rosa Beltre, Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence (OAESV)** – Cultural humility, sensitivity, trauma, barriers and systematic oppression and anti-oppression trainings should be trainings that we all take, as we are creating and ensuring that Ohio survivors of Human Trafficking are safe, and we don't continue creating systems of oppression. All our partners are important, but not every victim is considered or is being neglected, abused or killed at the rate of victims of color.

**Next Commission Meeting Date: TBD**