



ILLINOIS STATE POLICE

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 13, 2025

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ILLINOIS STATE POLICE ANNOUNCES SWEEPING CHANGES TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING LAWS IN ILLINOIS

Governor Pritzker signs Illinois Statewide Trauma-Informed Response to Human Trafficking Act

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois State Police (ISP) is announcing major updates to several laws impacting the ability to combat human trafficking and help those who have been trafficked with the signing of [Senate Bill 2323](#), the Illinois Statewide Trauma-Informed Response to Human Trafficking Act. The Act addresses human trafficking through prevention, intervention, and establishing standards for survivor support, and impacts laws governing ISP, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL), Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ), Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board (ILETSB), Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs), the Office of the State's Attorneys Appellate Prosecutor, the Illinois Secretary of State, and other stakeholders.

“As Illinois continues to enhance its strategies to combat human trafficking, it's crucial that we ensure survivors — no matter who they are or where they live — have access to the resources they need,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “This vital legislation marks a coordinated, multi-agency effort to better identify, protect, and support our most vulnerable, making Illinois a safer place for everyone.”

Human trafficking is one of the most underreported and under-identified crimes. In fiscal year 2024, 448 human trafficking survivors were reported to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority as receiving services from an Illinois domestic violence or sexual assault agency, and 213 possible cases of child trafficking were reported to DCFS during that same time frame. However, we know these numbers are only a fraction of the human trafficking victims in our state.

“Human trafficking can come in many forms, from commercial sex acts to forced labor,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “Because human trafficking has many faces and can happen almost anywhere, it is important to have a comprehensive, statewide victim-centered, trauma-informed response that encompasses those who may come in contact with individuals who are being trafficked, such as law enforcement, child services, case workers, treatment providers, and others.”

The Illinois Statewide Trauma-Informed Response to Human Trafficking Act provides consistency in the state's response by creating uniform service response, policies, agency infrastructure, screening tools, training, and protocols.

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Service Response for Survivors of Human Trafficking

- Coordinates several state agencies through a single statewide plan to identify and respond to survivors.
- Creates standards of care for human trafficking service providers.
- Develops curriculum standards and training for human trafficking and other service providers.
- Calls for collaboration with medical and legal associations to provide training for their members working with survivors.
- Requires Children's Advocacy Centers adopt multidisciplinary team human trafficking task force protocols and facilitate training, standards, and collaboration to ensure a coordinated response to trafficked children.

Law Enforcement and Prosecution

- Creates multidisciplinary team human trafficking task forces where they do not exist across the state.
- Supports local law enforcement encountering victims of human trafficking.
- Develops law enforcement curriculum standards and policy guidelines for human trafficking detection, investigation, and response.
- Mandates support and training for state's attorneys prosecuting human traffickers.
- Aligns penalties for child labor trafficking with child sex trafficking penalties.
- Allows an affirmative defense for minors accused of status or misdemeanor crimes committed as a result of human trafficking victimization.
- Requires the court to take into account the age of human trafficking victims when sentencing those convicted of human trafficking crimes.
- Eliminates the statute of limitation for civil liability to allow individuals who were trafficked as a minor to bring suit against their trafficker at any point in their healing process.
- Permits dissolution of corporations convicted of human trafficking crimes.

State Agency Response

- Expands screening of children and youth in state care, juveniles in IDJJ, and individuals under the jurisdiction of IDOC for indicators of having been trafficked or at high-risk of being trafficked for specialized services and placements.
- Expands training for DCFS, IDHS, and IDOC staff on screening tools and appropriate protocols for children, youth, and adults in state care and custody who have been trafficked or are at risk of being trafficked.
- Creates training for state inspectors, investigators, and regulators on signs of human trafficking in industries at high risk for trafficking, such as restaurants, hotel, agriculture, construction, and educational materials on the rights of youth workers.

"Too often, trafficking victims are left without support because the systems in place aren't communicating with each other," said State Senator Julie Morrison (D-Lake Forest). "This law strengthens coordination across state agencies to identify victims earlier and expedite access to trauma-informed care for survivors."

In October 2023, ISP and the Illinois Department of Human Services launched the Joint Human Trafficking Working Group – an ad hoc working group comprised of several State agencies, the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, the Office of the State’s Attorneys Appellate Prosecutor, and more than 60 stakeholders representing human trafficking, domestic violence, and sexual assault advocacy organizations, survivors, local law enforcement, prosecutors, and courts, as well as medical, substance use disorder, and behavioral health providers. The working group helped develop policy recommendations, which are reflected in the Illinois Statewide Trauma-Informed Response to Human Trafficking Act.

“Since launching the Joint Human Trafficking Working Group in the Fall of 2023, we have made significant progress,” said IDHS Secretary Dulce M. Quintero. “I want to thank Governor Pritzker and our sister agencies, ISP and DCFS. This law means our response is not only compassionate, but consistent. It will set standards of care for human trafficking service providers all across the state.”

“Human trafficking is a reality that affects every corner of our nation, from large cities to small towns, and Illinois children and youth are not immune,” said Illinois DCFS Director Heidi E. Mueller. “Through expanded training for our staff and our ongoing collaborations with law enforcement, community organizations and dedicated service providers, we are strengthening our ability to prevent the human trafficking of children and support the children who have been trafficked and their families so they can heal.”

To combat human trafficking, ISP created the Trafficking Enforcement Bureau in 2022. Since that time, more than 1,300 ISP officers have received human trafficking awareness training, and almost 140 officers have been trained in advanced investigative techniques related to human trafficking investigations. Last year, the ISP Trafficking Enforcement Bureau conducted seven human trafficking demand suppression operations resulting in 31 arrests and 90 criminal charges, including Grooming, Indecent Solicitation of a Minor and Traveling to Meet a Minor and obtained charges in three additional cases, including charges of Involuntary Servitude and Promoting Prostitution.

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are victims of trafficking worldwide, including in the United States and in Illinois. The signs of human trafficking can be subtle. To learn more, visit [Recognizing the Signs | National Human Trafficking Hotline](#). If you suspect human trafficking, contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 or text *233733. For more information visit www.humantraffickinghotline.org. You can also email ISP.CrimeTips@illinois.gov.

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