



Combating Human Trafficking Through Collaboration

FEBRUARY 21, 2018

Speakers

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- [Joann Lee](#), Directing Attorney, Asian and Pacific Islander Community Outreach Project, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles
- [Stephanie Richard](#), Policy & Legal Services Director, Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST)
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Collaborating with Law Enforcement:

DOJ Civil Rights Division's

Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit

(HTPU)

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Presentation Overview

- **What is human trafficking?**
- **What is HTPU?**
- **What are the opportunities to identify HT in legal aid and public defender contexts?**
- **What are the practicalities of collaborating with HTPU?**

What is Human Trafficking?



Federal Human Trafficking Crimes:

Crimes of Exploitation

**A) Compelling or coercing a person for
labor, services, or commercial sex**

or

B) Exploiting a minor for commercial sex



Defining Human Trafficking

- Exploitation can be for labor or commercial sex;
- Coercion can be subtle or overt;
- Coercion can be physical or psychological;
- *Need not include smuggling or movement*



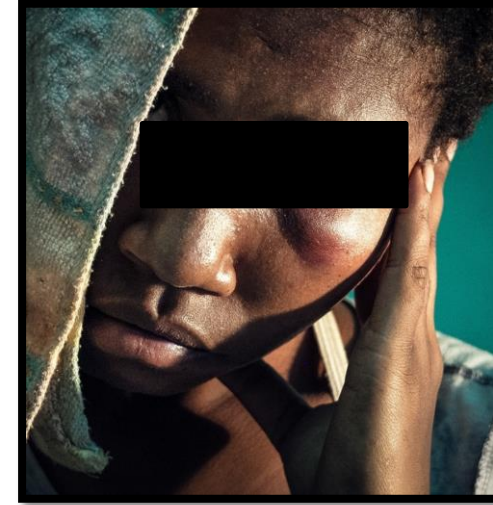
Understanding Human Trafficking

- **Victims can be:**
 - **Adult or minor**
 - **Male or female**
 - **U.S. Citizen or foreign-born**
 - **Documented or undocumented**
- **Traffickers can be individuals, loosely affiliated networks, or organized enterprises**
- **Contexts can be urban, suburban, or rural; isolated or “in plain sight”**



Understanding Human Trafficking

- **Common thread: traffickers identify and exploit a vulnerability**
- **Vulnerabilities may include:**
 - **Addiction**
 - **Disability**
 - **Isolation, dislocation**
 - **Homelessness, poverty, debt**
 - **History of abuse or trauma**
 - **Illiteracy, limited language proficiency**
 - **Criminal or legal exposure**
 - **Undocumented immigration status**



Sex Trafficking Contexts

- **Online advertising**
- **Delivery / Outcall / Escort**
- **Brothels**
- **Migrant Labor Camp Brothels**
- **Redlight District / “Track”**
- **Bars and Cantinas**
- **Massage Parlors**
- **Karaoke Bars, Nightclubs**
- **Strip clubs, Lounges**
- **Modeling Agencies**
- **Hotels, Casinos**



Labor Trafficking Contexts

- **Agricultural harvesting and processing**
- **Massage Parlors, Cantinas, Strip Clubs**
- **Construction Crews**
- **Buffet Restaurants**
- **Hair and Nail Salons**
- **Hospitality Workers**
- **Domestic Servitude**
- **Traveling Sales Crews, Peddlers**
- **Home Health and Eldercare Aides**



What is HTPU?



HTPU

- Formed within Civil Rights Division in 2007 to consolidate anti-trafficking expertise
- Partner with USAOs to *prosecute forced labor, transnational sex trafficking, and adult sex trafficking*, focusing on novel, complex, multi-jurisdictional, and international cases;
- *Lead interagency enforcement initiatives* to build law enforcement anti-trafficking capacity;
- Develop and deliver training in *survivor-centered, trauma-informed enforcement strategies*; and
- Provide anti-trafficking subject matter expertise to strengthen strategic partnerships and advance Departmental *legislative, policy, and programmatic* priorities

Survivor-Centered Strategies

- **Recognize victim's central role as key witness**
- **Focus on vindicating individual rights;**
- **Empower victim as active participant in criminal justice process**
- **Minimize re-traumatization**
- **Facilitate transformation of vulnerable victim to empowered survivor**
- **Maintain clear boundaries between survivor and law enforcement roles**

Trauma-Informed Strategies

- **Understand neurobiological, psychological, cognitive, emotional, physical effects of trauma**
- **Emphasize stabilization and rapport-building**
- **Recognize trauma responses and symptoms**
- **Plan enforcement actions, interviews, trial preparation, and trial presentation accordingly**



Opportunities to Identify Human Trafficking in Civil Legal Aid and Public Defender Contexts



Legal Aid Providers

- **Custody, Parental Rights, and Family Issues**
- **Protective or Restraining Orders**
- **Immigration Issues**
- **Labor, Workplace, and Wage and Hour Violations**
- **Issues Accessing Benefits (e.g. refugee, disability, at-risk youth)**
- **Clients with Insurmountable Debts (e.g. for employer-provided housing, transportation, hidden fees)**
- *Be aware of potential indicators in these contexts*

Public Defenders

- **Clients charged with offenses related to providing commercial sex (e.g. prostitution, loitering)**
- **Juvenile clients charged with offenses related to providing commercial sex or status offenses (curfew, truancy)**
- **Drug use or dependency among individuals involved in commercial sex; or addictive drugs provided by employer**
- **Indigence/poverty tied to recruitment- or employment-related debts insurmountable debts**
- **Unexplained low-level or petty crimes**
- ***Be aware of potential indicators in these contexts***

Collaborating with LE and HTPU



Contacting Law Enforcement

- Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit:
 - HTPU@USDOJ.GOV
 - T-adjustment.cert@usdoj.gov
- National Human Trafficking Hotline: **1-888-3737-888**
- Local Human Trafficking Task Forces:
<https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/humantrafficking/>
- FBI Field Office and ICE SAC Office Victim Assistance

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Senior Attorney, Ron Olson Justice Center

Joann Lee

Directing Attorney, Asian and Pacific Islander
Community Outreach Project

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA)



LAFLA Legal Services for Trafficking Survivors

February 21, 2018



Overview of Services

Legal Assistance

Legal Services

- Immigration
- Family Law
- Eviction Defense
- Housing
- Government Benefits
- Employment Law
- Asian Pacific Islander Community Outreach Project
- Medical Legal Partnership
- Veterans Justice Project

Legal Services for HT:

- Work with Law Enforcement
- Remedies: T visa, U visa, Asylum, VAWA, SIJS, Humanitarian Parole, etc.
- Removal Defense
- Family Reunification
- Adjustment of Status
- U.S. Citizenship

Other Legal Services for HT:

- Government benefits- case complaints
- Wage claims
- Expungements
- Name changes
- Family law: Restraining orders, divorce, custody, etc.
- Represent victim in criminal proceedings
- Crime compensation

Identifying Survivors

Training Staff & Partners

LAFLA MODEL

- Workgroups
 - **Supporting Families:**
 - Family law, immigration law, DV clinics, Torture Survivor's Project
 - **Asian Pacific Islander Project:**
 - Family law, immigration, community clinics, language access advocacy
 - **Economic Stability:**
 - Government benefits, employment law, expungements

Preparation

1. Training staff

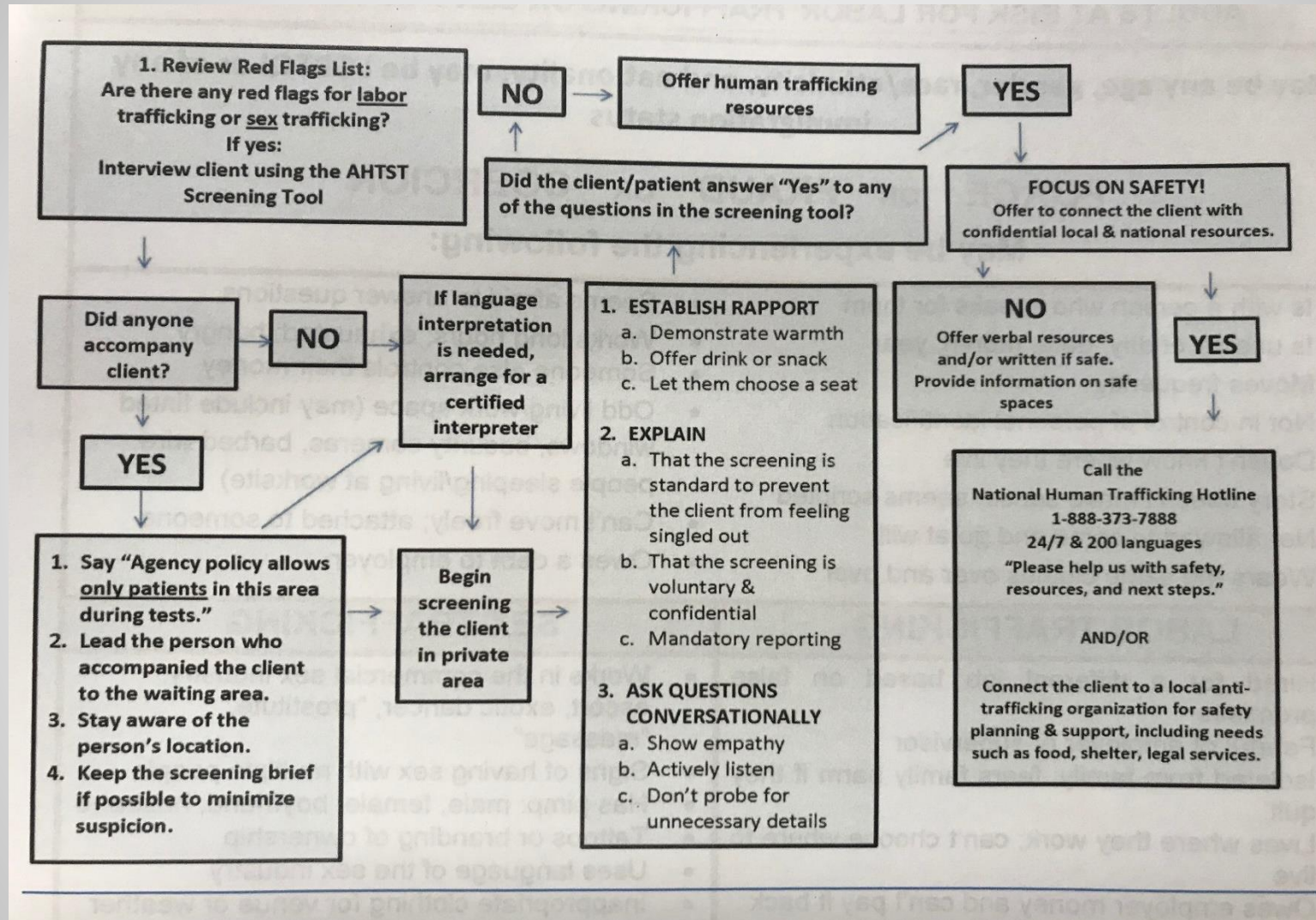
- Trafficking
 - Red flags
 - Screening
 - Services
- Trauma informed approach

2. Partner with NGOs

- Ensure cultural & linguistic resources

3. Prepare referral list

- National HT Hotline Referral directory
1-888-373-7888



Screening flowchart for for adults

Training DV advocates

Intersection of DV and HT

- DV push/pull factor to HT
- Lack of self identification
- Power and control wheel
- Abuse/violence by persons close to victim
- Returning to abuser/trafficker
- Abuse may include:
 - Physical violence
 - Sexual violence
 - Isolation
 - Restricted movement
 - Psychological
 - Economic
 - Verbal, threats of harm
 - Abuse of legal process: immigration, family law

Possible Indicators of HT within Abusive Relationship

- ▶ Unsure as to where they are
- ▶ Fearful of providing information
- ▶ Work, but have no access to earnings
- ▶ Use language common in sex work culture
- ▶ Severe/untreated dental and medical problems
- ▶ Multiple STIs or abortions
- ▶ Drug addiction and/or indication partner sells drugs
- ▶ Work long hours in home and provide care to other family members
- ▶ Expressing owing partner a debt

Training other advocates

- **Intersection between asylum seeker/refugee population and HT**
 - People escaping home country prone to HT
 - Force used in HT similar to torture
- **Employment Law**
 - Abuse at work: threats, physical, sexual, economic
 - No adequate breaks, food, water, protective equipment
 - Recruited for different job
 - Debt
 - Required to live in Housing provided by employer

Healthcare Providers

- Shares a scripted or inconsistent history
- Unwilling/hesitant to answer questions re: injury or illness
- Is accompanied by an individual who does not let the patient speak for themselves, refuses to let the patient have privacy, or who interprets for them
- Evidence of controlling or dominating relationships (excessive concerns about pleasing a family member, romantic partner, or employer)
- Fearful/nervous behavior (eg.: avoids eye contact)
- Is unable to provide his/her address
- Is not in possession of his/her identification documents
- Is not in control of his or her own money
- Is not being paid or wages are withheld

Service Delivery Model

Attorney/client relationship

- “HEALING” through relationship
 - Client centered approach
 - Trauma informed approach

Client Centered Approach

- Confidential
- Create safe space for private screening
- Meet person's physical needs
- Non-threatening body positioning
- Empathetic and respectful language
- Be prepared to respond to trauma reaction

Trauma Informed Principles

- Empathy
- Recognizing effects of all types of trauma on human development and coping
- Cultural and linguist appropriateness
- Physical, emotional safety for both client and advocate
- Help survivor rebuild sense of control and empowerment: education, choice, resilience

Language Access: Best Practices

Provide Interpreter

- Offer a qualified interpreter that your organization provides



Confidentiality

- All information must be kept confidential
- Interpreter must not disclose privileged communications.



Why Not Use Friends & Family?



Skills

- Not trained interpreters
- May not be fully bilingual or know proper terminology



Ethical Issues

- Confidentiality
- Risk of destroying attorney-client privilege



Relationships

- Risk of lost, incorrect, or incomplete information
- Never use children, absent emergencies

Tips & Safeguards

- Prepare and brief interpreter before the client meeting
- Review confidentiality
- Screen for potential conflicts
- Allow for extra time, breaks
- Possible issues:
 - Side conversations, giving legal advice, not speaking in 1st person, client is confused, etc.
 - Be prepared for contingency plan if communication breaks down
 - Offer training resources, if needed
 - Mandated reporter?



LSC LEP Guidance

- Issued to all LSC Programs (12.6.04)
(<https://www.lsc.gov/sites/default/files/Grants/pdfs/Program%20Letter%2004-2%20LEP%20Guidance.pdf>)
- Purpose
 - Ensure access to justice
- Summary of guidance
 - Identify Individuals
 - Examine LEP concerns
 - Develop elements of written policy
 - Review LEP efforts



LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

**Guidance to LSC Programs for Serving Client Eligible Individuals
with Limited English Proficiency**

December 6, 2004

Among the many vast changes that affect how and what services LSC programs provide to clients, none is more significant than the high number of immigrants that have come to the United States over the past few decades. Almost 47 million people in our nation speak a language other than English at home, and of these almost half (over 21 million) speak English "less than very well." Many of these individuals are US citizens or legal residents; many are quite poor; many are children. LSC programs have an obligation to provide services to clients with limited English proficiency (LEP) that are equal to the services they provide to clients who speak English without difficulty. In order to provide equal access to LEP clients, programs need to develop capacity to deliver quality legal services, in languages other than English, in a way that addresses the needs of these demographic groups. While limited resources and locally determined program priorities inevitably mean that many eligible individuals are not represented by LSC programs, and nothing in this Guidance in any way guarantees service to any eligible individual, the decision whether or not to help someone must not be made on the basis of his or her language abilities. The challenge of accomplishing this goal is significant. This Guidance will serve to provide direction to LSC programs as they develop their LEP activities and an LEP plan.¹

I. Identifying Limited English Proficiency

For purposes of this Guidance, the LEP community is defined as the group(s) of persons eligible to be served or likely to be directly or significantly affected by the LSC program and who do not speak English proficiently. For a program, defining who is an LEP eligible individual will require considerable thought. The National Health Law Program suggests:

¹ Much of this Guidance is based on the work of organizations that have already grappled with the challenges of providing legal services to language isolated populations. In particular LSC appreciates the work of Community Legal Services (Philadelphia), Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County and the National Health Law Program, and the guidance of the LSC Leadership and Diversity Advisory Committee. The letter was also enhanced by public comments submitted in early December 2003.

Statutory Mandates & Other Obligations

- Title VI of the CRA of 1964
 - Prohibits discrimination by federal fund recipients based on race, color, or national origin
- Executive Order 13166 (8/2000)
 - “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency” (federal agencies (DOJ, HHS, etc.) must provide guidance – www.lep.gov)
- California
 - Strategic Plan for Language Access in CA Courts
 - Evid Code 756; Gov’t Code 68092.1
 - Gov’t Code 11135; Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act
- ABA – Language Access Standards for Courts & Civil Legal Aid; Model Rules



Partnerships

Cultural Responsiveness

- Advocate learns about client's culture
- API HT Taskforce
- Cultural NGOs
- LGBT Centers

Partnership with CAST

- LA HT Taskforce
- Regional trainings and tech assistance
- CAST social services/shelter/survivor caucus
- Sub-grantee: focus on domestic trafficking

LAFLA Tools & Resources

Important Information for Interpreters (Updated 2015)

LAFLA Interpreter & Translator Confidentiality Agreement

HT Power Control Wheel

Flow Chart for HT Screening

Polaris Indicators

Indicators for HT

Indicators for HT in Medical Setting

HT Indicators NHTTAC

AHTST Adult HT Screening Tool

Stephanie Richard

Policy & Legal Services Director at the Coalition to
Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST)



Cast

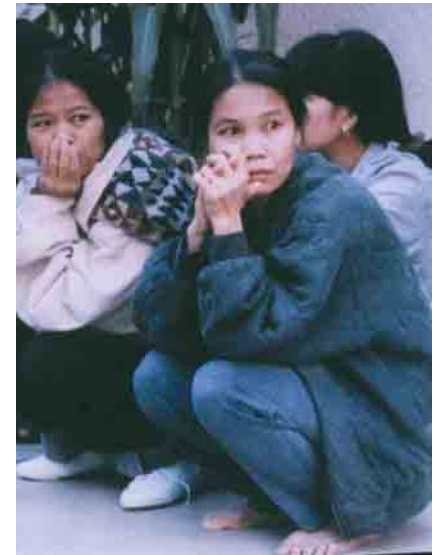
COALITION TO
ABOLISH SLAVERY
& TRAFFICKING

CAST Legal Services & Collaboration with Civil Legal Service Providers, Public Defenders and LEA Partners

It Ends with US

Who is CAST?

- *“To assist persons trafficked for the purpose of forced labor and slavery-like practices and to work toward ending all instances of such human rights violations.”*



El Monte Slave Shop Workers, 1995

Emergency Response



- 24-Hours a Day, 7 Days a Week Toll-Free Human Trafficking Hotline
- Emergency Social Services include:
 - Locating safe, immediate housing
 - Basic necessities
 - Assistance with emergency medical needs
 - Transportation assistance
 - Client Advocacy
 - Crisis Intervention/Safety Planning
 - Community referrals to needed services
- Emergency Legal Services include:
 - Criminal Victim Advocacy / Client Accompaniment to law enforcement interviews/Assistance reporting to law enforcement
 - Information on immediate legal concerns including:
 - Immigration Status
 - Criminal Warrants/Pending cases
 - Family Law Matters/Protective Orders

Case Management Program



- Comprehensive Strengths and Needs Assessment
- Independent Living Skills Training/Mentoring
- Supportive Counseling
- Court Accompaniment
- Facilitation between various providers/systems
- Advocacy including but not limited to:
 - Education, Access to Services, County Benefits, Interacting with systems
- Linkage to Resources including but not limited to:
 - Housing, Employment, Education, County Benefits, Health and Wellness, Mental Health, Tattoo Removal, etc.
- Ongoing Safety Planning and Assessment
- Training and Technical Assistance

Support for Attorneys & Social Service Providers Serving Trafficking Survivors

Free support to attorneys and social service providers assisting trafficking survivors with legal needs in the following areas of law:

- Immigration
- Criminal Re-Entry
- Reporting to Law Enforcement
- Ethics
- Criminal Victim Witness Advocacy
- Program Support
- Referrals
- Civil
- ...and More.

Technical Assistance Contact Information

For case specific questions or individualized technical assistance:

Call or Email

Weekdays from 9 AM – 5 PM PST

TechnicalAssistance@CASTLA.org

Direct Legal Services

- Victim Witness Advocacy
 - Asserting Victim's Rights under Marsy's Law (Victims' Bill of Rights)
 - Appearing for hearings
 - California Victim Compensation Program (CalVCP)
- Criminal Re-entry
 - Warrants
 - Expungements
- Civil Remedies
 - Tort/Labor violations
- Public Benefits
 - Immigrant HT survivors eligible for similar benefits as Refugees
- Family/Dependency Law
 - Divorce/custody disputes
 - Restraining Orders
- Immigration

Legal Service Provider's Role



Pro Bono Program

- Pro bono attorneys required training
 - Free 8-hour pro bono training which provides intro to human trafficking and legal advocacy
 - Twice a year in Los Angeles for 6 hours of MCLE
- CAST's Role-Co Counsel for All Cases
 - Provides placement materials, facilitates first meeting with client and attorney, reviews all drafts, provides regular check-in
- Impact Litigation/Policy
 - Unique projects for impact litigation cases or policy work for pro bono are available upon request

Collaboration with Legal Aid

- CAST & LAFLA
 - CAST often has Waitlist of 50-100 survivors of HT
 - Refer HT Victims for specialized services from LAFLA 2002-Ongoing
 - Family law
 - Employment
 - Immigration
 - Benefits
 - Launched first HT taskforce in country in 2005
 - Received 1st DOJ-OVC grant for legal service providers 2010-Ongoing
 - Direct services for HT victims
 - Trained other Legal Aid Organizations in 3 locations in CA and three other states

Collaboration with Public Defenders

- Many trafficking victims are criminalized for crimes their traffickers force them to commit
- CAST sees PDs as first line ability to ID
 - Sex & Labor cases
- CAST has trained PDs on identification and specialized legal remedies in CA
 - Materials witnesses-victim-witness advocacy
 - Specialized Immigration benefits
 - Specialized Criminal Re-entry provisions for HT victims=Sealing arrest and conviction
 - Affirmative Defense for Human Trafficking victims
- CAST has provided expert testimony to get charges dismissed/ warrants cleared
- CAST developed relationship with LA City Attorney so that PDs can contact CAST for an “Attorney Certification” letter
 - If CAST concludes crimes is directly related to HT, City Attorney dismisses charge

Collaboration LEA: Attorney Protocol on Reporting to LEA

- Initial meeting with CAST attorney and victim:
 - Meeting scheduled ASAP
 - Discuss benefits of reporting to LEA generally
- CAST attorneys **always advise** that our best recommendation is to report the criminal case to LEA ***as soon as possible***
- After client consents to reporting, CAST attorney reports case to LEA via e-mail using **1-page intake**.
 - LEA reporting contacts are established by the taskforce

Common Concerns Expressed by Clients About Reporting to LEA

Concern	CAST Attorney Advice
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior negative experience with LEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LEA have been trusted partners with CAST• CAST's LEA partners are specialists in trafficking
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fear of Deportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In CAST's experience, no client has been deported for working with CAST's LEA partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fear of going to LEA offices/station	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LEA is often willing to come to CAST for interviews• If LEA can't come to CAST, CAST attorney can accompany• LEA has safe spaces for interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trauma/Fear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CAST tries to connect with social services immediately to deal with trauma/fear to allow victim to be ready to engage with LEA• CAST recommends reporting ASAP• Follow up regularly with victim to answer questions and encourage cooperation

After reporting...

- To encourage ongoing cooperation with LEA, CAST offers these services:
 - Acting as a liaison between LEA to client to ensure smooth communication and coordination for interviews, hearings, etc.
 - Accompaniment for interviews to provide additional support
 - To be able to collect evidence (e.g., medical reports, additional witnesses)

LA Regional TASKFORCE



Cast



LARHTTF Leadership

LASD
CAST
USAO

Subcommittees

Service
provider

Administrative

Training &
Outreach

Law
Enforcement

Program
development

SP, LEA, &
Justice System

Evaluation

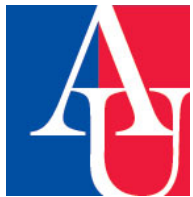
Data Systems

For Immediate Help with Victim Response

- Call 911
- CAST Hotline (If in CA)
 - 888.KEY.2.FRE(EDOM)
 - 888.539.2373
- National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline (National)
 - 1.888.373.7888

Zoë Root

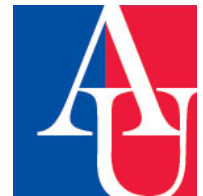
Senior Policy Counsel, Justice Program Office,
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Client-Centered Defense Services for Survivors of Human Trafficking

Zoë Root

Senior Policy Counsel, Justice Programs Office



Identifying and Serving Survivors: The Bronx as Model

- Bronx County Human Trafficking Intervention Court
- Started in 2013
- Specialized court model
- Evolving philosophy
- Better outcomes for clients
- Services through Bronx Community Solutions
- Defense/prosecution collaboration
- Incremental changes to increase client trust in the legal process
- Trafficking disclosure is not guaranteed

The Bronx Defenders' Prostitution Conviction Vacatur Project

- Utilizes CPL 440.10(1)(I)
- Motions to vacate convictions resulting from human trafficking
- Extensive outreach: Hundreds of letters to former clients
- All motions have been successful
- Coordinated efforts between defense and prosecution
- Transformative experience for clients and attorneys

Arielle Altman

Senior Program Associate, Civil Legal Services, NLADA



Federal Resources for Anti-Trafficking Work



Federal Funding for Anti-Trafficking Work DOJ Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)

- OVC manages the largest amount of federal funding dedicated to providing direct services to survivors of human trafficking in the U.S. (more than \$8 million in 2017)
- OVC's anti-trafficking programs aim to provide high-quality services that address individualized needs of trafficking victims; enhance interagency collaboration and the coordinated community response to victims of human trafficking; and support the implementation of victim-centered, trauma-informed responses to human trafficking
- In recent years, OVC has focused on enhancing the quality and quantity of services available to victims of human trafficking through three key anti-trafficking programs:

OVC Grant Program	Activities
Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	Provide a comprehensive range of services to victims of all forms of trafficking, from case management to housing to employment services
Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	Provide a specific service, such as legal assistance **Out of 3 grants, best suited for legal aid to apply as primary entity**
Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking (Joint OVC & DOJ Bureau of Justice Assistance)	A BJA law enforcement grantee and OVC victim services provider jointly implement a collaborative task force in order to identify victims of all forms of trafficking, provide victims with comprehensive services, and investigate and prosecute traffickers

Federal Funding for Anti-Trafficking Work

DOJ Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)

- OVW Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) Grant Program
 - LAV grant funds may be used to provide direct legal services to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking in matters relating to or arising out of that abuse or violence
 - Significant funding source for civil legal aid, but also one of the most competitive funding streams for legal services
 - Purpose areas much broader than trafficking, but FY 2018 LAV solicitation included trafficking as a priority area given special consideration
 - From LAV FY 2018 notice of funding:

Applications proposing activities in the following areas will be given special consideration:

 - *Improve services for and/or the response to victims of sex trafficking and other severe forms of trafficking in persons who have also experienced sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking*

Added Capacity for Anti-Trafficking Work

Equal Justice Works

Crime Victims Justice Corps Fellowship Program (funded by DOJ OVC)

- The Crime Victims Justice Corps will mobilize 62 Fellows and 34 summer law students over a two-year Fellowship period, from June 2018 to May 2020
- **45 Fellows will serve human trafficking survivors**
- Fellows and law students will provide legal services, outreach, and education to address legal needs resulting from human trafficking and a variety of civil legal issues arising from victimization, such as family law, education, employment, immigration, and consumer protection, as well as enforcing crime victims' rights.
- Equal Justice Works will provide up to \$48,000 toward each Fellow's annual salary and additional funds, as specified in the solicitation. For law students, Equal Justice Works will provide a \$3,200 stipend for working full-time for eight to ten weeks during the summer.
- **Applications are due March 14**
- For more information, please contact Allie Yang-Green at ayanggreen@equaljusticeworks.org or (202) 372-9331

Presenter Bios & Contacts





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As an attorney at the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, Daliah has provided legal assistance to victims of human trafficking, state sponsored torture abroad, domestic violence and victims of crime and has represented her clients before the US Citizenship and Immigration Services, Immigration Courts, Board of Immigration Appeals as well as the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Daliah successfully represents foreign national victims of sexual and labor human trafficking to obtain immigration relief and has also represented trafficking victims in federal criminal court as a victim advocate, with a trauma informed, client centered approach. In addition, she has trained advocates in California and nationally on immigration issues, including human trafficking.



Hilary Axam

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Hilary Axam is the Director of the Civil Rights Division's Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit. She has been a federal prosecutor with the Department of Justice since 2001, prosecuting and supervising human trafficking cases of national significance. She joined the Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit as Senior Litigation Counsel when the Unit was formed in 2007, and has served as its Director since 2009. Under her leadership, HTPU has partnered with U.S. Attorney's Offices to prosecute record numbers of human traffickers, has launched highly effective interagency enforcement initiatives, and has played a central role in advancing the Department's broad-based anti-trafficking efforts.



Joann Lee

Directing Attorney, Asian and Pacific Islander Community Outreach Project, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles

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Joann Lee is the directing attorney of the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Community Outreach Project of the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA). Bilingual in Korean, Ms. Lee has provided direct legal services to the growing indigent API immigrant population in the Los Angeles area at LAFLA since 2000. Ms. Lee directs outreach efforts, media work, and projects designed to provide monolingual and limited-English proficient APIs improved access to services. Ms. Lee specializes in the areas of family and immigration law, with a focus on representing domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking survivors before the family and immigration courts, as well as other administrative bodies. She has extensive experience navigating local courts and government agencies to obtain interpreters for her clients, including filing administrative complaints and litigation based on state and federal civil rights language access requirements. In 2015, Ms. Lee was appointed by the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court to serve on the California Judicial Council Language Access Plan Implementation Task Force. Ms. Lee is closely connected with local API communities and has served on the boards of the Korean American Bar Association of Southern California, Korean Resource Center, and the Center for the Pacific Asian Family, a domestic violence/sexual assault shelter serving API women and children.



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Stephanie Kay Richard, Esq., is the Policy & Legal Services Director at the Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking (CAST) where she provides direct legal services to survivors of human trafficking and technical consultation on human trafficking cases nationwide. She has been involved in the anti-trafficking movement for over 10 years. During this time she has served as the domestic lead for the Alliance to End Slavery & Trafficking (ATEST) and the policy Co-Chair of the Freedom Network, USA, two national U.S.-based coalitions working to improve federal and state laws and the implementation of these laws to better serve trafficking survivors in the United States. Ms. Richard graduated summa cum laude from American University, Washington College of Law, where she was the recipient of a public interest/public service scholarship. She is licensed to practice law in California, Maryland, Minnesota, and Washington, D.C.



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Zoë Root is Senior Policy Counsel at the Justice Programs Office (JPO) and an Adjunct Instructor in the School of Public Affairs at American University. At JPO, she works on the Right to Counsel National Campaign, and is the project director of the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court (JDTC) Training and Technical Assistance Initiative. Ms. Root joined JPO after five years as a supervising attorney and staff attorney at The Bronx Defenders. During her time as a public defender, she director of the Prostitution Conviction Vacatur Project and served as coordinating attorney in the Bronx County human trafficking intervention court. She also represented adolescents and adults on all criminal charges and trained and supervised first-year attorneys. Prior to law school she worked as a court representative at the Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES), an alternative-to-incarceration program for adolescents in New York City. Ms. Root earned her JD at Northeastern University School of Law, and holds a BA in Psychology from Vassar College.

Q & A Session



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Thank you!

