



BLUE BULLETIN

CAMPAIGN

One Voice. One Mission. End Human Trafficking.®

September 2023

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What's New With Blue

Human Trafficking 101: Learn More about the Crime, Save Lives

Did you know that [human trafficking](#) is a crime of exploitation that happens in every region of the United States and to people of all ages, backgrounds, and nationalities? While it's true that traffickers often target vulnerable communities, human trafficking can happen anywhere and to anyone. It is a crime that involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act at the expense of an individual. The good news is that there are [resources](#) you can access to help you identify traffickers and victims, and there are ways you can respond if you suspect you're witnessing an exploitative situation.



Year-round, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Blue Campaign shares tools that educate the public about human trafficking. The signs to watch out for, reporting information, and more can be found in the below materials:

- [Indicators of human trafficking](#)
- [Human trafficking myths and misconceptions](#)
- [Human trafficking response guides](#)

- [Awareness videos](#)
- [Training resources](#)
- [Forced labor awareness](#)

Follow Blue Campaign social media channels (@DHSBlueCampaign on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#)) for more anti-human trafficking awareness information.

“Concern” is a DHS Blue Campaign interactive and asynchronous virtual training course hosted by [Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers](#) (FLETC) for state and local law enforcement officers and agents. This e-Learning simulation provides law enforcement, and those likely to encounter human trafficking victims, opportunities to practice victim-centered interviewing, which places equal value on identifying and stabilizing victims and on investigating and prosecuting traffickers.*

Those who complete this course will be able to:

- Advocate for the victim
- Develop a rapport and establish trust
- Interview victims without judgment

One session remains open for registration:

- Aug. 28 – Oct. 6

Visit the following link to register: go.dhs.gov/4Wh and enter BCAPT in the search bar.

Community Policing Dispatch Highlights Importance of School Resource Officers

In a recent edition of its e-newsletter, *The Community Policing Dispatch*, The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) discussed the critical role school resource officers (SROs) play in combating human trafficking. The article included information about what human trafficking is and what it looks like, how SROs are uniquely positioned to help combat the crime, and how Blue Campaign is educating the public, law enforcement, and other industry partners to recognize and respond. COPS also provided a list of additional anti-human trafficking awareness resources. Read “DHS Blue Campaign: SROs Play a Critical Role in Combating Human Trafficking” [here](#).

BLI Corner

BLI Sits on Panel at I-AAAE Conference of Americas

In August, the International American Association of Airport Executives (I-AAAE) held the Conference of Americas in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Approximately 200 representatives from airports in the United States, Canada, Argentina, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Ecuador, and Mexico attended. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Law Enforcement Representative for the [Blue Lightning Initiative](#) (BLI) sat on a panel regarding human trafficking to discuss indicators, reporting, and partnerships. While in Puerto Rico, the BLI representative met with professors from the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico School of Aeronautics to welcome them to BLI and discuss future collaboration.

BLI Presents at Global Business Travel Association Annual Conference

In August, the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) held its annual conference in Dallas, Texas. The CBP Law Enforcement Representative for BLI provided an overview of human trafficking, indicators, reporting, and partnership. More than 100 participants attended the presentation.

CCHT Corner

Blue Campaign Presents at Essence Festival of Culture

In July, the Center for Countering Human Trafficking (CCHT) hosted two webinars to raise awareness of [Continued Presence](#), a temporary immigration designation provided to non-citizens identified by law enforcement as victims of human trafficking. Continued Presence allows victims to remain in the United States without fear of removal and makes them eligible to receive work authorization and other benefits. Continued Presence not only helps to stabilize victims but also improves their ability to cooperate with law enforcement during their trafficking investigation.



On July 13, CCHT's Continued Presence Webinar for Law Enforcement Personnel provided information on why and how requesting Continued Presence strengthens a human trafficking investigation, how to prepare and submit a Continued Presence request, and recent improvements to the Continued Presence program.

On July 25, the CCHT hosted a Continued Presence Webinar for non-governmental organizations, service providers, and the general public. Topics covered included:

- What Continued Presence is and who is eligible to make a request
- Who to contact to make a Continued Presence request
- The Continued Presence Resource Guide
- The CCHT Victim-Centered Approach
- Continued Presence applications in support of civil action
- Recent improvements to the Continued Presence program

Approximately 370 individuals attended the two webinars, which are offered regularly to encourage use of this critical tool in countering human trafficking. For information on upcoming webinars, visit the [CCHT landing page](#) on DHS.gov and select “Webinars” from the drop down menu. For more information on the Continued Presence program, please click on the Victim-Centered Approach tab. To request a Continued Presence training please contact Training@ccht.dhs.gov.

From The Field

HSI Tyler, Texas Investigation Results in Conviction for Child Sex Trafficking

A Jacksonville, Texas, man was convicted in late June for sex trafficking of children and conspiracy, the culmination of a two-and-a-half-year investigation by Homeland Security Investigations’ (HSI) Tyler, Texas office.

Desnique Deshawn Herndon, 27, was found guilty by jury of all counts in the Eastern District of Texas. He faces up to life in prison at sentencing. In 2019, Herndon began trafficking multiple teenage girls for commercial sex acts, recruiting the girls through social media. He deceived them by promising riches, and placed them in hotels in the Tyler, Texas area. He then posted online advertisements showing explicit photos of the girls and offering them up for commercial sex acts. Some of Herndon’s victims were as young as 13. During the trial, jurors heard testimony that Herndon used co-conspirators to continue to run his operation while he was in jail so that the victims could earn money to pay his bond. Three of Herndon's co-conspirators previously pleaded guilty for their roles in the offenses.

This case was investigated by HSI Tyler and partners including the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Tyler Resident Agency, Texas Department of Public Safety’s Criminal Investigations Division, the Texas Attorney General's Human Trafficking Unit, Tyler Police

Department, Henderson and Cherokee County Sherriff's Offices, the Jacksonville Police Department, and the Texas Department of Public Safety Crime Lab.

CCHT assisted with the investigation. More details can be found in the U.S. Department of Justice [press release](#) announcing the conviction.

For more information visit the [Blue Campaign](#)

To report suspected human trafficking: 1-866-347-2423

To get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888

or text HELP or INFO to BeFree (233733)
