

## Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Force to Combat Human Trafficking

# Referrals to/from Law Enforcement and Victim Service Providers Protocol Checklist

This checklist provides a list of items that Enhanced Collaborative Model anti-human trafficking task forces should consider when developing protocols on referrals to and from law enforcement agencies and victim service providers. This checklist can be used as a guide for the development of a strong protocol. While it is not mandatory to include all items, it is important that task force members discuss and agree which items should be included specific to their local task force.

Referrals are an essential activity for all task forces, serving as the foundation of multidisciplinary collaboration and case response. Whether from law enforcement to victim service providers or vice versa, referrals ensure the smooth operations of a task force and address a multitude of needs for human trafficking victims.

Developing a referral protocol will:

- 1 **Provide** task force members with concrete steps guiding referrals from victim service providers to law enforcement and from law enforcement to victim service providers;
- 2 **Ensure** that roles and responsibilities for a referral process are recognized by task force members;
- 3 **Streamline** the referral process;
- 4 **Expedite** the process connecting victims to needed services; and
- 5 **Accelerate** the process referring law enforcement to potential human trafficking investigations.

Some task forces have one primary victim service provider partner who serves as a hub for all services. In these task forces, an initial referral is typically made by law enforcement to the primary victim service provider, who then assigns a case manager to handle any further service needs and referrals. Other task forces operate with a larger pool of victim service providers who receive referrals from law enforcement.

### Definitions: For the purposes of this checklist:

- A **referral** is the sharing of information, from one agency to another, to request services related to a specific and identified victim. A referral carries with it an implied or explicit expectation of response by the party receiving the referral.
  - A referral to law enforcement from victim services often indicates a victim's interest in making a report or willingness to be interviewed; and
  - A referral from law enforcement to victim services indicates a request that the service provider engage with the victim to provide support.
- A **tip** is information shared with law enforcement by victim service providers, a community member, or a human trafficking survivor. This information is usually about a potential crime, perpetrator, or concerning situation. A tip may lead to a referral, if upon further investigation, law enforcement identifies potential victims who are then referred for services.

**Instructions:** Review and discuss the below list of considerations to include when developing a referral protocol with task force members.

Referrals to/from Law Enforcement and Victim Service Providers Protocol Checklist		
Section	Item	
Introduction to Task Force Referral Protocol	Rationale for the referral protocol	
	Individuals who assisted in developing the protocol (include representatives from law enforcement, victim services, and prosecution)	
	Flowchart of the referral process	
	Schedule for periodic review and update of the protocol	
Task Force Partners Overview, Matrix, and Key Information	Task force partners, services they provide, and geographic areas served (consider including a matrix for ease of use and understanding)	
	Key contact information including emergency response and main points of contact for the task force	
	Sample referral form, if applicable	
	Vetting procedures to ensure task force members have the necessary training	
Process for Making a Referral	Circumstances under which a referral to victim services is or is not required or suggested	
	Circumstances under which a referral to law enforcement is or is not required or suggested	
	Agencies available to receive referrals and whether there is a central hub that receives referrals for both law enforcement and victim services and where referrals should be directed (e.g., an agency that provides case management or a particular unit within a law enforcement agency)	
	Appropriate modes for making a referral (e.g., phone, text, or e-mail)	
	Timeline for referrals and responses (e.g., within 72 hours if the referral is for an interview by law enforcement)	
	Procedures for when a referral cannot be accepted (for law enforcement and victim service providers), reasons a referral might be declined, and to what extent declinations are documented	
	Method for data collection and assessment of referral protocols to determine procedures and policies that are required	

Section	Item	✓
Referral Protocol Scope	Contact information for each law enforcement and prosecution partner (e.g., local, state, federal law enforcement and prosecutors)	
	Contact information for each victim service provider, including the services and service populations served as required by grant funding mandates	
	Mandatory reporting requirements and any special procedures for specific victim types (e.g., minors, individuals classified as disabled/vulnerable by statute)	
	Information on capacity of service providers, including emergency medical/safety needs, short- and long-term needs of victims, and the role of respective task force members who first encounter a victim (e.g., taking steps to meet those needs versus referring to a more appropriate partner)	
	Information for service providers' operating hours to accept referrals including business hours, after-hours during the week, and weekend	
	Constraints service providers, law enforcement, and prosecutors have in accepting a case (Note: it is important task force members discuss their needs, capabilities, and reasons to create an atmosphere of understanding and collaboration)	
	Protocol for soft referrals (i.e., law enforcement meeting with a victim without asking for their name)	
Information to Share in the Referral	Information on services requested (e.g., to receive services, to access benefits, to initiate an interview/investigation)	
	Basic requirements for all referrals between law enforcement and victim services	
	Additional information requested, but not mandatory if not available or if the victim does not consent to sharing such information	
	Process for service providers to inform law enforcement regarding confidentiality and informed consent, including to what extent a provider should obtain informed consent prior to making a referral and how service providers will maintain victim confidentiality once reported to law enforcement (Resource: <a href="#">IACP human trafficking task force confidentiality protocol checklist</a> )	
Managing Referrals and Data Collection	Procedures for tracking referrals, including data the task force needs or wants to collect, to ensure best practices and inform future task force growth	
	Information on if/how referral data will be shared	
Other Considerations	Whether or not law enforcement can refer a victim to an agency that is not a member of the task force	