



Human Trafficking – Learn the Signs

Some Signs from Hotline¹

If you see any of these red flags, contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888.

Common Work and Living Conditions:

- Is not free to leave or come and go
- Is unpaid or paid very little
- Works excessively or is not allowed breaks
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- High security measures exist in the work and/or living locations (e.g. opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.)

Poor Mental Health or Abnormal Behavior:

- Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement

Poor Physical Health:

- Lacks medical care; appears malnourished
- Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, torture

Lack of Control:

- Has few or no personal possessions
- Is not in control of his/her own money, no financial records, or bank account
- Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport)
- Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)

Other:

- Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where he/she is staying/address
- Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story

Additional Signs from USCCB²

- Tearfulness or signs of depression
- Unexplained bruises or cuts
- Appears to be in a relationship with someone who is dominating
- Never is alone
- Inability to leave their job or residence
- Says they cannot schedule appointments.

Screening Questions from USCCB

If you can find an opportunity to get the person alone, ask him/her the following screening questions:

- Can you leave your job or house when you want?
- Where did you get those bruises or is anyone hurting you?
- Do you get paid for your employment? Is it fair? How many hours do you work?
- (If foreign national) How did you get to the U.S. and is it what you expected? Are you being forced to do anything you don't want to do?
- Are you or your family being threatened?
- Do you live with or near your employer? Does your employer provide you housing? Are there locks on doors or windows from outside?
- Do you owe debt to anyone?

¹ <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/human-trafficking/recognizing-signs>

² <http://www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program/identifying-trafficking-victims.cfm>