

## National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) At-a-Glance

### OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESOURCE CENTER (NHTRC)

#### What is the NHTRC?

The NHTRC is operated by Polaris Project for the purpose of providing a national, 24-hour, toll-free hotline for the human trafficking field in the United States. Funding is provided by the Department of Health and Human Services and other private donors and supporters. Available services include urgent and non-urgent referrals, tip reporting, training and technical assistance on a range of topics, and comprehensive anti-trafficking resources for the anti-trafficking field and those who wish to get involved.

The NHTRC maintains a national database of over three thousand organizations and individuals working in the anti-trafficking field, as well as a library of anti-trafficking resources and materials. The NHTRC also works collaboratively within the infrastructure of the anti-trafficking movement in the U.S., which includes HHS Rescue and Restore coalitions, DOJ-funded Human Trafficking Task Forces, FBI Innocence Lost Task Forces, federal victims' services and outreach grantees, statewide human trafficking task forces, community-based initiatives, and on-going research projects.

#### Who Can Call the NHTRC?

The NHTRC is equipped to handle calls from anywhere in the United States, and from a wide range of callers including, but not limited to: potential trafficking victims, service providers, community members, law enforcement agents, medical professionals, legal professionals, researchers, students, and policy makers.

#### Contacting the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC)

Callers can reach the NHTRC 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling toll free to **1-888-3737-888**. In addition, the NHTRC can be contacted via email during business hours at **NHTRC@PolarisProject.org**

#### When Does the NHTRC Respond to Calls?

The NHTRC is available to answer calls from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. All calls requiring urgent action are processed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Non-urgent requests are processed primarily between the hours of 9am and 7pm EST, Monday through Friday. If a non-urgent request comes in between 7pm and 9am EST, on the weekend, or on a holiday, a message will be taken by the Call Specialist on duty, and a full-time program staff member will respond to the request within two to three business days, allowing for holidays. A chart detailing the NHTRC service schedule is available below:

<b>AVAILABLE SERVICES</b> – The NHTRC is available to respond to the following call types during the hours listed	<b>24 hours/ 7 days</b>	<b>9am – 7pm EST</b>
Crisis Calls	X	
Tip Reporting about Human Trafficking Situations	X	
Training & Technical Assistance Requests – URGENT	X	
Training & Technical Assistance Requests – NON URGENT		X
Referrals - URGENT	X	
Referrals – NON URGENT		X
General Information Requests		X

### **What is the Need for the NHTRC?**

More than eight years after the passage of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, the anti-trafficking field in the U.S. has made significant progress, but continues to face persistent challenges. Some critical needs in the anti-trafficking movement include: increase in the levels of victim identification and Certification, which are currently low relative to the scope of the problem; improved infrastructure to disseminate information and best practices to the growing field; more coordinated training and technical assistance efforts; and strengthened communication among federal, state, and local anti-trafficking initiatives within the government, non-government, and private sectors. As a whole, there is an urgent need for capacity building to facilitate an increase in the number of victims identified, the number of traffickers brought to justice, and the number of survivors receiving critical social services.

### **What are the Goals of the NHTRC?**

The NHTRC is part of Polaris Project's Training, Technical Assistance, and Strategic Support Program (TTASP), which exists to help improve the systemic response to protect victims of human trafficking in the U.S. The NHTRC is working to help meet the following critical needs in the field:

- To increase the effectiveness of trainings, technical assistance, and strategic support throughout all levels and sectors of the anti-trafficking movement
- To increase the number of U.S. citizen and foreign national victims identified and receiving services in the U.S.
- To improve local, regional, and national levels of coordination and communication
- To build an institutionalized capacity of city, state and regional infrastructure to respond to the needs of victims
- To provide more accessible and comprehensive promising practices, including practitioner-based training, technical assistance, and strategic support to the anti-trafficking movement in the U.S.

The overall effectiveness of the anti-trafficking field in the U.S. is dependent on the collective efforts of thousands of organizations and stakeholders. Using a strengths-based model, the NHTRC seeks to connect callers with anti-trafficking practitioners in communities nationwide who are best equipped to understand local needs and serve victims in their area.

### **TYPES OF CALLS MADE INTO THE NHTRC NATIONAL HOTLINE**

Calls to the NHTRC are categorized into 6 call types, allowing staff to appropriately tailor their responses to the particular needs of the caller.

### **CRISIS CALLS**

This category includes calls received from self-identifying victims of trafficking in need of immediate assistance or from an individual calling on behalf of a victim in need of immediate assistance. Non-emergency calls referencing the potential exploitation or harm of minors may also fall under this category.

NHTRC full-time staff will respond immediately to all calls that are designated as crisis calls. The response may include connecting the caller with a local service provider or trusted law enforcement in the caller's area. The NHTRC considers a broad range of factors in determining the appropriate response. These factors include, but are not limited to: needs and wishes expressed by the caller; level of detail provided on the call; anti-trafficking infrastructure in the caller's area; potential threat to the caller or others; and reference to the potential exploitation or harm of minors.

## TIPS

This category includes calls received from individuals wishing to report tips related to potential trafficking victims, suspicious behaviors, and/or locations where trafficking is suspected to occur.

Urgent tips are processed by NHTRC staff immediately following the call; all other tips are discussed during regular meetings – several times per week. Follow up may involve any of the following actions: reconnecting with the caller to elicit further information; referring the caller to a local anti-trafficking organization; reporting the tip directly to a local anti-trafficking organization, coalition, task force, or law enforcement agent (this may include local, state or federal). Prior to reporting, the NHTRC will consider the needs of the caller; the level of potential danger involved; the specificity of the information provided; the presence of minor victims; and the existing anti-trafficking infrastructure in the caller's area.

## TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUESTS

The NHTRC regularly receives calls requesting training and technical assistance on a variety of topics relating to the issue of human trafficking. Training and Technical Assistance calls often include, but are not limited to requests for: specialized information; programmatic and project support; phone consultations; materials reviews; trainings and presentations; and field training or joint activities.

The NHTRC provides tailored training and technical assistance according to the needs of the caller. Training and technical assistance is provided in person, on the phone, through email, and through referrals to other organizations in the field.

## REFERRALS

This call category includes requests for referrals to organizations working in the human trafficking field. Callers may request referrals by organization or contact name, geographical area, population served and/or type of services needed.

Referrals may include contact information for service providers, law enforcement, coalitions and other collaborative efforts, and other relevant agencies or field practitioners. Referral requests may seek any of the following: case management services, shelter services, legal services, mental health or medical services, and many more. The NHTRC respects the need for privacy of many organizations and will employ the referral process preferred by that organization.

## GENERAL INFORMATION REQUESTS

This category includes calls requesting general information on the issue of human trafficking, such as legal definitions, scope, statistics, trends, and prevalence.

Many requests for general information are fulfilled during the original phone call. In order to best meet the needs of the caller, the NHTRC will often follow up with the provision of various resources including documents, training materials, links to research, and referrals.

## RELATED CALLS

This category has been created to address calls that come into the NHTRC that are either unrelated to the issue of human trafficking and the purpose of the NHTRC, or related, but beyond the scope of NHTRC services, such as sexual assault or general labor exploitation.

When these calls occur, Call Specialists refer callers to other national hotlines, other service providers, or other coalitions that are best equipped to fulfill the caller's request.

**HIGHLIGHTED CALL STATISTICS:**

- **Date Hotline Operations Began:** 12/07/2007
- **Monthly Call Volume:** 400-500 calls
- **Average Calls per Day:** 18-22 calls
- **Victim Statistics:** Over 2300 potential victims have been described during calls received during the period from 12/7/07 to 12/31/2008
- **12/07/07 – 12/31/08:** 5985 Calls
- **1/1/08 – 12/31/08:** 5748 Calls
- **Call Statistics by Month:**
  - 237 calls in Dec. '07
  - 392 calls in Jan. '08
  - 410 calls in Feb. '08
  - 401 calls in Mar. '08
  - 422 calls in Apr. '08
  - 457 calls in May '08
  - 459 calls in Jun. '08
  - 485 calls in Jul. '08
  - 470 calls in Aug. '08
  - 414 calls in Sep. '08
  - 856 calls in Oct. '08
  - 538 calls in Nov. '08
  - 444 calls in Dec. '08

*For questions about Polaris Project's operation of the NHTRC, please contact Sarah Jakiel, National Human Trafficking Resource Center Program Manager, at [SJakiel@PolarisProject.org](mailto:SJakiel@PolarisProject.org) or 202-745-1001 Ext.160.*