



2016 Final Report

# Maryland Safe Harbor Workgroup

Secretary of State, John C. Wobensmith, Chair

DECEMBER 1, 2016

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This 2016 final report of the *Maryland Safe Harbor Workgroup* is the result of hard work, valuable input, and dedication from numerous individuals. State and local law enforcement representatives, legislators, community advocates, victim's rights' representatives, state and local government representatives, and survivors. Everyone was exceptionally generous with their time and supportive feedback. Their participation in the *Workgroup to Study Safe Harbor Policy for Youth Victims of Human Trafficking*, as well as their feedback, suggestions, and recommendations were invaluable for the *Maryland Safe Harbor Workgroup* final report. The completion, timeliness, and comprehensiveness of this report would not have been possible without their active participation and support.

## **ROSTER OF MEMBERS**

The *Workgroup to Study Safe Harbor Policy for Youth Victims of Human Trafficking* was composed of 23 members, including State and local law enforcement representatives, legislators, community advocates, victim's rights' representatives, state and local government representatives, survivors, and a Chairman appointed by Governor Hogan.

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Chairman

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2015, Governor Hogan signed House Bill 456 (Chapter 91) into law which established the *Workgroup to Study Safe Harbor Policy for Youth Victims of Human Trafficking* (Workgroup). Under the provisions of Chapter 91 (2015), the Workgroup was directed to study legal protections for youth victims of human trafficking, the provision of services for youth victims of human trafficking, and to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by December 1, 2015.<sup>1</sup>

In response to Chapter 91 (2015), the Workgroup met five times over the duration of two months to discuss and develop recommendations to restore victims and bring traffickers to justice. As a result of such discussions, the Workgroup developed ten recommendations which were submitted to the Governor and General Assembly on December 1, 2015. This report is accessible to the public and may be viewed on the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention's website at:

<http://goccp.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/safe-harbor-workgroup-final-report.pdf>.

In 2016, Governor Hogan approved the sunset extension for Chapter 91 (2015) via Chapter 80 (2016). Pursuant to Chapter 80 (2016), the Workgroup was directed to continue to study legal protections and provisions of services for youth victims of human trafficking, and to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by December 1, 2016.

Pursuant to Chapter 80 (2016), the Workgroup met five times over a five month period to discuss recommendations to restore survivors of human trafficking and bring traffickers to justice. In response to these discussions, the Workgroup reaffirmed the majority of recommendations from the 2015 report, and developed two additional recommendations (*as illustrated below*):

1. Provide immunity for youth, age 17 and under, who are charged with prostitution or other non-violent misdemeanor charges related to their victimization with immediate referral to services (*for more information please see recommendation nine*).
2. Establish statewide protocols for addressing missing or runaway children.
3. The Department of Juvenile Services should expand the use of its risk assessment tool to all community and detention locations within the State, provided services are available to support identified victims.

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<sup>1</sup> The Workgroup was specifically directed to: (1) compile existing information on and identify the needs of youth victims of human trafficking and identify the public and private sector programs and resources currently available to meet those needs; (2) identify gaps in public and private sector programs and resources currently available to meet the needs of youth victims of human trafficking; (3) collect and compile data on the number of youth victims of human trafficking in the State, including the number of youth victims in each jurisdiction of the State; (4) evaluate current State safe harbor policies and legal protections for youth victims of human trafficking; and (5) make recommendations regarding: (i) legislation and policy initiatives to address the provision of services and legal protections for youth victims of human trafficking in the State; (ii) the collection of data to identify youth victims of human trafficking in the State; (iii) funding requirements and budgetary priorities to address the needs of youth victims of human trafficking in the State; and (iv) any relevant issues or considerations identified by the Workgroup.

4. Require human trafficking awareness training for all entry level law enforcement officers, followed up by mandated in-service training for all sworn law enforcement officers.
5. Continue to identify and apply for appropriate federal funding to support funding priorities.
6. Remove solicitation for prostitution from § 11-306 of the Criminal Law Article and make it a separate charge with same penalties consistent with § 11-306 of the Criminal Law Article.
7. Amend § 19-103 of the Business Regulation Article to include adult entertainment establishments as entities required to post National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline information signs.
8. Expand the definition of sexual abuse to include sex trafficking regardless of the identity and role of the trafficker.
9. Form a workgroup of appropriate state agencies and non-governmental organizations to design and implement a three year plan to develop a “Safe Harbor Service Provision Proposal” that would create a single point of entry into services for youth victims of human trafficking.
10. The Maryland State Department of Education should work with all public school systems to develop and implement curriculum related to educating students as to the signs of human trafficking to include prevention and intervention opportunities. The Department should work to provide human trafficking training to all administrators, teachers, support staff, bus drivers, and school resource officers.

## INTRODUCTION

“Sex trafficking is a form of slavery that exists throughout the United States and globally.”<sup>2</sup> While much effort has occurred across the nation to address this issue, many states struggle to identify and/or provide the best service to victims of human trafficking, particularly youth victims. In prior years, youth victims of human trafficking entered the criminal justice system where they were charged as juvenile delinquents; however, in more recent years, a growing number of states have taken a different approach, treating victims of human trafficking, particularly youth victims, and diverting them to services and resources in the community.

Although human trafficking occurs throughout the nation, those states with greater accessibility, such as Maryland, may face greater challenges with traffickers. In fact, the State of Maryland is located between several east coast metropolitan areas. Because of this, and the presence of major interstate highways throughout the State, Maryland is a “hot spot” for traffickers seeking to pass through, as well as those interested in residing in our State.

In 2014, Victims Services Committee of the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force identified “396 survivors of human trafficking” within our State of which 124 were trafficked as children (175 survivors did not report their age).<sup>3</sup> The Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, which is coordinated out of the United States Attorney’s Office, is the State’s primary organization that works to prevent trafficking, protect victims by providing them with needed services, prosecute traffickers, and also partners with a variety of organizations to eradicate the scourge of human trafficking from within our communities.

To continue these efforts made by the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, in 2015, the Maryland General Assembly passed, and Governor Hogan signed into law, Chapter 91 (2015) which established the *Workgroup to Study Safe Harbor Policy for Youth Victims of Human Trafficking*. Later, in 2016, Chapter 80 (2016) was enacted to extend the sunset of the *Workgroup to Study Safe Harbor Policy for Youth Victims of Human Trafficking* until June 30, 2017. This legislation directed the Workgroup to continue to study legal protections and provisions of services for youth victims of human trafficking, and to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by December 1, 2016. Specifically, the Workgroup was directed to:

1. Compile existing information on and identify the needs of youth victims of human trafficking and identify the public and private sector programs and resources currently available to meet those needs;
2. Identify gaps in public and private sector programs and resources currently available to meet the needs of youth victims of human trafficking;

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<sup>2</sup> Retrieved from the Polaris Project (<https://polarisproject.org/sex-trafficking>).

<sup>3</sup> For more information, please visit the following website: <http://www.mdhumantrafficking.org/reports/>.

3. Collect and compile data on the number of youth victims of human trafficking in the State, including the number of youth victims in each jurisdiction of the State;
4. Evaluate current State safe harbor policies and legal protections for youth victims of human trafficking; and
5. Make recommendations regarding:
  - a. Legislation and policy initiatives to address the provision of services and legal protections for youth victims of human trafficking in the State;
  - b. The collection of data to identify youth victims of human trafficking in the State;
  - c. Funding requirements and budgetary priorities to address the needs of youth victims of human trafficking in the State; and
  - d. Any relevant issues or considerations identified by the Workgroup.

Pursuant to Chapter 80 (2016), the Workgroup met five times over a five month duration to deliberate on recommendations and listen to testimony provided by stakeholders with expertise and/or personal experiences from across the State. These meetings occurred from July 2016 to November 2016, and were held in various areas of Maryland, to include: Annapolis, Largo, Burtonsville, and Baltimore.

## **WORKGROUP OBSERVATIONS**

In an effort to accomplish its goals, the Workgroup met five times at which each meeting consisted of in-depth discussions regarding the recommendations captured in the 2015 final report, as well as the proposal of several additional recommendations. Each meeting was open to the public which allowed community members to provide expertise and offer suggestions, as needed. Secretary Wobensmith, chair of the Workgroup, also invited various experts from law enforcement and prosecutors to two of these meetings in which they were able to share their experiences with youth victims of human trafficking. Through testimony, research and discussion, members of the Workgroup examined the following issue areas which were outlined by the legislation.

### **Compile Existing Information & Identify Needs of Youth Victims**

Children traumatized by sex trafficking need and deserve a prompt and streamlined response that provides informed, culturally-appropriate and trauma-informed crisis assistance, and emergency response. They also deserve immediate coverage of basic needs, and assessment for placement into care.

The provision of specialized services for survivors of child sex trafficking is limited to a handful of metropolitan locations across the State. This causes fragmented services and revictimization for survivors. Promising practices in Maryland have revealed that aligning a victim services advocate with the child immediately upon identification can assist with long-term success. This includes reduction of flight risk, increased rapport, more successful investigations and prosecutions and appropriate access to services for victims. Where possible, these practices should be replicated.

In Maryland, non-governmental organizations currently serve child victims of sex trafficking in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Howard County, and Prince George's County. There is an organization located in Washington, D.C. that also serves children from Montgomery County. The Department of Human Resources identified two 24/7 programs equipped with diagnostic centers and residential programs within the State to receive trafficking victims: Arrow Project (Harford County) and The Children's Home (Baltimore County). Both of these programs work with victims of human sex trafficking in their diagnostic units and group home program. In addition, there are several child advocacy centers in Maryland that work with child protective services (a component within the Department of Human Resources) to provide short-term care and refer individuals to service providers.

The University of Maryland, School of Social Work was recently awarded a three-year, \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime to improve statewide coordination and multidisciplinary collaboration in responding to

human trafficking involving children and youth. The grant, known as the Maryland Human Trafficking Initiative for Children and Youth, is in partnership with the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention, the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, the Maryland Department of Human Resources, the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services, and the United States Attorney's Office (District of Maryland), the University of Maryland SAFE Center, the Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts, Healthy Teen Network, TurnAround, Inc., and the Baltimore Child Abuse Center. The grant will create multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) throughout the State, beginning with Baltimore City and Montgomery and Prince George's counties. Each MDT will include members from local child welfare and juvenile justice offices, human trafficking investigators from law enforcement, victim services advocates, and local prosecutors. The three MDTs will be piloted for possible expansion to the rest of the State.

Because recovery from the victimization of sex trafficking is not a quick fix, long-term care options, although they can be costly, must be available for victims of sex trafficking and their families. Some of such resources may be found in the 2016 Resource Directory which was compiled by the Victims Services Committee of the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force. This directory lists the organizations and agencies actively involved in either victim services or public awareness activities to address human trafficking in Maryland.<sup>4</sup>

### **Identify Gaps in Programs & Available Resources**

Most of the services available for youth victims of human trafficking in Maryland remain located in the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas. Very few services are available on the Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland, Northern Maryland, and Western Maryland. A lack of available bed space continues to be a concern, particularly in more rural areas.

### **Collect & Compile Data on the Number of Youth Victims**

In partnership with the Child Sex Trafficking Victims Initiative (CSTVI) at the University of Maryland, School of Social Work, and the Maryland Department of Human Resources, data for this report involved the collection and review of all child maltreatment reports of suspected sex trafficking (CST) cases made to Maryland's 24 local Department of Social Services agencies (LDSSs) between June 2013 and September 2016. CST reports are defined as those child maltreatment reports of youth under age 18 suspected of involvement in commercial sex, either forced or "voluntary." Commercial sex acts, for example, consist of prostitution, stripping, or pornography, which are done in exchange for anything of value. Examples of items of value include money, shelter, food, clothing, or transportation.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information regarding the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, please visit their website at: [www.mdhumantrafficking.org/resources/](http://www.mdhumantrafficking.org/resources/).

CST reports were made by local, state, and federal law enforcement, child welfare and juvenile justice workers, mental health professionals, private citizens, educators, family members, non-profit organizations, and medical providers. A total of 213 youth were identified as trafficked in Maryland, with an average of 66 cases each year. Between 2013 and 2016, the number of child sex trafficking cases have increased drastically. In fact, in 2013, 18 trafficked youth were identified and in 2016, 87 youth were identified within the first nine months. Within the State of Maryland, five jurisdictions were identified with the greatest number of child sex trafficking cases:

1. Baltimore City (60 reported cases)
2. Baltimore County (44)
3. Prince George's County (39)
4. Washington County (33)
5. Montgomery County (20)

Research indicates that child trafficking cases often go unreported and their victims remain unidentified.<sup>5</sup> As a result, the accurate number of CST victims in Maryland is presumed to be higher than 213, and this number reflects an initial survey of cases that have only touched the State's various law enforcement and social services systems, thus far.

### **Evaluate Current State Safe Harbor Policies & Legal Protections**

In Maryland, there continues to be no legal immunity for a child found to be involved in prostitution or prostitution related activities. Although a person under the age of 18 who has been induced to perform a commercial sex act is a victim of a severe form of human trafficking under federal law, such individuals can still be arrested and entered into the criminal justice system by Maryland authorities. Law enforcement officers who spoke in front of the Workgroup stated that they routinely do not arrest youth for prostitution. Instead they treat them as victims of human trafficking and try to connect them to services. However, it is up to the discretion of the officer whether or not to charge a minor.

Maryland Chapter 357 of 2015 provides that, in a prosecution for a charge relating to prostitution under §11-306 of the Criminal Law Article, it is an affirmative defense of duress if the defendant committed the act as a result of being a victim of an act committed by another person in violation of the prohibition against human trafficking under federal law or §11-303 of the Criminal Law Article. A defendant is prohibited from asserting the affirmative defense unless the defendant

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<sup>5</sup> Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2013. *Confronting commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors in the United States*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

notifies the state's attorney of the defendant's intention to assert the defense at least 10 days prior to trial.

Chapter 516 of 2016 (Alicia's Law) established the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Fund to pay for training, salaries, and equipment to be used for the investigation and prosecution of internet crimes against children. Alicia's Law was one of 10 recommendations made by the 2015 Safe Harbor Workgroup.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2015, the Workgroup was tasked with making recommendations regarding (1) legislation and policy initiatives to address the provision of services and legal protections for youth victims of human trafficking in the State; (2) the collection of data to identify youth victims of human trafficking in the State; (3) funding requirements and budgetary priorities to address the needs of youth victims of human trafficking in the State; (4) any other relevant issues or considerations identified by the Workgroup. The 2016 final report (*Maryland Safe Harbor Workgroup*) carefully examined each of the 2015 recommendations to make them stronger, and added two new recommendations.

**Recommendation #1: Provide immunity for youth age 17 and under who are charged with prostitution or other nonviolent misdemeanor charges related to their victimization with immediate referral to services (*for more information please see recommendation nine*).**

States that have enacted safe harbor laws have done so in a variety of ways. Currently, all states that have made immunity part of their safe harbor legislation have made the age for immunity no higher than age 17.

The Workgroup has continued to engage in a robust conversation on immunity for youth victims of sex trafficking throughout the meetings. Several members of the Workgroup, as well as members of law enforcement who were invited to speak, were opposed to any type of immunity, citing concerns of a revolving door if there are no consequences for repeat offenders. Most members of the Workgroup supported immunity for individuals 17 and younger who are charged with prostitution or other nonviolent misdemeanor charges related to their victimization. Several members of the workgroup advocated for immunity up to the age of 25 or 26, citing research on brain development and the fact that some children do not age out of foster care until age 21.

Despite a difference of opinion on immunity provisions, an overwhelming majority of Workgroup members agreed that all children must be referred to services upon identification. All workgroup members agreed that immunity cannot take place until there are appropriate service provisions in place. Recommendation number nine outlines service provisions for youth victims of human trafficking.

**Recommendation #2: Establish statewide protocols for addressing missing or runaway children.**

There is a direct link between runaway children and vulnerability of being targeted by human traffickers. One in five endangered runaways reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children in 2015 were likely sex trafficking victims. 74% of these likely sex trafficking victims were in the care of social services or foster care when they went missing.

Data collected by the Maryland Center for Missing and Unidentified Persons for repeat runaway children, specifically children that ran away two or more times from July to September 2016 (minimum two times to maximum 12 times,) found a total of 212 (female = 124, male = 88) children were reported, with a total of more than 578 incidents of children running away. The youngest runaway was 10 years old and the oldest was 17 years old. There are approximately 12,440 reports of runaway children every year in Maryland. Focusing on repeat runaways could potentially lead to identifying additional youth victims of human trafficking.

To address this problem, it is recommended that law enforcement should put into place a procedure to have all chronic runaways (defined as three or more incidents) and children missing for more that 30 days screened for trafficking upon their return. Additional resources may be needed to facilitate this process.

**Recommendation #3: The Department of Juvenile Services should expand the use of its risk assessment tool to all community and detention locations within the State, provided services are available to support identified victims.**

The Department of Juvenile Services officially implemented its Human Sex Trafficking risk assessment pilot program at the Thomas J. S. Waxter Children's Center in March 2012, Noyes Children's Center in December 2012, Charles H. Hickey School in Baltimore County in March 2014, and at the Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center in November 2015.

As of October 31, 2016, Juvenile Services had 2,397 juvenile admissions to these four designated female and male detention facilities. Of these 2,397 admissions 103 youth ranging from 14 to 19 years of age were confirmed as victims of human sex trafficking. All of the confirmed victims were referred to TurnAround, Inc., a domestic violence and sexual assault center in the Baltimore area, for individual and group services.

Additionally, to ensure that possible victims are identified in the community, case management staff is required by Department policy to screen youth supervised in the community who present a concern for possible trafficking victimization. The Department is coordinating with victim service providers to account for the additional referrals as more youth are identified. In order to expand the program to other juvenile facilities, more qualified service providers must be identified.

**Recommendation #4: Require human trafficking awareness training for all entry level law enforcement officers, followed up by mandated in-service training for all sworn law enforcement officers.**

Law enforcement training on human trafficking is still fragmented across the State. Some police departments require comprehensive human trafficking awareness training for their officers, while

some departments have no requirements at all. The Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission is responsible for enforcing training standards to all law enforcement officers in the State and should require human trafficking awareness training for all entry level law enforcement as well as require in-service training every three years to ensure that all law enforcement officers in Maryland, including executive officers will be aware of human trafficking and know how to spot potential victims. There needs to be additional human trafficking training for first line supervisors, especially Patrol Sergeants. The first line supervisors are key in any law enforcement agency to proper reporting, documentation, and follow up of human trafficking incidents. An online training video can be used in lieu of classroom training, and it is recommended that the video be produced by the Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission in cooperation with the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force.

In an effort to provide comprehensive and effective training, the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention, the United States Attorney's Office (District of Maryland), and the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force have developed human trafficking training for law enforcement officers. The training is broken into "Basic Human Trafficking Training" and "Advanced Human Trafficking Training." The trainings are held throughout the state and are free of charge, voluntary, and provide law enforcement officers with in-service credit hours through the Maryland Police Training Commission. From May 2015 to September 2016 approximately 1,110 law enforcement officers completed the Basic and Advanced Human Trafficking training. This number represents a small number of the approximately 16,000 law enforcement officers in Maryland.

**Recommendation #5: Continue to identify and apply for appropriate federal funding to support funding priorities.**

As mentioned above, \$2.5 million will support the Maryland Human Trafficking Initiative for Children and Youth from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Victims of Crime over the next three years. This funding will help Maryland partners improve statewide coordination and multidisciplinary collaboration in responding to human trafficking involving children and youth.

In addition, in October of 2016, the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention awarded over \$46 million in federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds for victims of crime across Maryland. A portion of the funds will go directly to victims of human trafficking, including funding for direct services, legal assistance for post-conviction relief, and regional navigators to assist victims with accessing services.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Governor Larry Hogan Announces over \$46 Million in Federal Funding for Crime Victims. November 21, 2016. <http://governor.maryland.gov/2016/11/21/governor-larry-hogan-announces-over-46-million-in-federal-funding-for-crime-victims/>

Maryland agencies and nonprofits should continue to identify and apply for appropriate federal funding opportunities. These funds would go towards supporting anti-human trafficking initiatives to include law enforcement training, provision of victim's services, and the work of the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force.

**Recommendation #6: Remove solicitation for prostitution out of § 11-306 of the Criminal Law Article and make it a separate charge with same penalties as the current § 11-306 of the Criminal Law Article. Decrease the fine for all prostitution related charges that would remain in § 11-306 of the Criminal Law Article.**

This recommendation is to target the buyers of sex that fuel the sex trade that makes human sex trafficking possible. Although the sexual solicitation of a minor is already a felony (§ 3-324 of the Criminal Law Article; penalty not to exceed 10 years, or a fine not to exceed \$25,000, or both), it is recommended by the Workgroup that more be done to punish those buyers of sex from adults. In order to target the buyers of sex from adults, it is recommended that § 11-306 of the Criminal Law Article be rewritten to remove “procure or solicit or offer to procure or solicit for prostitution or assignation” and make it an independent charge with a penalty not to exceed one year or a fine not to exceed \$500 or both. This new charge could be enforced via a criminal citation or physical arrest. Fines collected for these violations should be placed into a victim services fund for the provision of services to victims of human trafficking. It is recommended that the current penalties for § 11-306 of the Criminal Law Article be lowered in an effort not to punish possible victims of human trafficking. The new version of § 11-306 of the Criminal Law Article can be enforced via criminal citation or physical arrest.

**Recommendation #7: Amend § 19-103 of the Business Regulation Article to include adult entertainment establishments as entities required to post National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline information signs.**

Effective October 1, 2012, bus stations and truck stops within Maryland are required by § 19-103 of the Business Regulation Article to post the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline information in restrooms. To increase reach and visibility of this information in high target areas, adult entertainment establishments should also be required to post information about the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline. For example, Virginia state law requires any employer who operates an adult entertainment facility to post notice of the existence of a human trafficking hotline at the same location where other employee notices required by state or federal law are posted. Failure to do so carries a civil penalty of \$500. Across the country, 30 states require or encourage a human trafficking hotline number to be posted or promoted within the state. The locations where a hotline number must be posted vary by state.

**Recommendation #8: Expand the definition of sexual abuse to include sex trafficking regardless of the identity and role of the trafficker.**

Define sexual abuse to include sex trafficking regardless of whether the sexual abuse was committed by a parent, or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of a child, or by any household or family member. Currently, in order to investigate an allegation of alleged child sexual abuse with law enforcement and provide services to all alleged victim, a local department of social services must have evidence that the alleged perpetrator was the victim's parent, family or household member or caretaker. In sex trafficking cases, the relationship between the victim and trafficker is not usually that clear. In compliance with Federal law, the statutory amendment redefining child sexual abuse to include sex trafficking, regardless of the identity and role of the trafficker, would permit local departments to respond immediately to trafficking allegations (both those with a trafficker controlling a minor or where minors are soliciting on their own), work with law enforcement, and provide services to victims.

**Recommendation #9: Form a workgroup of appropriate state agencies and non-governmental organizations to design and implement a three-year plan to develop “Safe Harbor Service Provision Proposal” that will create a single point of entry in to services for youth victims of human trafficking.**

The Governor’s Office of Crime Control & Prevention will form a working group of state agencies and non-governmental organizations to implement a plan for the Safe Harbor Service Provision Proposal. The workgroup will consist of the following agencies and non-governmental organizations:

- Maryland Department of Juvenile Services
- Maryland Department of Human Resources
- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Maryland State Department of Education
- Governor Office of Crime Control & Prevention
- Maryland State Police
- TurnAround Inc.
- FairGirls
- University of Maryland SAFE Center
- UMD School of Social Work
- Representative from local law enforcement

The working group will implement a three-year plan to develop the Safe Harbor Service Provision Proposal. In developing this plan, the group shall consider the feasibility of various service provision methods including, but not limited to, the following items:

1. The establishment of Therapeutic Foster Care homes for youth survivors of human trafficking
2. The establishment and implementation of a credentialing process for direct care providers and programs approved to treat survivors of sex trafficking
3. Establishment of regional navigators in multiples areas of the State to ensure that all victims receive the proper short-term and long-term service
4. Establishment of a statewide human trafficking position to oversee regional navigators, coordinate state wide training efforts, implement policies related to human trafficking and coordinate with the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force

This proposal is to develop localized safe houses in specific jurisdictions for children that are recovered/domiciled and are identified as victims of human trafficking. The proposal would allow for the creation of an “Off Hour” Crisis Intervention worker who would respond to the jurisdiction where a child was recovered. These Crisis Workers would be employed by a local service provider and they would have the needed experience and training to verify the identification of a human trafficking victim. If a child is identified and the crisis worker determines that child is in danger and an alternative living arrangement is needed, the crisis worker would have the option of placing the victim in a crisis bed.

The proposal would create and establish crisis beds in the community. These beds would be established in foster homes where the foster parents will receive additional training in the services needed for victims of human trafficking. These crisis home providers would agree to be available to receive an identified victim 24 hours per day, seven days per week. In return the crisis home foster parents would receive stipends to hold the available beds as well as to be available 24 hours per day.

On the next business day after the recovery, the Crisis Worker Service Provider would facilitate a crisis team meeting to develop a temporary treatment plan for the recovered victim. The crisis team would consist of members from the local DSS, the county DJS, a representative from DHMH, the local service provider and the law enforcement agency that recovered the child. A treatment plan would be created that could consist of continued placement in the crisis foster bed or other alternative living or reunification plan. The crisis team would determine a lead agency and that agency would provide case management services to monitor and implement the treatment service plan.

This would be a single point of entry into the “Safe Harbor” program. A similar outcome would result whether the child was originally recovered by a law enforcement agency or placed with another agency and regardless of how the child is identified. Participation in the Safe Harbor

Crisis Program is voluntary and the goal is for the crisis worker to engage the victim and encourage them to participate as an opportunity for services.

In order to provide these intensive services, resources will be needed to not only contract with a service provider for on-call crisis staff, but also to establish crisis beds. The proposal will need to be screened to determine what legislative changes need to be made or established to fund a voluntary placement program.

Further discussion needs to be held on the need for shelter orders, child in need of assistance (CINA) hearings and requirements under the new statute for reporting child abuse.

Recovery and Placement:

1. A victim is recovered and an identification is made.
2. Crisis intervention “liaison” or “team” is deployed (Regional Navigator) and a decision is made on the need for a crisis bed.
3. On the next business day, the Service Provider will convene the Crisis Team and a Treatment Service Plan will be developed with the participation of the victim.
4. The liaison and the state-agency representative meet to discuss placement (MDT)
5. Placement options would include small treatment foster care facilities run by community partners.

Further Discussions:

1. How does this proposal support the grant awarded to the University of MD School of Social Work for the Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking Grant from the DOJ?
2. Community agency accepting liability for a victim’s placement with a state contracted provider/crisis bed.
3. Court involvement, if any.
4. How and who would create the Statement of Need for the crisis beds?
5. What agency, if any, would take the lead in contracting for crisis beds?
6. Safe Harbor Service proposal would need to be reviewed by the Executive Staff for DHR, DJS and DHMH.

**Recommendation #10: The Maryland State Department of Education will work with all public school systems to develop and implement curriculum related to educating students as to the signs of human trafficking to include prevention and intervention opportunities. To provide training to all administrators, counselors, classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, security guards, health room staff, etc.**

Several school systems in Maryland have already tried to implement some human trafficking education to students. These efforts can be inconsistent from system to system and can often

provide different messages. Curriculum should be developed in cooperation with the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force.

There should be advanced human trafficking training for all Maryland School Resource Officers. It is also recommended that all educators (administrators, counselors, classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, security guards, health room staff, etc.) receive human trafficking awareness training. This shall include all public and private schools in Maryland. This would strengthen statewide prevention efforts, identify potential victims and get them into services, and would help in producing more accurate numbers of potential trafficking incidents.