

## MYTHS VS REALITIES



## NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION

**Myth:**  
Human trafficking is a global problem. There is nothing I can do to help.

**Reality:**  
Trafficking has been reported in every state in the U.S. Know the signs and report tips to the National Hotline.

**Myth:**  
Victims are desperate to escape and ask for help when needed.

**Reality:**  
Victims may not readily seek help due to a number of factors: shame, self-blame, fear, or instructions from their trafficker.

**Myth:**  
Labor trafficking is only or primarily a problem in developing countries.

**Reality:**  
Labor trafficking occurs in the U.S. and in other developed countries but is reported at lower rates than sex trafficking.

**Myth:**  
If the victim consented in their initial situation, then it cannot be human trafficking because they “knew better.”

**Reality:**  
Initial consent prior to acts of force, fraud, or coercion is not relevant to the crime.

**Myth:**  
Victims are physically unable to leave their situations/locked in/held against their will.

**Reality:**  
Sometimes, but more often, victims stay for lack of basic needs, are afraid for their safety, or are manipulated.

**Myth:**  
Trafficking includes travel or transportation.

**Reality:**  
Transportation is not needed for human trafficking. Victims can be trafficked within their own home or neighborhood.

### What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is using force, fraud, or coercion to manipulate someone into performing labor or sex acts for something of value. Any commercial sex act with minors is legally considered trafficking.

### Signs of a potential victim:

- Accompanied by someone who prohibits the person from speaking or answering questions; refuses privacy.
- Has few or no possessions; not in possession of their own documents; employer holds their documents.
- Mentions they are working to pay off a debt owed to someone.
- Fearful, submissive, depressed, anxious, withdrawn, nervous, or paranoid.
- Works excessively long or unusual hours.
- Works in an apartment or house that is shared by other workers and may be expected to be on-call whenever business is open.
- Signs of malnourishment, serious dental problems, or lack of healthcare.
- Unable to leave their job without owing something to their employer.
- Inconsistent or scripted history or uses communication that appears coached or programmed.
- Unable to provide an address where they live or may not know what city they are in.

Get to know:

## The North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission

North Carolina Human  
Trafficking Commission



HTC.NCCOURTS.GOV

The North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission (HTC), housed in and staffed by the North Carolina Judicial Branch, is the legislatively mandated leader of anti-human trafficking efforts for the state per S.L. 2013-368. The Commission is charged with:

- Examining and combating human trafficking
- Funding and facilitating research
- Creating measurement, assessment, and accountability measures
- Suggesting new policies, procedures, and legislation
- Informing and educating law enforcement personnel, social services providers, and the general public
- Developing regional response teams
- Identifying gaps in law enforcement or service provision and recommending solutions

National Human  
Trafficking Hotline

Call: 1-888-373-7888  
Text: BEFREE (233733)  
humantraffickinghotline.org  
24/7 - Toll Free  
- Confidential -

## How can you get involved?



- ♦ Learn the signs of human trafficking
- ♦ Attend trafficking trainings from a variety of organizations
- ♦ Teach others and encourage them to learn



- ♦ If you see something, say something immediately
- ♦ Report details: time, location, vehicle
- ♦ Be an advocate for policy and legislative action



- ♦ Join a coalition or volunteer for an anti-trafficking organization
- ♦ Sign up to receive emails from the Human Trafficking Commission @ [htc.nccourts.gov](http://htc.nccourts.gov)