

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Human Trafficking

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Policy

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is committed to

- preventing
- identifying
- recovering
- protecting
- providing services for

children who have been identified as victims of human trafficking.

Legal reference: Conn. Gen. Stat. 53a-82; Conn. Gen. Stat. 46b-133; . Conn. Gen. Stat. 53a-192a; Conn. Gen. Stat. 54-222; and Conn. Gen Stat. 46a-170.

Collaboration with Stakeholders

As part of the Child Protective System, DCF shall collaborate with

- state, local, and federal law enforcement
- juvenile justice
- health care providers
- education agencies
- organizations with experience in dealing with at-risk youth

to develop and update policies and procedures (including relevant training for Social Workers) for

- preventing
- identifying
- documenting in agency records
- determining appropriate services

for any child over whom DCF has responsibility for placement, care or supervision and who DCF has reasonable cause to believe is a child trafficking victim.

Careline Responsibilities

For any referral of alleged human trafficking of a child, the Careline shall:

- identify cases with Human Trafficking (HT) characteristics for tracking purposes
NOTE: "HT Characteristics" should be noted if a child or circumstance presents with risk factors or behaviors that suggest Human Trafficking.
 - assess for acceptance per Operational Definitions (cross reference DCF Policy 22-3)
 - obtain complete information as to why the reporter suspects human trafficking and any other concerns regarding child's well-being
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Careline Responsibilities (continued)

- notify respective local law enforcement, Statewide Human Anti-trafficking Response Team (HART) Lead, FBI, Office of the Chief State's Attorney, and Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) via DCF-737
- if referral does meet acceptance criteria, assign to the appropriate Regional Office/Special Investigative Unit for investigation and create Exceptional Circumstance - Critical Incident via DCF-823 (cross reference DCF Policy 22-1-2).

Investigation Worker Responsibilities

The Investigation Social Worker shall:

- reach out to the area office HART Liaison for a HART consult
- collaborate with the Multi-Disciplinary Team(s) (MDT), sharing the outcome of the HART consult and participating in the MDT Case Review Meeting(s), to identify appropriate recommendations for intervention and investigation
- consult with DCF legal staff, Regional Resource Group (RRG) and other appropriate resources as needed.

Note: If Human Trafficking, as defined in the Operational Definitions, is first identified during the course of an investigation, the Investigation Social Worker shall contact the Careline to make a new referral.

On-Going Worker Responsibilities

When Human Trafficking concerns are newly identified on an open case with the Department, the Ongoing Social Worker shall:

- assess for child trafficking characteristics/red flags and reach out to the area office HART Liaison for a HART consult
- notify respective local law enforcement, the HART Director, FBI, Office of the Chief State's Attorney, and MDT via DCF-737
- refer to the Careline any new allegation of Human Trafficking as defined in the Operational Definitions
- collaborate with the Multi-Disciplinary Team(s) (MDT) sharing the outcomes of the HART consult and participating in the MDT Case Review Meeting(s), to identify appropriate recommendations for intervention and investigation
- consult with DCF legal staff, Regional Resource Group (RRG) and other appropriate resources as needed.

HART Liaison Responsibilities

The HART Liaison shall:

- provide HART Consults on all possible child trafficking cases within 72 hours of the request
- ensure 737s are generated on open cases and sent to the appropriate parties
- complete the Decision Map to determine the risk level or confirm the child is a victim of child trafficking

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HART Liaison Responsibilities continued

- collaborate with the MDT Coordinator and the area office MDT liaison
 - enter consult into the Department's case management system within five days and required data in the approved system(s) every month
 - assist with law enforcement related issues.
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HART Lead Responsibilities

The HART Lead shall:

- coordinate regular local HART meetings ensuring each office has a team of dedicated members to address the local response
 - support the HART Liaisons with child trafficking cases which may include attendance at HART team consults, assessing treatment options, collaboration with law enforcement, law enforcement operations, etc.
 - ensure local community has training and resources necessary to address child trafficking at a local level
 - partner with the HART Director and HART on child trafficking related issues that cannot be addressed at the local level.
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HART Director or Designee Responsibilities

The HART Director or Designee shall:

- review all forwarded DCF-737 forms and assess all reports identified with characteristics/ red flags of Human Trafficking
 - assess and triage both non-accepted and accepted referrals for response by the Regional/ Area Office HART Team and Multi-Disciplinary Team(s)
 - provide leadership and consultation to HART, the Regional/ Area Office HART Leads and Liaisons
 - provide oversight of HART related data including data entry/ extraction and reporting as indicated.
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Regional/ Area Office HART Team

A Regional/ Area Office HART TEAM is a local HART team within the DCF Regional and Area Office led by the HART Lead and Liaison(s) focused on individual child trafficking case response, local service delivery, and community education.

Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)

A Multidisciplinary Team consists of child abuse and neglect professionals, including, but not limited to

- a coordinator
 - DCF
 - law enforcement
 - state's attorney/ prosecutor
 - mental health providers
 - medical providers
 - forensic interviewer
 - advocates.
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Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)

Multidisciplinary Teams review all cases of

- child sexual abuse including child trafficking
- severe physical abuse
- death of children.

The MDT's ultimate goal is to ensure the child and the non-offending caregiver(s) receive the support and services they need due to the victimization while ensuring the team's communication minimizes the number of interviews the child must go through so as not to re-traumatize the child.

The MDT's secondary goal is to increase the prosecution rates of the identified perpetrators; the team approach increases the likelihood of successful prosecutions.

Human Antitrafficking Response Team (HART)

The Human Antitrafficking Response Team (HART) is a large group of interested parties working together to address child trafficking in the state of Connecticut.

Members include, but are not limited to

- various state agencies (DCF, DMHAS, etc.)
- courts
- HART Leads
- Liaisons
- all levels of law enforcement
- probation
- mental health providers
- service providers
- multidisciplinary team members
- medical providers
- the faith-based community.

The focus of HART is the statewide response to child trafficking, public awareness, training, events, and other activities focused on eradicating child trafficking in the state.

Law Enforcement Human Trafficking Victim Recovery Operations

Targeted law enforcement operations for the purpose of recovering child victims of human trafficking are often conducted in collaboration with DCF.

When possible, the law enforcement agency will notify the designated DCF HART or Careline administrator prior to an operation for planning and coordination of resources. DCF shall take steps to ensure that designated staff, placements and resources are available to support these operations.

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Unique Service Options for Immigrant Child Victims of Human Trafficking

The determination of services and placement of an immigrant child who is a victim of trafficking is dependent on many factors that differ from situations in which trafficking is not an issue.

The DCF Eligibility Certification Coordinator, within the Office of Multicultural Affairs, shall make the appropriate contacts with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Anti-Trafficking In Persons Child Protection Specialist to obtain the necessary letters of eligibility and certification for the child.

Legal Reference: 45 CFR §400.116.

Repatriation reunification is available for an immigrant child when

- it is in his or her best interest to return to the country of origin and
- there is no risk of being re-trafficked.

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children

The Interstate Compact Office (ICO) should be contacted immediately in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes in accepted cases

- involving the identification of a trafficked youth in Connecticut who is not a resident of the State of Connecticut
- when a minor child who is a Connecticut resident, or in the care and custody of Connecticut's DCF, is
 - located in another state with concerns of human trafficking, and
 - the out-of-state travel was not authorized by the Department and/or legal guardian.

Legal Reference: Conn. Gen. Stat. §17a-175

Other Service Options for Child Victims Of Human Trafficking

Specialized licensed out-of-home care is available for immigrant children and children who are U.S. citizens if they are victims of trafficking.

These programs include foster care, group homes and other therapeutic settings.

Placement in these programs shall proceed only when the facility or placement agency is informed of the child's status as a victim of human trafficking because these children are considered a high risk for being runaways.

Confidential Records

Information about sex trafficking cases and victims that is maintained by DCF is protected by state and federal confidentiality laws. DCF shall only disclose this information to the appropriate authorities or other third parties as permitted by law.