DANE ADVOCACY

Human Trafficking

Understanding the Core Facts Everyone Should Know

Scope & Prevalence

Human trafficking is a global human rights violation affecting an estimated 50 million people worldwide. It includes forced labor, sexual exploitation, and forced marriage, and exists in every country, including the United States.

Who is Most Vulnerable?

Anyone can be trafficked, but heightened risk exists for women and children, immigrants and refugees, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, individuals experiencing homelessness, those in foster care, and survivors of domestic or sexual violence.

Who are the Traffickers

Traffickers are often known to the victim and may include family members, romantic partners, employers, or community members. They can operate alone or within organized criminal networks and are not limited by gender, class, or profession.

How Trafficking Happens

Most trafficking does not begin with kidnapping. Instead, traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion, often exploiting vulnerabilities through promises of work, safety, housing, or relationships, followed by control through threats, abuse, debt, or isolation.

Where it Occurs

Human trafficking happens everywhere — in private homes, workplaces, schools, farms, factories, and online spaces. It occurs both within countries and across borders, with many countries serving as origin, transit, and destination locations.

Trafficking vs Smuggling

Human trafficking involves ongoing exploitation and control, while smuggling is typically a paid service that ends after border crossing. A person may consent to smuggling but cannot consent to trafficking.

What You Can Do

Learn the signs, share accurate information, support survivor-centered organizations, advocate for accessible services, and prioritize prevention, protection, and accountability in your community.

