

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: MYTHS VS. REALITY

MYTH

REALITY

Trafficked persons are always immigrants from other countries

The federal definition of human trafficking includes both U.S. citizens and foreign nationals

Human trafficking must involve some form of travel or movement

Trafficking does not require transportation

Human trafficking is another term for human smuggling

Smuggling is a crime against a country's borders; human trafficking is a crime against a person

Human trafficking only occurs in illegal underground industries

Trafficking can occur in legal and legitimate business settings as well as underground markets

Victims of human trafficking will immediately ask for help or self-identify as a victim of a crime

Victims of human trafficking often do not immediately seek help or self-identify as victims of a crime

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There must be elements of physical restraint, physical force, or physical bondage when identifying a human trafficking situation

Trafficking does not require physical restraint, bodily harm, or physical force

Sex trafficking is the only form of human trafficking

The federal definition of human trafficking encompasses both sex trafficking and labor trafficking

Human trafficking victims always come from situations of poverty or from small rural villages

Poverty alone is not a single causal factor or universal indicator of a human trafficking victim

If the trafficked person consented to be in their initial situation, then it cannot be human trafficking or against their will because they “knew better”

Initial consent prior to acts of force, fraud, or coercion (or if the victim is a minor in a sex trafficking situation) is not relevant to the crime, nor is payment