

Kentucky Child Victims of Human Trafficking Annual Report

Report to Legislative Research Commission

Department for Community Based Services
Cabinet for Health and Family Services

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Introduction

In accordance with KRS 620.029(2)(b), the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (cabinet/CHFS) submits the annual report outlining the cabinet's response for child victims of human trafficking following the enactment of the Human Trafficking Victims Rights Act (Act) during the 2013 Regular Session. This report details the cabinet's efforts to implement requirements of the Act to ensure the safety of child victims, collaborate among multiple agencies during the course of investigations and response, and continue efforts to increase staff skill level to better serve victims. The report provides available statistics and data regarding the number of reports received involving an alleged child victim of human trafficking, investigative determinations, and services provided.¹

Section I: Implementation

The cabinet's Department for Community Based Services (department/DCBS) has worked closely with human trafficking experts, including the Catholic Charities' Human Trafficking Program and the Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs (KASAP). DCBS staff regularly attend the Louisville, Lexington, Frankfort, Shelbyville, London, Northern Kentucky, Bullitt County, and Nelson County human trafficking task force meetings, as well as the quarterly statewide human trafficking meeting and subcommittee meetings. The DCBS Division of Protection and Permanency (DPP) leadership also has membership on the statewide human trafficking advisory council. DCBS staff networks with law enforcement, victim services, and other professionals to build stronger community-based responses to human trafficking cases. Since the enactment of the Human Trafficking Victims Rights Act, DCBS has been involved with or managed the following efforts:

- Collaboration with KASAP, Catholic Charities, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (DBHDID), Children's Advocacy Centers of Kentucky, Prevent Child Abuse KY (PCAK), Kentucky Office of the Attorney General, and other agencies to participate in and/or conduct educational opportunities and work collaboratively to enhance the response to human trafficking cases among community partners;
- Statewide trainings, specialized for various audiences, including community partners, DCBS staff, and the public regarding human trafficking and the Kentucky mandatory reporting laws related to KRS 620.030;
- DCBS Child Protection Branch participation in frequent webinars, trainings, conferences, and forums regarding human trafficking and services for victims and their families across the state. In addition, the Child Protection Branch has participated in phone calls and conferences with other states discussing human trafficking response, accessing services, and service delivery to victims and their families;
- DCBS provision of technical assistance and additional guidance to field staff regarding screening, investigating, and documentation of human trafficking referrals; and

¹ The number of reports, the number of victims, and the number of perpetrators will not add up across the categories, because it is possible to have multiple children and/or perpetrators in a single report.

- Numerous updates to existing policies and procedures to comply with federal requirements (P.L. 113-183 Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act). The assessment and documentation tool (ADT) was updated to include assessment for human trafficking. Additionally, the state's child welfare database (The Worker's Information SysTem-TWIST) was updated to indicate an individual's status as a human trafficking victim as well as to distinguish between labor and sex trafficking.

Section II: Kentucky Human Trafficking Child Victim Investigations

DCBS has received human trafficking reports from various sources, including law enforcement, schools, friends, neighbors, relatives, community partners, and medical personnel, as well as anonymous reporters. Human trafficking investigations arose from a variety of reported scenarios including:

- Commercial sexual exploitation of victim in exchange for drugs, money, shelter, or something else of value;
- Victim identified as having a trafficker, buyer, or "boyfriend";
- Victim advertised for commercial sex on various social media sites and other websites;
- Victim working in a massage parlor;
- Victim working in a strip club;
- Commercially exploited runaway victims from other states; and
- Victim traveling/working with magazine, candy, or other sales.

Geographic Area

Since the inception of human trafficking reporting in Kentucky in 2013, there have been 957 reported incidents involving 1,164 alleged victims. During the 2019 reporting period, there were 171 reported incidents involving 215 alleged victims consisting of five (5) labor trafficking and 166 sex trafficking reports. For this report, incidents are organized by DCBS service region² and are displayed in Table 1. The majority of reports originate from the Louisville area.

Table 1 – Number of Reports by DCBS Service Region

Region	YEAR							Totals
	2013	2014	2015 (10/1/2014- 9/30/2015)	2016 (10/1/2015- 9/30/2016)	2017 (10/1/2016- 9/30/2017)	2018 (10/1/2017- 9/30/2018)	2019 (10/1/2018- 9/30/2019)	
Jefferson	14	13	18	29	32	50	32	188
Salt River	12	3	11	19	31	30	31	137
Cumberland	0	15	15	27	33	21	12	123
Eastern Mountain	7	6	9	21	16	8	15	82
Northeastern	2	7	10	13	14	14	12	72
Southern Bluegrass	3	4	11	17	13	15	12	75
The Lakes	0	6	13	19	13	17	8	76
Two Rivers	1	2	5	7	19	25	30	89

² DCBS Service Regions: See Attachment A

Northern Bluegrass	1	1	7	17	46	24	19	115
Statewide Total	40	57	99	169	217	204	171	957

Victim Demographics

While alleged victims of human trafficking range in age from infant through age 17, most victims are between the ages of 13 and 17. During the 2019 reporting period, ten (10) of the 215 alleged victims were marked as unknown due to their identities remaining unknown, despite efforts made to identify the victim. Age distribution is displayed in Table 2, whereas gender of victim is displayed in Table 3. Please note that some data in Table 2 has been adjusted since the prior report due to attempts to organize the data collected in the early reporting periods.

Table 2 – Age of Alleged Trafficking Victims N=1,164

Age of the victim	2013	2014	2015 (10/1/2014- 9/30/2015)	2016 (10/1/2015- 9/30/2016)	2017 (10/1/2016- 9/30/2017)	2018 (10/1/2017- 9/30/2018)	2019 (10/1/2018- 9/30/2019)	Totals
Infant	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
1 year of age	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
2 years of age	2	1	1	5	3	2	1	15
3 years of age	0	1	0	4	1	0	0	6
4 years of age	1	0	0	1	2	3	2	9
5 years of age	1	1	2	3	4	3	5	19
6 years of age	0	0	0	7	3	6	2	18
7 years of age	0	0	1	4	2	3	1	11
8 years of age	1	2	0	6	3	5	5	22
9 years of age	1	3	4	6	12	8	5	39
10 years of age	0	3	1	2	9	4	5	24
11 years of age	2	4	3	4	6	7	10	36
12 years of age	2	2	2	12	12	13	11	54
13 years of age	2	4	19	18	22	21	21	107
14 years of age	5	10	16	23	37	28	23	142
15 years of age	11	9	19	33	46	36	36	190
16 years of age	4	16	22	48	46	52	38	226
17 years of age	14	17	24	29	40	50	38	212
Unable to locate/Unknown	0	0	1	3	3	9	10	26
Statewide number of alleged victims	51	73	115	208	251	251	215	1,164

Females are most frequently the targets of human trafficking and account for 169 of the 215 alleged victims in 2019, while males account for 45 of the 215 alleged victims. There is one (1) victim in which the gender is unknown. Gender distribution is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3 – Gender of 2019 Alleged Trafficking Victims N=215

Female	169 (78.6%)
Male	45 (20.9%)
Unknown/Unidentified	1 (.5%)

Assessment Findings

All reported and identified victims have received services throughout the investigative process. Community services provided to the children who are victims in these cases include:

- Mental health and trauma counseling;
- Referrals to Catholic Charities and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for victims advocacy;
- Children's advocacy center services;
- Residential placement;
- Placement and custody with alternative caregivers;
- Medical evaluations, as needed, for immediate and ongoing services;
- Detoxification and substance treatment services;
- Language services and cultural needs;
- Legal services;
- Educational services; and
- Clothing, hygiene, and nutritional services.

For the 2019 reporting period:

- Ten (10) children were placed outside of the familial home due to human trafficking allegations. Placements included foster homes, private child caring facilities, and relatives. Services were provided to the victims and families in those settings.
- Drugs were identified to have been provided to 72 victims or involved in the trafficking of these victims.
- Criminal charges were made in nineteen (19) investigations with reported charges that included human trafficking, sodomy, sexual abuse, unlawful transaction with a minor, and illegal sex act with a minor.
- Of the 215 total alleged victims, 209 were American born and four (4) were foreign-born. The documented nationality of two (2) alleged victims was pending as of the end of this reporting period.
- Of the 171 reports, 143 have prior DCBS history and 28 do not.
- A caretaker was alleged to be the perpetrator of 131 of the 215 total alleged victims in 2019. A non-caretaker was alleged to be the perpetrator of 137 of the 215 total alleged victims. In some cases, both a caretaker and non-caretaker were listed as perpetrators in the case, as displayed in Table 4.

Table 4 – Human Trafficking Investigative Findings N=215

	Caretaker		Non-caretaker
Substantiated	17	Confirmed	17
Unsubstantiated	55	Not confirmed	62
Pending	56	Pending	56
Unable to locate	3	Unable to locate	2
Total	131	Total	137

Section III: Conclusions and Planned Efforts

DCBS representatives continue to partner with community providers to ensure that trafficking victims are receiving trauma-informed care and other supportive services to address the multiple needs of victims. In addition, staff from the DCBS Child Protection Branch consult with field personnel, as needed. Children’s advocacy center services are obtained, as necessary, for trafficking cases. Law enforcement is notified of every investigation. Law enforcement was involved in 74% of the 215 incidents and declined to investigate approximately 6% of the alleged human trafficking cases identified by DCBS. There are 44 cases (20%) currently pending.

The Child Protection Branch and the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General provided training to all frontline supervisors throughout the nine (9) DCBS service regions and continue to provide supplemental trainings as requested.

During the 2019 reporting period, DCBS worked closely with the University of Louisville (UofL) Kent School of Social Work on their research project titled, “Project PIVOT: Prevention and Intervention of Victims of Trafficking.” The goal of the research project is to increase awareness of human trafficking within the child welfare population as well as improve the ability of systems to respond to human trafficking in the child welfare population in a way that limits additional trauma.

Planned future efforts include:

- DCBS will continue to attend task force and subcommittee meetings, conduct trainings as needed, and provide technical assistance to field personnel.
- DCBS staff will continue to work with community providers in efforts to implement new programs and services to address the needs of the victims of human trafficking.

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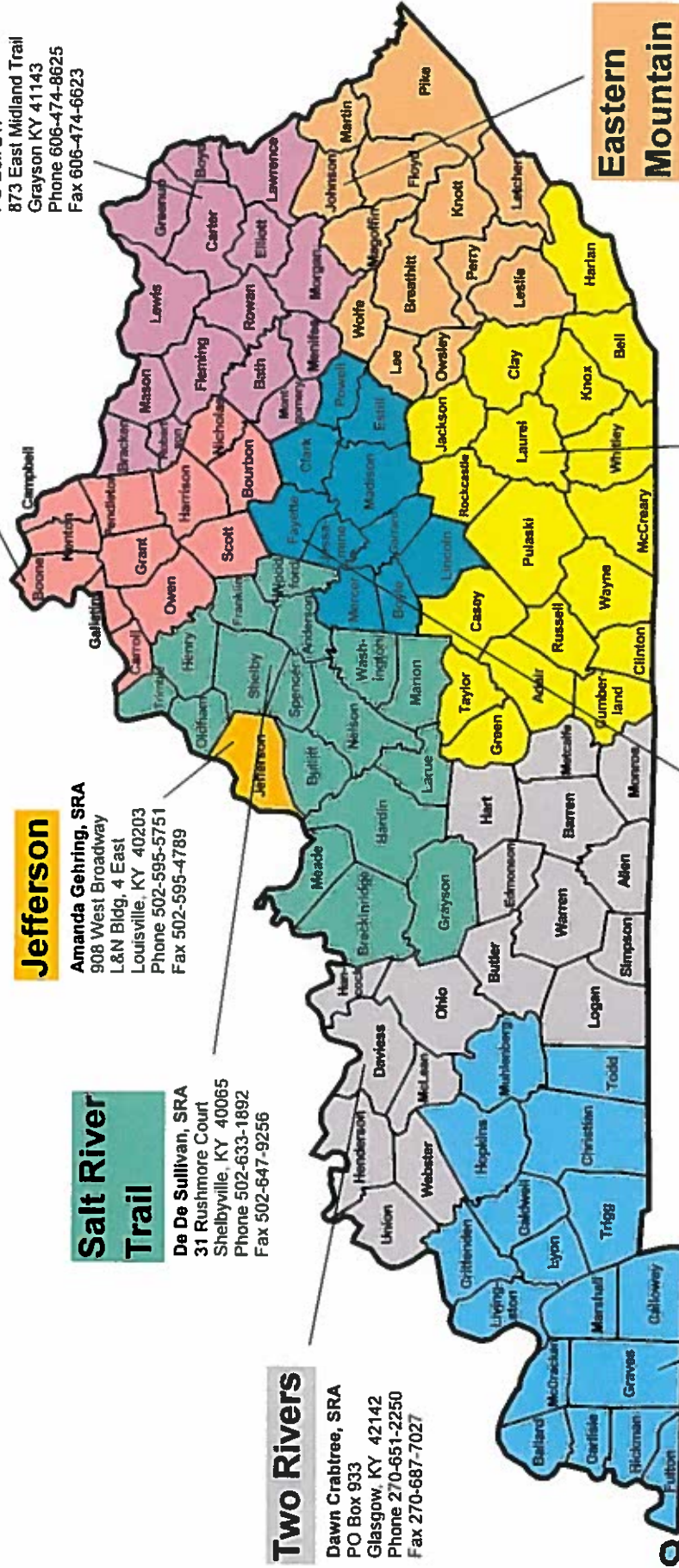
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