



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

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Eric C. Friedlander
Secretary

November 1, 2020

Jay D. Hartz, Director
Legislative Research Commission
700 Capital Avenue, Room 300
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Mr. Hartz:

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Community Based Services, presents the eighth annual report regarding Kentucky child victims of human trafficking. This report has been prepared in accordance with KRS 620.029(2)(b), established by the Human Trafficking Victims Rights Act of the 2013 Regular Session and reflects activities and services since enactment of the law.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Melanie Taylor, Assistant Director of the Department for Community Based Services' Division of Protection and Permanency, at 502-564-6852.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "ECF", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eric C. Friedlander
Secretary

Human Trafficking

Report to Legislative Research Commission

Department for Community Based Services
Cabinet for Health and Family Services

November 1, 2020



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Introduction

In accordance with KRS 620.029(2)(b), the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (cabinet) 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: DCBS Human Trafficking Program Overview

The cabinet's Department for Community Based Services (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 attends the Louisville and Lexington human trafficking task force meetings, as well as the quarterly statewide human trafficking and subcommittee meetings. 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), Kentucky Association of Children's Advocacy Centers, 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;
- Provision of technical assistance and additional guidance to field staff regarding screening, investigating, and documentation of human trafficking referrals;
- Numerous updates to existing policies and procedures to comply with federal requirements (P.L. 113-183 Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act); and
- The investigative assessment and documentation tool 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.

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

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 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 1,165 reported incidents involving 1,398 alleged victims. During the 2020 reporting period, there were 206 reported incidents involving 234 alleged victims consisting of 216 sex trafficking cases, 12 labor trafficking reports, and six reports with allegations of both sex and labor trafficking.

For this report, incidents are organized by DCBS service region² and are displayed in Table 1. The majority of reports originate from the Jefferson and Northern Bluegrass regions.

Table 1 – Number of reported incidents 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) | 2020 (10/1/2019- 9/30/2020) | |
| Jefferson | 14 | 13 | 18 | 29 | 33 | 50 | 32 | 33 | 222 |
| Salt River Trail | 12 | 03 | 11 | 19 | 31 | 30 | 31 | 19 | 156 |
| Cumberland | 0 | 15 | 15 | 27 | 33 | 21 | 12 | 29 | 152 |
| Eastern Mountain | 07 | 06 | 09 | 21 | 16 | 08 | 15 | 9 | 91 |
| Northeastern | 02 | 07 | 10 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 12 | 22 | 95 |
| Southern Bluegrass | 03 | 04 | 11 | 17 | 13 | 15 | 12 | 14 | 89 |
| The Lakes | 0 | 06 | 13 | 19 | 13 | 17 | 08 | 19 | 95 |
| Two Rivers | 01 | 02 | 05 | 07 | 19 | 25 | 30 | 23 | 112 |
| Northern Bluegrass | 01 | 01 | 07 | 17 | 46 | 24 | 19 | 38 | 153 |
| Statewide Total | 40 | 57 | 99 | 169 | 218 | 205 | 171 | 206 | 1,165 |

² DCBS Service Regions: See Attachment A

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 years. During the 2020 reporting period, 10 of the 234 alleged victims were marked as unknown due to their identities remaining unknown, despite efforts made to identify the victim. Age distribution is contained in Table 2 below, whereas gender of victim is contained 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=1,398

| 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) | 2020 (10/1/2019-9/30/2020) | Totals |
|--|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Infant | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 7 |
| 1 year | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| 2 years | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 15 |
| 3 years | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 9 |
| 4 years | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 11 |
| 5 years | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 21 |
| 6 years | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 20 |
| 7 years | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 16 |
| 8 years | 1 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 26 |
| 9 years | 1 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 12 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 40 |
| 10 years | 0 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 10 | 34 |
| 11 years | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 10 | 9 | 45 |
| 12 years | 2 | 2 | 2 | 12 | 12 | 13 | 11 | 12 | 66 |
| 13 years | 2 | 4 | 19 | 18 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 33 | 140 |
| 14 years | 5 | 10 | 16 | 23 | 37 | 28 | 23 | 28 | 170 |
| 15 years | 11 | 9 | 19 | 33 | 46 | 36 | 36 | 28 | 218 |
| 16 years | 4 | 16 | 22 | 48 | 46 | 52 | 38 | 44 | 270 |
| 17 years | 14 | 17 | 24 | 29 | 40 | 50 | 38 | 37 | 249 |
| Unable to locate/Unknown | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 36 |
| Statewide number of alleged victims | 51 | 73 | 115 | 208 | 251 | 251 | 215 | 234 | 1,398 |

Females are most frequently the targets of human trafficking and account for 184 of the 234 alleged victims, while males account for 50 of the 234 alleged victims. Gender distribution is contained in Table 3.

Table 3 – Gender of alleged trafficking victims N=234

| | |
|--------|-----------|
| Female | 184 (79%) |
| | |

Assessment Findings

For the 2020 reporting period (10/01/19-9/30/20):

- Twenty (20) children were placed outside of the familial home due to human trafficking allegations. Placements included foster homes, private child caring facilities, and relative or fictive kin caregivers. Services were provided to the victims and families in those settings.

- The commercial exchange of illegal substances were identified in the trafficking of 86 alleged victims.
- As of the date of this report, criminal charges have been filed against alleged perpetrators in 23 investigations. Reported charges included human trafficking, sodomy, sexual abuse, unlawful transaction with a minor, illegal sex acts with a minor, use of electronic devices to procure a minor, and promoting sexual acts of a minor. Additional charges may be filed as law enforcement completes additional steps in their investigations.
- Of the 234 total alleged victims, 221 were American born and 13 were foreign-born.
- A caretaker was alleged to be the perpetrator of 109 of the 234 alleged victims. A non-caretaker was alleged to be the perpetrator of 171 of the 234 alleged victims. In some cases, both a caretaker and non-caretaker were alleged to be perpetrators in the case.

Table 4 – Human trafficking investigative findings N=234

| | Caretaker | | Non-caretaker |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Substantiated | 18 | Confirmed | 33 |
| Unsubstantiated | 49 | Not confirmed | 70 |
| Pending | 40 | Pending | 66 |
| Unable to locate | 2 | Unable to locate | 2 |
| Total | 109 | Total | 171 |

Service Provision:

All reported and identified victims are provided services through the assessment or investigative process.

Services provided to the children who are the 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 drug treatment services;
- Language services and cultural needs;
- Legal services;
- Educational services; and
- Clothing, hygiene, and nutritional services.

Section III: Conclusions and Program Enhancement

DCBS representatives continue to collaborate with community providers to ensure that trafficking victims receive 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, to provide guidance and technical assistance during the assessment or investigative process. Children's Advocacy Center services are obtained, as necessary, for trafficking cases. Law enforcement is notified of every investigation. Law enforcement was involved in 83% of the 206 reported incidents and declined to investigate approximately 16% of the alleged human trafficking cases identified by DCBS. There are 27 cases (13%) pending without that information reported.

The Child Protection Branch offers a specialized investigation training annually to field personnel who complete human trafficking and other high-risk investigations. This training includes an overview of the human trafficking program and reviews the investigative process as it pertains to trafficking cases. The Child Protection Branch also offers refresher training to central intake staff as requested to review the process of screening reports involving human trafficking.

During the 2019 reporting period, DCBS worked closely with the University of Louisville, Kent School of Social Work's Human Trafficking Research Initiative as they completed a two year, grant funded research project entitled Project PIVOT (Prevention and Intervention for Victims of Trafficking). The goal of the research project was to increase awareness of child trafficking in Kentucky, as well as to improve the systematic response to ensure child trafficking victims are appropriately and effectively served in a way that reduces or limits additional trauma to the child. The preliminary report was published in December 2019 and is available online. The final report is pending at this time.

DCBS is currently working to develop a trauma-informed curriculum for private child caring (PCC) agencies who provide residential services to youth who are victims of sex trafficking or who are at risk of being trafficked.

In September 2020, DCBS was awarded a \$1,000,000 Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking grant through the Office for Victims of Crime. The project will focus on screening high-risk children and youth and providing trauma-informed services to identified victims.

DCBS Service Regions

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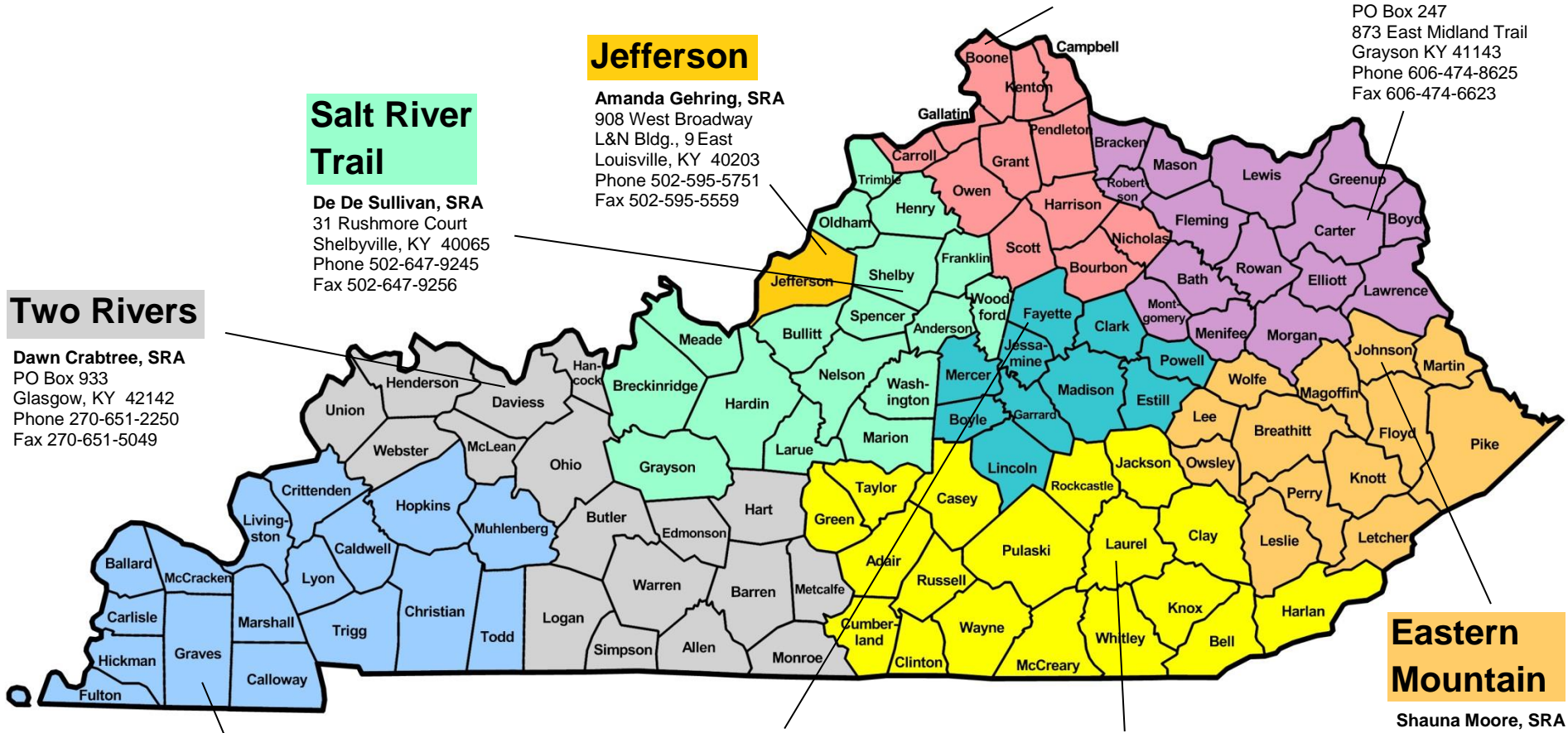
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