

Guiding Principles and Standards of Care **Within Scope of Services**

- We recognize that human trafficking is a human rights issue impacting all people.
- We understand that poverty, inequality, gender discrimination and social exclusion (based on race, class, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, immigration status, language, etc.) can increase a person's vulnerability to being trafficked for sex and labor.
- We believe survivor input is important in all aspects of program development and service delivery and work in collaboration with survivors to see restored autonomy over their lives and increased confidence in determining the next steps in their healing and recovery.
- We are aware that human trafficking often happens due to the absence of relationships, sense of belonging, and/or ostracism from a community and we offer restorative services that facilitate connection with informal supports within a person's chosen community.
- We acknowledge that healing from complex trauma such as trafficking does not take place in a linear fashion, therefore, cyclical participation in services is not seen as an indicator of failure on the part of the provider.

Best Practice Standards of Care

1. Respect for and protection of human rights

Human trafficking is a serious human rights violation. Assistance provided to victims/survivors of trafficking should aim to restore their rights, provide protection from further violations, and ensure that victims/survivors are made aware of their rights.

2. Special considerations for minor victims/survivors

When working with victims/survivors who are minors (under the age of 19), keep in mind that special considerations often apply. For example, there are specific legal requirements about reporting concerns, sharing information, and getting consent or informing parents or guardians prior to providing services or care in most cases. Programming and services will also need to be adapted for minor victims/survivors to account for important developmental differences and the unique needs that children or adolescents have.

Service providers are advised to develop programming and work in collaboration with their local Child Advocacy Center(s), the Department of Health and Human Services, Juvenile Probation and other systems and stakeholders that are knowledgeable on serving minor victims/survivors and their families.

3. Accessibility

Service providers have a coordinated intake process that assesses the individual needs of victims/survivors and can ensure victims/survivors receive services within an organization that can meet their needs, with language that a victims/survivor prefers (ex. developmentally appropriate, trained interpreter, etc). The need for access to specialized interpretation services is communicated in referrals to other providers via release of information. It is advised that agencies develop their own resource list for staff in order to access additional services (see appendix).

4. Informed consent

All services to victims/survivors of trafficking are provided with consent from victims/survivors, as they are the leaders of their treatment and have choice in services. Information about resources and services must be provided in a language the victim/survivor understands. Rights, responsibilities, confidentiality and exceptions to confidentiality should be explained to victims/survivors in a way that is understandable before service provision begins and prior to when the victim/survivor consents to services.

5. Anti-discrimination

Victims/survivors of human trafficking will have access to services regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, language or socioeconomic status.

6. Cultural humility

Service provision should be diverse, inclusive and flexible to meet the different needs of each victim-survivor. Assistance provided to victims/survivors will promote equality and diversity and ensure that victims/survivors are treated fairly and with dignity, on the basis of a victim/survivors' individual needs

and with the full respect for their gender, gender identity, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation or age.

7. *Confidentiality and right to privacy*

All information and communication about the victim/survivor must maintain regard for their right to confidentiality and privacy. The need for confidentiality should be maintained throughout all stages of assistance with victims/survivors; from initial identification through to completion of services. Service providers should clearly communicate to the victim/survivor the limits of their confidentiality. Service providers should ensure that information is only collected and shared with the informed consent of the victim/survivor whenever possible and within the “need to know” limits. Recognizing the different roles of stakeholders involved with victims/survivors, it is advised that clear communication of information and options be made available while respecting the limits of confidentiality for each agency.

Service providers should inform victims/survivors of the risks of sharing their story with the media and must not ask victims/survivors to speak to the media. To avoid potential risk of harm to a victim/survivor, service providers should request them to interact with the media only after the end of their period of service, (after relative safety of the victim/survivor is determined) with their full, ongoing consent, and after appropriate training and counseling.

8. *Self-determination and participation*

Services will be built on the belief that the victim/survivor has the right to self-determination and agency in the decision-making process. Participation is voluntary.

Victims/survivors choose how and when to leave their trafficking situation and the pace of their recovery. Service providers should be prepared to serve victims/survivors at any stage in this process or know where to refer for appropriate access to services. In acknowledgement that the healing process for victims/survivors is a cyclical process, agencies should consider allowing rapid and easy program reengagement as eligibility requirements allow.

9. *Gender-sensitive*

Service providers will recognize the needs of victims/survivors are different and that, in order to treat them equally, their gender identity in relation to their needs and circumstances ought to be understood and acknowledged. Service providers will strive to offer tailor-made supports that are responsive to the specialized needs of victims/survivors, including the use of preferred pronouns when speaking to and about a victim/survivor.

10. *Individualized treatment and care*

The most appropriate personalized assistance, support and protection measures should be provided according to the needs, circumstances, and experiences of the individual victim/survivor.

The service provider has a responsibility to have a discussion with the individual victim/survivor on how to engage with informal support networks.

11. *Holistic and victim/survivor-centered*

Service providers are willing and able to consider all aspects of each individual; including their physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, financial, legal, and social well-being. Service providers will provide or coordinate with other organizations to ensure victims/survivors have access to survivor led supports within their own scope of practice.

Within their scope of practice, providers should engage victims/survivors in safety planning whenever possible. A general safety plan template is available in the appendix.

12. *Continuum of care*

Services provided to victims/survivors of human trafficking should offer a comprehensive continuum of care, taking into account an individual's physical, psychological and social condition. A holistic, victim/survivor-centered approach may include collaboration with other providers, who share in a holistic approach to services, in order to provide appropriate services for victims/survivors.

13. *Professionalism & Boundaries*

Service providers will implement policies and procedures that set limits for safe, acceptable and effective behavior by all staff that fosters positive attachments and healthy relationships within professional boundaries. Services agencies should encourage positive coping skills and self-care plans for staff who are working with victims/survivors of trafficking.

All staff have passed Nebraska DHHS and Sex Offender Registry Background checks. Exceptions made in the hiring of staff with criminal convictions are supported by an analysis of the severity of the offense, additional subsequent acts, timeframe of crime, compliance with sanctions, evidence of rehabilitation and potential benefits.

Provider staff must attend Human Trafficking Training through an approved trainer of the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force. Continuing education on Human Trafficking and related issues is highly encouraged. A list of agencies providing approved training is included in the appendix.

- Guiding Principles and Standards of Care are adapted from IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking (2007); the Human Trafficking Foundation: Trafficking Survivor Care Standards (2015); the Ohio Human Trafficking Standards (2013) and the Office for Victims of Crimes Model Standards for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime (2016)

Service Providers' Values & Commitments

Service – The provider's primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems. The provider will draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to respond to human trafficking in our community. Providers will address the risk factors that leave people vulnerable to human trafficking.

Social Justice – The provider will challenge social injustice and strive to ensure victim/survivor has access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision-making processes.

Dignity & Worth of Person – The provider will respect the inherent dignity and worth of the victim/survivor and treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. The provider will promote clients' socially responsible self-determination. The provider will seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs.

Importance of Human Relationships – The provider will recognize the central importance of human relationships. The provider will understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. The provider will engage victims/survivors as partners in service provision. The provider will seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of victims/survivors and their families, and our community.

Integrity – The provider will behave in a trustworthy manner and act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

Competence – The provider will practice within their areas of competence, and develop and enhance their professional expertise in the area of human trafficking. The provider will continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to service victims/survivors in a trauma informed manner.

*Adapted from NASW Code of Ethics