



Urban Justice Center

666 Broadway, 10th floor, New York, NY 10012
Tel: (646) 602-5600 • Fax: (212) 533-4598

HUMAN TRAFFICKING FACT SHEET: RIGHTS OF TRAFFICKED PERSONS

- ***What is human trafficking?***

Every year, human trafficking brings thousands of people into the United States. International human trafficking is the act of bringing people into one country from another, and then **exploiting them through control or coercion**, and using them to earn money for the traffickers. In New York City, many trafficking victims come from China, Mexico, and Eastern Europe.

- ***Why do trafficking victims agree to come over here, only to be exploited?***

Back in their home country, the trafficker or his/her associates may have lied about the type of job that the trafficked person will have, or has lied about the conditions under which that person will work. Often, victims do not know that they will be working in unsafe or slavelike conditions. People agree to pay traffickers large amounts of money so that the trafficker can bring them to the United States. The victim seeks economic opportunities.

- ***What type of work do trafficking victims do once they're here?***

Trafficking victims work in different settings, including brothels, strip clubs, garment sweatshops, restaurants, agricultural work, and in private homes as domestic workers.

- ***Why don't the trafficking victims leave these conditions?***

Trafficked persons may live in slave-like conditions, or they may live in a climate of fear, where they are subject to threats against themselves or their families. Even if it appears that the victim has autonomy and can leave the situation, he or she cannot simply leave in most cases. The traffickers have threatened them with violence or with the possibility of arrest and/or deportation, making them afraid of police and lawyers here in the United States. The victim also owes a large sum of money to the traffickers, and may be afraid to leave until that debt is paid. The traffickers make it very difficult for trafficked persons to ask for outside help. Victims often feel isolated think that there is no one whom they can trust, and no one who can help them.

- ***Can trafficking victims get any help?***

YES. The law provides for ways to help trafficked persons. Victims may be able to obtain legal immigration status and/or other benefits—Victims should not be afraid to speak out. **It is very important to consult a lawyer or other legal advocate for help in receiving benefits.**

For more information, call Juhu Thukral at 646/602.5690, at the Urban Justice Center, to get advice and assistance.