

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2025 SESSION

CHAPTER 375

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 9.1-116.5 and 15.2-1627.6 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Sex Trafficking Response Coordinator; name change.

[H 1734]

Approved March 24, 2025

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 9.1-116.5 and 15.2-1627.6 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 9.1-116.5. Human Trafficking Response Coordinator; duties; report.

A. There is established within the Department a ~~Sex~~ Human Trafficking Response Coordinator (the Coordinator). The Coordinator shall:

1. Create a statewide plan for local and state agencies to identify and respond to victims of ~~sex~~ human trafficking;

2. Coordinate the development of standards and guidelines for treatment programs for victims of ~~sex~~ human trafficking;

3. Maintain a list of programs that provide treatment or specialized services to victims of ~~sex~~ human trafficking and make such list available to law-enforcement agencies, attorneys for the Commonwealth, crime victim and witness assistance programs, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Education, and school divisions;

4. Oversee the development of a curriculum to be completed by persons convicted of solicitation of prostitution under § 18.2-346.01; and

5. Promote strategies for the education, training, and awareness of ~~sex~~ human trafficking and for the reduction of demand for commercial sex.

B. The Coordinator may request and shall receive from every department, division, board, bureau, commission, authority, or other agency created by the Commonwealth, or to which the Commonwealth is a party or any political subdivision thereof, cooperation and assistance in the performance of its duties. The Coordinator may also consult and exchange information with local government agencies and interested stakeholders.

C. The Coordinator shall report annually on or before October 1 to the Governor and the General Assembly. The report shall include a summary of activities for the year and any recommendations to address ~~sex~~ human trafficking within the Commonwealth. The Department shall ensure that such report is available to the public.

§ 15.2-1627.6. Coordination of multidisciplinary response to human trafficking.

A. The attorney for the Commonwealth in each political subdivision in the Commonwealth shall coordinate the establishment of a multidisciplinary response to human trafficking as set forth in Article 3 (§ 18.2-346 et seq.) of Chapter 8 of Title 18.2 and hold a meeting, at least annually, to (i) discuss implementation of protocols and policies for human trafficking response teams consistent with those established by the Department of Criminal Justice Services pursuant to subdivision 37 d of § 9.1-102; (ii) establish and review guidelines for the community's response to the various forms of human trafficking, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking; and (iii) review protocols for the trauma-informed, victim-centered collection, preservation, and secure storage of evidence from physical evidence recovery kit examinations consistent with § 19.2-165.1.

B. The following persons or their designees shall be invited to participate in the annual meeting: the attorney for the Commonwealth; a representative of the Virginia Indigent Defense Commission in jurisdictions served by a public defender office; the sheriff; the director of the local sexual assault crisis center providing services in the jurisdiction, if any; the chief of each police department and the chief of each campus police department of any institution of higher education in the jurisdiction, if any; a forensic nurse examiner or other health care provider who performs physical evidence recovery kit examinations in the jurisdiction, if any; a health professional knowledgeable in the treatment of trauma-informed, victim-centered services; a social worker knowledgeable in the needs of immigrant communities; the state ~~Sex~~ Human Trafficking Response Coordinator or his designee; a representative from at least one national or local organization that supports victims of human trafficking; at least one survivor of human trafficking; the director of the victim/witness program in the jurisdiction, if any; a division superintendent or his designee from at least one of the local school divisions; and a labor union representative knowledgeable about labor trafficking. In addition, the attorney for the Commonwealth may invite other individuals, or their designees, to participate in the annual meeting, including (i) local health department district directors; (ii) the administrator of each licensed hospital within the jurisdiction; (iii) the director of each health safety net clinic within the jurisdiction, including those clinics created by 42 C.F.R. § 491.1 and the free and charitable

clinics; (iv) local administrators in charitable clinics or local hospitals, as well as other health care providers or local nonprofit organizations working with victims of trafficking; and (v) as determined by the attorney for the Commonwealth, any other local health care providers.

C. Attorneys for the Commonwealth are authorized to conduct the human trafficking response team annual meetings using other methods to encourage attendance, including electronic communication means as provided in § 2.2-3708.3.