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HOUSE BILL NO. 927

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 13, 2026

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 9.1-116.4 and 9.1-116.5 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 9.1-116.5:1, relating to human trafficking digital identification and reporting platforms; duties of Human Trafficking Response Coordinator; quarterly reports.

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Committee Referral Pending

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 9.1-116.4 and 9.1-116.5 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 9.1-116.5:1 as follows:

§ 9.1-116.4. Virginia Prevention of Sex Trafficking Fund; purpose; guidelines.

A. There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the Virginia Prevention of Sex Trafficking Fund (the Fund). The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller. All moneys accruing to the Fund shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Fund. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Moneys in the Fund shall be used for the purpose of (i) promoting prevention and awareness of sex trafficking and (ii) *implementing and sustaining any digital identification and reporting platform utilized pursuant to § 9.1-116.5:1*. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Director of the Department.

B. The Fund shall be administered by the Department, and the Department shall adopt guidelines to make funds available to agencies of the state and local governments for the purpose of (i) promoting awareness of and preventative training and education related to sex trafficking and (ii) *providing funds to the administering organization as defined in § 9.1-116.5:1 and for technology development, maintenance and integration costs, training materials, workshops and online modules, salaries and operational expenses for statewide and field coordinators as defined in § 9.1-116.5:1, and independent evaluations. The Department is authorized to seek federal grants, private donations, and partnerships to supplement state appropriations.*

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

A. There is established within the Department a 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 human trafficking;

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

3. Maintain a list of programs that provide treatment or specialized services to victims of 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 human trafficking and for the reduction of demand for commercial sex;

6. *Consult with the administering organization and relevant state agencies to certify one or more digital identification and reporting platforms utilized pursuant to § 9.1-116.5:1;*

7. *Enter into an agreement with any administering organization to provide statewide training on the use of the digital identification and reporting platforms, as defined in § 9.1-116.5:1. Such training shall include trauma-informed response, legal obligations, privacy protocols, and integration with existing systems; and*

8. *Develop a public awareness campaign to inform residents, mandated reporters as defined in § 9.1-116.5:1, and professionals of the availability and purpose of the digital identification and reporting platforms utilized pursuant to § 9.1-116.5:1. The Coordinator shall direct all state agencies and local governments to display signage containing a QR code, as defined in § 23.1-802.1, or web address for such platform certified by him in locations frequently accessed by the public, including schools, healthcare facilities, transit centers, hotels, and airports.*

B. The Coordinator may request and shall receive from every department, division, board, bureau,

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HB927

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 human trafficking within the Commonwealth. The Department shall ensure that such report is available to the public.

§ 9.1-116.5:1. Human trafficking digital identification and reporting platforms.

A. As used in this section:

"Administering organization" means a nonprofit organization experienced in human trafficking prevention and supporting victims of human trafficking that has developed or administers a digital identification and reporting platform.

"Coordinator" means the Human Trafficking Response Coordinator established pursuant to § 9.1-116.5.

"Digital identification and reporting platform" means a secure, trauma-informed technology platform compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) that is certified by the Coordinator pursuant to § 9.1-116.5 and (i) provides multi-channel access for the public and professionals, including through mobile application, web portal, SMS, and voice and live chat; (ii) guides users through structured questions to identify indicators of trafficking and enables users to upload supporting evidence; (iii) allows reporters to remain anonymous and uses consent-based controls over personally identifiable information; (iv) utilizes a risk model or similar decision-support system to triage reports based on severity and credibility and to push notifications to authorized investigative agencies; (v) routes high-priority reports in real time to the appropriate law-enforcement agency, child-protection agency, or vetted service provider based on jurisdiction; (vi) provides secure dashboards for authorized agencies to view, manage, and respond to reports, with role-based access controls and audit logging; (vii) is interoperable with the National Human Trafficking Hotline, state child-welfare systems, law-enforcement case-management systems, and other relevant platforms through standardized application programming interfaces; and (viii) complies with all applicable federal and state privacy laws, including HIPAA and the Criminal Justice Information Services security policy.

"Field coordinator" means a staff position within an administering organization that serves under the statewide coordinator to assist with regional training, outreach, and implementation. A field coordinator is not a state employee and shall not be hired, compensated, or granted benefits through state employment systems.

"Mandated reporter" means any individual, including teachers, healthcare professionals, law-enforcement personnel, and social workers, required by law to report suspected abuse, exploitation, or trafficking of a vulnerable adult, as defined in § 18.2-369, or a minor.

"Statewide coordinator" means a staff position within an administering organization that is employed by or under contract with an administering organization, designated by such organization, and approved by the Department to oversee implementation of a digital identification and reporting platform, coordinate training and outreach, and serve as a liaison among agencies and such administering organization. The statewide coordinator is not a position within state government and shall not be filled by or paid through state employment systems.

"Victim of human trafficking" means the same as that term is defined in § 19.2-327.15.

B. 1. A digital identification and reporting platform shall:

a. Issue push notifications of high-priority reports to designated law-enforcement and child-protection officials;

b. Provide a secure dashboard for authorized personnel to view, triage, and respond to reports of suspected human trafficking. Such platform shall support real-time communication between investigators and victims of human trafficking or mandated reporters, subject to consent;

c. Facilitate referrals to the National Human Trafficking Hotline for crisis support, as appropriate;

d. Utilize encryption in transit and at rest, role-based access controls, audit logging, and consent-based data sharing;

e. Allow mandated reporters to remain anonymous or provide contact information; and

f. Log all user actions, which shall be subject to audit. However, data collected through the platform shall be retained for no more than five years and then automatically purged unless otherwise required by state or federal law.

2. A digital identification and reporting platform shall not:

a. Share personal data with law enforcement or any agency without a mandated reporter's consent, except where required by law, including cases involving minors; or

b. Permit downloading, printing, or copying of data outside the platform.

C. Any agency or mandated reporter may use a digital identification and reporting platform as the primary mechanism for reporting suspected human trafficking while retaining the ability to utilize the

121 National Human Trafficking Hotline or any other mandated reporting channels.

122 D. The administering organization shall employ or contract with a statewide coordinator who shall be
123 responsible for (i) overseeing implementation of the digital identification and reporting platform across
124 agencies and jurisdictions; (ii) coordinating training and outreach for mandated reporters, law enforcement,
125 and service providers; (iii) facilitating interoperability between such platform and state or local systems,
126 including the National Human Trafficking Hotline; (iv) monitoring performance metrics and reporting
127 outcomes to the Coordinator and the General Assembly; and (v) assisting in the designation and oversight of
128 field coordinators. An administering organization may use funds available pursuant to § 9.1-116.4 to fulfill
129 such responsibilities. The administering organization may employ or contract with field coordinators to
130 support implementation of a digital identification and reporting platform in a specific region, and such field
131 coordinators shall report to the statewide coordinator.

132 E. The administering organization shall submit quarterly performance reports to the Coordinator and the
133 General Assembly. Such quarterly reports shall include (i) the number of reports submitted to the digital
134 identification and reporting platform, classified by risk level; (ii) the number of reports submitted to the
135 digital identification and reporting platform routed to law enforcement or any other agency; (iii) the time
136 from submission of a report to the digital identification and reporting platform to action by investigating
137 agencies; (iv) the number of victims of human trafficking connected to services; (v) any training and outreach
138 activities completed; and (vi) all operational issues, privacy incidents, or system enhancements such
139 organization has for the digital identification and reporting platform, if any.

140 F. Nothing in this section shall be construed to supersede or replace existing emergency services or the
141 National Human Trafficking Hotline. Individuals in immediate danger shall continue to call 9-1-1, and the
142 National Human Trafficking Hotline shall remain available for crisis assistance and referrals. A digital
143 identification and reporting platform shall serve as a complementary tool for identification, triage, and
144 reporting of suspected human trafficking.

145 2. That the provisions of this act are subject to the availability of funds appropriated for such purposes.