

# SEX TRAFFICKING 101

## Federal Human Trafficking Definition

Human Trafficking is a crime that involves exploiting a person for labor, services, or commercial sex. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and its subsequent reauthorizations define human trafficking as:

- Sex Trafficking is which commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

## SEX TRAFFICKING STATISTICS

**40% OF WOMEN WHO ARE VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IDENTIFY AS AMERICAN INDIAN, ALASKA NATIVE, OR FIRST NATIONS**

**1 IN 3 AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE WOMEN WILL BE RAPED IN THEIR LIFETIMES**

**70% OF THE VIOLENCE COMMITTED AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN IS PERPETRATED BY NON-NATIVE INDIVIDUALS**

**70-80% OF NATIVE PERSONS RESIDE OFF TRIBAL LANDS IN URBAN, RURAL, OR OTHER AREAS**



**INDIGENOUS PEOPLE MAKE UP LESS THAN 10% OF THE COMMUNITIES, HOWEVER, OVER 40% OF PEOPLE BEING TRAFFICKED WERE INDIGENOUS**

## Terminology

**Sex Work:** Exchanging sex for food, money, housing, transportation, safety, visitation, drugs and/or favors

**Sex Trafficking:** Occurs when a person is forced or coerced into the commercial sex trade against their will, with a third party benefiting.

## Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation is what happens to anyone sold/traded/objectified for sex in exchange for something of value, including: money, food, clothing, shelter, safety, drugs, etc.

## Forms of Sexual Exploitation

- Survival Sex: Sex act for something of value (money, food, shelter, drugs)
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation (Prostitution)
- Stripping, Pornography, Transactional Sex Work
- Sex Trafficking

## SEX TRAFFICKING ECOSYSTEM



### SEX BUYER

People who obtain sex or sexual activity with money or a trade for something of value (e.g. food, place to stay, goods, drugs)



### TRAFFICKER

People who profit from connecting sex buyer to provider/victims (including pimps and third-party facilitators).



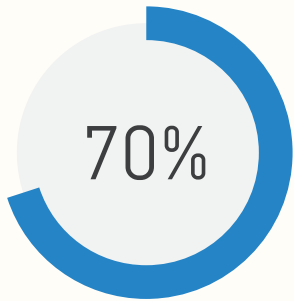
### PROVIDER/VICTIM

People who provide sex or sexual activity include victims of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, as well as people who are not involved with a trafficker.



# SEX TRAFFICKING IN URBAN AREAS

We want to openly acknowledge that there is very limited research and data available that is specific to Urban Sex Trafficking for our Native relatives. Naming this gap is important, as we see this as both a responsibility and an invitation for collaboration, shared learning, and collective action to better support our communities.



American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people now live in urban areas, compared with 45 percent in 1970 and 8 percent in 1940.

National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH), <https://ncuih.org/about/urban-indian-health-facts/>

Today, the majority of our Native relatives live in urban areas and cities. This reality calls us to be intentional about how we show up for one another. It is why we must build thoughtful, culturally responsive approaches, rooted in our Indigenous values to support advocates who are walking alongside our relatives in urban communities.



## WHAT DOES SEX TRAFFICKING LOOK LIKE IN URBAN AREAS

Across four sites surveyed in the US and Canada as part of a 2015 report, an average of 40 percent of the women involved in sex trafficking identified as American Indian/Alaska Native or First Nations.

“In Hennepin County, Minnesota, roughly 25 percent of the women arrested for prostitution identified as American Indian...In Anchorage, Alaska, 33 percent of the women arrested for prostitution were Alaska Native...In Winnipeg, Manitoba, 50 percent of adult sex workers were defined as Aboriginal... and 52 percent of the women involved in the commercial sex trade in Vancouver, British Columbia were identified as First Nations.”

To clarify how disproportionate these rates are, it is important to note that in not one of these cities and counties do Native women represent more than 10 percent of the general population.

Sweet, V. (2015). Trafficking in Native Communities. Published on 5/24/2015 by Indian Country Today Media Network. Retrieved from: <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/05/24/trafficking-native-communities-160475>.

### Risk Factors

- Age (minors being more susceptible)
- Poverty and/or unemployment
- Homelessness
- Substance Abuse/dependency
- Lack of support/support systems
- History of abuse and sexual abuse
- Child welfare system and/or foster care involvement
- Lack of educational opportunities
- Unsupervised youth
- Family history of violence and abuse

### Common Misconceptions

- Sex trafficking must involve kidnapping, confinement, or physical force.
- Sex trafficking must involve travel across state or international boundaries.
- Traffickers are always strangers to the victim.
- Sex trafficking victims are always female.
- Getting paid any amount means an individual cannot also be a victim.
- Victims are eager to receive help, self-identify, and discuss their victimization.
- Domestic violence is always different from sex trafficking.
- Sex trafficking always involves the exchange of money.

Tribal Law and Policy Institute, Sex Trafficking in Indian Country: Advocacy Curriculum Unit 1, <https://www.home.tlpi.org/sex-trafficking>

#### Resources:

- [Stronghearts Native Helpline](#)
- Tribe-specific sex trafficking resources at [tribaltrafficking.org](http://tribaltrafficking.org).
- Alliance of Tribal Coalitions to End Violence (ATCEV), [www.actev.org](http://www.actev.org)
- For further support, visit the [Human Trafficking Hotline’s referral directory](#).