

# What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation and/or harboring of persons for the purpose of exploitation. Victims are exploited through the use of threats, force, coercion or deceit. The most common forms of human trafficking are:

**Sexual Exploitation:** a person is forced to provide sexual acts against his or her will for the financial benefit or material gain of the trafficker. In Canada, this has mostly been associated with organized prostitution occurring behind fronts such as escort agencies or residential brothels.

**Labour Exploitation:** a person provides work or service under the threat of penalty; often in inadequate conditions, for little or no pay, or are paid a full wage but are forced to return most of it to the trafficker. The work may be in a legitimate setting such as a farm or restaurant or an illegal setting like a drug lab.

**Domestic Service Exploitation:** a person provides domestic tasks and services, mostly within a private household, under physical or psychological threat or coercion. Because the work takes place out of sight in private households, domestic workers can be particularly isolated and are often expected to be at the continuous disposal of the householder.

Human trafficking can also include forced marriage, illegal adoption, forced participation in criminal activities and the trafficking of body organs.

Human trafficking is one of the fastest growing criminal industries in the world today. Although cases of exploitation are surfacing across Canada, the hidden nature of the crime makes it difficult to estimate the extent of the problem.

Human trafficking is a crime against humanity. A victim's safety is first and foremost. It is important for a victim to be aware that when they report such crimes, all those involved in assisting them through the process have their safety and wellbeing in mind. Ensuring there are services in place that can provide assistance to the victim is of the utmost importance to the police and assisting service providers.