

Virtual Meeting

MINUTES¹

Thursday, 20 January 2022

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present: Yolanda Sonnier, Jon Steuernagle, Jackie Scott, Cheryl Mattis, Andrea Nunez, Monica Krebs, Dina Ward, Chuck Chandler, Alicia Altamirano, Jessica Epps, Leslie Lampieri, Lt. Eric Kruhm, Sara Cochran, Stephen Liggett-Creel and Jennifer Ritter.

Members Absent: Vinitha Nithianandam, Christina J. Bostick, Mariana Izraelson, Andrew Heiliger, Rich Gibson, Dave Francis, Lauren Blake, Tamera Bulla and Donna Bauer.

Others in Attendance: Briana McNemar, Kathy Jordan, Leslie Petak, Susan Allen, Nick Weikel, Paloma Leon, Rachel Sye, Tania Araya, Lisa Sloyer, Heidi Weiss-Beedie, Jessica Emerson, Heather Heiman and Meaghen Murphy.

Special Guests: Dr. Calvin Ball, Howard County Executive, and Ms. Jennifer Jones, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Howard County Executive

MEETING SUMMARY:

1. MEETING OPEN

- a. 1:00 pm; Yolanda Sonnier, Chair, Howard County Human Trafficking Prevention Coordination Council (HTPCC), opened the meeting by welcoming committee members. Yolanda Sonnier recognized the attendance of special guests: Dr. Calvin Ball, Howard County Executive, and Ms. Jennifer Jones, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Howard County Executive.

Andrea Nunez welcomed and introduced new attendees: Rachel Sye, Tania Araya and Lisa Sloyer with TurnAround; and Jessica Emerson, Heather Heiman and Meaghen Murphy with the Human Trafficking Prevention Project.

Dr. Calvin Ball, Howard County Executive, thanked Andrea Nunez for her phenomenal energy and leadership, also recognizing the great work of the council. Dr. Ball stated Human Trafficking is a critical issue and the work of the council is incredibly important. He issued a proclamation, commending Yolanda Sonnier, as Chair of the Human Trafficking Prevention Coordination Council for her outstanding efforts in leading the council and proclaimed January 20th Human Trafficking Prevention Month in Howard County.

Yolanda Sonnier thanked Dr. Calvin Ball for the recognition and extended gratitude to the full council for their dedication.

2. Establishment of Quorum

- a. The Roll was taken: Thirteen Committee members were in attendance. Yolanda Sonnier declared the Committee was in quorum and brought the meeting to order.

3. Consideration of Meeting Minutes

- a. Ms. Sonnier entered the 18 November 2021 Committee minutes and opened for discussion. Jennifer Ritter motioned to accept the minutes as written. Monica Krebs seconded the motion. A voice vote of official members was taken and approved without opposition or abstentions.

4. Presentation: OVC Performance Report Summary

- a. Andrea Nunez presented a summary of the OVC Performance Report for the 6-month period of April 1- September 30, 2021. (Please see attachment A.)

Monica Krebs shared Howard County specific data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline for 2020. There were 35 substantive signals made from Howard County in 2020. This number does not refer to cases but is based on contacts made to the hotline- reports could be for concerns happening in a location outside of the county. There were 5 potential trafficking cases in Howard County in 2020. This only includes cases that were reported to the hotline and is not representative of all cases.

Dr. Calvin Ball, exclaimed it was wonderful that the county has access to those numbers. He requested data from previous years, if possible, to then identify any trends. Monica Krebs noted she would share available data with Andrea Nunez.

Jessica Emerson with the Human Trafficking Prevention Project shared her organization is seeing a significant increase in numbers and complexity of cases. She does not anticipate the numbers changing, explaining that the pandemic has only exacerbated the need for services.

5. Presentation: Review of Recommendations from 2019 Howard County Human Trafficking Prevention Coordinating Council Report with: Howard County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball

Andrea Nunez and Briana McNemar, reviewed overall progress towards the 2019 Recommendations and Work plan for 2022 (Please see attachment B.)

Dr. Calvin Ball expressed gratitude for the presentation and thanked the council, expressing excitement for the continued work of the council in 2022.

6. Announcements and Events of Importance

- a. February 25: Training, Outreach and Partnerships Committee, 10 am- 11:30 am.
- b. March 17: Human Trafficking Prevention Coordination Council Full Meeting, 1:00pm – 2:30pm.

7. Additional Items for Discussion

- a. Andrea Nunez assigned the following tasks to appointed members: 1) Plan for one virtual or in person community training, presentation or other outreach event or initiative you can facilitate in 2022, and 2) By March 10, send Briana an interesting scholarly or news article or short report relating to labor law and/or labor trafficking.

Yolanda Sonnier stated the HTPCC will only be as strong as what the members bring to it, requiring a collective effort.

- b.** Lt. Eric Kruhm directed a question for Rachel Sye, whether TurnAround had seen an increase in familial trafficking, explaining that it was a topic of discussion at a recent training and HCPD worked a case in 2019. Rachel Sye stated they have not yet identified an increase. She noted they have seen occurrences in the past, but due to COVID numbers have been low.
- c.** Stephen Liggett-Creel posed a clarifying question regarding a current report involving an unaccompanied minor and the potential for trafficking. Monica Krebs and Andrea Nunez agreed the report did not seem to possess any coercive element. They suggested he make a report to Office of Refugee Resettlement.
- d.** Stephen Liggett-Creel inquired whether there was a specific curriculum for youth the OHTP utilized for youth training. Andrea Nunez answered that her office is still working to identify one but could create something until a curriculum has been identified. Rachel Sye shared the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force has stressed the importance for a more unified approach to youth curriculum across the state.

8. Next Coordination Council Meeting Date(s)

- a.** The next meeting of the Howard County Human Trafficking Prevention Coordination Council will be held March 17, 2022. The meeting will be virtual.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

- a.** 2:27 pm; Yolanda Sonnier closed the meeting and directed the Council to stand in adjournment until 17 March 2022.

Minutes were drafted by: Briana McNemar

Yolanda Sonnier
Chair

Notes:

- 1) The meeting was conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Attachments:

- A) Presentation: OVC Performance Report Summary
- B) Presentation: Review of Recommendations from 2019 Howard County Human Trafficking Prevention Coordinating Council Report with: Howard County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball

ATTACHMENT A

Presentation:

OVC Performance Report Summary
20 January 2022

HOWARD COUNTY HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION COORDINATION COUNCIL

January 20, 2022

COORDINATION COUNCIL – MEMBERS AND DESIGNEEES *

Chair: Yolanda Sonnier, Esq. Administrator, Howard County Office of Human Rights (elected July 22, 2020)

Vice Chair: Jon Steuernagle, M.D. (elected March 18, 2021)

Ex Officio Members

- Jackie Scott, J.D., M.L., Director, Howard County Department of Community Resources and Services
- Yolanda Sonnier, Esq. Administrator, Howard County Office of Human Rights
- Richard Gibson, Jr., Esq., Howard County State's Attorney
- Gregory Der, Chief, Howard County Police Department & Lt. Eric Kruhm, HCPD Vice and Narcotics Unit.
- Jessica Obiageli Epps, Howard County Commission for Women
- Stephen Liggett-Creel, LCSW-C, Director, Howard County Department of Social Services

- Dina Ward, Victim Advocate, Howard County Sheriff's Office
- Lauren Blake, Office of Academic Intervention, Howard County Public School System
- Mariana Izraelson, Executive Director of Clinical and Crisis Services, Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center
- Leslie Iampieri, LCSW-C, Director, Patient Support Services, Howard County General Hospital (A Member of Johns Hopkins Medicine)
- Sara Cochran, Founder/Lead Organizer, Howard County AGAST (Advocacy Group Against Slavery & Trafficking)

Public Members

- Monica Krebs
- Andrew Heilingler, M.B.A.
- Alicia Altamirano, Esq.
- Chuck Chandler
- Christina J. Bostick
- Vinitha Nithianandam



OVC PERFORMANCE REPORT SUMMARY

April 1 - September 30, 2021 (6 months)



**DISCLAIMER — THIS DATA DOES NOT INDICATE THE PREVALENCE OF
TRAFFICKING IN THE COUNTY, NOT A COMPLETE PICTURE**

HCPD VICE AND NARCOTICS UNIT, HUMAN TRAFFICKING SECTION:

Investigations:

- Sex Trafficking: **3**
- Labor Trafficking: **0**
- Sex AND Labor Trafficking: **0**

New Arrests: 1

Potential Victims Identified: 8 (all offered services)

Race/Ethnicity

- Black or African-American: **5**
- Asian: **3**

Age

- 13-17: **3**
- 18-24: **1**
- 25-59: **4**

Citizenship

- U.S. Citizens: **4**
- Foreign Nationals: **4**

HOPEWORKS OF HOWARD COUNTY ANTI-TRAFFICKING DEPARTMENT:

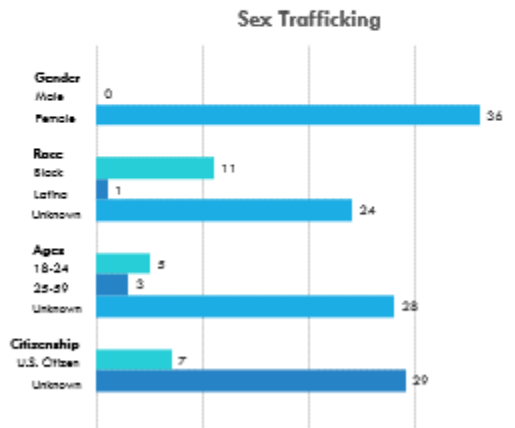
Total New Individual Contacts for Services: 42

Anonymous Contacts: 3

Total New Eligible Family Members: 6

- **Race/Ethnicity**
 - Black or African-American: **6**
- **Age**
 - 0-12: **4**
 - 13-17: **2**
- **Citizenship**
 - U.S. Citizens: **6**

DEMOGRAPHICS FOR NEW CONFIRMED AND POTENTIAL VICTIMS



- **New** Confirmed and Potential Victims of Sex Trafficking: **36**
- **New** Confirmed and Potential Victims of Labor Trafficking: **0**
- **New** Confirmed Potential Victims of Sex AND Labor Trafficking: **0**

SERVICES PROVIDED (AT HOPEWORKS)





ATTACHMENT B

Presentation:

Review of Recommendations from 2019 Howard County Human Trafficking Prevention Coordinating Council Report with: Howard County Executive Dr. Calvin Ball

20 January 2022

Howard County Human Trafficking Prevention Coordination Council 2021 Report:

Summary of HTPCC activities in 2021 and Status Updates on 2019 HTPCC Report Recommendations OHTP 2022 Work Plan Preview

PREPARED BY: OFFICE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION, DCRS
(ANDREA NUNEZ & BRIANA MCNEMAR)

HTPCC 2021 Activities

Speakers:

Briana McNemar, OHTP
Yolanda Sonnier, OHRE

- Posted **local informational flyers** to over 40 local businesses for July World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, volunteer member **Leslie Petak** and **HoCo AGAST** members led well, OHTP supported and posted on social media.
- Member **Alicia Altamirano** joined OHTP spanish language outreach at DCRS mobile home resource events in July and October with approx. 150 people.
- Member **Monica Krebs**: connected OHTP to expert **Polaris staff on outreach planning**, led initial HT article reviews, discussions of emerging issues around employment at detention and correctional facilities. Monica also capably served as a panelist for the HTPCC's virtual Sexual Assault Awareness Month conversation in April, 2021.
- Member **Chuck Chandler**, affiliated with the Maryland Hotel Lodging Association, collaborated on meetings with Visit Howard, local hotels, shaping hotel outreach usefully.
- Commemorating HT Awareness Month in January: Many members participated in remote **Red Sand Project video** with County Executive in January 2021. This year members are attending and assisting with the promotion of **labor trafficking documentary virtual screening on January 25, 2022**.
- Developed **Responsible Social Media Ambassador** concept with OHTP, reviewed initial draft content.
 - Concept was given strong positive feedback by our OVC technical assistance provider, ICF.

HTPCC 2021 Activities

Speaker:

Briana McNemar, OHTP
Yolanda Sonnier, OHRE

- Discussed Potential Outreach Activities:
- Community awareness walk, resource fair or open house
- Speaker series or film screening(s) at popular community destinations like Busboys and Poets, HCLS, DCRS locations
- Hosting informational tables at Columbia Mall and/or other highly frequented by teens gathering places and events
- Clothes, basic needs collection drive to benefit local trafficking survivors, possibly cell phones, other useful electronics in future
- Events in partnership with local businesses that emphasize free trade goods
- Court watching, state legislation tracking and discussion time as desired by members with interest

Status updates on Key Ongoing 2019 Report Recommendations

Speaker:

Andrea Nunez, OHTP, DCRS

Continuously Develop new Partners and Potential New HTPCC Members

- **Status:** In progress, recommend no new appointments at this time. Consider "allied member" category/recognition for future.
- TurnAround, CASA, Luminus, Centro de Derechos del Migrante (CDM), Human Trafficking Prevention Project (legal), Bridges (housing), County staff at DFR, Rec and Parks, all have expressed interest in working with OHTP, many others planned for outreach.

Reach key groups most vulnerable to trafficking in a culturally appropriate, responsive manner in multiple languages:

- **Status:** In planning, will be significantly in-person. To be addressed by OHTP's pilot and long-term outreach plans, with TurnAround, other partners.

Conduct General Community and Specialized Education

Speaker:

Briana McNemar, OHTP

Conduct general community education: In progress.

- OHTP, HCPD and TurnAround standardizing general educational materials, de-emphasizing how to "spot" trafficking, focusing on vulnerabilities, best general referrals for services or reporting to law enforcement, ways to be helpful.
- Will continue to leverage existing high-quality training content.
- OHTP Seeking regular HTPCC member support in connecting to new community and faith leaders and groups; ideally 1 presentation or other outreach event per year per member.

Train organizations serving particularly vulnerable populations, including social media: In progress, OHTP leading.

- OHTP completed training for HCDFRS, some Howard County General Hospital nurses. Open offer to local hotels, well-positioned to observe, through Visit Howard.

Develop strategies to increase resources and services to survivors

Speakers:

Andrea Nunez, OHTP

Continue to focus on **establishing additional funding and/or other resources** to help survivors, **especially long-term housing and employment options.**

Status: Ongoing multi-year efforts requiring new funding in future. OHTP developing with new provider **TurnAround**, other partners. Outreach efforts and survivor leader consultants will be good steps on this.

- In 2021 2 HTPCC volunteer real estate community members offered: 1) free temporary workspace for HCPD, and 2) affordable rental property to HopeWorks, TurnAround staffs.
- OHTP developed initial rental housing pilot concept with Bridges, DCRS's OCP, DHCD in 2021, will work to resume with TurnAround in 2022.

Public Education and awareness campaign(s)

Speaker:

Andrea Nunez, OHTP

Pursue human trafficking education and awareness campaign(s)

Status: In progress. Social Media Ambassador concept a component. Will enhance with TurnAround, survivor leader consultant partners and be informed by outreach efforts.

- Completed in 2020-2021: one month run of exterior bus ads, CAC/HCPD regional navigator advertising, HT awareness month events, pro-survivor rally, social media posts.

Prioritize Survivor Leadership and Diversity

Speakers:

Andrea Nunez, OHTP

County agencies, partners, and community stakeholders should maintain a focus on **the development of Survivor leadership and diversity as a means by which equity and just outcomes are the focus** at all levels of services to, with and on behalf of those most affected by human trafficking.

Status: Will resume progress with new service partner TurnAround, survivor leader consultants, funded jointly by OVC award, on projects of mutual interest.

Monitor County Human Trafficking Case Asset Forfeiture Fund

Speakers:

Lt. Eric Kruhm, HCPD

January 2021:

- \$1,954 in the County human trafficking case asset forfeiture account

January 2022:

- Unchanged, \$1,954 in the County human trafficking case asset forfeiture account

Next steps: OHTP continue to monitor with HCPD, Finance, CAO, ensure disbursements to service providers in future.

Continue to seek outside funding wisely

Speakers:

Andrea Nunez, OHTP

- **Status:** In progress. OVC award ends October 2023 with possibility for extension or reapplication. OHTP and DCRS will lead strategy on potential for continued OVC funding beyond 2023, continue to seek useful opportunities wisely.
- **Potential Future Funding Source:** **U.S. HHS' Office of Trafficking in Persons TVAP** program, which would generate referrals of adult and minor foreign national victims of trafficking for comprehensive case management and tangible needs, which are *funded on a client-by-client basis*. In the future this funding would need to involve another local nonprofit organization since it cannot be duplicative of OVC funding.

OHTP 2022 Work Plan Abstract - New Efforts

Speaker: Andrea Nunez, OHTP

On-board new direct service partner and staff, **TurnAround**, initiating collaborative survivor leader consultant work, adopting protocols.

With partners, perform **Community Threat Assessment** for trafficking vulnerabilities.

Develop **Pilot Direct Outreach Efforts** to residents vulnerable to labor exploitation with accessible know-your-rights materials and resources.

Develop Long-Term Multi-Modal Proactive Outreach Plan, including:

- Partnerships and civilian-led rights-based outreach
- Responsible Social Media Ambassador program, other wise media strategies (i.e., Spanish language radio ads, appearances)
- Community and employer focused initiatives (informational postings, training and recognition).