

## **What businesses can do to prevent trafficking during National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month**

*In Texas, an estimated 300,000 people are victims of human trafficking, including 79,000 youth who are trafficked for sex.*

**January 2022, Austin, Texas** – Human traffickers profit off the sale of lives, trapping millions of people in horrific situations around the world. In Texas alone, an estimated 300,000 people are trafficked, according to [IDVSA at the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work](#).

January is Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. As the new year begins, advocates who specialize in preventing trafficking are encouraging businesses and community groups to be active in their role to stop violence.

The SAFE Alliance is now offering trainings to local organizations on how to spot trafficking and take action.

“Traffickers use violence, threats, deception, debt bondage, and other manipulative tactics to force people to engage in commercial sex or to provide labor or services against their will,” said Crystal Sepulveda, Director of the SAFE CARES anti-trafficking program. “As a business owner, you cannot see what you do not know how to look for.”

Depending on the nature of a business or group, individuals may be more likely to encounter some signs of trafficking than others. A few of the more common signs include:

- Tattoos that say things like “Daddy” or “Property of...”
- Someone accompanied by a person who won’t let them speak for themselves or make any decisions
- People who are not wearing clothing appropriate for the weather

SAFE can provide custom trainings about the signs of trafficking a specific business may encounter, how employees can respond, what makes an effective policy for preventing trafficking, and more to ensure business owners are doing all they can.

For more information about trainings for businesses or community groups, please contact SAFE CARES Director Crystal Sepulveda at [mcsepulveda@safeaustin.org](mailto:mcsepulveda@safeaustin.org).

If you would like to schedule an interview with SAFE staff or receive more information for a news story, please contact SAFE Communications Officer Antwon R. Martin at [amartin@safeaustin.org](mailto:amartin@safeaustin.org) or 512.772.9374

If you suspect someone is being trafficked, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888.

## **About SAFE**

SAFE is a Central Texas nonprofit committed to providing safety, stability, and healing to anyone who has experienced violence and abuse. Locally, we provide housing, support services, and prevention programs to stop the cycle of violence. Globally, we engage in conversations that shape a culture free from violence and abuse. Learn more at [safeaustin.org](https://safeaustin.org).