



TEXAS
**Department of Family
and Protective Services**

**Human Trafficking
Response Protocol**

Only
Bexar, Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Travis Counties
Effective March 2019

Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Division
Department of Family and Protective Services
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Introduction

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) establishes the Human Trafficking Response Protocol (HT Protocol) in accordance with the [Child Protective Services Handbook](#) and the requirements as outlined in Texas and Federal statutes. This protocol applies to all Investigation (INV) and Child Protective Services (CPS) staff. The HT Protocol should be followed in conjunction with existing policy, and all actions taken by DFPS staff must be documented within appropriate timeframes, as set forth in the [Child Protective Services Handbook](#).

The Human Trafficking Protocol:

1. Supports DFPS's continued adherence to the *Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act 2014* reporting requirements for missing children and suspected victims of sex and labor trafficking.
2. Allows for the identification of youth who are at risk of or victims of human trafficking.
3. Allows for service planning for identified youth who are at risk of or victims of human trafficking.
4. Outlines DFPS's collaboration with Anti-Trafficking organizations.

DFPS leadership across the agency, including caseworkers, supervisors, program directors, program administrators, regional directors, and state office personnel, are all responsible for ensuring child safety and compliance with human trafficking protocols. HT Protocol compliance will also be monitored by the DFPS Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Team (HTCE).

The HT Protocol outlines the agency's expected response in three critical areas:

1. **Human Trafficking Investigations** are when the alleged perpetrator is a person traditionally responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare such as family member, or an adult living in the home of an alleged child victim of sex trafficking or labor trafficking.
2. **Youth at Risk** are youth 12 years or older, in DFPS conservatorship who have had five or more placements with no known sex trafficking victimization and no missing events in the last 12 months.
3. **Youth at High Risk** are children in DFPS conservatorship, who are missing, or are on runaway status.

Human Trafficking Definitions

Federal and Texas Family Codes

The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, or for labor or services.

- i. It is a crime for any person to knowingly engage, or attempt to engage, in human trafficking with the intent or knowledge that the trafficked person will be subjected to forced labor or services or engaged in prohibited sexual conduct; or to benefit financially by receiving anything of value from participation in a venture that has subjected a person to forced labor or services or engaged a person in prohibited sexual conduct (Tex. Penal Code § 20A.02)
- ii. Children can be victims of human trafficking regardless of their citizenship, residency, or alien or immigrant status.

Sex Trafficking

The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act (22 U.S.C. 7102(10)). For minors, the use of force, fraud, or coercion is not required. This includes the exchange of anything tangible for a sexual act or the promise of a sexual act.

- i. Compelling or encouraging the child in a manner to engage in sexual conduct as defined by Section [43.01](#), Penal Code, including compelling or encouraging the child in a manner that constitutes an offense of trafficking of persons under Section [§20A.02\(a\)\(7\) or \(8\)](#), Penal Code, solicitation of prostitution under Section [43.021](#), Penal Code, or compelling prostitution under Section [43.05\(a\)\(2\)](#), Penal Code.

-Texas Family Code [§261.001\(1\)\(G\)](#)

- ii. knowingly causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing a child to be trafficked in a manner punishable as an offense under Section [§20A.02\(a\)\(5\),\(6\),\(7\), or \(8\)](#), Penal Code, or the failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent a child from being trafficked in a manner punishable as an offense under any of those sections

-Texas Family Code [§261.001\(1\)\(L\)](#)

Labor Trafficking

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 (22 U.S.C. 7102(9)(B)).

- i. knowingly causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing a child to be trafficked in a manner punishable as an offense under Section [§20A.02\(a\)\(5\), \(6\), \(7\), or \(8\)](#), Penal Code, or the failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent a child from being trafficked in a manner punishable as an offense under any of those sections.

Texas Family Code [§261.001\(1\)\(L\)](#)

Agency Definitions and Expected Actions

Confirmed Human Trafficking Victim

DFPS defines a trafficking event as “confirmed” when evidence supports the conclusion that the child or youth has been trafficked. The supporting evidence must be more than just an allegation or suspicion but does not have to be a direct outcry from the child or youth. See CPS Handbook [6462 Confirmed or Suspected Victims of Human Trafficking](#).

Suspected-Unconfirmed Human Trafficking Victim

DFPS defines a trafficking event as “suspected-unconfirmed” when specific information regarding the child or youth and the surrounding circumstances creates a reasonable belief that the child or youth has been trafficked. A runaway or missing episode, in and of itself, does not equal to “suspected-unconfirmed.” See CPS Handbook [6462 Confirmed or Suspected Victims of Human Trafficking](#).

Expectations for Newly Identified and/or Suspected Victimization

1. When new concerns for trafficking victimization are suspected or identified (includes disclosures and Clear Concern results on CSE-IT), regardless of who is alleged to be perpetrating the trafficking, report to Law Enforcement and Statewide Intake **immediately, but no later than 8 hours from suspicion, identification, disclosure** or a **Clear Concern score**.
2. All Suspected-Unconfirmed and Confirmed trafficking events must be referred to the Local Care Coordination Teams, when local [CCT](#) is in operation.
3. All Suspected-Unconfirmed and Confirmed trafficking events must be documented the following areas:
 - a. IMPACT Human Trafficking Event page
 - b. IMPACT documentation on case planning and service referrals for trafficking concerns, and
 - c. The [Trafficking Referral Survey](#) for the following circumstances:
 - i. Referral to [CSEY/HT](#) Advocate Agency,
 - ii. Referral to Local Care Coordination Team ([CCT](#)), and/or
 - iii. [CCT](#) Opt-Out decision with PD approval.

Missing Child or Youth

A child or youth in DFPS managing conservatorship is categorized as missing if the child or youth, runs away, is abducted by a known/unknown person, or is otherwise absent from care with no known location. See CPS Policy [6461 Child or Youth Missing from Substitute Care Placement](#). When a child or youth is missing from conservatorship, all stages of service are required act with urgency and prioritize a coordinated and expedient recovery.

Human Trafficking Support Systems (alphabetical order)

Care Coordination Teams

The Office of the Texas Governor – Child Sex Trafficking Team (CSTT), Children’s Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc. (CACTX), the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and local communities are establishing Care Coordination Teams (CCT) across the state to provide youth victims of sex trafficking with a continuum of care. The CCT is made up of professional organizations in the community who provide services for trafficking victims, or who investigate and prosecute trafficking cases. In most communities across Texas, Children’s Advocacy Centers are leading the CCT development process and serving as the local Care Coordinator.

In an area where the Care Coordination Team (CCT) is in operation, it is the default structure for referring youth identified as *Suspected-Unconfirmed* or *Confirmed* trafficking victims, including youth with a Commercial Sexual Exploitation Identification Tool (CSE-IT) Clear Concern score.

When the CCT structure is used, the local CCT protocol provides the applicable response guidelines and time frames. Local CCT protocols may have narrower time frames than the DFPS Human Trafficking protocol, so staff should be well versed in their local CCT protocols. CCT participation should be clearly documented within the case narrative and on the [Trafficking Service Referral Survey](#).

If DFPS chooses **not** to use the CCT on a specific case, primary caseworker must:

1. Obtain **Program Director approval to opt out** of the CCT process.
2. Provide clear documentation within the case narrative and the [Trafficking Service Referral Survey](#) as to why DFPS opted out of the CCT process.

A referral to the CCT may occur at any point in the life of a youth’s case.

Documentation of Referral to or Approved Opt-out of Care Coordination

All Care Coordination Referrals and/or opt out decisions must be documented in a case narrative as well as the [Trafficking Service Referral Survey](#).

Participation in Care Coordination Team structure

As a member of the CCT, attending DFPS staff are responsible for active participation in CCT staffing while adhering confidentiality and Release of Information expectations as specified in the local CCT protocols. Care Coordinators who are employees of a CAC can be advised of placement changes for the youth.

Decisions within the Care Coordination Team structure

For youth in the custody of his/her parent/legal guardian in Investigation (INV) and/or Family Based Safety Services (FBSS) cases:

- All final decisions on placement, services, and/or referrals for the youth lie with the youth's parent or legal guardian.
- All decisions made within the CCT structure are recommendations. DFPS must clearly document the CCT recommendations.
- If the youth's parent/legal guardian decides to not follow CCT recommendations, staff must document the parent/legal guardian's reasoning, if known.
- A parent/legal guardian's refusal to participate in CCT services does not in itself rise to the level to warrant removal of the youth(s).

For youth in conservatorship:

- All final decisions on placement, services, and/or referrals for the youth lie with CPS, as the youth's legal guardian.
- CCT recommendations must be strongly considered.
- DFPS must clearly document the CCT recommendations and any reasons for not following CCT recommendations.

Children's Advocacy Center

Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) provide a safe, child-friendly environment where law enforcement (LE), Child Protective Services, prosecution, medical and mental health professionals may share information and develop effective, coordinated strategies sensitive to the needs of each unique case and child.

Local CACs provide an array of child-focused services including:

- Multidisciplinary Team Case Reviews
- Joint Investigation Coordination
- Specialized Forensic Interviews
- Family Advocacy and Victim Support
- Trauma-Focused Therapy
- Medical Evaluations

In most communities across Texas, Children's Advocacy Centers are leading the CCT development process and serving as the local Care Coordinator. When CCT is not available, local CAC service arrays should be maximized as much as possible.

Reminder: Forensic Interviews and Multi-Forensic Interviews should be strongly considered when working with suspected victims of trafficking.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation – Identification Tool

Description of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool

The Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT, pronounced “see it”) is a research-based screening tool that helps improve early identification of commercially sexually exploited youth (CSEY). The tool was developed by West Coast Children’s Clinic (WCCC) and is currently used in Texas and multiple other states and across various sectors, including juvenile justice, Child Placing Agencies and General Residential Operations, mental health service providers, Children’s Advocacy Centers, education, advocate agencies, runaway/homeless youth agencies, and limited areas of child protection.

The CSE-IT is not an interview guide, but a series of questions around eight key indicators (see chart below) that providers consider about the youth’s circumstances. It is never conducted in the presence of a child and/or youth. The CSE-IT controls and accounts for the important factor that the child or youth may not understand, or openly acknowledge their own victimization.

The CSE-IT is not a diagnostic tool and it cannot confirm victimization. Confirmation of victimization requires using educated, professional judgment in consideration of evidence and what is known about the youth and their circumstances. The CSE-IT helps screeners identify the existence of research-based indicators and assigns a score that helps screeners effectively triage youth with high scores who need further assessment and Investigative and/or service referrals.

Indicators and Scoring

The CSE-IT is a quick (5-7 minute) information integration tool, that uses credible information from intake processes, case files, colleagues, child protective services, juvenile probation, CASA volunteers, CSEY Advocates, and/or caregivers to complete and score the eight key indicators. The completed CSE-IT will give the user a concrete outcome (number score) of 0-3 No Concern/Not Enough Information; 4-8 Possible Concern; and 9-23 Clear Concern.

CSE-IT Key Indicators	CSE-IT Scores
1. Housing and Caregiving	No Concern/Not Enough Info (0-3)
2. Prior Abuse and Trauma	
3. Physical Health and Appearance	
4. Environment and Exposure	Possible Concern (4-8)
5. Relationships and Personal Belongings	
6. Signs of Current Trauma	Clear Concern (9-23)
7. Coercion	
8. Exploitation	

In Texas, a score of “clear concern” for a minor means that a child is a **“presumed victim”** for mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse and service delivery, including referrals to Care Coordination, CSEY Advocate Services, and other specialized services available. It is not intended to meet investigative, statutory, legal, or other criteria specific to other applications. When a partner completes a CSE-IT with a score of Clear Concern on a child or youth they will make a report to Statewide Intake.

Score Explanations

- **No Concern/Not Enough Information**
This final score indicates either that the information available does not suggest the youth is being sexually exploited or that there is not enough information to determine a higher rating at this time. This rating does not state that sexual exploitation categorically does not exist. A No Concern/Not Enough Information score means that no trafficking interventions are needed at this time.
- **Possible Concern**
Information indicates that the child may be at high risk for or experiencing sexual exploitation but there is either limited information available or the current behaviors and circumstances do not clearly indicate exploitation. Caregivers should actively monitor a young person who receives this rating, fully assess their needs, and initiate preventive actions to ensure that exploitation does not intensify or occur.
- **Clear Concern**
Clear, concerning information from observations, client records, or information from others involved in the case indicates that numerous risk factors and vulnerabilities are present. This final score **suggests** the youth is being commercially sexually exploited or is at high risk for sexual exploitation.

Use of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool

DFPS will complete a CSE-IT for the following populations:

- **Human Trafficking Investigations** all alleged victims 10 years of age or older in an assigned Sex Trafficking (SXTR) investigation.
- **Youth at Risk** are youth 12 years or older, in DFPS conservatorship who have had five or more placements with no known sex trafficking victimization no missing events in the last 12 months, and not had a CSE-IT completed in the past year.
- **Youth at High Risk** are children 10 years of age or older, in DFPS conservatorship, who are recovered from a missing or runaway episode.

All assigned staff, including Supervisors, are responsible for providing information that informs the CSE-IT so the agency can respond appropriately to meet the youth's needs. The CSE-IT should be used as a guide to identification and should not be the sole source for deciding whether the youth is being sexually exploited.

Note: While responsibility of the CSE-IT completion falls to the Special Investigator and/or Conservatorship Supervisor, the actual completion of CSE-IT should be done in partnership with the Primary Worker to ensure assessments are inclusive of each person's knowledge of the child/youth.

Rescreening Criteria

Anytime, a youth is specifically suspected to be at risk of sexual exploitation. Reminder: CSE-IT is validated for youth 10 years of age and up.

For Youth at Risk, a CSE-IT should be conducted annually, all children who meet the Youth at Risk definition.

For Youth at High Risk, a CSE-IT should be conducted at every recovery, if the previous results are No or Possible Concern.

Actions taken based on Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool Results

When CSE-IT results in **No Concern**, the case will continue to be worked according to current policy and practices; to include the existing plan of service, if applicable.

When CSE-IT results in **Possible or Clear Concern**,

1. **Immediately but no later than eight hours**, from when a child or youth **discloses trafficking** or scores a **Clear Concern** the primary case worker must notify the correct law enforcement jurisdiction and Statewide Intake.
2. Within 2 business days of the CSE-IT, primary caseworker conducts a CSE-IT Results Assessment staffing to:
 - a. Determine if youth has been, is currently being, or is at risk of being exploited.
 - b. Identify risk, as well as, mitigating factors, and determine if services and referrals are needed to further reduce risk of exploitation.
 - c. Determine if it is the best interest of the youth to refer to [CSEY/HT AA](#) services.\

This staffing includes all DFPS staff who have an open stage of service or are involved with a youth's case. Non-DFPS professionals who know the youth may be included to inform the decision.

3. When CSE-IT results in **Clear Concern**, refer to [CCT](#) when local [CCT](#) is in operation.
4. Stabilize, as needed, the youth in the current placement with appropriate services. Services may include appointment of a [CSEY/HT AA](#), where available, and/or involvement with the CAC/ [CCT](#) services.
5. If it is in the youth's best interest for placement to change, staff will follow current practice and policy.
6. Document in IMPACT the staffing and decisions.

Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth Advocacy Agencies

The Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth (CSEY) Advocate Agencies are supported by the Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team (CSTT) with funding, training, and technical assistance. CSEY Advocate Agencies agree to abide by a set of common minimum standards and best practices regarding abuse risk management and quality of services developed by CSTT in coordination with Praesidium, an internationally recognized child abuse prevention organization. CSEY Advocacy Agencies are nonprofits that employ advocates to provide individualized 24/7 crisis response and ongoing trust-based relational support to child, youth, and young adult survivors (through age 21). CSEY Advocates may also provide robust case management that is flexible to support and not duplicate, replace or interfere with efforts of other case managers and advocates. CSEY Advocates work collaboratively with other stakeholders in support of the victim-centered goals pursued by the survivor and their family, law enforcement, prosecutors, child welfare, juvenile justice, healthcare, and other partners. They help survivors gain the strength and empowerment needed to participate in investigation/prosecution of exploiters.

Note: Human Trafficking Advocate Agencies (HTAA) provide similar services but do not receive training or technical assistance from the CSTT and may not abide by the CSEY Advocate Agencies minimum standards.

Memorandums of Understanding

The DFPS Human Trafficking and Legal divisions work with CSEY/HT AAs to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU agreement establishes protocols and outlines the working relationship between the two parties for the identification of and provision of coordinated services to victims of commercial sexual exploitation (CSE). CSEY/HT AAs with approved MOUs have met DFPS requirements and are able to serve children, youth, and young adults in any DFPS stage of service. DFPS and CSEY/HT AA MOUs must be executed prior to referring for services and/or sharing confidential case specific information with Advocate Agencies.

Referrals for a CSEY/HT Advocate

For a child or youth in the custody of his/her parent/legal guardian (INV and FBSS cases):

- A parent/legal guardian's refusal to participate with either recommendations of the CCT or the consent for [CSEY/HT](#) Advocate Agency services does not rise to the level for opening a case to FBSS or warrant removal of the child(ren) or youth.
- All final decisions on placement, services, and/or referrals for the child or youth lie with their parent or legal guardian.

For a child or youth in conservatorship:

- Children or youth who are *Confirmed* victims of sex trafficking may access CSEY/HT Advocate Agency services with agencies who have Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with DFPS. Note: Some CSEY Advocate Agencies may serve Youth at Risk. See Advocate Agencies with DFPS MOUs on Safety Net.
- Children and youth in DFPS conservatorship may have both a CASA and a CSEY Advocate.
- Engagement with a CSEY/HT Advocate Agency is optional, if the youth has not previously been matched with an advocate.
- DFPS must provide clear documentation within the case narrative regarding why the decision to opt in or opt out of CSEY/HT advocacy services was made.
- DFPS must provide written approval for services prior to a CSEY/HT Advocate engaging with a child or youth in DFPS conservatorship. Written consent may be via text or email with formal consent paperwork being completed within a reasonable amount of time (i.e. the next business day). The signature for consent may be provided by:
 - The child's or youth's DFPS primary caseworker.
 - The child's or youth's DFPS primary caseworker's supervisor.
 - The child's or youth's current caregiver, with written approval from the child's or youth's DFPS primary caseworker/supervisor.

A referral to CSEY/HT Advocate services may occur at any point in the life of the child or youth's case.

Documentation of Referral to CSEY/HT Advocate Services

Referral to CSEY/HT Advocate Services must be documented by the primary caseworker in the case narrative and in the [Trafficking Service Referral](#).

Terminating CSEY/HT Advocate Services

If at any time either DFPS or CSEY/HT Advocate Agency determines that the Advocate relationship is not in the best interest of the child or youth, either party shall notify the other party within 48 hours and initiate a staffing regarding what actions need to be taken, including but not limited to the termination of the Advocate relationship with the child or youth.

Recovery Meetings for Confirmed Victims

Within **two business days** after DFPS learns that a youth who is a *Confirmed* victim of trafficking is missing or has run away from care, a Recovery Meeting is held. The Recovery Meeting participants will develop a Recovery Plan. The goal of the Recovery Meeting is to ensure the appropriate actions are being taken to locate the youth as quickly as possible and appropriate interventions and services are initiated for the youth upon recovery.

Within **three business days** of recovery for *Confirmed* victims of trafficking, a subsequent Recovery Meeting will be held to ensure appropriate actions are being taken and appropriate interventions and services are initiated. If a Youth Recovery Roundtable (i.e. Wraparound meeting) is scheduled with the youth within 72 hours of recovery, then the Recovery Meeting will be held in conjunction with this planning meeting.

Recovery meetings for a youth who runs away chronically may not require a Recovery Meeting at every recovery. Whether or not to hold a Recovery Meeting in these circumstances will be made on a case by case basis. Example: If an updated plan is needed, or [CCT](#) or [CSEY/HT](#) Advocate is being reconsidered.

Recovery Meetings are optional on a case by case basis for any other youth who is **not** a confirmed victim of trafficking and is missing or has run away from care.

Recovery Meeting Participants

The Recovery Meeting may include the following:

DFPS REQUIRED	KEY STAKEHOLDER, AS AVAILABLE	AS APPROPRIATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CVS primary worker • CVS Supervisor • CVS Program Director • Special Investigator (SI) • SI Program Director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad litem • CASA • DFPS Attorney (Regional, County or District) • Primary Caregiver • Law Enforcement with jurisdiction • Crime Analyst • Other DFPS staff as needed (e.g. CPI, FBSS, PAL, DDS, LPS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation/Parole Officer • Care Coordinator • CAC staff • CSEY/HT Advocate • Relatives and Fictive Kin (close family friends) • Others as needed • Missing Child and Human Trafficking Regional and Statewide Coordinators

Standard releases and confidentiality agreements must be addressed with external parties as needed. Stakeholder availability should not impede adherence to timeframes.

Recovery Meeting Plan

The Recovery Meeting participants will develop a Recovery Plan. The Recovery Plan is a coordinated outline of all planned and active efforts to locate a youth and preliminary interventions and services to be initiated for the youth upon recovery. The plan can be revised throughout the missing/runaway episode as needed. The plan will include, but is not be limited to:

- Information regarding locating the youth,
- Tasks assigned to Recovery Meeting Participants,
- Potential engagement with a CCT (See [CCT](#) section, page 7),
- Potential engagement with a CSEY/HT AA (See [CSEY](#) section, pages 11 -12),
- Potential engagement with a CAC,
- Youth’s placement options upon recovery, and/or
- A communication plan which includes the frequency of updates and meetings.

Trafficking Service Referral Survey

The Trafficking Service Referral Survey must be completed by the primary case worker when any of the following occur:

- A Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth/Human Trafficking Advocacy Agency referral has been completed for a child or youth and/or,
- A Care Coordination Team referral has been completed in any stage of service, or
- A Care Coordination Team Opt-Out official decision has been made in any stage of service.

Trafficking Service Referral Survey, services and resources can be found on the Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation page of the DFPS intranet.

Statewide Intake Responsibilities

Human Trafficking Reports

Statewide Intake (SWI) will ensure that an intake is generated for all allegations of alleged child SXTR/LBTR by any person traditionally responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare. These intakes are prioritized and routed based on standard SWI assignment procedures, including making after hours notifications to on-call field staff when applicable.

Any SXTR/LBTR report regarding a child in DFPS conservatorship, regardless of investigative jurisdiction, is considered [Situations That Always Require an I&R Call Regarding Existing CPS Case \(I&R to Existing Case\)](#). SWI must generate an **I&R to an Existing Case** and notify field staff. If the field office is open, standard routing processes will be followed. If the field office is closed, SWI will call out the **I&R to Existing CPS case**.

SWI will ensure that a report of child trafficking not under CPS investigative jurisdiction is processed as an Information & Referral (I&R) to be sent to law enforcement (LE). These reports are sent both to local law enforcement and the Joint Crimes Information Center (JCIC).

Reports of Missing or Recovery Events for Youth in Conservatorship

Statewide Intake (SWI) will receive reports from providers notifying DFPS that a youth in conservatorship is missing and/or recovered from a missing event. These reports are considered [Situations That Always Require an I&R Call Regarding Existing CPS Case \(I&R to Existing Case\)](#). SWI must generate the **I&R to Existing CPS Case** and notify field staff. If the field office is open, standard routing processes will be followed. If the field office is closed, SWI will call out the **I&R to Existing CPS Case** to on-call staff.

Note:

Statewide intake is not the only vehicle by which notification can be received, as youth may let their caseworker know they have left/returned, placement may contact the agency, etc. Therefore, the above statement only applies when SWI receives the notification of a missing and/or recovery event.

Human Trafficking Investigations

DFPS investigates allegations of sex trafficking (SXTR) and/or labor trafficking (LBTR) when the alleged perpetrator is traditionally responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare such as a family member, or an adult living in the home of an alleged child victim.

Child Protective Investigations and Special Investigations

Child Protective Investigation staff (CPI) will:

1. Follow current regional practices to have a Special Investigator (SI) assigned as secondary on an investigation with an allegation of SXTR/LBTR.
2. Work a joint investigation with the SI through the Child Advocacy Center's (CAC) local Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Protocols and MDT partners, and CVS when applicable. Reminder: Forensic Interviews and Multi-Forensic Interviews should be strongly considered when working with suspected victims of trafficking.
3. Provide information to the SI for completion of the CSE-IT **only for SXTR** investigations.
 - a. With CSE-IT results, complete *Actions taken based on Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool Results* (See [CSE-IT](#) section, page 9)
 - b. Add copy of CSE-IT from SI to the external case file, as an External Document, enter fields as **Type: Other** and **Details: CSE-IT.**
4. Assess need for referral to the [CSEY/HT AA](#) for victims of SXTR.
5. Participate in CAC/MDT/ [CCT](#) staffings for the duration of the DFPS Investigation.
6. Participate in Transfer/Removal staffings, if applicable.
7. When new concerns for trafficking victimization are suspected or identified, complete Expectations for Newly Identified and/or Suspected Victimization (See [Expectations](#) Section, page 6)

Special Investigators (SI) will:

1. Coordinate a joint investigation with CPI Investigator through the CAC's local MDT Working Protocols, MDT partners, and local law enforcement (LE).
2. Coordinate with CPI and CPS for cases involving a child in DFPS conservatorship.
3. Assess need for referral to the [CSEY/HT AA](#) for victims of SXTR.
4. Gather information and begin the CSE-IT **only for SXTR** investigations.
 - a. Information is gathered from DFPS staff involved with the youth and/or individuals outside of the organization. Ensure proper releases and confidentiality are addressed.
 - b. With CSE-IT results, complete *Actions taken based on Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool Results* (See [Actions](#) section, page 11)
5. Participate in CAC/MDT/ [CCT](#) staffings for the duration of the DFPS Investigation.
6. Participate in Transfer/Removal staffings, if applicable.
7. When new concerns for trafficking victimization are suspected or identified (includes disclosures and Clear Concern results on CSE-IT), regardless of who is alleged to be perpetrating the trafficking, report to Law Enforcement and Statewide Intake **immediately, but no later than 8 hours from suspicion, identification, disclosure or a Clear Concern score.**

STEPS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

8. **Prior to INV closure**, finalize, print and submit the CSE-IT to WestCoast. The CSE-IT must be documented in IMPACT as an External Document, enter fields as **Type: Other** and **Details: CSE-IT**. The CSE-IT is given to CPI to add to the external case file.
9. Document an **Assessment** Contact in IMPACT and in the narrative include the CSE-IT results, decisions from *CSE-IT Results Assessment* staffing and, whether or not the family:
 - a. Elects to participate in CAC/ [CCT](#) services and if family elects to opt out include any known opt out justifications, and
 - b. Elects to participate with a human trafficking advocate and if family opts out include any known opt out justifications

Case Referrals to Family-Based Safety Services

Family-Based Safety Services Referral Criteria and Actions

- LBTR/SXTR investigations may be referred to FBSS when there is a protective caregiver who is not the perpetrator of trafficking and the perpetrator does not reside in the household.
- Investigations of abuse/neglect typically referred to FBSS and risk of trafficking by a non-household member was also identified.

Example: Perpetrator is non-household member and the parent/legal guardian *does not* sign releases for [CCT](#)/CAC involvement and has no plans to seek services of their own. FBSS services are needed to address child safety and strengthen protective capacity.

Note: Refusal to sign releases is not an automatic referral to FBSS or grounds for removal.

- Current practices and policies will be followed for the referral to FBSS, and completion of the investigation.

SI and CPI must participate in a transfer staffing with the **FBSS Supervisor and FBSS worker** that includes a review and hand-off of the completed CSE-IT. FBSS will be informed of the child's unique needs as a trafficking victim when SXTR/LBTR is confirmed.

FBSS will participate in CAC/MDT/ [CCT](#) staffings for the duration of the FBSS case.

New Trafficking Concerns within Family Based Safety Services

When new concerns for trafficking victimization are suspected or identified in FBSS, complete Expectations for Newly Identified and/or Suspected Victimization (See [Expectations](#) Section, page 6 and [CPS HB 12911 Child Trafficking \(Sex and Labor Trafficking\)](#))

Case Referrals to Conservatorship

Conservatorship Services Referrals and Actions

SI and CPI will follow current practices and policies for the execution of either an emergency or non-emergency removal, to include coordination with law enforcement as the specific case may warrant.

Current practices and policies will be followed for the completion of the investigation and transfer to **Conservatorship Services (CVS)**.

SI and CPI must participate in a transfer staffing with the **CVS Supervisor and CVS worker** that includes a review and hand-off of the completed CSE-IT. CVS will be informed of the child's unique needs as a trafficking victim when SXTR/LBTR is confirmed.

CVS worker is responsible for service planning and coordination when a child/youth is a confirmed victim of SXTR/LBTR. Services may include CAC, [CCT](#), or [CSEY/HT AA](#) services where available. (See [CSEY/HT AA](#) Section, pages 11 -12)

CVS worker will participate in CAC or [CCT](#) staffings for the duration of service delivery when CAC or [CCT](#) services are initiated.

[New Trafficking Concerns within Conservatorship Services](#)

When new concerns for trafficking victimization are suspected or identified in CVS, complete Expectations for Newly Identified and/or Suspected Victimization (See [Expectations](#) Section, page 6 and CPS HB [6462 Confirmed or Suspected Victims of Human Trafficking](#))

Youth at Risk of Human Trafficking

Youth at Risk are defined as youth 12 years or older, in DFPS conservatorship who have had five or more placements with no known sex trafficking victimization, no missing events in the last 12 months, and not had a CSE-IT completed in the past year. Youth at Risk will be screened using the CSE-IT at the following intervals:

- **Initially**, all children who meet the Youth at Risk definition,
- **Annually**, all children who meet the Youth at Risk definition, and
- **Anytime**, a youth (10 years of age or older) is specifically suspected to be at risk of sexual exploitation.

[Data Warehouse Report](#)

The Monthly Youth in Conservatorship at Risk for SXTR Requiring CSE-IT Completion (sa_108) data warehouse report was developed for Conservatorship Supervisors to support the identification of children who are considered Youth at Risk of trafficking who require the CSE-IT.

Program Director Expectations

If a Conservatorship (CVS) Supervisor has not received the CSE-IT User Training, the Program Director will find a CSE-IT trained CVS Supervisor to complete the actual CSE-IT for the Youth at Risk until CSE-IT User training is completed.

Conservatorship Supervisor Expectations

1. On a monthly basis by the 3rd business day, generate the *Monthly Youth in Conservatorship at Risk for SXTR Requiring CSE-IT Completion* report (sa_108).
2. CVS Supervisors are responsible for tracking and maintaining the monthly lists of children screened.
3. The CVS Supervisor is responsible for filtering the report to determine which children assigned to their unit should be screened.
 - a. See Youth at Risk of Trafficking Screening Process – Using sa_108 for instructions on filtering process. (Found on Safety Net)
 - b. This can be completed by all CVS Supervisors regardless of CSE-IT User training status.

STEPS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

4. If a CVS Supervisor has not received CSE-IT User Training, the Program Director will find a CSE-IT trained CVS Supervisor to complete the actual CSE-IT for the Youth at Risk until CSE-IT User training is completed.
5. For children requiring a CSE-IT screening, the CSE-IT must be completed by the last day of the month.

CSE-IT Completion

CVS Supervisor will:

1. Lead collection of information for the CSE-IT
 - a. Information is gathered from CVS worker, other DFPS staff involved with the youth and/or individuals outside of the organization. Ensure proper releases and confidentiality are addressed.
 - b. With CSE-IT results, complete Actions taken based on Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool Results (See [Actions](#) Section, page 11)
2. Finalize, print, and submit the CSE-IT to WestCoast. The CSE-IT must be documented in IMPACT as an External Document, enter fields as **Type:** Other and **Details:** CSE-IT. The CSE-IT is given to CVS worker to add to the external case file.
3. Document an **Assessment** Contact in IMPACT and in the narrative include the CSE-IT results, decisions from *CSE-IT Results Assessment* staffing and, whether or not the family:
 - o Elects to participate in CAC/[CCT](#) services and if family elects to opt out include any known opt out justifications, and
 - o Elects to participate with a human trafficking advocate and if family opts out include any known opt out justifications
4. Ensure criminal actions are reported to correct law enforcement jurisdiction(s).
5. For duration of service delivery, participate in CAC/[CCT](#) staffings when services are initiated.
6. When new concerns for trafficking victimization are suspected or identified, complete Expectations for Newly Identified and/or Suspected Victimization (See [Expectations](#) Section, page 6)

SAFETY TIP

Staff safety must be an overriding factor in this work.

*Set **SafeSignal**, just like your seat belt. Set it every day, on every interaction.*

***SafeSignal** provides one pull to back-up should something go wrong*

Youth at High Risk of Human Trafficking (Missing from Care)

The HT Protocol should be followed in conjunction with existing policy, [6460, 'When a Child or Youth is Missing from CPS Conservatorship](#) and the [Runaway/Missing Youth & Victims of Human Trafficking Protocol Resource Guide Bexar, Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, and Travis Counties](#).

Youth who are missing or on runaway status require an informed and coordinated effort that supports expedient recoveries. All DFPS staff actively involved with a youth who is missing or on runaway status have a responsibility to act with urgency and support one another in recovery efforts.

Youth in DFPS Conservatorship who are in missing or runaway status are considered to be at high risk for human trafficking because accessibility to traffickers has been determined to be the number one risk factor for exploitation.

Conservatorship Required Notifications for Youth Who are Missing/Runaway

CVS must notify Law Enforcement (unless already completed by placement) and then the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), and all identified required parties of the youth's missing status. Timeframes for the completion of these notifications are specifically listed below according to hours of operation (either during regular or after business hours).

Per CPS Policy [6151.3](#), identified required parties are:

- Appropriate law enforcement agency.
- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) at the 24-hour call center: 1-800-THE LOST (1-800-843- 5678) (The caseworker must also obtain a reference number from NCMEC.)
- Designated SI regional mailbox.
- Regional director's assistant.
- The court.
- Child's parents (unless an exception is met, see [Texas Family Code §264.123External Link](#)).
- The parents' attorneys.
- The child's attorney ad litem.
- The child's guardian ad litem.
- The child's CASA.
- The child's probation or parole officer if involved with Juvenile Probation or the Texas Juvenile Justice Department.
- Care coordination team, if applicable.
- Human trafficking and commercially sexually exploited youth advocate agency, if applicable.

Recovery Meeting

for Confirmed victim of trafficking.

A Recovery Meeting is held within two business days of missing event.

Notifications during Regular Business Hours

Router

The regional router will contact the assigned Primary CVS worker's Program Director to ensure the CVS Supervisor and CVS worker are notified timely that a youth is missing or has run away.

CVS Worker will:

1. **Immediately** notify the Regional Director Assistant (RDA) to report:
 - a. Youth is missing or has run away, and
 - b. Request a SI be assigned, if one has not yet been assigned.
2. Confirm CVS Supervisor and chain of command are informed of youth's missing status
3. **Immediately but no later than 8 hours**, complete notifications to Law Enforcement (unless completed by placement), NCMEC and identified required parties. (See [Notification](#) section, page 19)
4. Provide assigned SI a copy of the court order granting DFPS conservatorship and the CPS Missing Child Preliminary Sheet.
5. Ensure a current photo of the youth is in IMPACT.

Notifications after Regular Business Hours

On-call Investigations

On-call CPI Investigator will receive a call out from SWI of an **I&R to Existing CPS Case** according to standard business procedures. On-call CPI Investigator is responsible for contacting:

1. On-call CVS worker, and
2. On-call SIPD for SI assignment.

On-Call Conservatorship Worker:

1. **Immediately but no later than 8 hours**, completes and documents notifications to Law Enforcement (unless completed by placement), NCMEC and identified required parties. (See [Notification](#) Section, page 13)
2. Ensures Primary CVS Worker and Chain of Command are informed of the youth's runaway/missing status.

Primary Conservatorship Worker:

Next business day, from being notified of youth's missing status:

1. Provides assigned SI a copy of the court order granting DFPS conservatorship and the CPS Missing Child Preliminary Sheet.
2. Ensures a current photo of youth is in IMPACT
3. Notifies the Regional Director Assistant (RDA) of the missing youth
4. Confirms On-call notification tasks were completed and documented.
5. Coordinates with the CVS Supervisor, SI, and SIPD to identify participants for the Recovery Meeting for *Confirmed* victims of trafficking.

Efforts to Recover Youth Who Are Missing or Runaway

Primary Conservatorship Worker will:

1. **By second business day from being notified that youth is missing status:**
 - a. Coordinate a Recovery Meeting for *Confirmed* victims of trafficking.
 - b. For children 10 years of age and older, coordinate with the CVS Supervisor/SI to gather and share information for the CSE-IT.
 - c. Ensure standard releases and confidentiality agreements are addressed with external parties, as needed.
2. **On the 14th day, if child is still missing status, update** the youth's placement in IMPACT, if not already completed.
3. **Maintain regular contact with the SI to:**
 - a. Coordinate Recovery Plan activities.
 - b. Share information collected by others for the CSE-IT.
 - c. Coordinate Recovery Meetings as needed for confirmed victims of trafficking.
4. **Monthly**, coordinate and update active efforts to locate the youth whose status is missing, until the youth returns or is recovered. Active efforts, at minimum, includes monthly contacts with:
 - a. Assigned SI,
 - b. NCMEC for tips and leads,
 - c. Appropriate law enforcement agencies,
 - d. Youth's relatives,
 - e. Youth's former caregivers,
 - f. Any state or local social service agency that may be providing services to the youth, and
 - g. Recovery Meeting participants, if applicable.
5. **Quarterly, staff with CVS Supervisor, CVS PD, SI, SIPD, and RDA** to determine whether sufficient efforts have been made to locate the youth and whether other action is needed.

CVS Supervisor/Special Investigator (SI) will:

1. Coordinate to determine who best suited to complete the CSE-IT for each specific case.
2. Collaborate with the CVS worker to gather information for the CSE-IT.
3. Gather information from additional DFPS staff involved with the youth and/or individuals outside of the organization. Ensure proper releases and confidentiality are addressed.

Special Investigations

SI and SIPD will:

1. **First business day from DFPS notification that youth is missing :**
 - a. Confirm receipt of documents from CVS to initiate recovery efforts.
 - b. SIPD will coordinate with CVS Supervisor to determine if missing child has any previous history of human trafficking.
 - c. Coordinate with local LE to develop a plan to locate the youth as quickly as possible.
2. **By second business day from DFPS notification that youth is missing**, participate in a Recovery Meeting for *Confirmed* victims of trafficking.
3. **Maintain regular contact with Primary CVS worker:**
 - a. Execute assigned Recovery Plan activities and document updates, if applicable.
 - b. Participate in review of the Recovery Plan, as needed.
 - c. Continue to collect/provide information for the CSE-IT.
4. **Monthly**, coordinate and update active efforts to locate the youth whose status is runaway/missing, until the youth returns or is recovered. Active efforts at minimum includes monthly contacts with:
 - a. Primary CVS worker,
 - b. NCMEC for tips and leads,
 - c. Appropriate law enforcement agencies,
 - d. Youth's relatives,
 - e. Youth's former caregivers,
 - f. Any state or local social service agency that may be providing services to the youth, and
 - g. Recovery Meeting participants, if applicable.
5. **Quarterly, staff with CVS Supervisor, CVS PD, and RDA** to determine whether sufficient efforts have been made to locate the youth and whether other action is needed.

When Youth is Recovered/Returns

Recovery/Return during Regular Business Hours

SI or Primary CVS worker will:

1. **Immediately:**
 - a. Coordinate with one another for response and supervisor notification.
 - b. Implement the Recovery Plan, if applicable.
 - c. Begin gathering the CSE-IT information collaboratively **for children 10 years of age and up**.
 - d. Determine appropriate timing/location/interviewer (LE/SI/CAC) for recovery interview as well as for forensic interview as applicable.
2. **Immediately and no later than two hours respond to the youth's location to:**
 - a. Assess the youth's physical and crisis needs, and
 - b. Seek appropriate services.
3. **Within 24 hours, coordinate and complete notification of youth's recovery with:**
 - a. Correct law enforcement jurisdiction(s),
 - b. NCMEC, and
 - c. RDA.

CVS supervisor/Designee will:

Ensure the Recovery Meeting participants are immediately notified and kept apprised of the recovery process, if applicable.

Primary CVS worker will:

1. **Within 24 hours of recovery**, notify all identified required parties of youth's recovery (See [Notification](#) section, page 19)
2. **On the day of placement or by 7pm next calendar**, update the youth's placement status in IMPACT, if needed.
3. **Within three business days of recovery for a *Confirmed* victim of trafficking**, coordinate a Recovery Meeting to:
 - a. Implement and/or adjust the Recovery Plan to prioritize actions and to address the youth's additional physical and emotional needs.
 - b. Finalize the decision whether to refer to the CAC/[CCT](#)/[CSEY/HT AA](#).
4. Provide information to CVS Supervisor/SI for the CSE-IT.
5. With CSE-IT results, complete Actions taken based on Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool Results (See [Actions](#) Section, page 11)
6. For duration of service delivery, participate in CAC/[CCT](#) staffings when services are initiated.
7. When new concerns for trafficking victimization are suspected or identified, complete Expectations for Newly Identified and/or Suspected Victimization (See [Expectations](#) Section, page 11)

CVS Supervisor/Special Investigator (SI) will:

1. Lead collection of information for the CSE-IT
 - a. Information is gathered from DFPS staff involved with the youth and/or individuals outside of the organization. Ensure proper releases and confidentiality are addressed.
 - b. With CSE-IT results, complete Actions taken based on Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool Results (See [Actions](#) Section, page 11)
2. **Within five to seven days:**
 - a. Ensure Recovery Interview is conducted and documented in IMPACT.
 - b. **Finalize, print, and submit the CSE-IT to WestCoast. The CSE-IT must be documented in IMPACT as an External Document, enter fields as Type: Other and Details: CSE-IT. The CSE-IT is given to CVS worker to add to the external case file.**
 - c. Document an **Assessment** Contact in IMPACT and include the CSE-IT results in the narrative.
3. Participate in the ongoing DFPS investigation as needed.
4. Ensure criminal actions are reported to correct law enforcement jurisdiction(s).
5. For duration of service delivery, participate in CAC/[CCT](#) staffings when services are initiated.
6. When new concerns for trafficking victimization are suspected or identified, complete Expectations for Newly Identified and/or Suspected Victimization (See [Expectations](#) Section, page 6)

Recovery/Return after Regular Business Hours

This section, identifies the Recovery/Return tasks for:

- On-Call staff to complete before On-Call shift ends, and
- Primary SI and CVS staff to complete **within the First Two Business Days of an On-Call Recovery.**

On the third business day after an On-Call Recovery, Primary SI and CVS staff must complete all subsequent tasks found in **Recovery/Return during regular business hours** section.

On-call CPI Investigations will be responsible for contacting:

1. On-call CVS, and
2. On-call SIPD for SI assignment.

On-Call SI or On-Call CVS will:

1. **Immediately and no later than two hours** respond to a youth's location to:
 - a. Assess the youth's physical, and crisis needs, and emergent needs;
 - b. Begin gathering the CSE-IT information **for children 10 years of age and up;** and
 - c. Determine appropriate timing/location/interviewer for recovery interview, as well as for forensic interview as applicable.
2. **Prior to End of On-Call shift,** notify correct law enforcement jurisdiction(s), and NCMEC of youth's recovery.

On-call CVS worker will:

1. Refer to Recovery Plan for guidance regarding interventions and services for confirmed victims of trafficking, if one exists.
2. Seek appropriate services, and
3. Seek and complete placement.
4. **On the day of placement or by 7pm next calendar day,** update the placement status in IMPACT.
5. **Prior to End of On-Call shift,** notify all identified required parties of youth's recovery. (See [Notifications](#) Section, page 19)
6. **Prior to End of On-Call shift,** ensure Primary CVS Worker and Chain of Command, including RDA are informed of youth's recovery.

CVS Supervisor on first business day will notify the Recovery Meeting participants, if applicable.

Primary CVS worker on first business day will confirm On-call notification tasks were completed.

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