


F R O M	Name & Title	Dr. Letitia Dzirasa, Health Commissioner	Health Department AGENCY REPORT	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202		
	Subject: Position:	21-0095 – Labor Trafficking Notice Requirements FAVORABLE		

To: President and Members
of the City Council
c/o 409 City Hall

August 27, 2021

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to review City Council bill #21-0095, entitled “Labor Trafficking- Notice Requirements.” This legislation will require certain contractors with the City of Baltimore to place notice regarding a human-trafficking prevention hotline in certain locations and to obtain human-trafficking notices from the United States Department of Homeland Security’s website.

In 2015, the Mayor and City Council enacted comprehensive human trafficking prevention legislation, City Council bill #14-0464. The bill, in part, required that all hotels provide a certified training course to all new employees within 30 days of their hire on how to identify human trafficking activities and human trafficking victims. In 2016, seeking a need to communicate information to potential victims of trafficking, Council Bill 16-0661 was passed requiring signage to be placed in adult entertainment venue restrooms. Notice requirements were further extended to other businesses, such as hotels and restaurants in Council Bill 18-0296.

The present bill seeks to further extend notice requirements to contractors of the City of Baltimore such as construction, installation, maintenance, and repair contractors.

Human trafficking is a serious issue in Maryland, with Baltimore City at its epicenter. According to their most recently available data, the National Human Trafficking Hotline (Hotline) reported that 187 human trafficking cases were identified in Maryland in 2019.¹ As of December 2019, the Hotline received 533 calls. Through those calls, 127 cases of sex trafficking and 36 cases of labor trafficking were identified.² Mapping of the call data showed a concentration in Baltimore City.

According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline Data Report, labor trafficking has increased in the last 5 years (2015-2019) and contact with victims increased 19% from 2018-

¹ National Human Trafficking Hotline. (2020). Maryland Spotlight 2019. <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/state/maryland>

² National Human Trafficking Hotline. (2020). Maryland Spotlight 2019. <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/state/maryland>

2019 through the Hotline.³ The concerning prevalence of labor trafficking incidents is most notable in recent migration or relocation of persons entering the labor field. The Trafficking Hotline has created new methods of reaching out such as text, web chat, and online reporting. Text is the fastest growing means of reporting labor trafficking.

Human Trafficking is a severe violation of human rights and its end should be a moral imperative. The physical and emotional trauma sustained as a result of trafficking can follow victims for the rest of their lives. According to a study of commercial sex trafficking victims in the United States, 47% of youth victims reported previous suicide attempts and nearly 4 in 5 youth met criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder.⁴ Providing victims a means of reporting labor trafficking is an important step in getting survivors the support they need and deserve.

Considering the lasting, severe health effects of trafficking, a more coordinated and effective public health response is needed. This bill is an important part of bolstering this response by opening another channel of communication to potential victims. Passage of the bill will not have operational or fiscal impact on the Baltimore City Health Department. It will, however, further the mission of BCHD by expanding knowledge about human trafficking, promoting identification and reporting of trafficking incidents, and helping to increase the use of victim services.

For the above reasons, BCHD urges a **favorable report** on City Council bill #21-0095.

³ National Human Trafficking Hotline. (2020). *2019 National Hotline Annual Report*. <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/sites/default/files/Polaris-2019-US-National-Human-Trafficking-Hotline-Data-Report.pdf>

⁴ Greenbaum VJ (2017) Child sex trafficking in the United States: Challenges for the healthcare provider. *PLoS Med* 14(11): e1002439. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1002439>