



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor Blagojevich Announces New Anti-Human Trafficking Training Program for Law Enforcement

Law Enforcement and Social Services Partner to Recognize and Protect Victims of Human Trafficking

CHICAGO – Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced a new weapon in the fight against human trafficking. The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), the Illinois State Police (ISP), the Chicago Police Department, Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights and the Illinois Regional Institute for Community Policing have produced an innovative computer based training video for law enforcement professionals. The video will help law enforcement officers handle human trafficking cases and victims more effectively.

“Human trafficking is a modern day form of slavery,” said Gov. Blagojevich. “Young children, teenagers, men and women are promised jobs and better lives in the United States. But once they’re here, they are forced to live and work in abysmal conditions, they’re paid pitiful wages, and some are forced into the sex trade. Sadly, we’ve seen this in Illinois. Last year, we launched the Rescue and Restore campaign to raise awareness and understanding about human trafficking. Now law enforcement officers have this training video available to help them to better recognize cases of human trafficking and know how to help victims.”

Growing awareness of the human trafficking problem led the Chicago Police Department and the Heartland Alliance to organize and implement a multi-jurisdictional, interdisciplinary Chicago Regional Human Trafficking Task Force funded by the Department of Justice and chaired by the Chicago Police Department.

One of the Task Force’s primary goals, educating the law enforcement community about human trafficking, led to this collaborative production of a training DVD. The video is called “Anti-Human Trafficking for Law Enforcement.” Copies of the video are being mailed to all of the approximately 1400 law enforcement organizations in Illinois.

The video includes information on topics such as the history of trafficking, state and federal laws, the roles of law enforcement and social services, victimization, investigative considerations and the recognition of human trafficking. Driving this curriculum is the need to treat victims ethically and with empathy, always mindful of the needs and mindset of the trafficked person.

“Recognizing human trafficking as a crime against humanity and as a worldwide policing problem requiring local solutions requires a multi-jurisdictional approach in which both law enforcement and social service agencies must work together. The efforts of these organizations exemplify a spirit of collaboration,” said Superintendent Philip Cline of the Chicago Police Department. “We hope that this DVD will help every law enforcement professional understand that those who fall prey to human trafficking are victims of a crime perpetrated against them and that we must help them begin their healing process with compassion and professionalism and help them secure the social services they need.”

The DVD addresses the myths that individuals must be moved in order to be victims of trafficking and clearly states that victims can be either foreign born or United States citizens. To view the video online or for additional information about the course, log on to these websites: www.dhs.state.il.us or <http://ricp.uis.edu>.

"Officers will have access to this program around the clock anywhere an Internet hook-up is available – including in their squad cars, so they can recognize and respond to potential human trafficking cases” said IDHS Secretary Carol L. Adams, Ph.D. “And long-term plans include more trainings for prosecutors, judges and members of the social service communities.”

The United States Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance reports human trafficking as the fastest growing criminal industry in the world and estimates: 27 million people worldwide are held against their will by coercive means; 70 percent of the victims are women; this criminal enterprise yields an estimated nine billion dollars in annual profits; and as many as 2 million people worldwide are trafficked annually, including into and within the United States.

In 2005, Gov. Blagojevich and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), in conjunction with several Illinois agencies, launched the Rescue and Restore public awareness campaign to combat human trafficking. The campaign includes outreach and training to local social service organizations, law enforcement and health care professionals.

“As a member of the worldwide criminal justice system, the Illinois State Police is committed to a collaborative enforcement effort with the Chicago Police Department, as well as to our continued reliance on our social services partners,” said ISP Director Larry Trent. “Since 2000, federal and state laws have been passed with the purpose of enabling law enforcement to investigate and prosecute traffickers and to provide protection to victims. Achieving success requires *both* the rescue of victims and the successful prosecution of their traffickers. One victim of human trafficking is one too many.”

“This collaborative effort resulted in a curriculum that is driven by the need to treat victims ethically, with empathy and with the application of sound investigative techniques sympathetic to the needs and mindset of the trafficked person,” said Dr.

Patricia Rushing, Interim Director, Regional Institute for Community Policing, University of Illinois, Institute of Government and Public Affairs. “A well-educated criminal justice system, one armed with knowledge of the law and enforcement techniques, will enable the effective prosecution of those perpetrating these crimes. When police officers understand that traffickers use violence, threats and psychological manipulation to maintain control of their victims, they will apply their well-honed investigative techniques with sensitivity. It is analogous to the days when victims of domestic violence were unseen and unheard. They were invisible. We hope to rectify this phenomenon with the creation and distribution of this *Anti-Human Trafficking for the Law Enforcement Professional* DVD.”

The Illinois Rescue & Restore Campaign aims to educate Illinoisans about the problem of human trafficking and how they can help victims in their community. To learn more about the campaign visit www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking for information and resources. The Illinois Rescue and Restore web site is www.dhs.state.il.us/projects/initiatives/trafficking. People are encouraged to call the toll-free national hotline at 888-3737-888 if they suspect human trafficking.

Earlier this year, Illinois organized the first-ever Statewide Human Trafficking Outreach Day, a grassroots blitz involving federal, state and local agencies and hundreds of volunteers to heighten awareness of the growing problem. More than 130 volunteer teams from every corner of the state canvassed neighborhoods and hung approximately 15,000 posters advertising the national human trafficking hotline. Another Outreach Day is planned for the near future.

The Governor also signed HB 1469 last year, making it easier to prosecute human trafficking offenders and to assist victims. The legislation established penalties for the offenses of involuntary servitude, sexual servitude of a minor and trafficking of persons for forced labor and services.

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