

# THE COLORADO PROJECT ACTION PLAN



A collaborative initiative of  
the Laboratory to Combat  
Human Trafficking, with  
generous support from the  
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THE  
COLORADO  
PROJECT

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Embrey Family  
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# COLORADO ACTION PLAN

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN COLORADO?

**ALL OF US.  
THAT MEANS YOU, ME,  
EVERYONE.**

In a word, it takes *action*. Action at the community level *and* action at the state level – both are essential to more efficiently and effectively combat human trafficking.

When the Colorado Project was first organized in 2010, we encountered an anti-trafficking landscape in Colorado that was comprised of scattered efforts with frustrated communities cobbling together resources to serve survivors and combat this crime. Consequently, victims were falling through the cracks and perpetrators were going unpunished.

What is also true is that anti-trafficking efforts have not been nascent. Since 2005, our state has been fortunate to support the coordination of federally-funded task forces, dedicated law enforcement, ground-breaking outreach strategies, legislators boldly taking on the issue, and a consistent interest from foundations and philanthropists. Yet, many of these efforts were largely undertaken without feedback from the communities where the work was done, or efforts were performed in silos, and that has not been enough. We need to honor our hard work and challenge ourselves to work in new ways – more comprehensively and more collaboratively. We need to step into that uncomfortable space of charting new territory by creating space for those who want to be but have not been invited to the table; of not being afraid to ask the hard questions; of learning to acknowledge and address vulnerabilities in this state. But – we don't have to do this without a roadmap.

Every community is unique. Each has particular resources, industries and community dynamics. These characteristics are essential and ought to be the principle guiding force behind organizing a community-based response around prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership. In fact, most communities can readily identify marginalized populations most at risk to trafficking, such as migrant workers and youth experiencing homelessness. Community-based initiatives allow for the creativity and innovation that stem from listening to those most knowledgeable of their lived experiences.

The Action Plan – *developed from Colorado Project State Advisory Board members, focus group participants from 10 communities around the state, State Conference participants, and surveys* – serves as a guide and tool for community members and leaders to organize an informed response to human trafficking. The overarching recommendations and major activities provide support and structure for the development of tailored, more detailed implementation plans that are community-owned and community-led. In this way, it empowers communities to move past being overwhelmed and to begin to intentionally organize. It also serves as a bridge – a bridge between geographic areas of our state, between sectors, and between anti-trafficking groups. All of these efforts must be parts of a larger, coordinated response to the issue on a state level, and this blend of empowering grassroots efforts and calling for a space where we begin to learn from each other, work in partnership with one another and see our efforts as mutually reinforcing, will lead Colorado into a new phase of addressing human trafficking, comprehensively and in partnership.



# PREVENTION

Prevention measures increase awareness, advocacy and education towards addressing a community's systemic vulnerability to a continuum of exploitation, including human trafficking. A good prevention plan recognizes that exploitation and human trafficking are symptoms of root causes like poverty, gender inequality and other forms of oppression that create vulnerable populations.

- › Training and education programs
- › Awareness campaigns
- › Advocacy campaigns
- › Public and private sector policies
- › Protection services for persons who have experienced trafficking
- › Programs that address root causes of trafficking aimed at universal and selected communities

## RECOMMENDATION 1

Create strategic statewide human trafficking public awareness and prevention campaign(s) targeting populations that may be vulnerable to human trafficking.

### PURPOSE

Increase direct engagement with populations vulnerable to human trafficking in Colorado (e.g. youth experiencing homelessness, migrant workers, individuals with developmental disabilities, resettled refugees, students) to reduce risk of being trafficked as well as organizations serving these populations.

### ACTIVITIES

- › Identify, adapt, and/or develop population-specific human trafficking prevention materials for distribution.\*
- › Contact appropriate organizations throughout the state and encourage them to initiate human trafficking awareness programs with the populations they already serve, and/or incorporate human trafficking awareness into existing programs, including, but not limited to: juvenile detention facilities, group homes, health clinics, schools.\*
- › Work with school districts around the state to develop appropriate and varied options for building awareness with student populations (i.e. after school curriculum, trainings for teachers and counselors and staff, learning modules, etc.)

## RECOMMENDATION 2

Increase the probability of effective prevention efforts.

### PURPOSE

Encourage the development and utilization of monitoring and evaluation strategies for trainings and prevention efforts throughout the state as a means of increasing the likelihood of intended, positive outcomes.

### ACTIVITIES

- › In collaboration, existing anti-human trafficking task forces should develop effective monitoring and evaluation tools (i.e., evaluation forms, post six-month effectiveness) for human trafficking prevention efforts.
- › Establish clear, written guidelines on the purpose and use of data collected through evaluation tools.
- › Replicate and adapt those programs with evidenced-based positive outcomes throughout the state.

## RECOMMENDATION 3

Encourage private sector participation in human trafficking prevention efforts such as through the monitoring of supply chains as well as adoption of existing private sector efforts (e.g. the Luxor Protocols).

### PURPOSE

Engage small and large businesses in anti-human trafficking efforts by stressing the importance of corporate social responsibility in both the workplace and communities at large.

### ACTIVITIES

- › Develop awareness events to reach out to the business community to engage in education and training that leads to an understanding of human trafficking so that corporate education can be ongoing.
- › Encourage small and large businesses in Colorado to support supply chain transparency.



# PROTECTION

Protection measures ensure that human trafficking victims are provided access to: (at a minimum) health care, legal aid, social services and education in ways that are not prejudicial against victims' rights, dignity, or psychological well-being. Protection also means creating an environment (social, political and legal) that fosters the protection of victims of trafficking.

- › Social service advocacy and case management
- › Housing
- › Medical services
- › Mental health services
- › Outreach
- › Legal services
- › Training and education programs
- › State laws on victim protection/rights
- › Clothing and food
- › Interpretation/translation
- › Education
- › Life skills training
- › Employment assistance
- › Community re-integration

## **RECOMMENDATION 1**

Create a cultural shift among and between law enforcement and service providers in anti-human trafficking efforts.

### **PURPOSE**

Encourage sensitivity and respect for all trafficked populations among and between stakeholders working with VOTs.

### **ACTIVITIES**

- › Create and expand a cadre of knowledgeable trainers that currently exist in Colorado.
- › Develop and offer quarterly curriculum-based training courses for multi-sector participants (law enforcement and service providers, and other stakeholder together). Trainings to include introduction to human trafficking and continuing education trainings on human trafficking.
- › Assess and disseminate the learning objectives/outcomes of each training course.

## **RECOMMENDATION 2**

Create a comprehensive and streamlined practice of working together across public and nonpublic agencies to address trafficking survivor service needs.

### **PURPOSE**

Address the comprehensive needs of victims/ survivors, by incorporating a clearer understanding of the continuum of exploitation that can occur for individuals.

### **ACTIVITIES**

- › Create partnerships and raise funds for shared resources among task force members to address current service gaps which include, but are not limited to: pre-certification, shelter options for men, boys and youth in general; mental health services; and legal remedies for immigrants.
- › Increase public awareness campaigns to create sensitivity to all trafficked populations.
- › Improve task force functioning through shared and agreed upon commitments by creating clear protocols and guidelines for participation. These guidelines should include a commitment to carry out specific task force objectives in order to ensure that participation in the task force is strategic, concrete, and mutually beneficial for both service providers and law enforcement.
- › Increase task force(s) membership of organizations already serving vulnerable populations around the state.
- › Encourage and support the participation of survivors in task forces.
- › Raise awareness among law enforcement and service providers about eligibility for post-certified foreign national victims to receive refugee services.

## **RECOMMENDATION 3**

Increase education and networking among service providers throughout Colorado and across service areas of expertise to serve human trafficking survivors through increased membership in the Colorado Network to End Human Trafficking (CoNEHT), the statewide victim services network.

### **PURPOSE**

For various service providers to know one another, where they are located, what services each agency provides, and receive ongoing training on human trafficking. To create comprehensive, coordinated services for trafficking survivors that include identifying and addressing service provision gaps.

### **ACTIVITIES**

- › Expand, maintain, and update regularly a comprehensive, statewide service provider resource directory for serving human trafficking survivors.
- › Prioritize and provide training on human trafficking and serving survivors for all organizations who are listed in the directory.



# PROSECUTION

Prosecution measures ensure the creation and implementation of laws which address the continuum of labor exploitation and the pursuit of criminal punishments for such cases, treating human trafficking as exploitation of victims rather than recruitment/transportation of workers or people in prostitution. (This includes not just criminal prosecution, but law enforcement officers and the creation of legislation).

- › Human trafficking protocols and procedures
- › Training and education
- › Task forces
- › State trafficking and trafficking-related legislation
- › Municipal trafficking and trafficking-related legislation
- › Attempted/successful civil and criminal prosecutions of trafficking case

## RECOMMENDATION 1

Form a statewide cohesive prosecutorial group (including law enforcement, prosecutors and judges) focusing on all forms of human trafficking.

### PURPOSE

To combine resources efficiently to better investigate cases, increase prosecutions, convictions, seizures, forfeitures, and compensation to victims.

### ACTIVITIES

- › Identify and cultivate prosecutorial champions to support coalition efforts, grow membership, and provide technical assistance.
- › Encourage prosecutorial entities to develop transition plans to account for turnover and retain institutional knowledge, expertise, and protocols.
- › Increase participation from municipal/ county/ state law enforcement and prosecution in existing networks.
  - › Encourage the development and/or growth of local (municipal/ county) prosecutorial agencies to join a statewide prosecution network.
  - › Create network-growing processes whereby current members recruit other jurisdictions.
  - › Develop communication vehicles to engage and maintain consistent and reliable communications with statewide partners (e.g., listservs to support distribution of meeting minutes).

## RECOMMENDATION 2

Create shift in prosecutorial mindset to prioritize human trafficking with the support of public awareness initiatives and successful prosecutions throughout the state.

### PURPOSE

Demonstrate a statewide commitment to investigating and prosecuting human trafficking in Colorado by increasing convictions, maintaining good statistics, garnering media coverage, and increasing funding.

### ACTIVITIES

- › Utilize media to support public awareness (coordinate with Prevention and Partnership efforts).
- › Select model training curriculum (e.g. The National Attorneys General Training and Research Institute trainings) for prosecutorial agencies to ensure training uniformity.
  - › The basics should impress upon officers a victim-centered approach; ensure that distinctions are made between human trafficking and similar crimes; ensure that examples of human trafficking-relevant evidence are included.
  - › Incorporate a “track” tailored to judges.
  - › Develop communication vehicles to engage and maintain consistent and reliable communications with statewide partners (e.g., listservs to support distribution of meeting minutes).
- › Identify trainers willing to 1) deliver Train-the-Trainer curricula and 2) follow up with trainees to offer technical assistance (i.e., departmental protocol development)
- › Explore ways in which Prosecution efforts can work with law schools (i.e., integrating human trafficking content into existing courses, identifying opportunities to work with clinics).
- › Pitch inclusion of human trafficking content to organizers of annual statewide Colorado judicial conference(s).

## RECOMMENDATION 3

Develop system-wide protocols to increase victim-centered and evidence-based cases.

### PURPOSE

Build evidence-based cases that are not contingent upon victim testimony; increase the likelihood of successful prosecutions; and support other individuals if they choose to come forward to pursue legal action against their traffickers through demonstrated successes/increased convictions.

### ACTIVITIES

- › Recruit investigators and prosecutors from all 22 Colorado judicial jurisdictions to attend system-wide trainings (e.g. The National Attorneys General Training and Research Institute) in order to learn ways to conduct thorough investigations to corroborate victim statements.
- › Identify and work with leaders from key state associations that already have established relationships with investigators and prosecutors (i.e., Bar Associations, National and Citizens Academies).



## **RECOMMENDATION 4**

Consult “model” legislation and legislative efforts in other states.

### **PURPOSE**

Strengthen Colorado’s laws around human trafficking to increase successful prosecutions.

### **ACTIVITIES**

- › Form working group and/or subcommittee of an existing task force to meet regularly to discuss municipal and state laws; include Colorado legislators in working group.
- › Review Colorado Project Policy Recommendations and relevant literature.
- › Prioritize 2014 legislative recommendations.
- › Advance policy recommendations to representatives serving in the Colorado Legislature.



# PARTNERSHIP

Partnership measures acknowledge that combating human trafficking requires a comprehensive response through the cooperation of multiple sectors. Partnerships bring together diverse experiences, amplify messages, and leverage resources. For the purpose of this survey, an anti-human trafficking partnership refers to a cooperative relationship between two or more organizations established for the purpose of jointly combating human trafficking in some way.

- › Private sector
- › Public sector
- › Third sector
- › Protocols
- › Leadership
- › Group diversity
- › Resource leveraging
- › Trust building
- › Sustainability beyond an individual
- › Inclusion of vulnerable population perspectives
- › Effective communication
- › Conflict management
- › Management of competing interests

## RECOMMENDATION 1

Provide an opportunity for collective learning, support, and action by encouraging leaders from community-based efforts to join existing statewide coalitions (e.g. the Colorado Network to End Human Trafficking (CoNEHT)).

### PURPOSE

Bring together leadership from community-based and statewide anti-trafficking efforts to build and/or enhance collaboration between and across communities, counties, and jurisdictions in the state; establish and/or improve comprehensive, wrap-around services for victims and survivors, successful prosecution of traffickers, and prevention efforts to vulnerable populations in the state.

### ACTIVITIES

- › Encourage representatives from local community response groups to join anti-trafficking statewide coalition(s) to represent all regions of the state.
- › Expand the statewide referral network to include service provider organizations/agencies from all regions of the state in order to improve existing localized responses to instances of human trafficking.
- › Support the facilitation of regular meetings around the state for statewide coalitions to share information and/or resources.

## RECOMMENDATION 2

Cultivate awareness and concern for the issue of human trafficking in communities across the state.

### PURPOSE

Define the problem of human trafficking in a way that resonates with community members in order to build community will to address situations of human trafficking. Mobilize a community-based response specific to the nuances of a given community.

### ACTIVITIES

- › Raise awareness of local vulnerabilities to human trafficking and their implications on the community.
- › Provide education and training opportunities to community members that consider local context and relevant information.
- › Support community leaders in determining focus areas (i.e. geographic, professional sectors, populations, etc.)
- › Conduct community needs assessments in communities where little is known about the extent of the issue or services available to address it.

## RECOMMENDATION 3

Encourage the development and/or growth of locally organized response groups (i.e. task forces, coalitions, alliances).

### PURPOSE

Support communities in bringing together key members from the Prevention, Protection, and Prosecution efforts to work together to effectively address the issue of human trafficking on a local level.

### ACTIVITIES

- › Increase political will and leadership by leveraging existing interest in the issue within communities and by providing training and technical assistance to generate additional community interest.
- › Identify community-level leaders to be included in state-level coalition work.
- › Cross-train between sectors to: develop and maintain relationships between organizations; identify opportunities to pool resources; and provide for a collaborative response to situations of human trafficking.
- › Invite potential allies in the community to participate in community efforts to address the issue (i.e. representatives from domestic violence/sexual assault community response programs, law enforcement, migrant services, survivors, mayors/representatives).
- › Encourage the involvement of underrepresented sectors in community efforts to combat the issue (i.e. funding community, corporate/business sector, the tribal justice system).

## **RECOMMENDATION 4**

Encourage collaborative anti-trafficking and allied efforts at both the local and state levels to set processes for communication and conflict management that cultivate a culture of openness.

### **PURPOSE**

Provide constructive conflict management support to anti-trafficking community response groups.

### **ACTIVITIES**

- › Foster leadership that values open communication and conflict management in both community response groups and state level efforts.
- › Incorporate communication and conflict management tools that create a space for constructive conflict resolution.
- › Establish processes for resolving conflict that cannot be resolved via internal procedures/protocols.

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**Everything is connected.**

Human trafficking doesn't happen in isolation; it happens because a host of other issues and conditions create opportunity for systems of exploitation to thrive.

**WE HAPPEN TO THINK EVERY  
SMALL STEP  
ON YOUR PART,  
THEIR PART,  
OUR PART,  
MATTERS.**