



June 2016

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Agencies Have Taken Steps to Assess Prevalence, Address Victim Issues, and Avoid Grant Duplication

Accessible Version

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-16-555](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

Human trafficking—the exploitation of a person typically through force, fraud, or coercion for such purposes as forced labor, involuntary servitude or commercial sex—is occurring in the United States. Congress has passed multiple laws to help ensure punishment of traffickers and protection of victims. DOJ and the Department of Homeland Security lead federal investigations and prosecutions of trafficking crimes. The Departments of Defense, Labor, and State, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission investigate trafficking related offenses under certain circumstances, and take further action, as appropriate. DOJ and HHS award grants to fund victim service programs.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 includes a provision for GAO to review law enforcement efforts and grant programs to combat human trafficking and assist victims in the United States. This report discusses (1) federal efforts to assess prevalence of human trafficking (2) challenges agencies face in investigating and prosecuting human trafficking cases, and (3) federal grants and steps taken to prevent duplication. GAO reviewed trafficking data and agency documents, and conducted 32 interviews with federal, state and local law enforcement officials and prosecutors in four jurisdictions. We selected these jurisdictions based on the number of human trafficking tips they received, receipt of human trafficking task force funding and geographic variation. These officials' perspectives cannot be generalized to all jurisdictions but they provide insights into anti-trafficking efforts.

View [GAO-16-555](#). For more information, contact Gretta L. Goodwin on 202-512-8777 or goodwin@gao.gov.

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What GAO Found

Federal agencies have begun efforts to assess the prevalence of human trafficking in the United States and develop data standards and definitions to help facilitate prevalence studies. For example, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is sponsoring the Human Trafficking Data Collection Project, which seeks to inform the development of an integrated data collection platform regarding human trafficking victimization, establish baseline knowledge of human trafficking and victim needs, and support effective prevention and intervention responses. HHS, in consultation with key stakeholders, has developed draft data fields and definitions for human trafficking and expects to begin piloting the data collection effort in fall 2016. Further, the National Institute of Justice, within the Department of Justice (DOJ), has awarded grants for the development and testing of methodologies that could be used to estimate the prevalence of human trafficking.

Federal, state and local law enforcement officials and prosecutors GAO interviewed reported that investigating and prosecuting human trafficking cases is challenging for multiple reasons, including a lack of victim cooperation, limited availability of services for victims, and difficulty identifying human trafficking. Officials told us that obtaining the victim's cooperation is important because the victim is generally the primary witness and source of evidence; however, obtaining and securing victims' cooperation is difficult, as victims may be unable or unwilling to testify due to distrust of law enforcement or fear of retaliation by the trafficker. According to these officials, victim service programs, such as those that provide mental health and substance abuse services, have helped improve victim cooperation; however, the availability of services is limited. Further, officials reported that identifying and distinguishing human trafficking from other crimes such as prostitution can be challenging. Federal, state, and local agencies have taken or are taking actions to address these challenges, such as increasing the availability of victim services through grants and implementing training and public awareness initiatives.

GAO identified 42 grant programs with awards made in 2014 and 2015 that may be used to combat human trafficking or to assist victims of human trafficking, 15 of which are intended solely for these purposes. Although some overlap exists among these human trafficking grant programs, federal agencies have established processes to help prevent unnecessary duplication. For instance, in response to recommendations in a prior GAO report, DOJ requires grant applicants to identify any federal grants they are currently operating under as well as federal grants for which they have applied. In addition, agencies that participate in the Grantmaking Committee of the Senior Policy Operating Group are encouraged to share grant solicitations and information on proposed grant awards, allowing other agencies to comment on proposed grant awards and determine whether they plan to award funding to the same organization.

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Abbreviations

ACF	Administration for Children and Families
ACTeams	Anti-trafficking Coordination Teams
BJA	Bureau of Justice Assistance
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOJ	Department of Justice
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
ICE HSI	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations
HSTC	Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center
HTPU	Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit
JVTA	Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act
Labor	Department of Labor
NCMEC	National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
NHTRC	National Human Trafficking Resource Center
NIJ	National Institute of Justice
OVC	Office for Victims of Crime
SPOG	Senior Policy Operating Group
State	Department of State
TSA	Transportation Security Administration
TVPA	Trafficking Victims Protection Act
USAO	United States Attorney's Office
USCIS	U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

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June 28, 2016

Congressional Committees

Sometimes perceived to be a foreign issue, human trafficking—the exploitation of a person typically through force, fraud, or coercion for such purposes as forced labor, involuntary servitude or commercial sex—is occurring in the United States. Human trafficking victims include women, men and transgender individuals, adults and children, and foreign nationals and U.S. citizens or nationals who are diverse with respect to race, ethnicity, and sexuality, among other factors. Human trafficking can take place in rural, suburban, and urban settings throughout the country, and often involves victims who are already vulnerable—such as missing and runaway youth or persons dealing with substance abuse addictions. Traffickers may lure victims into work or commercial sex with false promises—such as offering to help a teenage girl become a model—and ultimately force victims to remain in the employment situation through various means, such as physical and sexual abuse; threatening to harm the victim’s family; or for foreign nationals, withholding their identification and immigration documents. Traffickers may be family members, intimate partners, acquaintances, or strangers, and they may run the human trafficking operation on their own or be a member of a large or small organized criminal network. For example, in January 2015, a federal jury convicted four gang members in El Paso, Texas—one of whom was a former juvenile probation officer—for child sex trafficking and related crimes. In June 2015, a military official from Qatar and his wife were charged with engaging in forced labor by obtaining the labor and services of two persons by means of force, threats of force, physical restraint, and threats of physical restraint in San Antonio, Texas.

Federal agencies, including the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS), Homeland Security (DHS), Justice (DOJ), Labor, and State, as well as state and local law enforcement and non-governmental organizations, have taken a collaborative approach to combating human trafficking in the United States, both in conducting investigations and prosecutions and ensuring that victims have access to needed services. For instance, HHS and DOJ have several grant programs in place to train and support law enforcement and organizations that assist victims in their efforts to combat human trafficking, as well as to provide services to victims, each of which also support collaboration among stakeholders. In 2014, HHS, DHS, and DOJ, in partnership with other federal agencies, issued the first *Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States*, which identified actions that each

agency will take to help rebuild the lives of trafficking victims through coordination, collaboration, and capacity building.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA) of 2015 includes a provision for GAO to report on federal and selected state efforts to combat human trafficking in the United States, as well as identify federal grant programs that can be used to assist victims of trafficking.¹ In this report, we address the following questions:

1. What federal efforts have been made to determine the prevalence of human trafficking in the United States?
2. What challenges, if any, do federal and selected state law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies face when combating human trafficking in the United States, and what actions have they or others taken to address identified challenges?
3. What federal grant programs are intended to combat human trafficking and assist victims within the United States, and what steps have federal agencies taken, if any, to reduce the potential for duplication among grant programs?

For purposes of this report, we focused on human trafficking within the United States, which includes U.S. citizens or nationals, or those with or without lawful immigration status, who are trafficked within the United States, as well as foreign persons who are brought to the United States from abroad for the purpose of trafficking.

To address the first objective, we reviewed the JVTA and other federal laws related to human trafficking, and interviewed DOJ, DHS, and HHS officials to learn whether any federal agencies had efforts underway to collect data that could be used to determine the prevalence of human trafficking in the United States. We also reviewed documentation issued by the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking to learn about additional federal efforts to determine prevalence. We analyzed data from federal investigative and prosecutorial agencies and two federally-funded entities, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), which, while not specifically

¹Pub. L. No. 114-22, tit. II, subtit. C, § 223, 129 Stat. 227, 250.

intended to do so, could give an indication of where human trafficking is occurring in the United States for fiscal years 2013 through 2015.² We assessed the reliability of the data the agencies and other entities provided by questioning knowledgeable officials and reviewing the data for obvious errors and anomalies. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for our purposes.

To address the second objective, we interviewed headquarters officials from the Department of Defense, DOJ, DHS, Labor, State, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) who are responsible for identifying, investigating, and prosecuting human trafficking-related crimes. For DOJ's Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and U.S. Attorney's Offices (USAO); DHS's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI); Labor's Wage and Hour Division; State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security; and EEOC, we interviewed investigators and prosecutors located in field offices that cover four jurisdictions—Washington, DC/Northern Virginia; Houston, Texas; Los Angeles, California; and Bismarck, North Dakota. We selected these jurisdictions because they are located in states that are among the top 10 in terms of human trafficking tips, per capita, that were sent to NHTRC or NCMEC. We also selected these jurisdictions because they reflect a variation in geography and receipt of human trafficking task force funding, and are priority areas identified by DHS's department-wide anti-human trafficking effort. In addition to federal agencies, we interviewed state and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies that were part of the identified task forces in each of these jurisdictions. During the interviews, we asked officials whether they experienced any challenges in carrying out their duties related to combating human trafficking and to identify any efforts that have been or could be taken to address challenges. While these officials' perspectives cannot be generalized to all jurisdictions, they provided insights into federal, state, and local efforts to combat human trafficking. We also interviewed representatives from six non-governmental organizations that provide services to human trafficking victims and were part of the identified task forces in each of the selected jurisdictions. In addition, we

²The National Human Trafficking Resource Center is a national anti-trafficking hotline and resource center serving victims and survivors of human trafficking and the anti-trafficking community in the United States. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children is a private, nonprofit corporation whose mission is to help find missing children, reduce child sexual exploitation and prevent future victimization.

interviewed officials from the Federal Judicial Center to further understand challenges faced when combating human trafficking.

To address the third objective, we worked with agencies to develop a list of federal grant programs that provide funding for activities related to combating human trafficking and assisting victims. We reviewed grant documentation and interviewed federal officials responsible for administering human trafficking-related grant programs and grantees. Using the GAO established framework for addressing overlap and duplication, we used the following definitions for purposes of assessing human trafficking grant programs:³

- **Overlap** occurs when multiple granting agencies or grant programs have similar goals, engage in similar activities or strategies to achieve these goals, or target the same or similar beneficiaries.
- **Duplication** occurs on multiple levels. It occurs when a single grantee uses grant funds from different federal sources to pay for the exact same expenditure. Duplication also occurs when two or more granting agencies or grant programs engage in the same or similar activities or provide funding to support the same or similar services to the same beneficiaries.

To assess what efforts have been made to prevent any unnecessary duplication among human trafficking grants, we reviewed DOJ and HHS guidance and interviewed federal officials to better understand processes put in place to prevent potential duplication. For more information on our scope and methodology, see appendix I.

We conducted our work from July 2015 to June 2016 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

³GAO, *Fragmentation, Overlap, and Duplication: An Evaluation and Management Guide*, [GAO-15-49SP](#) (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 14, 2015).

Background

Federal law generally recognizes two forms of human trafficking—sex trafficking and labor trafficking. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), as amended, defines human trafficking under the term “severe forms of trafficking in persons.”⁴ Pursuant to the TVPA, as amended, sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act.⁵ Sex trafficking is a “severe” form of trafficking where it involves force, fraud or coercion, or where the victim has not attained 18 years of age, in which case force, fraud or coercion are not necessary elements.⁶ In the case of sex trafficking, a perpetrator—which could be a pimp, intimate partner or relative of the victim—generally forces the victim to engage in commercial sexual activity. For instance, victims may be forced to act as hostesses in a “cantina,” which is a bar at which payment for drinks includes the company of women. Additional payment can be made for sexual contact, and officials told us that many cantinas may contain rooms for the purpose of sexual acts, while others pay for the transaction at the bar and then engage in the sexual act in a nearby hotel. The TVPA defines labor related trafficking generally as 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.⁷ Labor trafficking can take various forms, such as debt bondage, domestic servitude, and forced labor.⁸ For example, in one case, workers from Thailand were brought to the United States with the understanding that they would have highly-paid work as welders. However, once they arrived in the country, they were forced to work in

⁴Pub. L. No. 106-386, div. A, § 103, 114 Stat. 1469, 1470 (classified to 22 U.S.C. § 7102(9)).

⁵22 U.S.C. § 7102(10). Under section 7102(4), the term “commercial sex act” means any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.

⁶See id. § 7102(9)(A).

⁷Id. at § 7102(9)(B).

⁸The term debt bondage means the status or condition of a debtor arising from a pledge by the debtor of his or her personal services or of those of a person under his or her control as a security for debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied toward the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined. See 22 U.S.C. § 7102(5).

restaurants without pay, had their passports confiscated, and were confined to cramped apartments without any electricity, water, or gas.

Federal and State Laws to Combat Human Trafficking

Federal efforts to combat and prevent human trafficking in the United States have evolved over time, including various laws that have established federal agencies' roles in these efforts. During the 1990s, the United States began to take steps to address human trafficking at home and abroad. DOJ prosecuted trafficking cases under several federal criminal statutes, including the involuntary servitude statutes,⁹ the Mann Act,¹⁰ and labor laws on workplace conditions and compensation.¹¹ However, involuntary servitude was restricted to cases of physical abuse including force, or threats of force, or threats of legal coercion, and did not include psychological coercion, which is often used by today's traffickers.¹² These statutes spread enforcement authority across the federal government and resulted in different case outcomes, depending on the charges brought or which agency learned of the allegations of abuse.

Over the past few decades, Congress has taken numerous legislative actions to help combat human trafficking and ensure that victims have access to needed services. In October 2000, the TVPA was enacted to combat trafficking in persons, ensure just and effective punishment of traffickers and protect trafficking victims.¹³ Among other things, the TVPA, as amended, makes it illegal to knowingly or recklessly use force,

⁹18 U.S.C. §§ 1581-1588.

¹⁰See *id.* §§ 2421-2424.

¹¹For example, 29 U.S.C. § 1851 (criminal sanctions for violations of the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act and related regulations).

¹²See *United States v. Kozminski*, 487 U.S. 931 (1988). "Legislative history suggests that Congress passed th[e] [Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection] [A]ct [of 2000] to correct what they viewed as the Supreme Court's mistaken holding in *United States v. Kozminski*... [which] limited the definition of involuntary servitude to 'physical' or 'legal' coercion." *United States v. Dann*, 652 F.3d 1160, 1169 (9th Cir. 2011) (citing *Kozminski*, 487 U.S. at 952). "In [18 U.S.C.] § 1589, Congress intended to 'reach cases in which persons are held in a condition of servitude through nonviolent coercion.' Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 § 102(b)(13)." *Id.*

¹³Pub. L. No. 106-386, div. A, § 102, 114 Stat. at 1466-91 (2000) (classified to 22 U.S.C. § 7101(a)).

fraud, or coercion to recruit, entice, harbor, transport, provide, obtain, advertise, maintain, patronize, or solicit any person to engage in a commercial sex act.¹⁴ The TVPA also makes it illegal to take the above actions, and thus cause a person under 18 years of age to engage in a commercial sex act, with or without the use of force, fraud, or coercion.¹⁵ In addition, the TVPA criminalizes the use of certain means, including force, threats of force, physical restraint, or serious harm or threats of such harm to knowingly provide or obtain persons for any labor or services, such as working in farms, factories, and households.¹⁶ The act also updated and supplemented existing involuntary servitude statutes used to prosecute trafficking crimes, enhanced the penalties for trafficking crimes, and provided a range of new protections and assistance for victims of trafficking. The TVPA provided for the creation of the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking, now known as the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, as a cabinet-level entity that convenes routinely to advance and coordinate both federal policies and the implementation of the TVPA.¹⁷

As amended by the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003, the TVPA also established the Senior Policy Operating Group (SPOG), consisting of senior officials from 14 federal agencies and the White House National Security Council and the Domestic Policy Council, to coordinate activities of federal departments and agencies regarding policies (including grants and grant policies) involving international human

¹⁴18 U.S.C. § 1591(a).

¹⁵Id.

¹⁶22 U.S.C. § 1589(a). In addition, it is a federal crime to knowingly recruit, harbor, transport, provide, or obtain by any means, any person for labor or services in violation of chapter 77 of title 18, U.S. Code. Id. at § 1590(a).

¹⁷See id. § 7103. The agencies of the PITF are the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, the Interior, Agriculture, Labor, Health and Human Services, Transportation, Education, and Homeland Security, as well as the Domestic Policy Council, the National Security Council, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

trafficking and the implementation of the TVPA.¹⁸ This multidisciplinary approach includes the enforcement of criminal and labor law, development of victim-centered identification and protection measures, support for innovations in data gathering and research, education and public awareness, enhanced partnerships and research opportunities, and strategically linked foreign assistance and diplomatic engagement. Congress also reauthorized the TVPA in 2005 and 2008; and, in 2013, further amended provisions of the act, its reauthorizations, and other related laws.¹⁹

In 2015, the President signed into law the JVTA, which, among other things, required the Attorney General to ensure that law enforcement officers and federal prosecutors receive anti-trafficking training; required the Federal Judicial Center, the research and education agency of the federal judicial system, to provide training for judges on ordering restitution for victims of certain trafficking-related offenses under chapter 77 of title 18, U.S. Code; mandated that the Secretary of Homeland Security implement a human trafficking training program for department personnel; and required the Attorney General to implement and maintain a national strategy for combating human trafficking.²⁰

In addition to the federal statutes, the 50 states and the District of Columbia have laws that address human trafficking to some degree,

¹⁸Pub. L. No. 106-386, div. A, § 105, as amended by Pub. L. No. 108-193, § 6, 117 Stat. 2875, 2881. The agencies of the Senior Policy Operating Group are the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, the Interior, Agriculture, Labor, Health and Human Services, Transportation, Education, and Homeland Security, as well as the Domestic Policy Council, the National Security Council, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

¹⁹Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 109-164, 119 Stat. 3558 (2006); William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-457, 122 Stat. 5044 Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, Pub. L. No. 113-4, tit. XII, 127 Stat. 54, 136-60.

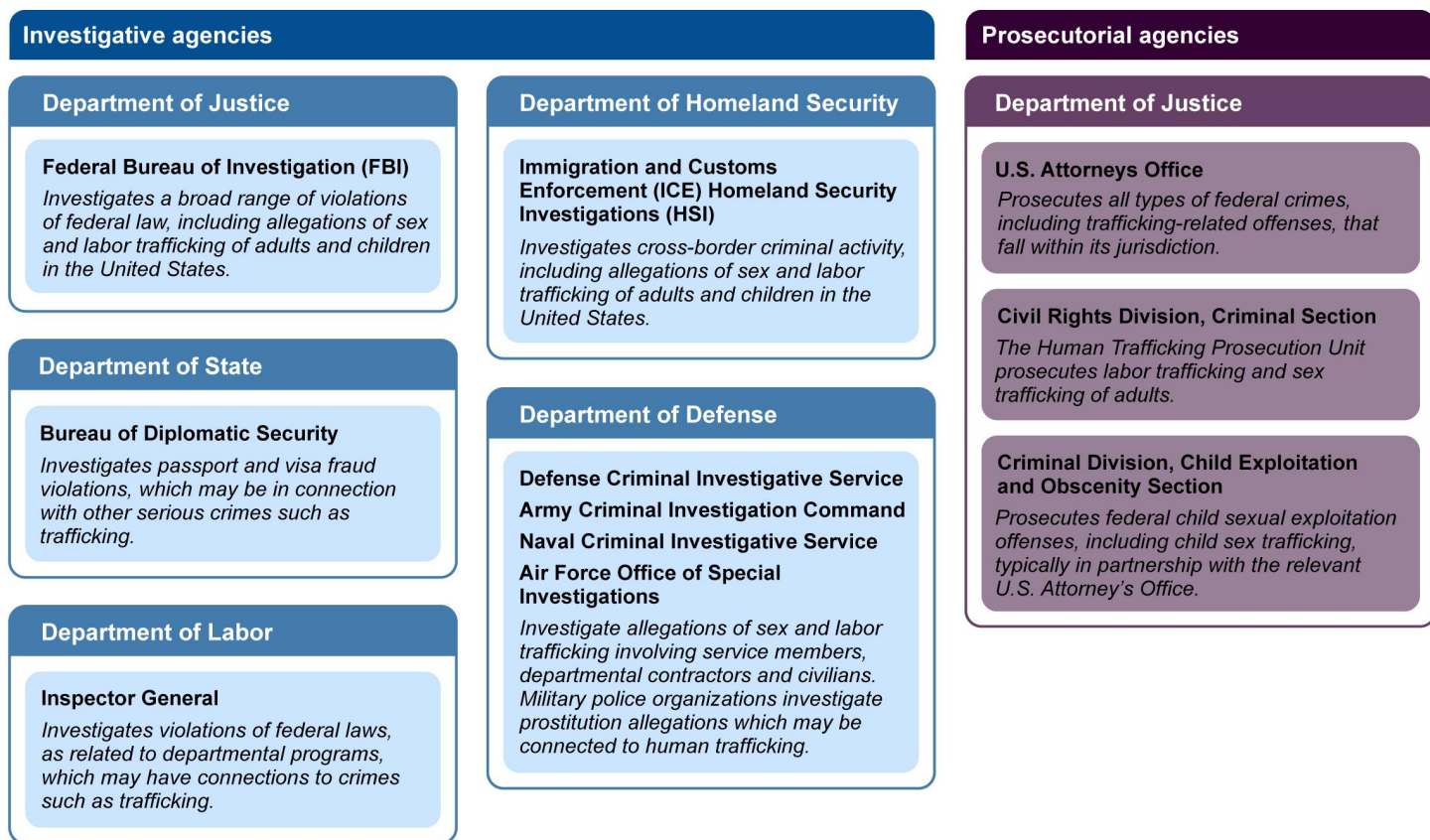
²⁰Pub. L. No. 114-22, 129 Stat. 227. Among other things, the JVTA also established the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund to supplement existing statutorily authorized grants or activities; amended the federal definition of child abuse to include human trafficking; and required the President's Interagency Task Force to conduct a review on trafficking in the United States and provide to Congress and make publicly available in an electronic format the resulting child trafficking primary prevention report.

whether explicitly under a “human trafficking” statute or pursuant to other relevant laws. State laws differ and may include various features that criminalize sex or labor trafficking or other related conduct; require training for law enforcement; lower the burden of proof for sex trafficking of minors by not requiring force, fraud or coercion as elements of the offense; and provide victim assistance, among other things.

Federal Agency Roles and Responsibilities to Combat Human Trafficking in the United States and Assist Victims

Several components within DOJ, DHS, Defense, Labor, and State have responsibility for investigating and prosecuting human trafficking crimes, as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1: Federal Agencies Responsible for Investigating and Prosecuting Human Trafficking Crimes in the United States



Source: GAO analysis. | GAO-16-555

In addition to federal investigative and prosecutorial agencies, other agencies play a role in helping to identify human trafficking, such as the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Coast Guard. These agencies may also encounter human trafficking victims in their daily operations, including at airports, land borders, and seaports. EEOC and Labor's Wage and Hour Division may encounter human trafficking when conducting investigations related to their statutory authority. For example, EEOC investigates alleged violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting employment discrimination based on, race, color, religion, sex, and national origin, which in certain circumstances involve human trafficking victims.

In addition to investigating and prosecuting human trafficking crimes, federal agencies, primarily DOJ and HHS, support state and local efforts to combat human trafficking and assist victims. Several components within DOJ's Office of Justice Programs, including the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), and National Institute of Justice (NIJ), administer grants to help support state and local law enforcement in combating human trafficking and to support nongovernmental organizations and others in assisting trafficking victims or conducting research on human trafficking in the United States. HHS also provides grant funding to entities to provide services and support for trafficking victims, primarily through components of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), including the Children's Bureau, Family and Youth Services Bureau, Administration for Native Americans.²¹ Further, ACF established the Office on Trafficking in Persons in 2015 to coordinate anti-trafficking responses across multiple systems of care. Specifically, HHS supports health care providers, child welfare, social service providers and other first responders likely to interact with potential victims of trafficking through a variety of grant programs. These efforts include integrated and tailored services for victims of trafficking, training and technical assistance to communities serving high-risk populations, and capacity-building to strengthen coordinated regional and local responses to human trafficking. HHS also established the HHS Task Force to

²¹See, e.g., 18 U.S.C. § 3014(a)-(h); 22 U.S.C. § 7105(b)(1), (f)(1), (2), (3); 42 U.S.C. § 5714-41; Pub. L. No. 114-22, tit. VII, 129 Stat. at 261-63.

Prevent and End Human Trafficking in 2015 to strengthen the health and well-being of victims of trafficking through strategic initiatives and policies.

Examples of Federal Collaboration Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking in the United States

The federal government has a number of efforts underway to combat human trafficking and assist victims in the United States, including task forces, working groups, as well as training and public awareness campaigns. In 2011, partly in response to a 2007 GAO report that recommended a federal coordinating body to combat human trafficking, DOJ, in collaboration with DHS and Labor, established Anti-trafficking Coordination Teams (ACTeams).²² The teams are located in six U.S. cities and are comprised of federal investigators and prosecutors from the USAO, FBI, ICE HSI, and Labor's Inspector General and Wage and Hour Division.²³ The Federal Enforcement Working Group, which oversees the ACTeams, selected these cities based on the agencies' commitment to combat human trafficking and to reflect a diversity of city size, federal agency staffing levels, nature of human trafficking threats, and federal agency experience with human trafficking investigations and prosecutions. The purpose of the ACTeams is to coordinate federal criminal human trafficking investigations and prosecutions to protect the rights of human trafficking victims, bring traffickers to justice, and dismantle human trafficking networks.

Pursuing trafficking investigations and prosecutions also involves the support of state and local law enforcement, which may be in the best position to find trafficking victims because of their familiarity with their respective jurisdictions; and nongovernmental organizations, where victims may more readily seek assistance. Moreover, victim service organizations assist human trafficking victims by providing assistance to address their short-term and long-term needs—such as legal and immigration services, housing, employment, education, food, clothing, job

²²GAO, *Human Trafficking: A Strategic Framework Could Help Enhance the Interagency Collaboration Needed to Effectively Combat Trafficking Crimes*, [GAO-07-915](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 26, 2007), 48-55.

²³The Phase I Anti-trafficking Coordination Teams (ACTeams), which has concluded, were located in Atlanta, Georgia; El Paso, Texas; Kansas City, Missouri; Los Angeles, California.; Memphis, Tennessee.; and Miami, Florida. In December 2015, Phase II of the ACTeam was announced. The six Phase II ACTeams, are located in Cleveland, Ohio; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Newark, New Jersey; Portland, Maine; Portland, Oregon; and Sacramento, California.

training, medical care, and child care. Since 2004, OVC and BJA have partnered to support multidisciplinary task forces that bring together law enforcement and victim service providers.²⁴ This partnership supports a state, local, or tribal law enforcement agency and a victim service provider. OVC awards support the provision of a comprehensive array of culturally and linguistically appropriate direct services to trafficking victims, while BJA awards support the coordinated efforts of local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement to investigate and prosecute traffickers. In fiscal year 2014, OVC and BJA undertook an analysis of the enhanced collaborative model and examined how well the funded task forces were operating. Based on both qualitative and quantitative analyses, program improvements were made, and a new solicitation incorporating these improvements was issued in fiscal year 2015. During fiscal year 2015, OVC and BJA provided nearly \$22.7 million to 16 task forces in 14 states.²⁵

Another key federal effort to combat human trafficking in the United States is DHS's Blue Campaign, which the department describes as the unified voice for DHS's efforts to combat human trafficking. The Blue Campaign raises public awareness about human trafficking, leveraging partnerships to educate the public to recognize human trafficking and report suspected instances. The Blue Campaign also offers training to law enforcement and others to increase detection and investigation of human trafficking, and to protect victims and bring suspected traffickers to justice.

²⁴In 2010 the task force model was updated and formalized into a new grant program, jointly administered by BJA and OVC, to support "Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Forces".

²⁵The 14 states are Arizona, California, Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri, Michigan, Nebraska, New York, New Mexico, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin. California and New York have two task forces in their states.

Federal Agencies Have Initiated Efforts to Determine Prevalence of Human Trafficking; Existing Trafficking Data Rely on Information Reported to Authorities

Federal Agencies Have Made Efforts to Determine Prevalence of Human Trafficking in the United States and Are Taking Steps to Improve Data Collection

Federal agencies have begun efforts to assess the prevalence of human trafficking in the United States and develop data standards and definitions to help facilitate prevalence studies. The Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center (HSTC) is an interagency federal effort designed to be an all source clearinghouse and information center for human trafficking, smuggling, and terrorism information.²⁶ The HSTC disseminates information, conducts strategic assessments, and identifies issues needing facilitation among multiple agencies. In July 2014, HSTC completed a Human Trafficking National Assessment, which focused on identifying federal data sources useful for human trafficking analysis and provided some initial assessment of the data for the purposes of identifying trends and patterns. HSTC officials noted, however, that they faced challenges understanding the landscape of the data collected, assessing the quality of the data, and identifying the gaps in data collection. As a result, the officials were unable to infer high levels of human trafficking in areas with high numbers of victims or cases or prosecution. Thus, several member agencies expressed concern over the methodology, data collected, and data analysis used in the assessment, and because HSTC products require the approval of all of the member

²⁶The Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center was established under the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, Pub. L. No. 108-458, tit. VII, subtit. B, § 7202, 118 Stat. 3638, 3813 (classified as amended to 8 U.S.C. § 1777).

agencies, the report was not released.²⁷ HSTC has released other assessments of human trafficking, including regional assessments and industry assessments for particular industries where human trafficking may occur, including fishing, agriculture, garment, and sex tourism.

In addition, HHS's Office on Trafficking in Persons, which is part of the Administration for Children and Families, and the Office on Women's Health are sponsoring the Human Trafficking Data Collection Project. The purpose of the project is to inform the development of an integrated data collection platform regarding human trafficking victimization; establish baseline knowledge of human trafficking and victim needs; and support effective prevention and intervention responses. According to HHS officials, the project takes a public health approach to human trafficking in order to (1) better collect data from federal and state data systems and national surveys to support analysis that will uncover specific risk factors for human trafficking among high-risk populations; (2) improve coordination of data collection on human trafficking across multiple health and human service systems such as refugee resettlement, child welfare, runaway and homeless youth, community health, and domestic violence programs; and (3) explore new data collection strategies, through public health methodologies, for compiling prevalence estimates. HHS, in consultation with key stakeholders, has developed draft data fields and definitions for human trafficking and expects to begin piloting the data collection effort in fall 2016.

Further, NIJ has focused its resources on improving the science that lies behind prevalence estimates of human trafficking in the United States, among other topics. NIJ has awarded grants for the development and testing of methodologies that could be used to calculate human trafficking prevalence. In fiscal year 2015, NIJ awarded two grants for nationwide research on the prevalence of human trafficking. Abt Associates was awarded \$996,870 to conduct a study on "Advancing Human Trafficking Prevalence Estimation," and Northeastern University was awarded \$462,973 for a study on "Capturing Human Trafficking Victimization

²⁷The member agencies have included the Departments of State including the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Naval Intelligence, and National Security Agency. Many of DHS components such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Protection, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Transportation Security Administration, and the United States Coast Guard.

through Crime Reporting”.²⁸ According to Abt Associates, the study being performed by Abt Associates will not give numbers on the prevalence of human trafficking; rather, it will provide a methodology to calculate prevalence.

Federal Agencies and Other Entities Maintain Data on Human Trafficking Activity Reported to Law Enforcement and Others; Data Vary in Scope and Comprehensiveness

In addition to federal efforts designed to determine the prevalence of human trafficking in the United States, federal agencies and federally-funded entities maintain data that, although not specifically intended to do so, could give an indication of human trafficking and where it is occurring across the country. However, considering that human trafficking is likely underreported, as with most clandestine crimes, and most of these data are based on information reported to law enforcement authorities or hotlines, these data cannot be used to assess prevalence.

In 2008, Office of Justice Programs’ Bureau of Justice Statistics, in partnership with BJA, established the Human Trafficking Reporting System, which is a database used to collect data on human trafficking cases from OVC- and BJA-funded anti-trafficking task forces. However, these task forces represent a small percentage of law enforcement agencies. Further, these task forces are unlikely to be a representative sample of human trafficking in the United States since areas with high trafficking are more likely to have a task force.

Since 2012, OVC also requires victim service providers that receive OVC grant funding under the trafficking victims services grants to biannually report the number of human trafficking victims that received services as a result of that funding. OVC maintains this data in the Trafficking Information Management System. According to OVC, in 2015, 54 grantees across 3 grant programs were required to report information. OVC grantees reported providing services to 3,889 human trafficking victims from July 2014 to June 2015. However, OVC grantees likely represent a small subset of service providers working with human trafficking victims.

ACF also requires victim service providers that receive ACF funding under the trafficking victim service grants to report the number of human

²⁸Abt Associates is a firm that researches and implements programs in the fields of health, social and environmental policy and international development.

trafficking victims and eligible family members who received services as a result of that funding. According to ACF, in 2015, grantees reported providing services to 1,726 individual clients through the Trafficking Victim Assistance Program.

In January 2013, the FBI, through its Uniform Crime Reporting Program, began collecting data on human trafficking in the United States, and in 2014, the FBI reported 443 offenses that involved human trafficking. However, because the Uniform Crime Reporting Program primarily collects data on crime-related incidents that have been reported to state, local, and tribal police that have the ability to report the data to the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, the FBI's human trafficking report does not include unreported incidents.

The Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys maintains data on the number of human trafficking matters received by each of the 94 USAOs, as well as matters that are ultimately prosecuted.²⁹ In fiscal year 2015, the 94 USAOs reported prosecuting a total of 252 human trafficking cases. Other DOJ prosecuting units, including the Civil Rights Division, also maintain data on human trafficking prosecutions. In addition, federal investigative agencies, including FBI and ICE HSI, keep data on investigations and arrests. See appendix II for federal human trafficking prosecution and investigation data from fiscal years 2013 to 2015.

Other federally-funded entities also collect human trafficking data based on victim reports that may not be referred to law enforcement, which may also provide an indication of human trafficking. For example, funded through an HHS grant, the NHTRC is a national anti-trafficking hotline and resource center serving victims and survivors of human trafficking and the anti-trafficking community in the United States. The NHTRC collects human trafficking data through its website and is based on aggregated information learned through signals—phone calls, emails, and online tip reports—received by the hotline. In 2015, NHTRC identified 5,544 potential trafficking cases. The NHTRC determined that 4,136 were related to sex trafficking, 721 were related to labor trafficking, and 178 were related to both sex and labor trafficking. The type of trafficking was not specified for 509 of the tips. Further, NHTRC was able to determine

²⁹“Matters received” are referrals from law enforcement agencies that have been opened in the Legal Information Office Network System (LIONS), the USAO case management system, but where no charges have been filed.

that 4,683 of the reports involved a female victim, 574 involved a male victim, 3,559 involved an adult victim and 1,621 involved a minor. Further, 1,660 involved U.S. citizen victims and 1,041 involved foreign national victims. However, the data do not define the totality of human trafficking or of a trafficking network in any given area.

NCMEC is a private, nonprofit corporation supported by federal grant funding, as well as corporate in-kind and private donations, whose mission is to help find missing children, reduce child sexual exploitation and prevent future victimization. To advance its mission, NCMEC operates the CyberTipline in which the public and electronic service providers can report suspected child sexual exploitation, including child sex trafficking. NCMEC makes the CyberTipline reports available to international and domestic law enforcement agencies, including the FBI Child Exploitation Task Forces and the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces.³⁰ From July 1, 2014 through March 31, 2016, NCMEC received 13,529 reports related to child sex trafficking.

Based on the data collected by federal agencies and federally-funded entities, there was some consistency with respect to states that have had the most reported human trafficking activity. For example, 9 states—Arizona, California, Florida, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and Washington—were in the top one-third with respect to investigations referred by law enforcement agencies to the USAOs for federal prosecution and calls and tips related to human trafficking. We found that federal law enforcement efforts and grant funding have been targeted in these locations, as discussed later in this report.

³⁰The Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program is a network of 61 task forces comprised of over 3,000 federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. Task force agencies engage in investigations, forensic examinations, and prosecutions of Internet crimes against children.

Selected Law Enforcement Officials and Prosecutors Reported Lack of Victim Cooperation, Limited Services, and Difficulty Detecting Victims as Challenges, and Have Taken Steps to Mitigate Them

According to federal, state, and local law enforcement officials and prosecutors we interviewed, investigating and prosecuting human trafficking crimes is challenging for multiple reasons, including a lack of victim cooperation, limited availability of victim services, difficulty identifying human trafficking, and others.³¹ Federal, state and local agencies have taken or are taking some actions to address these challenges, such as increasing the availability of services, primarily by providing funding through grants.

Limited Victim Cooperation and Victim Services Hinder Investigations and Prosecutions of Human Trafficking

Limited Victim Cooperation

Officials in 25 of the 32 interviews we conducted with law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies reported that they faced challenges with victim cooperation. In general, officials stated that obtaining the victim's cooperation is important for human trafficking investigations and prosecutions because the victim is generally the primary witness and source of evidence. The officials told us that human trafficking victims may be unable or unwilling to cooperate with the investigation or

³¹During interviews with federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, officials identified challenges when we explicitly asked them to do so or during the course of our discussion. When we report the number of agencies that identified a particular challenge, this does not necessarily mean that the remaining agencies did not also experience the challenge. It means that those stakeholders did not raise the challenge during the course of our interviews.

prosecution because they distrust law enforcement, may be traumatized by abuse or addicted to drugs, have a sentimental attachment to the trafficker, do not see themselves as victims, or fear retaliation from the trafficker. For example, some victims may not cooperate because the trafficker is holding or threatening the victim's family abroad. Officials also stated that juvenile victims can present challenges because they may come from troubled homes or foster care and may feel that they are better cared for by the trafficker than at home and do not want to receive any help.

Law enforcement are to use a victim centered approach when combating human trafficking that may help improve the victim's ability and willingness to cooperate. This approach seeks to minimize retraumatization associated with the criminal justice process by providing the support of victim advocates and service providers, empowering survivors as engaged participants in the process, and providing survivors an opportunity to play a role in seeing their traffickers brought to justice. Such an approach places value on the identification and stabilization of victims and providing immigration relief, as well as the investigation and prosecution of traffickers. Identifying, not criminalizing, victims is the first step in adopting a victim-centered strategy and to achieve this goal, officers must be committed to helping victims feel safe, secure, and stable. Officials in 12 of the 32 interviews we conducted with law enforcement and prosecutors told us there are strategies that may help improve the victim's ability and willingness to cooperate, such as facilitating access to immigration relief and protecting the victim's family abroad for foreign victims, or providing services to both foreign and domestic victims.

Immigration relief: T visa, U visa, or Continued Presence. According to USCIS, immigration relief options encourage victims to report crimes and work with law enforcement. Trafficking victims may seek immigration relief in the form of T nonimmigrant status (T visa) for victims of a severe form of trafficking who meet certain criteria and U nonimmigrant status (U visa) for victims of qualifying criminal activity, including human trafficking and fraud in foreign labor contracting, who satisfy U visa-specific criteria.³² The T visa and U visa allow the victims to remain in the country, for up to 4 years, which may be extended under certain circumstances, so

³²See 8 U.S.C. §§ 1101(a)(15)(T), (U), 1184(o), (p).

they can assist with the investigation or prosecution of human trafficking or qualifying crimes, respectively.³³ Individuals with T or U visas are authorized for employment incident to their nonimmigrant status, and U visa applicants may receive work authorization while their application is still pending.³⁴ U visa holders may be eligible for lawful permanent residence if, among other things, they have been physically present in the United States continuously for at least 3 years since admission as a U nonimmigrant. For T visa holders, the physical presence requirement may be satisfied by demonstrating continuous physical presence either for 3 years since the date of admission as a T nonimmigrant, or during the investigation or prosecution of trafficking, whichever period of time is less. Further, ICE can grant Continued Presence, which is a temporary form of protection available to foreign national victims of human trafficking without lawful immigration status if they are potential witnesses to that trafficking, and upon the application by federal law enforcement officials to DHS.³⁵ Continued Presence allows victims to remain and work in the country temporarily, for 1 year, and may be renewed in 1 year increments, during the ongoing investigation into the human trafficking-related crimes

³³With respect to T nonimmigrant status, under 22 U.S.C. § 7105(b)(1), derivatives of T visa holders, as well as minors who have been subjected to a severe form of trafficking in persons and certified adult victims of severe forms of trafficking whose T visa applications are still pending (provided they are willing to assist law enforcement if able to do so), are eligible for certain federal or state benefits and services to the same extent as are refugees admitted to the United States under 8 U.S.C. § 1157.

³⁴See 8 C.F.R. §§ 214.11(l)(4), 214.14(c)(7), 274a.12(a)(16), (19); 8 U.S.C. § 1184(p)(6). In addition, eligible T and U visa applicants and petitioners who, due solely to the cap, are not granted their respective nonimmigrant status, are to be placed on a waiting list. 8 C.F.R. §§ 214.11(m)(2), 214.14(d)(2). While such T visa applicants are on the waiting list, they maintain their current means to prevent removal and any employment authorization, subject to any limits imposed on that authorization. *Id.* at § 214.11(m)(2). While U visa petitioners are on the waiting list, USCIS is to grant them deferred action or parole, and USCIS, in its discretion, may authorize employment for them. *Id.* at § 214.14(d)(2).

³⁵22 U.S.C. § 7105(c)(3); 28 C.F.R. § 1100.35.

committed against them.^{36, 37} See appendix II for information on T and U visa applications and petitions, and Continued Presence approvals and denials for fiscal years 2013 through 2015. Further, working through ICE and FBI personnel stationed at U.S. embassies, U.S. investigative and prosecutorial agencies have protected U.S. trafficking victims' family members in a foreign country.

Victim services. Federal agencies have victim service coordinators who help navigate the victim through the criminal justice process and connect the victim with appropriate services. Additionally, OVC and ACF provide grants for comprehensive and specialized victim service programs to non-governmental organizations and others.³⁸ These organizations utilize grant funding to provide services such as shelters, medical services, substance abuse treatment, legal services, food and clothing, mental health, literacy education, job training, interpreter and translation services, support groups, and mentoring programs for human trafficking victims. Officials in 9 of the 32 of interviews we conducted with law enforcement and prosecutors reported that providing these services helps stabilize victims and encourages them to cooperate. For example, the officials reported that mental health and substance abuse services are vital to stabilize the victim so that they can provide an accurate recount of the trafficking situation and may help them to testify.

Limited Victim Services

While victim services may help victims recover and possibly cooperate more fully, the availability of services is limited. Officials in 15 of the 32 interviews we conducted with law enforcement officials and prosecutors reported limited availability of services in their area of responsibility.

³⁶In order for an individual with continued presence to be eligible for certain federal or state benefits and services to the same extent as a refugee, he or she must have been subjected to a severe form of trafficking in persons, and be certified as willing to assist in every reasonable way in the investigation and prosecution of severe forms of trafficking in persons unless unable to do so as a result of physical or psychological trauma. See 22 U.S.C. § 7105(b)(1).

³⁷The Secretary of Homeland Security may temporarily parole into the United States certain relatives of trafficking victims granted continued presence under 22 U.S.C. § 7105(c)(3). See 8 U.S.C. § 1229b(b)(6).

³⁸In addition to meeting with law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies, we conducted 6 interviews with non-governmental organizations that provide services to human trafficking victims.

Below are examples of the types of limitations in services for human trafficking victims.

- *Short-term assistance.* Of the 15 officials who reported limited availability of services in their area of responsibility, 8 told us that short-term assistance, particularly shelters were needed. According to officials, many victim assistance service providers that typically serve other populations may not be prepared or willing to deal with human trafficking victims as very few shelters specialize in services for human trafficking victims. For example, in some cases these shelters are designed to address the needs of survivors of domestic violence, such as resources to become financially stable and access to government services and childcare, whereas, trafficking victims need medical and psychological assistance tailored to meet their unique needs. Further, officials told us that shelters may not accept human trafficking victims because they fear that the victim will recruit women from the shelter for the trafficker.
- *Long-term assistance.* Of the 15 officials who reported limited availability of services in their area of responsibility, 7 told us that there is insufficient long-term assistance, including housing, mental health services, and drug rehabilitation, available for trafficking victims. For example, law enforcement officials in one of our site visits told us that their areas of responsibility are ill-equipped to provide long-term services to human trafficking victims. As a result, victims are sent to other states to receive services. In addition, a service provider told us that finding long-term housing presents a challenge when the victim has a criminal background or bad credit history. Further, other officials told us that in some circumstances services are more limited for U.S. citizens than for foreign victims. The officials explained that, historically, the federal government's efforts to combat human trafficking in the United States and assist victims have been focused primarily on foreign nationals. While the TVPA of 2000 included certain provisions for services for victims of human trafficking in the United States, its reauthorization in the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 established a program specifically to assist U.S. citizen and lawful permanent resident victims of trafficking.³⁹

³⁹See 22 U.S.C. § 7105(b) (Assistance for victims in the United States), (f) (Assistance for U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents).

In recent years, DOJ, HHS, and some states, including those within the scope of our review, have taken steps to increase the availability of services, primarily by providing funding through grants. Two of the six service providers we spoke with told us that in some instances no one service provider can provide all the services a human trafficking victim needs and organizations must work together to help victims. Further, 5 of the 6 service providers we spoke with reported that victim services are limited for human trafficking victims; in particular, they reported difficulty finding shelter or housing options for victims. When asked about actions the federal government could take to address this challenge, 2 of 6 service providers noted that it would be helpful if the federal government increased funding. In 2015, DOJ increased funding to support services specifically for human trafficking victims by \$13.5 million, compared to the previous year. Specifically, in fiscal year 2014, DOJ awarded \$13.1 million through two grant programs and, in fiscal year 2015, \$26.6 million through four grant programs. HHS officials reported that in fiscal year 2015, the agency increased funding by \$1.54 million to support services specifically for human trafficking victims. Specifically, officials reported that this included a \$1.44 million increase for domestic victims of trafficking and \$0.1 million for foreign victims of trafficking compared to fiscal year 2014. Further, multiple states, including those within the scope of our review, as well as the District of Columbia, have enacted laws to facilitate the provision of services to victims of trafficking. Laws in these selected jurisdictions are designed to, for example, develop plans to identify and assist trafficking victims, establish a program to address the rehabilitation and treatment needs of juvenile victims of sex trafficking, or create funding mechanisms for victim services.

Law Enforcement and the Public Face Challenges in Identifying and Distinguishing Human Trafficking from Other Crimes, and Have Taken Steps to Enhance Training and Public Awareness

Officials in 9 of the 32 interviews we conducted with law enforcement and prosecutors reported challenges with identifying and distinguishing human trafficking from other crimes, or even from legal activities. Further, officials from 3 of the 6 service providers we met with reported distinguishing human trafficking from prostitution as a challenge. On the surface, human trafficking may appear to be voluntary prostitution or an undocumented laborer working under his or her own volition. Therefore, in these instances, individuals who are actually victims may instead be treated as criminals—prostitutes or undocumented workers. For example, officials and service providers in one of our selected areas told us that human trafficking is common in the area, but that it is difficult for local law enforcement to distinguish this illicit activity from voluntary prostitution. Further, of the 9 officials who reported challenges identifying human trafficking, 7 told us that it is more difficult to identify and detect labor trafficking compared to sex trafficking. According to these officials, sex

trafficking takes place out in the open and is often advertised online, making it easier for law enforcement to identify the crime. However, labor trafficking often occurs behind closed doors—including sweatshops, massage parlors, agriculture, restaurants, hotels and households—making it harder to identify. For example, officials told us about one 2015 labor trafficking case that involved a nanny from Nigeria. According to officials, the victim had a contract with her trafficker which stipulated \$100 per month to take care of five children. However, she had not been paid since she moved to the United States and was being physically and psychologically abused. The victim fled and sought shelter with a neighbor.

Federal agencies, and state and local agencies in the locations we visited, have several training and public awareness initiatives underway that are intended to help identify, investigate and prosecute human trafficking, including the following:

Federal Agency Initiatives. Each of the federal law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies with whom we met provide training to their employees and other law enforcement officials on how to identify human trafficking, among other things. For example,

- ICE HSI provides a human trafficking training course that uses video scenarios and group discussions to teach its agents how to identify human trafficking, how to distinguish human trafficking from smuggling, and how to conduct victim-centered investigations, among other things.
- The FBI provides annual specialized training in the commercial sexual exploitation of children and dealing with victims of child sex trafficking. This course teaches law enforcement personnel investigative strategies to address the child sex trafficking threat, and methods in understanding the various types of victims in these cases, how to interact with them, and victim services available to them. The FBI also published a law enforcement sensitive investigative guide on sex trafficking of juveniles.
- The Attorney General has provided guidance to USAOs for developing strategic anti-trafficking plans, including recommended practices for identifying, investigating, prosecuting, and tracking human trafficking offenses. The Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys also provided USAOs with guidance for establishing and coordinating human trafficking task forces.

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- The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, in coordination with the Blue Campaign, offers a web-based human trafficking training course that teaches law enforcement officers at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels how to recognize human trafficking encountered during routine duties, how to protect victims, and how to initiate human trafficking investigations.⁴⁰ In addition, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center provides human trafficking training to federal officers and agents as part of its basic training program. In fiscal year 2015, 128 law enforcement officers took the training. Further, since July 2015, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center has provided human trafficking awareness training by text or video to 3,007 students in basic training programs.

In addition, federal agencies provide training to state and local agencies, as well as the public, regarding human trafficking, including the following:

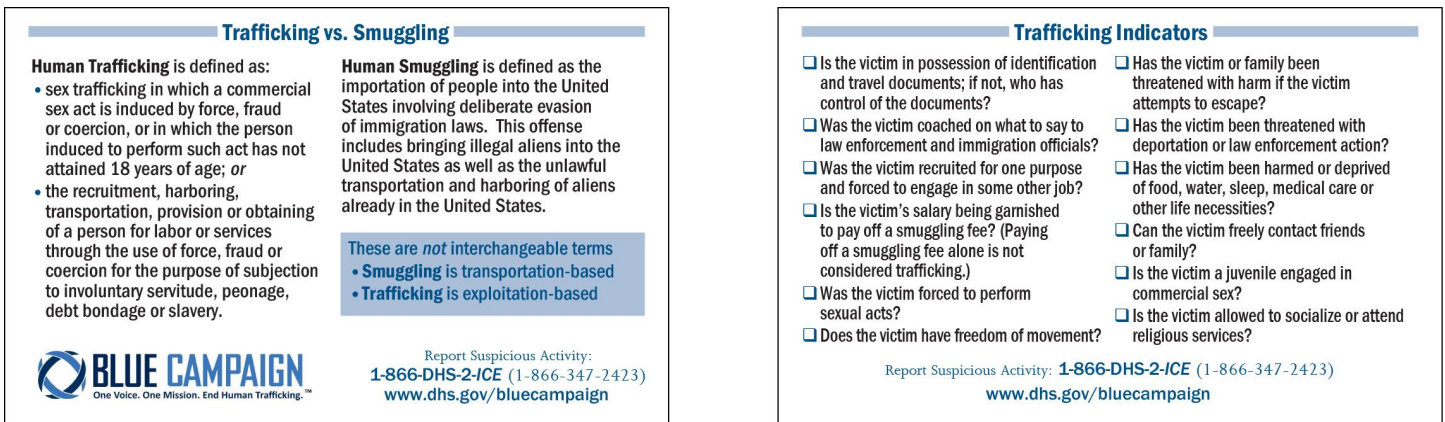
- FBI field offices conducted approximately 672 human trafficking training sessions in fiscal year 2014 to various groups, including, but not limited to, state and local law enforcement, social workers, healthcare providers, hotel workers, faith based groups, non-governmental organizations, students and educators.
- HHS piloted the Stop. Observe. Ask. Respond (SOAR) to Health and Wellness program, a human trafficking training program to help health care providers identify potential victims and appropriately refer them for services, in fiscal year 2014. According to HHS officials, the department will expand the training to social workers, substance abuse and mental health providers, and public health professionals in fiscal year 2016. In addition, the officials said that in fiscal year 2015, 15,265 professionals and first responders likely to interact with victims of trafficking were trained through a network of several HHS-funded anti-trafficking grantees.
- The Blue Campaign, in collaboration with the ICE HSI Victim Assistance Program and other DHS components, provided human trafficking awareness training to government, nongovernment, and

⁴⁰The Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers provide tuition-free and low cost training to state, local, campus, tribal and territorial law enforcement agencies. Programs are conducted across the United States and are normally hosted by a local law enforcement agency. Training is also conducted at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers facilities located in Glynco (Brunswick), GA; Artesia, NM; Charleston, SC; and Cheltenham, MD.

private industries, including those in hospitality, health care, and education.

Other federal agencies, whose employees may come across human trafficking victims in their day-to-day operations—including U.S. Customs and Border Protection, TSA, USCIS, and the U.S. Coast Guard—also provide human trafficking training to their employees. Further, Labor’s Wage and Hour Division and the EEOC also look for human trafficking indicators when conducting their own investigative and enforcement work. According to officials, these agencies are to refer potential human trafficking cases to the appropriate law enforcement agencies for further investigation. For example, TSA officials we met with told us that from March 2015 to February 2016, they referred six reports of suspected human trafficking to ICE HSI. Figure 2 shows an example of a resource available to agencies and the public to help them identify human trafficking.

Figure 2: Blue Campaign Human Trafficking Indicator Cards for Law Enforcement, First Responders and Others

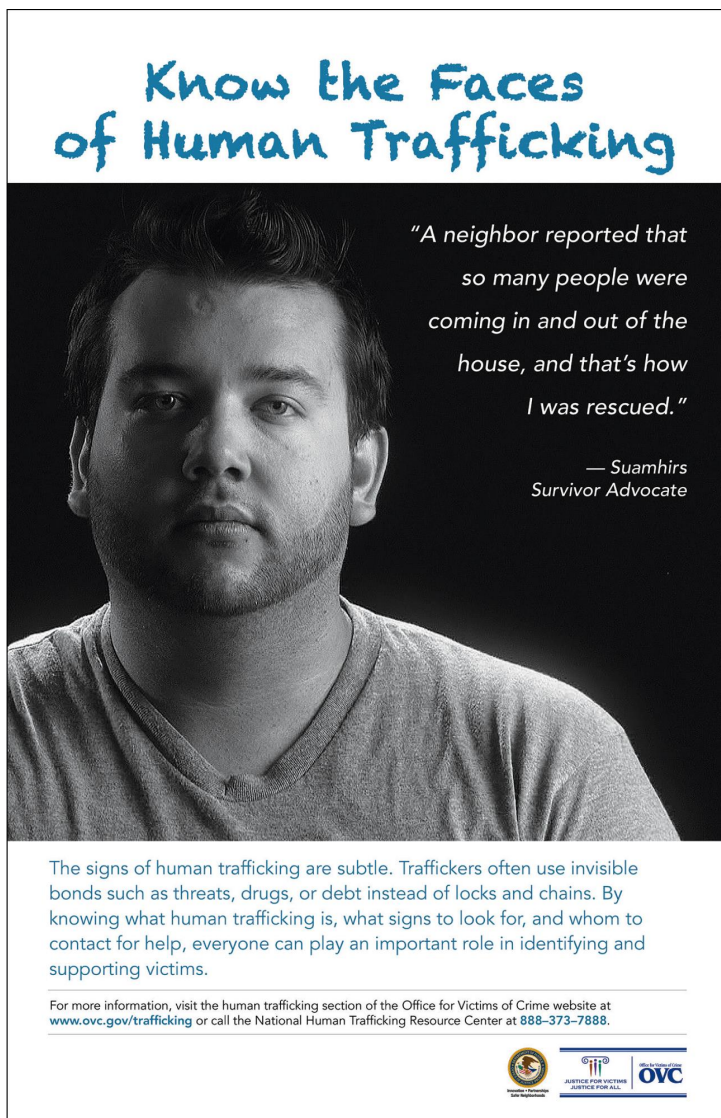


Source: Department of Homeland Security, Blue Campaign. | GAO-16-555

Further, some federal agencies also have efforts related to public awareness of human trafficking. For example, in January 2016, OVC released resources to raise awareness and serve victims, including a video series called “The Faces of Human Trafficking” and posters to be used for outreach and education efforts of service providers, law enforcement, prosecutors, and others in the community. The series includes information about sex and labor trafficking, multidisciplinary approaches to serving victims of human trafficking, effective victim services, victims' legal needs, and voices of survivors. Since 2010, DHS, through the Blue Campaign, reported it has worked to raise public awareness about human trafficking, leveraging partnerships with select

government and nongovernmental entities to educate the public to recognize human trafficking and report suspected instances. According to DHS officials, Blue Campaign posters are displayed in public locations including airports and bus stops. Figures 3 and 4 show examples of resources used as part of these initiatives, which are available online, or by request, for public distribution.

Figure 3: Office for Victims of Crime “The Faces of Human Trafficking” Public Awareness Campaign Poster



Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, Faces of Human Trafficking Video Series. | GAO-16-555

Figure 4: Blue Campaign Tear Cards for Potential Victims and Vulnerable Populations



- » Did someone take away your ID or documents?
- » Is someone forcing you to work for them to pay off a debt?
- » Is someone forcing you to work or have sex against your will?
- » Is someone threatening or hurting you or your family?
- » Are you under 18 and getting paid for having sex?

Don't be afraid to ask for help.

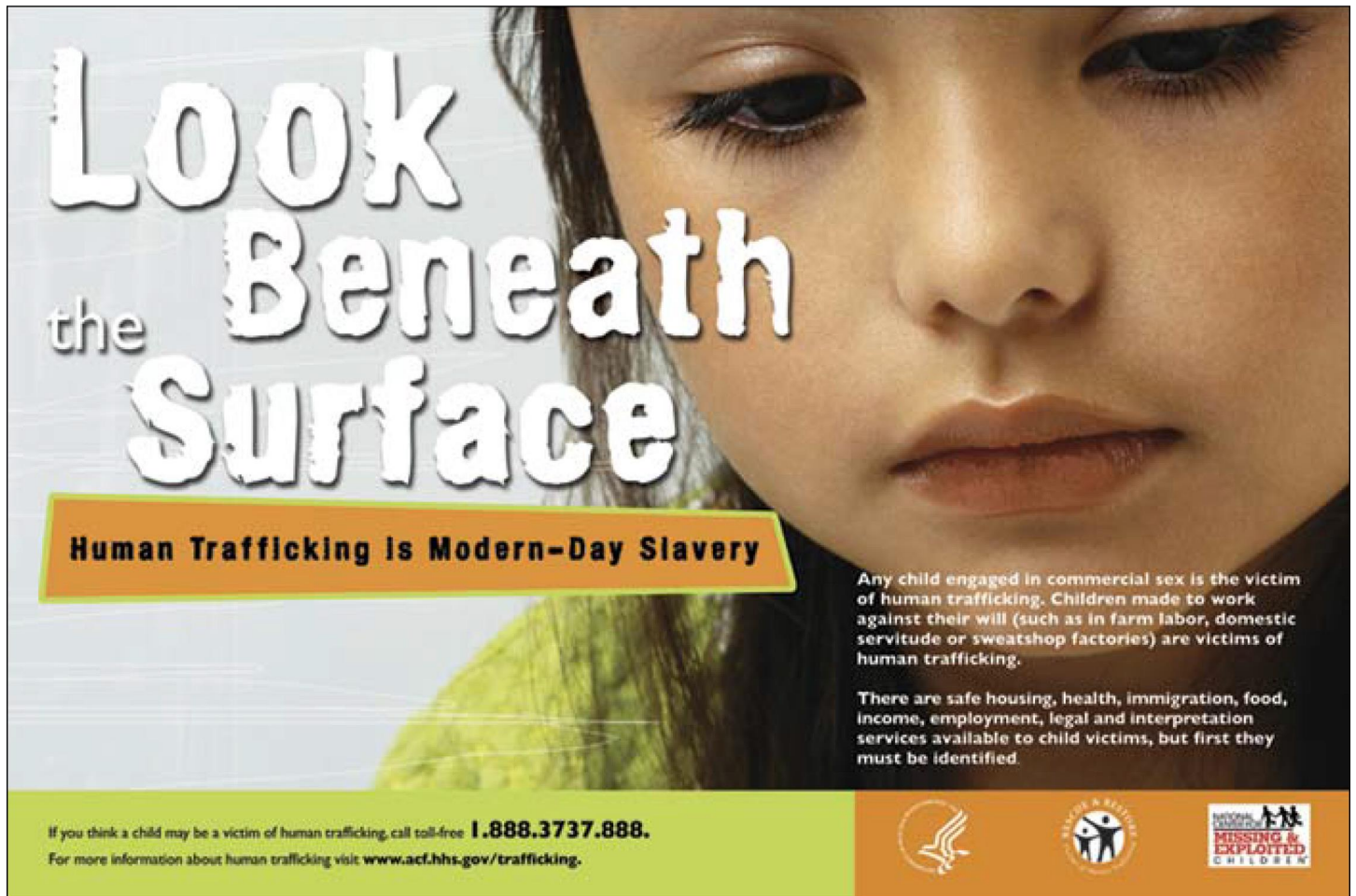
You have rights in the U.S. regardless of your immigration status.

CALL TOLL-FREE, 24 HOURS: | Text INFO or HELP to:
1-888-373-7888 | BeFree (233733)

Source: Department of Homeland Security, Blue Campaign. | GAO-16-555

In addition, HHS established the “Look Beneath the Surface” public awareness campaign through its Rescue and Restore Victims of Human Trafficking program. According to HHS officials, in fiscal year 2015, the department distributed over 883,000 pieces of material publicizing the NHTRC. These materials, which included posters, brochures, fact sheets, and cards with tips on identifying victims, were available in eight languages. According to HHS officials, in fiscal year 2016, the department is updating its public awareness campaign materials to be complementary to other federal resources. Figure 5 shows an example of resources used as part of this initiative.

Figure 5: "Look Beneath the Surface" Public Awareness Campaign Poster



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Administration for Children and Families, Rescue and Restore Victims of Human Trafficking public awareness campaign. | GAO-16-555

Federal Judicial Center Initiatives. In accordance with the JVTA, the Federal Judicial Center provided training to federal judges and judicial branch attorneys, including judicial law clerks, on human trafficking

through a webinar in August 2015.⁴¹ The training walked participants through the provisions of the JVT and addressed how child exploitation manifests in human trafficking cases, among other things. According to Federal Judicial Center officials we spoke with, 1,300 registered viewers participated in the webinar, which is now available for on-demand viewing on the Federal Judicial Center website. They also told us that, in April 2016, 198 district judges attended a workshop in which, among other topics, a human trafficking sentencing scenario was discussed. According to Federal Judicial Center officials, adjudicating human trafficking cases can be challenging for judges because they have to determine the role the victim played in the trafficking situation and it may be difficult to determine what kept the victims from escaping, and led them to instead obey the trafficker.

State and Local Initiatives. The states and jurisdictions included in our review also provide for training of law enforcement personnel on human trafficking-related issues. Some of the states also have laws related to ensuring public awareness of human trafficking. For example:

- Virginia's Department of Social Services is required to develop a plan providing for, among other things, preparation and dissemination of educational and training programs and materials to increase awareness of human trafficking and services available to victims among local departments of social services, public and private agencies and service providers, and the public; and
- North Dakota's Department of Transportation is required to display in every transportation station, rest area, and welcome center, a public-awareness sign that contains state or local human trafficking resource information as well as the NHTRC Hotline number.

⁴¹The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 required the Federal Judicial Center to provide training for judges on ordering restitution for victims of certain trafficking-related offenses under chapter 77 of title 18, U.S. Code. See Pub. L. No. 114-22, tit. I, § 114, 129 Stat. at 242 (section 114 is known as the Combat Human Trafficking Act of 2015, and is classified to 42 U.S.C. § 14044g).

Law Enforcement Officials and Prosecutors Reported Other Challenges in Combating Human Trafficking

Additional challenges reported by law enforcement officials and prosecutors we spoke with include the amount of time it may take for a USAO to decide whether federal charges will be pursued in certain human trafficking cases. USAOs would be expected to take the time that is needed to exercise prosecutorial discretion in a reasoned manner, considering the relevant laws and facts. However, one of the four state prosecutors we interviewed said that the length of time it takes the USAO to decide whether to accept or decline the case, which has taken over a year in certain instances, can make it difficult for them to obtain evidence once the case is referred to them. Human trafficking-related prosecutions can occur at both the federal and state level. Law enforcement officials told us that, in most instances, they refer cases to the state prosecutor when the USAO declines to prosecute the case. Based on our review of data provided by the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, the most common reasons that USAOs reported declining human trafficking cases were “insufficient evidence” and “matters being referred to another jurisdiction.”(See appendix II for additional information on declinations.) Two of the four state prosecutors we interviewed reported working with the USAO to make a joint decision on whether to prosecute the case at the federal or state level, which may help address this challenge.

Additionally, officials from FBI, ICE HSI and Bureau of Diplomatic Security whose area of responsibility includes North Dakota identified challenges such as having to drive long distances, sometimes under hazardous driving conditions, to do their investigative work and meet with victims. These officials told us that there has been an increase in human trafficking and other criminal activity in the Bakken area—a relatively remote area—due to the oil boom. According to FBI and ICE HSI officials, the agencies are taking steps to address this challenge. FBI officials told us that the agency opened a field office in spring 2016 in western North Dakota, which is closer to the area where crime, in general, has increased. FBI and ICE HSI officials also told us that the agencies are working together to station some ICE HSI agents in the FBI’s new facility.

DOJ and HHS Administer Human Trafficking Grants to Promote Stakeholder Collaboration and Provide Victim Services, and They Have Processes to Minimize Grant Duplication

At Least 42 Federal Grant Programs Are Available to Combat Human Trafficking in the United States and Assist Victims

We identified 42 grant programs for which the federal government awarded funding in 2014 and 2015 that may be used to combat human trafficking or to assist victims of human trafficking (see appendix IV for a list of the grant programs and their objectives).⁴² Fifteen grant programs administered by DOJ and HHS are intended solely to combat human trafficking or assist victims. In fiscal years 2014 and 2015, 123 organizations were awarded funds under these grant programs. These initiatives include programs that provide training and technical assistance to service providers and law enforcement agencies; support multi-disciplinary task forces to ensure victim-centered responses to human trafficking; and provide services directly to victims of human trafficking. Further, each grant program may be used for more than one of these purposes. More specifically, the 15 grant programs can be used for:

Collaboration and partnerships. 12 of the grant programs allow funds to be used for collaboration between or within law enforcement and service providers through mechanisms such as task forces, coalitions, and partnerships. For example, the Enhanced Collaborative Model grant program, administered by OVC and BJA, supports the development and

⁴²Because services for human trafficking victims may be one of many allowable uses for some grant programs, it is possible that there are some programs that were not identified by granting agencies or by GAO's analysis of public records.

enhancement of multidisciplinary human trafficking task forces. These task forces implement collaborative approaches to involve both law enforcement and service providers in implementing a victim-centered approach to human trafficking investigations, prosecutions, and assistance.

Data, research, and evaluation: 3 of the grant programs include an element of data collection on human trafficking cases, research on human trafficking, or evaluation of best practices. For instance, the Research and Evaluation on Trafficking in Persons grant program, administered by NIJ, has supported nine research projects evaluating, among other things, the prevalence of human trafficking in the United States, and victim experiences with law enforcement and service providers.

Victim services: 9 of the grant programs can be used to provide services directly to victims of human trafficking, including provision of housing, health care, mental health and substance abuse services, and legal services. For example, HHS administers the Trafficking Victims Assistance grant program, which provides comprehensive services for foreign victims of human trafficking in the United States.

Public awareness: 8 of the grants may be used to raise public awareness of trafficking, which is intended to help the public recognize human trafficking and report suspected cases.

Training and technical assistance: 13 of the grant programs may be used to provide training and technical assistance to service providers or law enforcement stakeholders on elements of identifying and serving victims of human trafficking. For example, one grantee funded under HHS's Rescue and Restore grant program provides peer-to-peer training in order to further develop coordinated, effective multidisciplinary coalitions to address human trafficking throughout its state.

Table 1: Allowable Uses for Federal Grant Programs Intended Solely for Human Trafficking for which Funding Was Awarded in Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015

	Grant Program	Agency Component	Collaboration and Partnerships	Data, Research, and Evaluation	Provision of Services to Victims	Public Awareness	Training or Technical Assistance
Department of Health and Human Services	Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking	Administration for Children and Families (ACF)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Severe Forms of Human Trafficking	ACF	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	ACF	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
	National Human Trafficking Resource Center	ACF	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	ACF	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
	Trafficking Victim Assistance Program	ACF	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
	Department of Justice	Anti-Human Trafficking National Training and Technical Assistance Program for Law Enforcement Task Forces	Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)	Yes	No	No	No
Anti-Human Trafficking Training for Law Enforcement and State Prosecutors Program		BJA	No	No	No	No	Yes
Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program		BJA/Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Research and Evaluation on Trafficking in Persons		National Institute of Justice	No	Yes	No	No	No
Mentoring for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Sex Trafficking		Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Grant Program	Agency Component	Collaboration and Partnerships	Data, Research, and Evaluation	Provision of Services to Victims	Public Awareness	Training or Technical Assistance	
Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	OVC	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	OVC	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	OVC	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Training and Technical Assistance on Comprehensive Legal Services for Human Trafficking Victims	OVC	No	No	No	No	Yes	
TOTAL	Not Applicable	Not applicable	12	3	9	8	13

Source: GAO analysis of agency documents | GAO-16-555

An additional twenty-seven grant programs are not specifically for human trafficking, but may be used to combat trafficking or assist victims. For instance, DOJ's Vision 21 Innovation Grants support training, technical assistance, capacity building, assessment, or strategic planning for eight issue areas, one of which was related to human trafficking in the fiscal year 2015 solicitation. Similarly, HHS's Refugee and Entrant Assistance grant programs are intended primarily for refugees in the United States, but individuals who have been certified as victims of human trafficking by HHS's Office of Refugee Resettlement or the Office on Trafficking in Persons are also eligible for services through these programs.⁴³

⁴³22 U.S.C. § 7105(b)(1). In the context of T visas and continued presence, foreign nationals are eligible for certain federal or state benefits and services to the same extent as refugees if they: (1) are derivatives of those with T nonimmigrant status, or (2) were subjected to a severe form of trafficking and are either under 18 years of age or, for adults, are certified as being willing to assist in the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking unless unable to cooperate due to physical or psychological trauma, and have filed a bona fide application for a T visa or have been granted continued presence

Overlap Exists Across Grant Programs Intended Solely to Combat Human Trafficking, but Processes Exist to Help Avoid Duplication, Both Within and Between Agencies

As shown in table 1 above, each of the 15 grant programs that are intended solely for human trafficking contains at least some potential overlap with other human trafficking grant programs in authorized uses. For instance, with the exception of the Research and Evaluation on Trafficking in Persons grant program, funding under each of the remaining 14 grant programs can be used for either collaboration or training purposes. Similarly, 9 of the 15 grant programs provide support for direct services to victims of human trafficking. As described earlier, according to our prior work addressing overlap and duplication, overlap among programs occurs when multiple programs engage in similar activities or strategies, as many of the human trafficking grants do.

Of the 123 organizations that were awarded grants specific to human trafficking in fiscal years 2014 or 2015, 13 received multiple human trafficking grants for either victim services or for collaboration, training, and technical assistance from DOJ and HHS. HHS officials stated that additional overlap may exist among sub-grantees, although we did not include subgrantees in our duplication analysis. Of the 13, 7 had multiple grants that could be used for victim services, and 3 had multiple grants that could be used for collaboration, training, and technical assistance.⁴⁴ For instance, two organizations received a grant for Services to Victims of Human Trafficking in 2014 and a grant for the Enhanced Collaborative Model in 2015, both from DOJ. Both grants can be used to provide direct services to victims of human trafficking. Another organization received similar grants for victim services from DOJ and HHS in 2014, and a third grant to establish a task force and provide services in 2015. HHS officials noted that they were comfortable with awarding multiple services grants to this organization because different populations were served under each grant application. DOJ officials noted that the same organization received the task force grant because they had submitted a strong application and they believed a task force would benefit the area in which the organization worked.

DOJ officials noted that geographical distribution is an important factor when making award decisions, and that they would not generally award two grants in a location that may be duplicative, such as two Enhanced Collaborative Model awards in the same city. However, they noted that

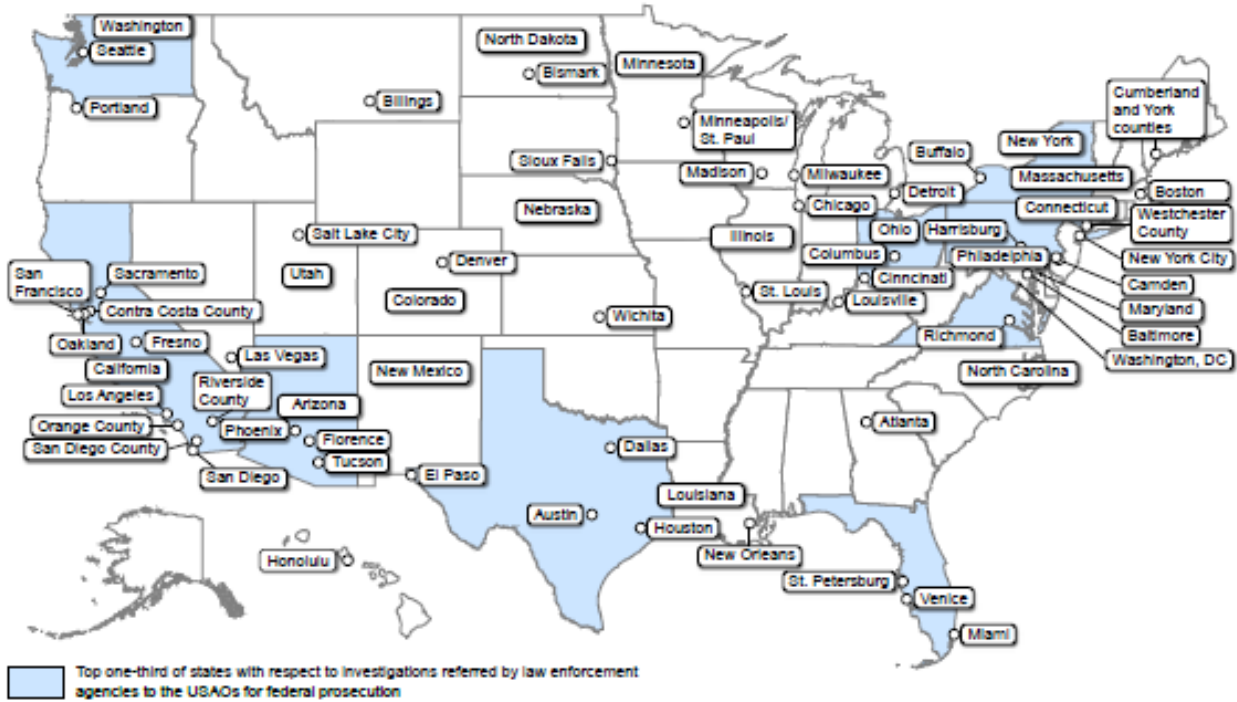
⁴⁴The remaining 3 organizations received one grant for victim services concurrently with one grant for collaboration, training, and technical assistance.

they may award funds under the same grant program to multiple service providers in cities that may have a high need for services or have a high number of identified trafficking victims. HHS officials told us that they do attempt to achieve geographic dispersion when awarding grants under the Rescue and Restore program, Trafficking Victim Assistance Program, and Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking. Officials from both agencies said that they do not consider the locations of grants awarded by other agencies when awarding grants. Five cities have multiple organizations located in their cities that have been awarded the same DOJ grants as one another, but in those cases, each organization serves a different population or provides different services, according to DOJ officials.⁴⁵ Based on our analysis of DOJ and HHS grant data, over half of all grants were awarded in the 9 states that are in the top one-third with respect to matters referred for federal prosecution and calls and tips related to human trafficking. Figure 6 shows the number of human trafficking grants awarded within the United States by city.

⁴⁵Cities in which multiple organizations were awarded funding under the same DOJ grant are Chicago, IL; San Francisco, CA; San Diego, CA; Miami, FL; and New York, NY.

Figure 6: Federal Human Trafficking Grants Intended to Combat Human Trafficking or Assist Trafficking Victims in the United States for which Initial Funding Was Awarded in Fiscal Years 2014 or 2015

Move mouse over city or state names for grant information. For noninteractive version see app. X



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Justice data; MapInfo (map). | GAO-16-303

Notes: Each grant program may have multiple purposes. Only the use that GAO analysis identified as the main purpose is included in the tables. The map does not include information on sub-recipients of DOJ and HHS grantees.

Grant awards are categorized by the main city in the area in which they are being implemented. The map does not include grants that provide services throughout the United States or that provide services in multiple states.

DOJ and HHS each have intra-agency processes in place to prevent unnecessary duplication. According to DOJ and HHS officials, each agency operates an internal working group to allow the components administering human trafficking grants to communicate on a regular basis. HHS officials indicated that offices that administer human trafficking grant programs meet monthly to exchange information, which may include grant-related announcements and coordination of anti-trafficking activities. Similarly, DOJ officials told us that all DOJ components that address human trafficking meet on a quarterly basis with the goal of ensuring coordination in policy and grant-making. Further, DOJ has taken action to implement recommendations from a prior GAO report to identify overlapping grant programs and mitigate the risk of unnecessary grant award duplication in its programs.⁴⁶ In response to these recommendations, DOJ also requires grant applicants to identify in their applications any federal grants they are currently operating under as well as federal grants for which they have applied. Finally, in response to recommendations in the same GAO report, DOJ has conducted two studies of overlap and duplication among fiscal year 2012 grant programs administered by the Office of Justice Programs, the Office on Violence against Women, and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.⁴⁷

DOJ and HHS officials also reported that they routinely share grant announcements with one another in an informal manner. For instance, officials from both agencies said they coordinate on grant-related activities through the implementation of the *Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States*, a government-wide plan which lays out a 5-year path for further strengthening coordination, collaboration, and capacity across

⁴⁶GAO, *Justice Grant Programs: DOJ Should Do More to Reduce the Risk of Unnecessary Duplication and Enhance Program Assessment*, [GAO-12-517](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 12, 2012).

⁴⁷DOJ, *DOJ Study to Determine the Extent of Overlap among its Grant Programs* (Washington, D.C.: December 2013) and DOJ, *DOJ Study to Determine the Extent of Unnecessary Duplication Among its Grant Awards – Phase II* (Washington, D.C.: March 2016). The first study concluded that the degree of overlap among DOJ's grant programs was relatively low, with no solicitations with a high degree of overlap across key areas of comparison, and the second found that no unnecessary duplication was present among the grants awarded under FY2012 grant programs.

governmental and nongovernmental entities.⁴⁸ DOJ and HHS officials told us that they conduct regular meetings to monitor progress in advancing the goals laid out in the strategic plan, one of which is to coordinate victim services effectively through collaboration across multiple service sectors to, among other things, reduce duplication of efforts. In addition, HHS officials noted that DOJ and HHS meet bi-weekly during co-chair meetings for the SPOG Victim Services Committee and both agencies participate in the SPOG Grantmaking Committee meetings, which provide additional opportunities to share information for the purposes of coordination and collaboration. According to HHS officials, this coordination prevents duplication because they are aware of the actions of all of the agencies involved in administering grants targeted at human trafficking. Officials from DOJ and HHS also told us that the agencies are working together to develop guidance for grantees that have been awarded human trafficking grants from both agencies so that grantees can avoid using grant funds for duplicative activities. HHS officials noted that the first set of guidance, for serving foreign victims of human trafficking, would be released in summer 2016. Finally, the officials noted that the community of individuals who administer human trafficking grants is small, and that there is frequent formal communication through respective agency grantee calls and informal communication over e-mail regarding the grants between the two agencies.

In addition to HHS's and DOJ's internal and intra-agency processes for addressing potential duplication, since November 2006, the SPOG has provided a formal mechanism for all agencies administering human trafficking grants to communicate with one another. SPOG guidance was updated in March 2016, and according to officials who administer the SPOG Grantmaking Committee, the updated guidance encourages enhanced information sharing among participating agencies. Specifically, the updated guidance directs participating agencies to share information with members of the Grantmaking Committee prior to final decisions in at least one of the following ways: (1) share plans for programs containing anti-trafficking components during the grant program development process; (2) notify the SPOG of grant solicitations within a reasonable time after they are issued; or (3) notify SPOG partner agencies of proposed funding recipients prior to announcing the award. In each case,

⁴⁸Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, and Homeland Security, *Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States 2013-2017*.

SPOG agencies are allotted 5 days for comment on the information. Further, agencies are also to share information with members of the Grantmaking Committee after final decisions are made.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We provided a draft of this report for review and comment to the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Justice, Labor, and State; the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; and the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. We received technical comments from the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Justice, and State; and the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, which we incorporated as appropriate. The Department of Labor and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission did not provide comments.

We are sending copies of this report to the appropriate congressional committees, the Attorney General; the Secretaries of Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Labor and State; the Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; and the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. In addition, the report is available at no charge on the GAO website at <http://www.gao.gov>

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512-8777 or goodwing@gao.gov . Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. GAO staff who made key contributions to this report are listed in appendix VI.



Gretta L. Goodwin
Acting Director, Homeland Security and Justice

List of Addressees

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Committee of the Judiciary
United States Senate

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Chairman
The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
House of Representatives

The Honorable Jim Sensenbrenner
Chairman
The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and
Investigations
Committee on the Judiciary
House of Representatives

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski,
Vice Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Appendix I: Objectives, Scope and Methodology

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA) of 2015 includes a provision for GAO to report on federal and selected state efforts to combat human trafficking in the United States, as well as identify federal grant programs that can be used to assist victims of trafficking. This report addresses the following questions:

1. What federal efforts have been made to determine the prevalence of human trafficking in the United States?
2. What challenges, if any, do federal and selected state law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies face when combating human trafficking in the United States, and what actions have they and others taken to address identified challenges?
3. What federal grant programs are intended to combat human trafficking and assist victims within the United States, and what steps have federal agencies taken, if any, to reduce the potential for duplication among grant programs?

For purposes of this report, we focused on human trafficking within the United States, which includes U.S. citizens or nationals, or those with or without lawful immigration status who are trafficked within the United States, as well as foreign persons who are brought to the United States from abroad for the purpose of trafficking.

To address the first objective, we reviewed prior GAO human trafficking reports, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 and other federal laws related to human trafficking, and we interviewed Department of Justice (DOJ), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) officials, to learn whether their component agencies had efforts underway to collect human trafficking data that could be used to determine the prevalence of human trafficking in the United States. We also reviewed documentation issued by the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking to learn about additional federal efforts to collect information on the prevalence of human trafficking. We obtained and analyzed data from federal investigative and prosecutorial agencies and federally-funded entities that, while not specifically intended to do so, could give an indication of where human trafficking is occurring in the United States. We assessed the reliability of the data the agencies and other entities provided by questioning knowledgeable officials and reviewing the data for obvious errors and anomalies. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of our reporting objectives. We identified potential sources of human trafficking information, including National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) and the National

Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). We received data related to calls, tips, and reports received by NHTRC and NCMEC and interviewed officials to determine how the information was collected and what criteria were used to determine whether a call or report was categorized as related to human trafficking. We also obtained prosecution and investigations data from DOJ, DHS, Department of Labor (Labor), and Department of State (State). Further, we reviewed DOJ's grants to identify studies funded to assess human trafficking in the United States. We also interviewed DOJ grantees to understand their ongoing research to quantify human trafficking.

To identify challenges federal and selected state law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies face when combating human trafficking and efforts undertaken to address these challenges, we identified relevant federal law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies based on our previous work and review of legislation related to human trafficking. We then interviewed headquarters officials from the Department of Defense, DOJ, DHS, Labor, State, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) who are responsible for identifying or investigating human trafficking and other unlawful activities, or prosecuting or litigating cases involving human trafficking-related violations. At DOJ, we interviewed officials from the Office of the Deputy Attorney General, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Civil Rights Division/Criminal Section, Criminal Division/Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, and the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys. At DHS, we interviewed officials from the Office of the Deputy Secretary, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Transportation Security Administration, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and U.S. Coast Guard. At Labor, we interviewed officials from the Wage and Hour Division and Office of the Inspector General, and at State we interviewed officials from the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. For the FBI, U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO), ICE HSI, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and EEOC, we interviewed investigators and prosecutors (or litigators) located in field offices that cover four jurisdictions—Washington, DC/ Northern Virginia; Houston, Texas; Los Angeles, California; and Bismarck, North Dakota.

We selected these four jurisdictions because they are located in states that are among the top 10 in terms of human trafficking tips, per capita, that were sent to the NHTRC or to NCMEC. We also selected these jurisdictions because they reflect a variation in geography and receipt of federal funding to establish or continue a human trafficking task force through the Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking during fiscal year 2015. In addition, all of the jurisdictions we selected are within geographic priority areas identified by DHS through the Blue

Campaign. The purpose of the Blue Campaign is to provide training and raise public awareness about human trafficking, among other things. The campaign has identified priority geographic areas and populations to focus its outreach efforts during fiscal year 2016.

We conducted 32 interviews with federal, state and local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies who were part of the identified task forces in these jurisdictions. During the interviews, we asked officials whether they experienced any challenges in carrying out their duties related to combating human trafficking and to identify any efforts that have been or could be taken to address challenges. Officials identified challenges when we explicitly asked them to identify them or during the course of our discussion. When we report the number of agencies that identified a particular challenge, this does not necessarily mean that the remaining agencies did not also experience the challenge. It means that those stakeholders did not raise the challenge during the course of our interviews. While these officials' perspectives cannot be generalized to all jurisdictions, they provided insights into federal, state, and local efforts to combat human trafficking. We also interviewed representatives from six non-governmental organizations that provide services to human trafficking victims in the selected jurisdictions. In addition, we interviewed officials from the Federal Judicial Center and the federal judge who conducted the required training for federal judges as mandated by the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, and the National Association of Attorneys General to further understand challenges faced when combating human trafficking.

To address our third objective, we asked the DHS, DOJ, HHS, Labor and State, which had been identified in a prior study as agencies administering grant programs related to human trafficking, to each provide us a list of grant programs that could be used to combat human trafficking in the United States or assist victims. We corroborated agencies' lists with online resources, such as grants.gov, and also followed up with interviews at which we requested additional information and ensured that we were aware of all grant programs that could be used to address human trafficking. We identified a total of 42 grant programs that could be used to address human trafficking, although because services for human trafficking victims may be one of many allowable uses for some grant programs, it is possible that there are some programs that were not identified by granting agencies or by our analysis of public records. However, we limited our duplication analysis to the 15 that were intended solely for human trafficking purposes, because we determined that there would most likely be duplication across these grant programs as they were created to address the same issue. Using the established

GAO framework for addressing overlap and duplication, we use the following definitions for purposes of assessing human trafficking grant programs:¹

- **Overlap** occurs when multiple granting agencies or grant programs have similar goals, engage in similar activities or strategies to achieve these goals, or target the same or similar beneficiaries. Overlap may result from statutory or other limitations beyond an agency's control.
- **Duplication** occurs on multiple levels. It occurs when a single grantee uses grant funds from different federal sources to pay for the exact same expenditure. Duplication also occurs when two or more granting agencies or grant programs engage in the same or similar activities or *provide funding to support the same or similar services to the same beneficiaries*. Duplication thus stems from overlap. When granting agencies do not identify overlap, assess its impact, or coordinate their activities in acknowledgment of the overlap, there is a heightened risk of unnecessary duplication because one granting agency may not be knowledgeable of the ways in which its funding decision duplicates another's. At times, federal funding is leveraged by design to achieve a single purpose through multiple federal funding streams. These funding arrangements are not characterized as unnecessary duplication for purposes of this review so long as federal agencies are aware of them or have deliberately planned for grant programs to be complementary.

To assess the possibility for overlap among the 15 grant programs intended solely to address human trafficking, we reviewed grant solicitations from fiscal years 2014 and 2015, the most recent two years in which grants had been awarded, to identify similarities and differences between the allowable activities and target beneficiaries. We divided allowable activities into five categories to determine how many of the grant programs could be used for the same purpose. We then examined the grant awards for each program to assess whether any organizations that had been awarded human trafficking grants were or could be using the grants to provide the same services to the same or similar groups of beneficiaries. We identified 14 organizations that were awarded multiple human trafficking grants in 2014 or 2015. To determine whether

¹GAO, *Justice Grant Programs: DOJ Should Do More to Reduce the Risk of Unnecessary Duplication and Enhance Program Assessment*, [GAO-12-517](#) (Washington, D.C.: July 12, 2012).

duplication was actually occurring, we interviewed officials responsible for administering grant programs at the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime in DOJ and the Administration for Children and Families in HHS about the specific organizations that had received multiple grants. We also spoke with three of the organizations regarding how they ensure that funds from each grant are being used for the approved purposes. We selected the organizations based on the number and similarity of grants they were awarded and whether the grants were from both federal agencies.

To evaluate what efforts, if any, have been made to prevent unnecessary duplication among human trafficking grants, we reviewed documentation on collaboration efforts, including the *Attorney General's Annual Report to Congress and Assessment of U.S. Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons* and guidance from the Senior Policy Operating Group's (SPOG) Grantmaking Committee. We also interviewed federal agency officials, including members of the SPOG and officials responsible for administering grant programs from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime in DOJ and the Administration for Children and Families in HHS regarding formal and informal mechanisms for coordinating with one another to prevent overlap among grants and duplication among grant awards.

We conducted this performance audit from July 2015 to June 2016 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix II: Federal Human Trafficking Investigation and Prosecution Data

Responsibility for addressing human trafficking crimes falls to multiple federal agencies. These agencies reported data on the investigations, prosecutions, indictments, and arrests related to trafficking crimes for fiscal years 2013 to 2015. These data are a general indicator of the level of agency effort on trafficking in persons, although they are limited by a number of factors. Because trafficking in persons is a hidden crime and victims are hesitant to come forward, it is difficult to estimate the extent of trafficking in persons crimes. Moreover, because prosecutors may charge traffickers with other crimes (e.g., kidnapping, the Mann Act, immigration violations, or money laundering) for strategic or tactical reasons, data on the number of trafficking in persons investigations and prosecutions do not provide a complete picture of the number of traffickers who have been thwarted. The data systems agencies use are primarily case management systems, which may not be able to extract trafficking data if trafficking was not listed as a charge. Additionally, if an investigation on smuggling later reveals a trafficking violation, some data systems will continue to store investigative data under the smuggling classification.

The complexity of the investigations and the limitations of data systems make providing data on human trafficking a labor-intensive effort for agencies. Therefore, these data are not comparable across the agencies and it is not possible to associate arrest and indictment data with a particular case because of differences in agency data systems. Moreover, agency officials noted that investigations do not always lead to prosecutions, because situations that appear to be trafficking may prove to be alien smuggling or prostitution accompanied by abuse and, therefore, do not meet the criteria to be prosecuted as trafficking cases. This appendix provides data on federal agencies' investigations and prosecutions of human trafficking during fiscal years 2013 to 2015.

Human Trafficking Investigations

Within the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has jurisdiction to investigate a broad range of violations of federal law including human trafficking. Within the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) investigates human trafficking as well as a range of cross-border and immigration-related criminal activity. Other agencies, also conduct human trafficking investigations as they relate to their statutory authority. Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security examines trafficking cases involving visa and passport fraud. Department of Labor's Inspector General investigates human trafficking offenses that are discovered during investigations involving the Department of Labor's Foreign Labor Certification programs. Department of Defense's Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Army Criminal

Investigation Command, Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and Air Force Office of Special Investigations investigate allegations of sex and labor trafficking involving service members, departmental contractors and civilians.¹

The data for fiscal years 2013 through 2015 related to investigations, indictments, arrests, and convictions of human trafficking offenses provided by the ICE HSI and the FBI are shown in tables 2, 3, and 4. The arrests, indictments, and convictions associated with ICE HSI and the FBI investigations could have occurred at either the federal, state, or local level.

Table 2: Human Trafficking Cases Investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, Fiscal Years 2013-2015

	2013	2014	2015
Investigations initiated	993	974	1034
Indictments	1231	1075	752
Arrests	1874	1741	1437
Convictions	930	892	587

Source: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations | GAO-16-555

Note: Investigations initiated during a particular fiscal year may not result in arrests, indictments, or convictions in that same year, because human trafficking investigations and prosecutions can extend over several months or years. Data were provided in March 2016.

Table 3: Human Trafficking Cases Investigated by Federal Bureau of Investigation Civil Rights Unit, Fiscal Years 2013-2015

	2013	2014	2015
Investigations initiated	248	307	264
Indictments	110	144	125
Arrests	184	532	419
Convictions	76	89	91

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation | GAO-16-555

Note: Investigations initiated during a particular fiscal year may not result in arrests, indictments, or convictions in that same year, because human trafficking investigations and prosecutions can extend over several months or years. Data were provided in April 2016.

¹In addition, military police organizations also investigate prostitution allegations which may be connected to human trafficking.

**Appendix II: Federal Human Trafficking
Investigation and Prosecution Data**

**Table 4: Human Trafficking Cases Investigated by Federal Bureau of Investigation
Violent Crimes Against Children Unit, Fiscal Years 2013-2015**

	2013	2014	2015
Investigations initiated	515	573	538
Indictments	249	332	307
Arrests	2380	2770	2217
Convictions	310	340	331

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation | GAO-16-555

Notes: Statistics for Fiscal Years 2013-2015 for 31E White Slave Traffic Act – Child Prostitution (Crime Against Children Unit) Data were provided in April 2016.

Investigations initiated during a particular fiscal year may not result in arrests, indictments, or convictions in that same year, because human trafficking investigations and prosecutions can extend over several months or years.

The data related to investigations of human trafficking conducted by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, the Department of Labor Inspector General, and the Department of Defense during fiscal years 2013-2015 are shown in tables 5, 6, and 7.

**Table 5: Cases with a Human Trafficking Nexus Investigated by Department of State
Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Fiscal Years 2013-2015**

	2013	2014	2015
Investigations	156	159	248 ^a

Source: Bureau of Diplomatic Security | GAO-16-555

Notes: The Bureau of Diplomatic Security was unable to provide additional information related to the human trafficking investigations conducted. Data were provided in March 2016.

^a According to officials, this increase could be a result of the increased awareness concerning Human Trafficking that has occurred as a result of DS training at international posts and awareness initiatives within the DS domestic investigative offices.

Table 6: Human Trafficking Cases Investigated by Department of Labor Inspector General, Fiscal Years 2013-2015

	2013	2014	2015
Investigations	1	2	0
Indictments	17	2	0
Arrests	0	0	0
Convictions	11	2	0

Source: Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General | GAO-16-555

Note: Department of Labor's Inspector General investigates human trafficking offenses that are discovered during investigations involving the Department of Labor's Foreign Labor Certification programs. Of the 121 Foreign Labor Certification investigations closed in FY 2013 to FY 2015, the data above reflect investigations coded as ACTeam or Human Trafficking.

Table 7: Human Trafficking Cases Investigated by Department of Defense, Fiscal Years 2013-2015^a

	2013	2014	2015
Investigations	42	57	38
Indictments	30	15	22
Arrests	58	49	40
Convictions	41	19	22

Source: Department of Defense | GAO-16-555

^a Includes cases related to criminal offenses that are indicative of human trafficking investigated by the Department of Defense's Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Army Criminal Investigation Command, Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and Air Force Office of Special Investigations. More than half the investigations, indictments, arrests and convictions for fiscal years 2013 through 2015 were from the Army Criminal Investigation Command.

Human Trafficking Prosecutions

Within the Department of Justice, the U.S. Attorney's Offices, along with the Criminal Division and Civil Rights Division, prosecute human trafficking crimes. The Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit (HTPU) in the Civil Rights Division prosecutes labor trafficking and sex trafficking of adults. Within the Criminal Division, the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, prosecutes child sex trafficking cases.

The data for fiscal years 2013 through 2015 related to matters initiated, cases prosecuted, defendants charged, and defendants convicted of human trafficking offenses provided by the Criminal Division, Civil Rights Division and U.S Attorney's Offices are shown in tables 8, 9, and 10.

**Appendix II: Federal Human Trafficking
Investigation and Prosecution Data**

Table 8: Human Trafficking Prosecutorial Statistics for Department of Justice Criminal Division, Fiscal Years 2013-2015

	2013	2014	2015
Matters opened ^a	6	5	1
Cases prosecuted ^b	13	9	17
Defendants charged ^c	15	9	4
Defendants convicted ^{c, d}	18	8	14

Source: Department of Justice Criminal Division | GAO-16-555

- ^a "Matter opened" is an investigation on which a staff person has worked a minimum of 30 minutes.
- ^b "Cases" is an action filed in court that results in the issuance of a docket number. "Cases prosecuted" is when all appeals for all defendants in a case have been exhausted or when an office has relinquished its responsibility for the remaining appeals.
- ^c Data on defendants charged and convicted are not associated with the data for matters opened in the same fiscal year.
- ^d Comparisons cannot be made between persons charged and convicted in the same fiscal year, since some defendants charged in one fiscal year may not be convicted until a later fiscal year.

Table 9: Human Trafficking Prosecutorial Statistics for Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Fiscal Years 2013-2015

	2013	2014	2015
Matters initiated ^a	222	160	142
Cases prosecuted ^b	71	67	90
Defendants charged ^c	161	152	155
Defendants convicted ^{c, d}	90	95	145

Source: Department of Justice Civil Rights | GAO-16-555

- ^a "Matters initiated" means only that HTPU reviewed a lead or complaint and determined that some follow-up action was merited; "matters initiated" does not mean that a formal criminal investigation was initiated.
- ^b These are cases filed in court.
- ^c Data on defendants charged and convicted are not associated with the data for matters opened in the same fiscal year.
- ^d Comparisons cannot be made between persons charged and convicted in the same fiscal year, since some defendants charged in one fiscal year may not be convicted until a later fiscal year.

Table 10: Human Trafficking Prosecutorial Statistics for U.S Attorney's Offices, Fiscal Years 2013-2015

	2013	2014	2015
Matters received ^a	545	485	571
Cases prosecuted ^b	190	259	252
Defendants charged ^c	292	382	380
Defendants convicted ^{c, d}	198	249	292

Source: Executive Office for U.S Attorneys | GAO-16-555

**Appendix II: Federal Human Trafficking
Investigation and Prosecution Data**

Notes: This chart includes data on any and all criminal cases/defendants where 18 :01581, 18 :01582, 18 :01583, 18 :01584, 18 :01585, 18 :01586, 18 :01587, 18 :01588, 18 :01589, 18 :01590, 18 :01591, 18 :01592, 18 :01593, 18 :01594, 18 :02421 was brought as any charge against a defendant.

^a“Matters received” are referrals from law enforcement agencies that have been opened in the Legal Information Office Network System (LIONS), but where no charges have been filed.

^b“Cases prosecuted” are cases where a charging document has been filed in district court.

^cData on defendants charged and convicted are not associated with the data for matters opened in the same fiscal year.

^dComparisons cannot be made between persons charged and convicted in the same fiscal year, since some defendants charged in one fiscal year may not be convicted until a later fiscal year. .

Prosecutorial agencies may decline a matter for prosecution for many reasons. For fiscal years 2014 and 2015 the main reason for the U.S. Attorney’s Offices to decline to prosecute a case was insufficient evidence. Table 11 presents the declination statistics and reasons for the U.S. Attorney’s Office for years 2014 and 2015.²

Table 11: Human Trafficking Declination Statistics for U.S Attorney’s Offices, Fiscal Years 2014-2015^{a, b}

	2014	2015
Insufficient evidence	150	158
Referred to another jurisdiction	53	57
Alternative to federal prosecution appropriate	7	29
Prioritization of federal resources and interests	25	25
Legally barred	24	6
Defendant unavailable	3	2
Other	0	0
Total:	262	277

Source: Executive Office for U.S Attorneys| GAO-16-555

^aIncludes immediate and later declinations.

^bComparisons cannot be made between matters received and matters declined in the same fiscal year, since matters received in one fiscal year may not be declined until a later fiscal year.

²Data for fiscal year 2013 was not included because the system used by the U.S. Attorney’s to record declinations changed in 2014.

Appendix III: Extent to which Human Trafficking Victims Were Granted T-visas, U-visas, and Continued Presence

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides immigration relief to foreign victims of human trafficking and other crimes by adjudicating applications for T nonimmigrant status (T visa) for victims of a severe form of trafficking who meet certain criteria and petitions for U nonimmigrant status (U visa) for victims of qualifying criminal activity, including human trafficking and fraud in foreign labor contracting, who satisfy U visa-specific criteria.¹ The T visa and U visa allow the victims to remain in the country, for up to a 4 year period, which may be extended under certain circumstances, so they can assist with the investigation or prosecution of human trafficking or qualifying crimes, respectively.² Further, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) can grant Continued Presence, which is a temporary form of protection available to foreign national victims of human trafficking without lawful immigration status if they are potential witnesses to that trafficking, and upon the application by federal law enforcement officials to DHS.³ Continued Presence allows victims to remain and work in the country temporarily, for 1 year and may be renewed in 1 year increments, during the ongoing investigation into the human trafficking-related crimes committed against them.⁴

T nonimmigrant status may be available for victims of severe forms of trafficking who meet the following criteria: physical presence in the United States on account of such trafficking; compliance with any reasonable request for assistance by law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of the trafficking (unless the victim is unable to cooperate due

¹See 8 U.S.C. §§ 1101(a)(15)(T), (U), 1184(o), (p).

²With respect to T nonimmigrant status, under 22 U.S.C. § 7105(b)(1), derivatives of T visa holders, as well as minors who have been subjected to a severe form of trafficking in persons and certified adult victims of severe forms of trafficking whose T visa applications are still pending (provided they are willing to assist law enforcement if able to do so), are eligible for certain federal or state benefits and services to the same extent as are refugees admitted to the United States under 8 U.S.C. § 1157.

³22 U.S.C. § 7105(c)(3); 28 C.F.R. § 1100.35.

⁴In order for an individual with continued presence to be eligible for certain federal or state benefits and services to the same extent as a refugee, he or she must have been subjected to a severe form of trafficking in persons, and be certified as willing to assist in every reasonable way in the investigation and prosecution of severe forms of trafficking in persons unless unable to do so as a result of physical or psychological trauma. See 22 U.S.C. § 7105(b)(1).

Appendix III: Extent to which Human Trafficking Victims Were Granted T-visas, U-visas, and Continued Presence

to physical or psychological trauma, or is under 18 years of age); and would suffer extreme hardship involving unusual and severe harm if removed from the United States.⁵ The number of T visas that may be granted each fiscal year is limited by statute to 5,000 for victims.⁶ To obtain a T visa a victim must submit an application, which may include law enforcement certification that the applicant has been a victim of trafficking, to USCIS for review. Victims may also request a derivative T visas for family members, such as the spouse, children or other eligible family members. Derivative family members do not count towards the 5,000 statutory cap.⁷ Tables 12 and 13 present the number of T visa applications filed with USCIS for victims and their families for fiscal years 2013-2015.

Table 12: Principal T visa applications filed during fiscal years 2013, 2014 and 2015^a

Fiscal year (FY)	Applications received in FY	Applications Approved in FY	Applications Denied in FY
2013	799	848	104
2014	944	613	153
2015	1062	610	294

Source: U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services | GAO-16-555

^aThe numbers of approved and denied do not total up to the number of applications received because decisions may have occurred in a given fiscal year for applications submitted in the previous fiscal year. Data were provided in March 2016.

⁵8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(T).

⁶See id. § 1184(o)(2).

⁷Id. at § 1184(o)(3).

Appendix III: Extent to which Human Trafficking Victims Were Granted T-visas, U-visas, and Continued Presence

Table 13: Derivative T visa applications filed during fiscal years 2013, 2014 and 2015^a

Fiscal year (FY)	Applications received in FY	Applications Approved in FY	Applications Denied in FY
2013	1021	975	91
2014	925	788	105
2015	1162	694	192

Source: U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services | GAO-16-555

^aThe numbers of approved and denied do not total up to the number of applications received because decisions may have occurred in a given fiscal year for applications submitted in the previous fiscal year. Data were provided in March 2016.

U nonimmigrant status may be available for victims of qualifying criminal activity who have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of being a victim of the qualifying crime, possess information about the qualifying crime, and have been, are being, or are likely to be helpful to law enforcement or government officials in the investigation or prosecution of the qualifying criminal activity, including trafficking and fraud in foreign labor contracting.⁸ The number of U visas that may be granted to principal petitioners each fiscal year is limited by law to 10,000.⁹ However, derivative family members do not count towards the 10,000 statutory cap.¹⁰ To obtain a U visa a victim must submit a petition, including a law enforcement certification that the petitioner has been a victim of a qualifying crime, to USCIS for review. See table 14 for the number of U visa petitions filed with USCIS for victims in human trafficking related cases.

⁸8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(U).

⁹See id. § 1184(p)(2)(A).

¹⁰Id. at § 1184(p)(2)(B). USCIS was unable to provide the number of derivative U visa petitions filed for family members of victims of human trafficking related cases.

Appendix III: Extent to which Human Trafficking Victims Were Granted T-visas, U-visas, and Continued Presence

Table 14: Principal U visa petitions filed in human trafficking related cases for fiscal years 2013, 2014 and 2015^{a, b}

Fiscal year (FY)	Applications received in FY	Applications Approved in FY	Applications Denied in FY	Applications Pending in FY
2013	164	41	25	46
2014	124	26	57	110
2015	124	29	22	119

Source: U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services | GAO-16-555

^a The numbers of approved and denied do not total up to the number of applications received because decisions may have occurred in a given fiscal year for applications submitted in the previous fiscal year. Data were provided in April 2016.

^b These include cases for which trafficking and/or slave trade, peonage, or involuntary servitude was the crime.

Continued Presence allows victims of human trafficking to remain in the United States temporarily during the ongoing investigation into the human trafficking-related crimes committed against them.¹¹ For a victim to obtain Continued Presence federal law enforcement officials or prosecutors must submit an application to ICE for review. Continued Presence is initially granted for 1 year and may be renewed in 1-year increments. Table 15 present the number of Continued Presence applications filed with ICE for fiscal years 2013-2015.

Table 15: Continued Presence applications filed during fiscal years 2013, 2014 and 2015

Fiscal year (FY)	Applications received in FY	Applications Approved in FY	Applications renewed (extended) in FY	Applications Denied or withdrawn in FY
2013	195	87	106	2
2014	243	73	168	2
2015	398	173	223	2

Source: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Law Enforcement Parole Branch | GAO-16-555

¹¹ 22 U.S.C. § 7105(c)(3). The Secretary of Homeland Security may temporarily parole into the United States certain relatives of trafficking victims granted continued presence under 22 U.S.C. § 7105(c)(3). See 8 U.S.C. § 1229b(b)(6). In addition, DHS regulations provide limited immigration relief, such as a 30-day extension of their stay, for any workers whose employer's petition has been revoked based on the worker's payment of a prohibited fee. 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(5)(xi)(B), (6)(i)(B)(4).

Appendix IV: Grant Programs for Human Trafficking

We identified 42 federal grant programs that can be used for the purpose of combating human trafficking or assisting victims of human trafficking in the United States. Fifteen are intended solely for these purposes. Each of the grant programs is administered by a component of the Departments of Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, or Justice.

Table 16: Federal Grant Programs that May Be Used to Combat Human Trafficking or Assist Trafficking Victims in the United States for which Funding Was Initially Awarded in Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015

Program Name	Fiscal Year(s) of Initial Award	Agency-Component	Solely for human trafficking	Objectives
Department of Health and Human Services				To assist organized ethnic communities comprised and representative of refugee populations by linking them to the mainstream in order to enhance ongoing refugee services after initial resettlement, foster their organizational development, and facilitate their successful resettlement and to provide an incentive and organizational support for refugee communities to join other service agencies to form a collaborative community service provider. Eligible individuals include victims of a severe form of trafficking who receive certification or eligibility letters from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). ^a
Ethnic Community Self Help Program	2014	Administration on Children and Families (ACF)	No	
Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Severe Forms of Human Trafficking	2014	ACF	Yes	Implement demonstration programs that will build and sustain coordinated services for victims of human trafficking in partnership with allied professionals in community-based organizations such as programs that serve runaway and homeless youth, domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking victims.
Expansion Grant for Safe Place Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center	2014	ACF	Yes	Supports one organization in expanding the scope of its work, including an extension of its human trafficking project, which is to build upon and expand efforts in assisting programs with making the transition from understanding how to recognize and respect victims of human trafficking to responding to the diverse needs of victims through the development of effective organizational practices and community collaborations.

Appendix IV: Grant Programs for Human Trafficking

Program Name	Fiscal Year(s) of Initial Award	Agency-Component	Solely for human trafficking	Objectives
Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	ACF	Yes	Continue the development of child welfare systems' response to human trafficking through infrastructure building, and a multi-system approach with local law enforcement, juvenile justice, court systems, runaway and homeless youth programs, Children's Justice Act grantees, child advocacy centers, and other necessary service providers.
Post Release and Home Study Services for Unaccompanied Alien Children	2014	ACF	No	Supports home studies prior to releasing an unaccompanied alien child to a sponsor. Home studies are mandatory for cases involving unaccompanied alien children who are victims of a severe form of trafficking, or whose proposed sponsor clearly presents a risk of abuse, maltreatment, exploitation, or trafficking to the child based on all available objective evidence, among others.
Refugee Health Promotion	2014	ACF	No	To build capacity to address identified health needs within refugee communities and reduce barriers to achieving wellness. Eligible individuals include victims of a severe form of trafficking who receive certification or eligibility letters from ORR. ^a
Refugee Home-Based Child Care Microenterprise Development Project	2014	ACF	No	To help refugees to achieve economic self-sufficiency by becoming licensed home-based child care providers and to ease the shortage of licensed culturally and linguistically competent providers who will promote the early care and development of refugee children. Eligible participants include certified victims of human trafficking. ^a
Refugee School Impact	2014	ACF	No	To assist newly arrived refugee children in these localities to improve their academic performance and social adjustment in schools. Eligible participants include victims of a severe form of trafficking who receive certification or eligibility letters from ORR. ^a

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Program Name	Fiscal Year(s) of Initial Award	Agency-Component	Solely for human trafficking	Objectives
Rescue & Restore Victims of Human Trafficking Regional Program	2014	ACF	Yes	Grant recipients serve as focal points for identifying foreign victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons, as defined by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, and referring them for protection and assistance in their targeted geographic area. Foreign victim identification activities include direct outreach to victims, anti-trafficking training and outreach to local professionals and organizations or entities that may encounter victims of trafficking, active participation in a strong multidisciplinary, anti-trafficking coalition or task force, and strategic public awareness activities.
National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC)	2014 and 2015	ACF	Yes	Operate the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, a 24/7 hotline that provides urgent assistance to trafficking victims, service referrals, tips to law enforcement agencies, and information and training on human trafficking.
Refugee and Entrant Assistance Voluntary Agency Programs	2014 and 2015	ACF	No	Assists refugees and certified victims of human trafficking in becoming self-supporting and independent members of American society by providing grant funds to private nonprofit organizations to support case management, transitional assistance, and social services for new arrivals. ^a
Refugee and Entrant Assistance Discretionary Grants	2014 and 2015	ACF	No	The program aims to serve refugees, including certified victims of a severe form of trafficking to, among other things, decrease the number of individuals on public assistance, encourage the placement of individuals in locations with good job opportunities and specialized case management for vulnerable cases, and provide health services. ^a
Refugee and Entrant Assistance Targeted Assistance Grants	2014 and 2015	ACF	No	Employment-related and other social services for refugees, certain Amerasians from Vietnam, Cuban and Haitian Entrants, asylees, victims of a severe form of trafficking, and Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants in areas with large refugee populations. An arrival must be within 5 years of arriving in this country or grant of asylum to be eligible for services under these grants. ^a

Appendix IV: Grant Programs for Human Trafficking

Program Name	Fiscal Year(s) of Initial Award	Agency-Component	Solely for human trafficking	Objectives
Social and Economic Development Strategies	2014 and 2015	ACF	No	To promote economic and social self-sufficiency for native peoples. The Administration for Native Americans is interested in supporting community-driven projects designed to grow local economies, increase the capacity of tribal governments, strengthen families, preserve Native cultures, and increase self-sufficiency and community well-being. Funded projects will reflect specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound outcomes and include specific strategies for reducing or eliminating community problems and achieving long-range community goals. One allowable community goal is to identify, report, and prevent human trafficking, and provide outreach and services for victims
Assets for Independence Demonstration Program	2015	ACF	No	Local demonstration projects that provide special-purpose, matched savings accounts to eligible individuals. Every dollar of earned income that a project participant deposits into their savings account is matched by the project. Participants use their accounts for one of three allowable assets: purchase a first home; capitalize or expand a business; or fund post-secondary education or training. Eligible individuals include certified victims of human trafficking. ^a
Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking	2015	ACF	Yes	Provides comprehensive case management to domestic victims of severe forms of human trafficking. Grantees should build, expand, and sustain organizational and community capacity to deliver trauma-informed, culturally relevant services for domestic victims of human trafficking through a coordinated system of agency services and partnerships with community-based organizations and allied professionals.
Expansion Supplement Grant To Support Training And Technical Assistance Activities	2015	ACF	No	Build the capacity of domestic violence programs to serve victims of domestic violence from Asian and Pacific Islander communities, including victims of human trafficking.
Refugee Family Child Care Microenterprise Development Program	2015	ACF	No	Provide intensive case management, training, technical assistance, and cash assistance as necessary to assist refugees in becoming licensed family child care businesses. Eligible individuals include certified victims of human trafficking. ^a

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Program Name	Fiscal Year(s) of Initial Award	Agency-Component	Solely for human trafficking	Objectives
<p align="center">Department of Homeland Security</p> Trafficking Victim Assistance Program (TVAP)	2015	ACF	Yes	To provide time-limited comprehensive case management services on a per capita basis in any location within the United States to foreign victims of a severe form of trafficking in persons and to assist potential victims of trafficking in achieving Office of Refugee Resettlement certification. ^a
<p align="center">Department of Homeland Security</p> Center of Excellence - Center for Borders, Trade and Immigration Research Center Partner	2014	Science and Technology Directorate		Supports one U.S. college or university to serve as a lead institution for a Center for Borders, Trade and Immigration Research, which includes research on human trafficking.
<p align="center">Department of Justice</p> Justice Information Sharing Solutions Implementation Program	2014	Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)	No	Enable new or enhanced information sharing among the criminal justice community and affiliated agencies and entities that play key roles in crime-fighting efforts or make significant contributions to such efforts. Proposed projects should contribute directly to the informational needs of key stakeholders. Applicants are encouraged to address common business challenges, one of which is identified as improving information sharing and coordination along particular lines of business, including human trafficking.
<p align="center">Department of Justice</p> Law Enforcement: National Training and Technical Assistance	2014	BJA	No	Support the needs, increase the effectiveness, and ensure success of BJA-funded and non-BJA-funded state and local task forces assembled and designed to address local crime issues, including human trafficking task forces.
<p align="center">Department of Justice</p> National Training and Technical Assistance: Anti-Human Trafficking Training for Law Enforcement and State Prosecutors Program	2014	BJA	Yes	Supports one provider to deliver nationwide, anti-human trafficking training and technical assistance services to law enforcement agencies and state prosecutors to more effectively address human trafficking within and across jurisdictions.

Appendix IV: Grant Programs for Human Trafficking

Program Name	Fiscal Year(s) of Initial Award	Agency-Component	Solely for human trafficking	Objectives
Regional Information Sharing Systems	2014 and 2015	BJA	No	The Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) is a nationwide program supporting local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement efforts in the areas of terrorism, drug trafficking, organized criminal activity, criminal gangs, violent crime, human trafficking, event deconfliction, and other regional criminal priorities. RISS provides secure, nationwide information and intelligence-sharing capabilities, secure, but unclassified electronic communications capabilities, investigative analysis support, specialized investigative equipment, and other investigative support services.
Adjudication and Law Enforcement National Initiatives: Improving Responses to Criminal Justice Issues	2015	BJA	No	To assist prosecutors around the country with planning, implementing, sustaining, enhancing, and evaluating prosecutor-led drug treatment programs that are alternatives to imprisonment. Deliverables include providing ongoing training and technical assistance to up to 20 jurisdictions, including jurisdictions wishing to implement human trafficking diversion programs.
Anti-Human Trafficking National Training and Technical Assistance Program for Law Enforcement Task Forces	2015	BJA	Yes	Funds one provider to coordinate the nationwide delivery of anti-human trafficking TTA training and technical assistance services to all BJA-funded Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Forces, law enforcement agencies, criminal justice professionals, and communities that are either forming new anti-human trafficking task forces or are working to expand or improve the effectiveness of an existing task force.
Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Competitive Solicitation	2015	BJA/Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)	Yes	Supports the development and enhancement of multidisciplinary human trafficking task forces that implement strategies, including investigations and victim services, to combat all forms of human trafficking—sex trafficking and labor trafficking—of foreign nationals and U.S. citizens (of all sexes and ages) within the United States.

Appendix IV: Grant Programs for Human Trafficking

Program Name	Fiscal Year(s) of Initial Award	Agency-Component	Solely for human trafficking	Objectives
Visiting Fellows Program	2015	BJA	No	Funds up to five fellows to collaborate with practitioners and researchers to build capacity to address gaps in priority and emerging issues in the criminal justice field. Of five areas of priority, one is to improve and expand the ability of law enforcement and prosecutors nationwide and the BJA-funded human trafficking task forces to improve responses, operations, efficiencies, and decision making in addressing the crime of human trafficking.
Research and Evaluation on Trafficking in Persons	2015	National Institute of Justice (NIJ)	Yes	Research and evaluation projects that will address the knowledge gaps related to trafficking in persons, with clear implications for criminal justice policy and practice in the United States.
Community Policing Development Grant	2014	Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)	No	Funds demonstration or pilot projects that offer creative ideas to build community engagement in one of four areas. One area is enhancing the ability of law enforcement agencies to reduce trauma and prevent victimization within one or more vulnerable population, including victims of human trafficking and exploitation.
Mentoring for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Sex Trafficking Initiative	2014 and 2015	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)	Yes	Mentoring Project Sites: Supports organizations' efforts to develop or enhance their mentoring capacity, facilitate outreach efforts, and increase the availability of direct services for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation and domestic sex trafficking, including children who are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents. Training and Technical Assistance: Funds a training and technical assistance provider to support the mentoring project sites.
Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Membership and Accreditation Program and Training and Technical Assistance	2014 and 2015	OJJDP	No	Provides technical assistance for state and local CASA programs that seek to increase the number and quality of services they provide and their recruitment of volunteers to work effectively with diverse populations of children, including victims of commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking.

Appendix IV: Grant Programs for Human Trafficking

Program Name	Fiscal Year(s) of Initial Award	Agency-Component	Solely for human trafficking	Objectives
Victims of Child Abuse Training and Technical Assistance for Child Abuse Professionals	2014 and 2015	OJJDP	No	Development and implementation of a model technical assistance and training program for child abuse professionals to improve the quality of criminal prosecution of child abuse cases, including training and technical assistance for child abuse response professionals regarding services to child victims of sex trafficking.
Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	OVC	Yes	Enhance the quality and quantity of services available to assist victims of human trafficking by enhancing interagency collaboration and the coordinated community response to victims of human trafficking, and through the provision of high-quality services that address the individual needs of trafficking victims. Funding under this program will support both comprehensive services and specialized services for victims of human trafficking.
Service, Support & Justice: A Strategy to Enhance Law Enforcement Response to Victims Demonstration Project	2014	OVC	No	Implementation and evaluation of the Enhance Law Enforcement Response to Victims strategy and toolkit with a strong focus on reaching and serving underserved and unserved victims identified in the community, including victims of human trafficking.
Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Toolkit 2.0 Competitive Solicitation	2014 and 2015	OVC	No	Update the Sexual Assault Response Teams toolkit, particularly in areas with outdated information or areas that do not address specific underserved and special populations, including victims of human trafficking.
Vision 21 Victim Legal Assistance Networks	2014	OVC	No	Implement comprehensive, wraparound, pro bono victim legal assistance networks at a statewide, regional, or local level. Networks must include agencies and organizations providing services including immigration assistance for human trafficking victims and battered immigrant women, among other things.
Comprehensive Services for Victims of All Forms of Human Trafficking	2015	OVC	Yes	Enhance interagency collaboration and the coordinated community response to victims of human trafficking, and provide high-quality services that address the individualized needs of trafficking victims.

Appendix IV: Grant Programs for Human Trafficking

Program Name	Fiscal Year(s) of Initial Award	Agency-Component	Solely for human trafficking	Objectives
Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2015	OVC	Yes	Enhance the quality and quantity of services available to assist all victims of human trafficking to achieve their goals, which may include increased autonomy and self-sufficiency, and increased feelings of safety and well-being.
Training and Technical Assistance on Comprehensive Legal Services for Human Trafficking Victims	2015	OVC	Yes	Provide training and technical assistance on a national level to legal services providers on issues within the range of legal services needs of human trafficking victims.
Vision 21 Innovation Grants: Enhancing and Transforming Services for Victims of Crime	2015	OVC	No	Provide training, technical assistance, capacity building, assessment, or strategic planning to enhance and transform services for victims of crime in one of eight purpose areas, one of which is targeted outreach to state legislators on human trafficking.
Grants to Indian Tribal Governments Program	2014 and 2015	Office on Violence Against Women	No	Among other goals, to increase tribal capacity to respond to violent crimes against Indian women, and to develop and strengthen victim services in cases involving violent crimes against Indian women, including sex trafficking.

Source: GAO analysis of agency documents| GAO-16-555

³Adult victims of human trafficking who are not United States citizens or Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs) can apply for certification as victims of human trafficking, which enables them to be eligible to receive benefits and services under any federal or state program or activity to the same extent as a refugee.

Appendix V: Data from Interactive Map

This appendix contains the data used in figure 6 of this report, Human Trafficking Grants Awarded within the United States, Fiscal Years 2014-2015. As in the map, each grant program may have multiple purposes, but their main purpose is identified in the table. In addition, grant awards are categorized by the main city or area in which they are being implemented. The table does not include grants that provide services throughout the United States or that provide services in multiple states, or information on sub-recipients of Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) grantees.

Table 17: Federal Human Trafficking Grants Intended to Combat Human Trafficking or Assist Trafficking Victims in the United States for which Initial Funding Was Awarded in Fiscal Years 2014 or 2015

State	Area	Grant Program	Fiscal Year of Initial Award	Granting Agency	Grantee	Main Purpose of grant
AZ	Pinal County	Rescue & Restore Victims of Trafficking Regional Program	2014	HHS	County of Pinal	Collaboration
AZ	Phoenix	Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Severe Forms of Human Trafficking	2014	HHS	Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development	Victim Services
AZ	Phoenix	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development	Victim Services
AZ	Statewide	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	HHS	Arizona Board of Regents on behalf of Arizona State University	Collaboration
AZ	Tucson	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	City of Tucson	Collaboration
AZ	Tucson	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	CODAC Behavioral Health Services of Pima County, Inc.	Collaboration
CA	Contra Costa County	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	County of Contra Costa	Victim Services
CA	Fresno	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission	Collaboration
CA	Los Angeles	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking	Collaboration
CA	Los Angeles	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking	Victim Services
CA	Los Angeles	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	County of Los Angeles	Collaboration

Appendix V: Data from Interactive Map

State	Area	Grant Program	Fiscal Year of Initial Award	Granting Agency	Grantee	Main Purpose of grant
CA	Los Angeles	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles LAFLA	Victim Services
CA	Los Angeles	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking	Collaboration
CA	Oakland	Mentoring for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Sex Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Motivating Inspiring Serving and Supporting Sexually Exploited Youth	Victim Services
CA	Orange County	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Community Service Programs, Inc.	Victim Services
CA	Riverside County	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	County of Riverside	Collaboration
CA	Riverside County	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Operation SafeHouse, Inc.	Collaboration
CA	Sacramento	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Opening Doors, Inc.	Collaboration
CA	San Diego	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition	Collaboration
CA	San Diego	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	North County Lifeline	Victim Services
CA	San Diego	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	San Diego Youth Services	Victim Services
CA	San Francisco	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Asian Pacific Island Legal Outreach dba of Nihonmachi Legal	Victim Services
CA	San Francisco	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Bay Area Legal Aid	Victim Services
CA	San Jose	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	President & Board of Trustees of Santa Clara College	Victim Services
CA	Sacramento	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	International Rescue Committee, Inc.	Victim Services
CA	Statewide	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	HHS	California Department of Social Services,	Collaboration
CO	Denver	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Colorado Legal Services	Collaboration
CO	Denver	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Colorado Judicial Department	Victim Services
CO	Statewide	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Colorado Legal Services	Victim Services

Appendix V: Data from Interactive Map

State	Area	Grant Program	Fiscal Year of Initial Award	Granting Agency	Grantee	Main Purpose of grant
CO	Statewide	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance (COVA)	Victim Services
CT	Statewide	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	International Institute of Connecticut, Inc.	Victim Services
CT	Statewide	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	HHS	State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families	Collaboration
DC	Washington	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Polaris Project	Victim Services
DC	Washington	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Ayuda	Victim Services
FL	Miami	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	International Rescue Committee, Inc.	Collaboration
FL	Miami	Mentoring for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Sex Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Kristi House, Inc.	Victim Services
FL	Miami	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Miami-Dade County	Victim Services
FL	Miami	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	HHS	Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc	Collaboration
FL	Miami	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	International Rescue Committee, Inc.	Victim Services
FL	Miami	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Kristi House, Inc.	Victim Services
FL	St. Petersburg	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Gulfcoast Legal Services, Inc.	Victim Services
FL	Venice	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Catholic Charities, Diocese of Venice, Inc.	Victim Services
GA	Atlanta	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Tapestri, Inc.	Victim Services
HI	Honolulu	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Department of Labor and Industrial Relations OCS	Victim Services
IL	Chicago	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Victim Services
IL	Chicago	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Cook County State's Attorney's Office	Collaboration
IL	Chicago	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2015	HHS	Metropolitan Family Services	Collaboration

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State	Area	Grant Program	Fiscal Year of Initial Award	Granting Agency	Grantee	Main Purpose of grant
IL	Chicago	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Collaboration
IL	Statewide	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	LAF	Victim Services
KS	Wichita	Mentoring for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Sex Trafficking Initiative	2015	DOJ	Wichita Children's Home	Victim Services
KY	Louisville	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2015	HHS	Catholic Charities of Louisville, Inc.	Collaboration
LA	New Orleans	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Covenant House New Orleans	Collaboration
LA	New Orleans	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office	Collaboration
LA	Statewide	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	HHS	Healing Place Serve	Collaboration
MA	Boston	Mentoring for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Sex Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Justice Resource Institute	Victim Services
MA	Statewide	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	HHS	Justice Resource Institute	Collaboration
MD	Baltimore	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	TurnAround, Inc.	Victim Services
MD	Statewide	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	HHS	University of Maryland, Baltimore	Collaboration
ME	Cumberland and York Counties (Southern ME)	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Preble Street	Victim Services
MI	Detroit	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Michigan Department of State Police	Collaboration
MI	Detroit	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Collaboration
MN	Statewide	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Breaking Free	Victim Services
MO	St. Louis	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis	Collaboration

Appendix V: Data from Interactive Map

State	Area	Grant Program	Fiscal Year of Initial Award	Granting Agency	Grantee	Main Purpose of grant
MO	St. Louis	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	International Institute of Metropolitan Saint Louis	Collaboration
MO	St. Louis	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Saint Louis County Police Department	Collaboration
MT	Billings	Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Severe Forms of Human Trafficking	2015	HHS	Tumbleweed Runaway Program	Victim Services
NC	Statewide	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Victim Services
NC	Statewide	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	HHS	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Collaboration
ND	Bismarck	Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Severe Forms of Human Trafficking	2015	HHS	Mountain Plain Youth Services	Victim Services
ND	Statewide	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	North Dakota Council on Abused Women's Services	Collaboration
ND	Statewide	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	North Dakota Office of Attorney General	Collaboration
NE	Statewide	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	State of Nebraska Attorney General	Collaboration
NE	Statewide	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Collaboration
NJ	Camden	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Center for Family Services, Inc.	Collaboration
NM	Statewide	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	New Mexico Attorney General	Collaboration
NM	Statewide	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	The Life Link	Collaboration
NV	Las Vegas	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Victim Services
NY	Buffalo	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Erie County Sheriff's Office	Collaboration
NY	Buffalo	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	International Institute of Buffalo	Collaboration

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State	Area	Grant Program	Fiscal Year of Initial Award	Granting Agency	Grantee	Main Purpose of grant
NY	New York City	Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Severe Forms of Human Trafficking	2014	HHS	Edwin Gould Services for Children and Families	Victim Services
NY	New York City	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	New York Asian Women's Center, Inc.	Victim Services
NY	New York City	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Sanctuary for Families, Inc.	Collaboration
NY	New York City	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Sanctuary for Families, Inc.	Victim Services
NY	New York City	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Ali Forney Center, Inc	Victim Services
NY	New York City	Specialized Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Covenant House New York/Under 21	Victim Services
NY	New York City	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Kings County District Attorney's Office	Collaboration
NY	New York City	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Safe Horizon, Inc.	Collaboration
NY	Statewide	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Worker Justice Center of New York	Victim Services
NY	Westchester	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	My Sisters" Place, Inc	Victim Services
OH	Cincinnati	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Victim Services
OH	Columbus	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Victim Services
OH	Statewide	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Office of Criminal Justice Services	Collaboration
OR	Portland	Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Severe Forms of Human Trafficking	2015	HHS	County of Multnomah	Victim Services
PA	Harrisburg	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	YWCA of Greater Harrisburg	Victim Services
PA	Philadelphia	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Nationalities Service Center	Collaboration
PA	Philadelphia	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Victim Services
PA	Philadelphia	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	City of Philadelphia - Police	Collaboration

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State	Area	Grant Program	Fiscal Year of Initial Award	Granting Agency	Grantee	Main Purpose of grant
PA	Philadelphia	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	The Salvation Army	Collaboration
SD	Sioux Falls	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc.	Victim Services
TX	Austin	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Refugee Services of Texas, Inc.	Victim Services
TX	Dallas	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Mosaic Family Services, Inc.	Collaboration
TX	Dallas	Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Mosaic Family Services, Inc.	Victim Services
TX	El Paso	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	El Paso Center for Children, Inc.	Victim Services
TX	El Paso	Mentoring for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Sex Trafficking Initiative	2015	DOJ	Big Brothers Big Sisters of El Paso	Victim Services
TX	Houston	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition	Collaboration
UT	Salt Lake City	Demonstration Grants for Domestic Victims of Severe Forms of Human Trafficking	2014	HHS	Asian Association of Utah dba Refugee and Immigrant Center	Victim Services
UT	Statewide	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Asian Association of Utah dba Refugee and Immigrant Center	Victim Services
UT	Statewide	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Asian Association of Utah dba Refugee and Immigrant Center	Collaboration
UT	Statewide	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Utah Attorney General's Office	Collaboration
VA	Richmond	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	The Gray Haven Project, Inc.	Victim Services
WA	Seattle	Grants to Address Trafficking within the Child Welfare Population	2014	HHS	King County Superior Court	Collaboration
WA	Seattle	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	YouthCare	Victim Services
WA	Seattle	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	City of Seattle	Collaboration

Appendix V: Data from Interactive Map

State	Area	Grant Program	Fiscal Year of Initial Award	Granting Agency	Grantee	Main Purpose of grant
WA	Seattle	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	International Rescue Committee, Inc.	Collaboration
WA	Statewide	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	International Rescue Committee, Inc.	Collaboration
WI	Madison	Services for Victims of Human Trafficking	2014	DOJ	ARC Community Services, Inc.	Victim Services
WI	Milwaukee	Mentoring for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Sex Trafficking	2014	DOJ	Milwaukee County DHHS Behavioral Health Division	Victim Services
WI	Milwaukee	Rescue & Restore Regional Program	2014	HHS	United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc.	Collaboration
WI	Milwaukee	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	City of Milwaukee Police Department	Collaboration
WI	Milwaukee	Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Program	2015	DOJ	Sojourner Family Peace Center	Collaboration

Source: GAO analysis of agencies' documents | GAO-16-555

Appendix VI: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

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Staff Acknowledgements

In addition to the contact named above, Kristy Love, Assistant Director; Kisha Clark, Analyst-in Charge; Marycella Mierez; Miriam Hill; Jon Najmi and Michele Fejfar made significant contributions to the work.

Appendix VII: Accessible Data

Accessible Text

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Accessible Text for Figure 1: Federal Agencies Responsible for Investigating and Prosecuting Human Trafficking Crimes in the United States

Investigative agencies:

1. Department of Justice:

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI): Investigates a broad range of violations of federal law, including allegations of sex and labor trafficking of adults and children in the United States.

2. Department of State:

Bureau of Diplomatic Security: Investigates passport and visa fraud violations, which may be in connection with other serious crimes such as trafficking.

3. Department of Labor:

Inspector General: Investigates violations of federal laws, as related to departmental programs, which may have connections to crimes such as trafficking.

4. Department of Homeland Security:

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI): Investigates cross-border criminal activity, including allegations of sex and labor trafficking of adults and children in the United States.

5. Department of Defense:

Defense Criminal Investigative Service Army Criminal Investigation Command Naval Criminal Investigative Service Air Force Office of Special Investigations: Investigate allegations of sex and labor trafficking involving service members, departmental contractors and civilians. Military police organizations investigate prostitution allegations which may be connected to human trafficking.

Prosecutorial agencies:

1. Department of Justice:

U.S. Attorneys Office: Prosecutes all types of federal crimes, including trafficking-related offenses, that fall within its jurisdiction.

Civil Rights Division, Criminal Section: The Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit prosecutes labor trafficking and sex trafficking of adults.

Criminal Division, Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section: Prosecutes federal child sexual exploitation offenses, including child sex trafficking, typically in partnership with the relevant U.S. Attorney's Office.

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