



The University of Texas at San Antonio
Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice

Polaris Data Analysis Report

By:

Marie Skubak Tillyer, Ph.D.

Michael R. Smith, J.D., Ph.D.

Rob Tillyer, Ph.D.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Polaris is a non-profit organization dedicated to the global fight against modern slavery. Since 2007, it has operated the National Human Trafficking Hotline with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In November 2018, researchers from the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) received a grant from the Center for Investigations and Network Analysis at George Mason University (a DHS-funded Center of Excellence) to analyze the Polaris hotline data for patterns and trends that might inform DHS efforts to investigate and prosecute individuals and organizations engaged in human trafficking and to improve services provided to victims of trafficking.

This report details the results of an analysis conducted by the UTSA research team of approximately six and half years of data - January 2012 through July 2018 - collected by Polaris through the National Hotline. These data represent 241,085 signals received by the hotline arrayed across 147,819 cases. Cases may include multiple signals, victims, or exploiters and may or may not meet Polaris criteria for inclusion as a human trafficking case. A case is identified in the data as trafficking-related if it involves commercial sex or labor combined with elements of force, fraud, or coercion, or potential commercial sex involving a minor. Approximately 29 percent of the cases represented in the Polaris data involved human trafficking while most (64%) did not. Another six percent involved labor exploitation that did not rise to the level of trafficking.

The number of signals received by Polaris has increased each year since 2012. Across the six and half year period represented in this study, the number of signals received more than doubled from about 19,000 signals in 2012 to more than 46,000 in 2017. Most signalers were community members contacting Polaris to report suspicious activity (32.9%). Potential trafficking victims comprised the second highest category of individuals who contacted the hotline (12.3%), but signals came from a wide array of sources including family members or friends of a victim, anti-trafficking organizations, law enforcement officers, attorneys, and employees of various industries where trafficking is prevalent (e.g. airlines, trucking).

Most human trafficking cases represented in the data involved sex trafficking (72%), particularly if the case included a victim who was a minor. Eighty-one percent of cases involving minors were identified as sex trafficking-related; an additional 3% of minor-involved trafficking cases involved both sex and labor trafficking. Altogether, the data set contained more than 10,000 cases involving sex trafficked minor victims. Labor trafficking was more prevalent among cases with only adult victims than among juvenile-involved cases (17% for adults vs. 10% for minors).

The illicit massage or spa business dominated the industries represented in sex trafficking cases. Almost 9 percent of cases associated with an industry involved the massage business. Hotels/motels, internet-based commercial sex, residence-based commercial sex, and escort services rounded out the top five sources for sex trafficking. On the labor trafficking side, domestic work, traveling sales crews, and the restaurant industry were the most frequent industries associated with labor trafficking.

While most cases did not specify the relationship between the victim and the exploiter, intimate partners were the most frequent exploiters of victims in those cases where the relationship was identified. Family members and organized crime groups also were likely to be identified as exploiters in the trafficking cases. Notable organized crime groups represented in the cases data set included various motorcycle gangs, Bloods, Crips, MS-13, and white supremacist groups. Women were more likely than men to be identified as victims in trafficking cases (77.6%), and this was particularly true in sex or combined sex and labor trafficking cases. The median age of persons when they first were trafficked was 17. Overall, sex trafficking victims were younger than labor trafficking victims. Most trafficking victims whose race or ethnicity was known were Latinx (33%). Asians (26%) and Whites (17%) comprised the next two highest racial/ethnic groups found among victims.

Most victims did not have associated risk factors for trafficking; however, the most commonly occurring risk factors included recent migration/relocation, substance abuse, runaway status or homelessness, mental health problems, unstable housing, and involvement with the welfare system. Examining risk for recurrence in the data as a human trafficking victim (i.e., appearing as a victim in two or more human trafficking cases) using multivariate regression revealed that prior involvement in the sex industry was the strongest risk factor for victimization recurrence. Status as a runaway or homeless youth, being an unaccompanied minor refugee, or those who previously were abducted also were predictors of recurrence.

Polaris is a victim-centered organization, and its referral and reporting practices reflect these priorities. Most referrals of callers by Polaris to a third party were to an anti-trafficking organization. And while most cases were not reported to law enforcement (approximately 30% of cases involved a report to law enforcement), the *Reports* data revealed that when Polaris itself made a report, 91% of those reports were made to a law enforcement agency. Polaris was more likely to report a case to law enforcement if it involved a minor, the caller directly observed suspicious activity, and if the location type was a residence or a hotel/motel.

Recommendations

- Improve data quality in key areas
 - Increase the collection of data on how the caller learned about the hotline
 - This may allow for improved marketing/awareness strategies about the hotline
 - Improve documentation of risk factors among victims
 - Would allow for improved prevention/outreach efforts to vulnerable populations
 - Collect more information on the access points (systems, locations, people) to trafficking across victims
 - Would allow for improved prevention/outreach efforts at key access points
 - Improve exploiter data especially related to exploiter affiliations to organized crime or related groups
 - Consider explicitly asking about the involvement of organized crime to improve investigative leads and reduce harm across multiple victims
- Improve communication with law enforcement
 - Develop more victim-centered law enforcement contacts and partners

- Improve follow-up capabilities with law enforcement to better understand the needs of law enforcement to pursue investigations based on Polaris tips

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since 2007, Polaris, a non-profit organization dedicated to the global fight against modern slavery, has operated the National Human Trafficking Hotline with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As the result of its hotline operations, Polaris has developed a rich data set on the signals it has received from the hotline, which represent a unique opportunity to gain insights into reported human trafficking activity, victims, and suspects through a comprehensive, systematic analysis of its data.

In November 2018, researchers from the University of Texas at San Antonio received a grant from the Center for Investigations and Network Analysis at George Mason University (a DHS-funded Center of Excellence) to analyze the Polaris hotline data for patterns and trends that might inform DHS efforts to investigate and prosecute individuals and organizations engaged in human trafficking and to improve services provided to victims of trafficking. The UTSA research team met with Polaris and negotiated a data-sharing agreement under which Polaris provided its hotline data for the purposes outlined above.

This report details the results of an analysis of approximately six and half years of data collected by Polaris through the National Hotline. The report is organized into six sections. The first section describes the research questions and analytic methods that informed the project and the analyses that follow. The next section describes hotline operations, including requirements and protocols related to reporting cases to law enforcement. The third section describes the aforementioned Polaris data files, beginning with signals received to the hotline and textline (Signals data), followed by substantive situations reported to NHTH (Cases data). The remainder of Section III focuses specifically on human trafficking cases, including a description of potential victims and exploiters (Case Contact Roles data), referrals to service providers (Referrals data), reports made to law enforcement and non-law enforcement agencies (Reports data), and outcomes from tips to law enforcement or referrals to service providers on human trafficking cases (Outcomes data). Section IV employs bivariate and multivariate regression analyses to identify factors that predict whether a report is made to law enforcement. Section V aggregates the Polaris human trafficking cases to the county-level using U.S. Census FIPS codes and describes the distribution of human trafficking cases across counties in the United States. Finally, Section VI summarizes key trends in human trafficking and offers recommendations for how to improve data quality and prioritize strengthening relationships with key law enforcement agencies.

METHODS

In January of 2019, the UTSA research team received seven data files from Polaris summarizing information on signals, cases, case contact roles, sites of exploitation, outcomes, referrals, and reports to law enforcement and non-law enforcement agencies obtained during Polaris's regular interactions with individuals contacting the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH). The study timeframe is January 1, 2012 through July 31, 2018 and is defined by the reported month and year in the *Cases* dataset (Table 1 below). This information is not part of a systematic social survey, but rather represents information classified over 120 standardized fields using detailed standards and definitions based on individuals' accounts of their own experiences and that of

their friends, family members, and community members. The data represent what those who contacted the NHTH and chose to disclose; victims and third parties reporting through these platforms were not asked a set of standardized questions but rather provided information they were comfortable sharing to Polaris, which was focused on getting them the help they needed. Table 1 summarizes the original data files.

Table 1: Summary of Original Data Files

Data Files	N	# of Variables	Description	Date
Signals	241,085	24	All substantive signals to the hotline and textline on cases representative of all substantive situations.	Jan 2012 – Jul 2018
Cases	149,631	42	All substantive situations reported to NHTH, including situations completely unrelated to human trafficking and those which are at high risk for human trafficking.	Jan 2012 – Jul 2018
Sites of Exploitation	68,701	10		Jan 2015 – Jul 2018
Case Contact Roles	60,137	35	Individual potential victims and potential exploiters who contacted the NHTH or were reported to the NHTH in association with cases which were assessed as having indicators of human trafficking OR labor exploitation.	Jan 2015 – Jul 2018
Referrals	48,822	7	All referrals made to service providers on cases representative of all substantive situations.	Jan 2015 – Jul 2018
Reports	13,928	6	All reports made to law enforcement on cases representative of all substantive situations.	Jan 2015 – Jul 2018
Outcomes	7,624	7	Outcomes from tips to law enforcement or referrals to service providers which were reported to NHTH.	Jan 2015 – Jul 2018

The findings reported below were informed by a number of research questions that guided the analysis:

1. What is the nature and comprehensiveness of the Polaris hotline data? What data fields are collected, where are data missing, and how can data collection through the hotline be improved consistent with Polaris’ mission and resources?
2. What are the temporal and geographic patterns of human trafficking activity represented in the Polaris data?
4. What are the characteristics of human trafficking victims?
5. Are there patterns of repeat victims?

The data were analyzed using a variety of descriptive, bivariate, and multivariate techniques. Descriptive statistics – including frequencies, percentages, means, and medians – are reported in the subsequent sections to summarize the various fields in the Polaris data. Bivariate analyses are used to show the relationship between two fields, revealing how values on one field vary depending on values on the other field. Finally, multivariate regression analyses are used to simultaneously take into consideration the effects of multiple variables on an outcome.

HOTLINE OPERATIONS

The National Human Trafficking Hotline operates twenty-four hours a day seven days a week.¹ The Hotline can be contacted via phone, text, web chat, email, and through an online reporting form. The primary purpose of the Hotline is to serve victims and survivors of trafficking; their safety, needs, and preferences are prioritized. Because the Hotline takes a victim-centered approach, decision-making is intended to mitigate any potential adverse consequences to victims.

When someone calls the Hotline, an interactive voice response system allows him or her to select several options that will place them in one of four queues: English General, Spanish General, English Crisis, and Spanish Crisis. Calls in the crisis queues are prioritized above calls in the general queues and are answered first. All signals are answered by highly trained Hotline Advocates who will first announce themselves and then assess for safety, conduct a needs assessment and trafficking assessment, and then provide referrals, report to law enforcement, and/or conduct other follow up as needed. The amount and type of information collected greatly depends on the safety of the signaler and the length and purpose of the signal. For example, a survivor in crisis may provide limited details, whereas a community member providing a tip may offer a significant amount of information. Hotline response depends on the nature of the signal. If the case involves a minor (regardless of severity or nexus to the situation) or is deemed urgent, a Hotline Supervisor (managing the Hotline shift at the time) will review the case and assign a report and/or additional appropriate follow up to occur within 0-2 hours. All other cases are reviewed within 24 hours by the Case Response Specialist Team, which makes nuanced reporting decisions and ensures a holistic case response.

Referrals for services are generally handled by the Hotline Advocates on the signal. If the potential victim or survivor is encountering barriers to accessing services, the case may require additional callouts or troubleshooting by additional team members. Unless the signaler prefers otherwise, Hotline Advocates typically “warm transfer” them in with service providers. This involves speaking with the service provider before the signaler is transferred so that background information can be communicated. The Hotline Advocates provide unique referrals to signalers based on the nearly 3,000 organizations listed in the National Referral Directory. Advocates conduct a radius search (default 25 miles) to find the closest appropriate, trafficking-specific referral while on the signal and then expand it outward as needed. While it is a priority to provide trafficking specific referrals, the Hotline is also able to provide domestic violence, sexual assault, or other related referrals if trafficking-specific organizations are not nearby or a good fit.

¹ The information in this section was provided to the UTSA Research Team by the NHTH Law Enforcement Partnership Manager.

Reporting to Law Enforcement: Hotline Policies

The Hotline is required to report cases to law enforcement if any of the following criteria are present: 1) minor trafficking, 2) indicators of imminent danger of serious bodily harm or death, 3) active violence heard on the phone and/or the signaler observes active violence against a potential victim during or immediately prior to the call, or 4) signaler is a potential victim of trafficking and requests that the National Hotline make a report on their behalf or anonymously. Hotline employees are mandated reporters and, if reportable information is obtained, are required to report references of child abuse, neglect, and trafficking to law enforcement and/or Child Protective Services. As for all other potential trafficking situations, the Hotline has discretion around reporting a case to law enforcement. As noted above, the Hotline takes a victim-centered approach, so every situation is assessed based on nuanced factors for reporting. Some of the factors considered for reporting are potential victim wishes and age, signaler's proximity to the situation, level of violence, involvement of other potential victims, potential adverse consequences in reporting, and strength of the reporting protocol in the area.

Emergency Referral and Reporting Protocols

When the Hotline reports potential trafficking cases to law enforcement, they are sent to a specialized Reporting Protocol that includes an email distribution list for multiple contacts and agencies. Protocols are ad hoc and are meant to reflect the anti-trafficking response and/or infrastructure in a locality, region, or state. The Hotline works closely with local partners to create protocols that best match the needs of a given community. Some states request a statewide protocol, while others are regional or county based. The approach varies by area, but typically involves identifying a coordinator (official or non-official) who is familiar with the anti-trafficking response in the given area and can suggest appropriate partners who work well with one another and employ a victim-centered approach. The "strength" of the protocol weighs heavily in the decision to report cases in which the Hotline is required to make a nuanced reporting determination. If it is unclear that the contacts on a protocol are victim-centered, or if reporting could ultimately make the situation worse for a potential victim or survivor (e.g., arrest, deportation), the Hotline may elect to not report.

DATA ANALYSIS

Signals Data (January 2012 – July 2018)

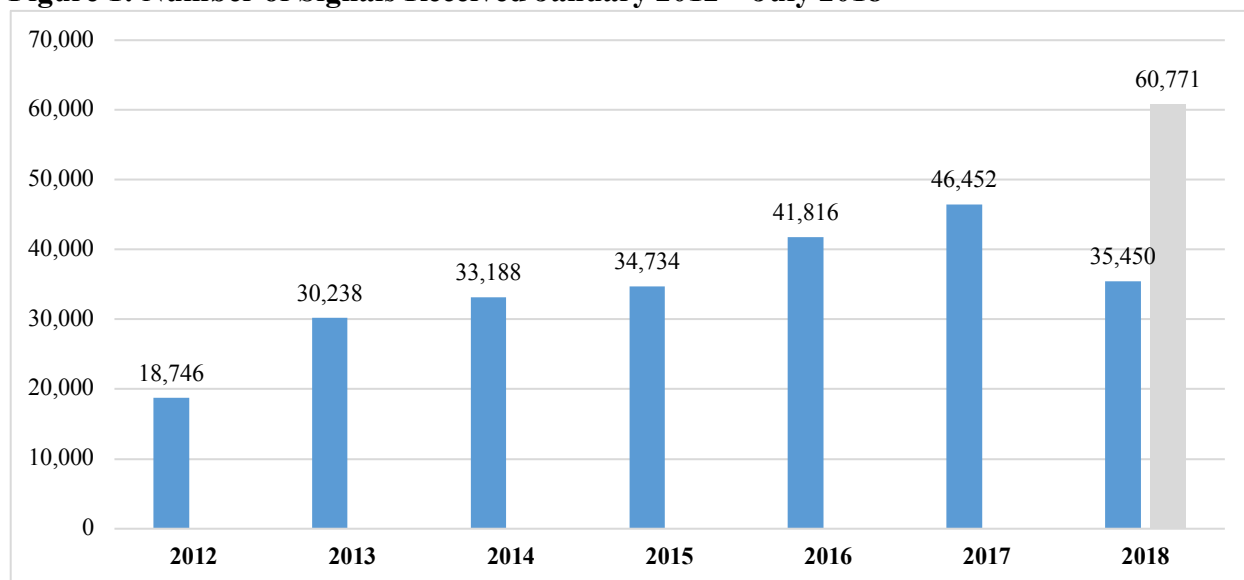
The following summary is limited to the 240,624 signals with a valid recorded year. Note that there are signals included that fall outside of the study timeframe (i.e., in the latter part of 2018), but are associated with cases that fall within the timeframe.

The Signals data represent all substantive signals received by Polaris. Each case has at least one hotline call, webform, or email (i.e., signal) associated with it. All signals will generate a new case or be linked to an existing case. In other words, a case may have multiple signals, some of which may be emails from law enforcement confirming the received a report from Polaris about a particular case, for example. For a summary of the origins of cases (i.e., how Polaris first

learned of a particular unique situation, report, or request for resources that originated through a call, email, text, or online report), please see Table 11 in the Cases section below.

As Figure 1 displays, the annual number of signals received by Polaris has been steadily rising, with a 147.8% increase from 2012 to 2017. Though only 7 months of data were available for 2018, the year was on track to have the most signals received by far, representing an approximate 30.8% increase from 2017 based on projections.

Figure 1: Number of Signals Received January 2012 – July 2018



Note: Only 7 months of cases data were available for 2018. The last blue bar represents signals received about cases January 1 through July 31. The gray bar is the projected number of signals received for all of 2018 based on the number received per month for the first 7 months of the year.

A majority of signals are received via the Hotline, representing 76.2% of all study period signals. That said, signals received via the Hotline represent a diminishing share of signals overall as other types of signals become more prevalent. Of note, the SMS reports as a percentage share of all signals grew substantially from 2017 to 2018 (5.7% to 10.0%), while Hotline signals as a percentage of all signals fell from 70.7% to 62.3%. Online reports as a percentage share of all signals steadily rose from 5.7% to 9.2%, and Webchats began to be used in 2018. To be clear, the raw number of Hotline signals (not pictured) has increased each year (from 16,051 in 2012 to 32,823 in 2017), suggesting that new forms of technology may be allowing additional Signalers to reach Polaris, not necessarily displacing Hotline users.

Table 2: Type of Signal by Year

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Email	8.7%	9.2%	8.4%	9.4%	13.1%	15.1%	15.6%	11.9%
Hotline	85.6%	83.1%	82.0%	79.8%	77.5%	70.7%	62.3%	76.2%
Online report	5.7%	5.5%	4.8%	5.8%	6.0%	8.5%	9.2%	6.7%
SMS report	0.0%	2.2%	4.9%	5.0%	3.4%	5.7%	10.0%	4.8%
Webchat	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	0.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3 summarizes the results of signals by year. As the final row indicates, the quality of these data has improved in recent years, with the missing value rate rising and then declining sharply.² In 2012, 14.36% of signals received by Polaris did not have a result recorded. This rose steadily to 20.2% in 2015, and decreased substantially in subsequent years, with a missing value rate of 1.09% in 2018. Note that the signal result Call Completed - Transferred to Law Enforcement is selected when the Hotline Advocate conferences the caller in with Law Enforcement or with a Government Agency for the purpose of reporting the situation before disconnecting. The signal result Call Completed – Transferred to Service Provider is selected when the Hotline Advocate conferences the caller in with a Service Provider or with a Government Agency for the purpose of accessing services before disconnecting. In addition, callers may receive referrals (see Figure 20 in the Referrals data summary below), and Polaris may make independent reports to law enforcement and service providers (see Table 35 in the Reports data summary below).

Table 3: Signal Result by Year

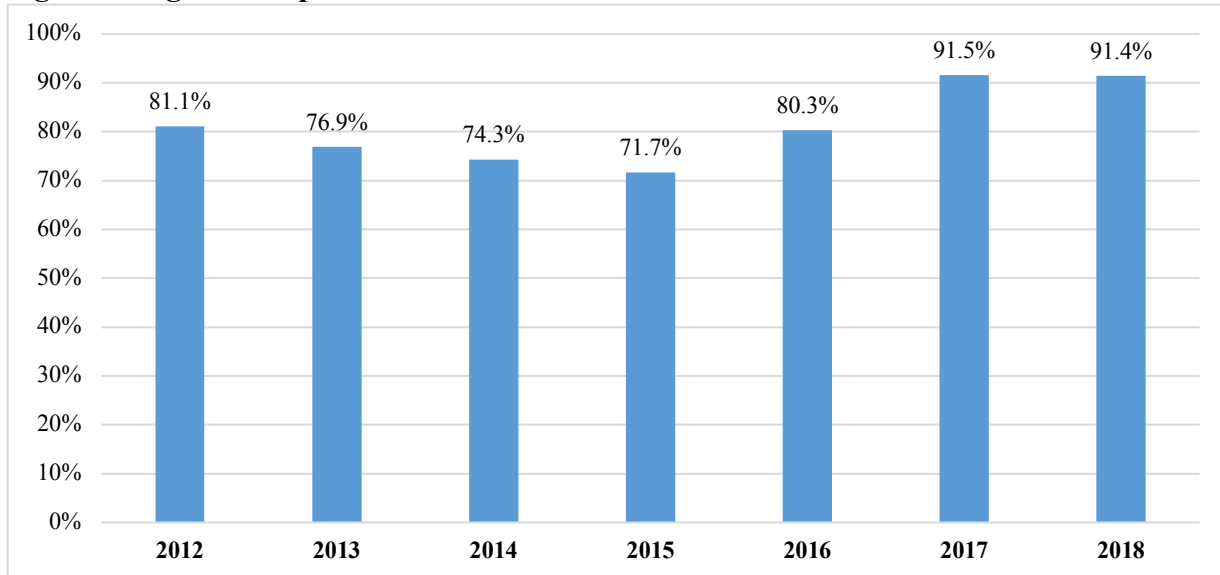
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Call Completed	15,195	23,250	24,656	24,900	28,293	28,179	21,237	165,710
Call Completed - Transferred to Law Enforcement	0	0	0	0	116	455	216	787
Call Completed - Transferred to Service Provider	0	0	0	0	533	1,268	889	2,690
Call Declined by RCS	17	192	190	67	19	0	0	485
Call Disconnected	413	807	983	1,047	697	0	0	3,947
Ended Early- Caller Safety Issue	0	0	0	0	91	162	182	435
Ended Early- Expressed Dissatisfaction	0	0	0	0	271	442	370	1,083
Ended Early- Outside of Scope	0	0	0	0	369	566	448	1,383
Ended Early- Technical	0	0	0	0	997	1,919	1,524	4,440
Caller Hung Up Midway	411	798	987	1,126	709	0	0	4,031
Missed	17	79	385	576	47	317	117	1,538
Online Report	0	0	0	0	4,656	12,603	10,066	27,325
Other	1	14	0	0	28	6	13	62
[MISSING VALUE]	2,692	5,098	5,987	7,018	4,990	535	388	26,708
Total	18,746	30,238	33,188	34,734	41,816	46,452	35,450	240,624
Missing Value Rate	14.36%	16.86%	18.04%	20.20%	11.93%	1.15%	1.09%	11.10%

Note: The “Other” category was created to include several infrequent signal result categories appearing in the data, including Abandon, Busy Signal, Email, No Answer, No Disposition, No Longer in Service, Left Message, Left Voice Mail.

² Polaris reports that this improved quality is likely the result of the implementation of a new phone system, Five9, which prompts Hotline Advocates to log a call result on the phone interface during the course of ending a call.

Figure 2 further summarizes the result of Signals received by Polaris by collapsing several categories described in Table 3 to compute a signal completion rate. Signal completion rates represent the percentage of signals with one of the following four results: 1) Call Completed, 2) Call Completed – Transferred to Law Enforcement, 3) Call Completed – Transferred to Service Provider, and 4) Online Report. As Figure 2 indicates, the signal completion rate has improved considerably in recent years, from a low of 71.7% in 2015 to over 91% in 2017 and 2018.

Figure 2: Signal Completion Rate



Tables 4 describes the languages spoken. English was the dominant language used (93.97%), followed by Spanish (5.39%). The language line was utilized in 3.4% of signals.

Table 4: Language Spoken

	Frequency	Percent
English	226,113	94.0%
Spanish	12,978	5.4%
Chinese - Mandarin	195	0.1%
Russian	153	0.1%
56 Other Languages	1,185	0.5%
Total	240,624	100.0%

Note: Language line was used in 3.4% of signals.

Table 5 summarizes the call duration in minutes for the 183,397 Hotline Calls received by Polaris. The mean duration during the study period was over 12 minutes, though this value was inflated by outliers that were likely data entry errors (0.2% of calls were listed as longer than 90 minutes in length, with a maximum length of 10,132 minutes and a standard deviation of 34.63). The median value, which is a better representation of the typical call, was 8 minutes. The 25th and 75th percentiles also reflect a more accurate representation of the distribution of call duration (as opposed to the standard deviation) given the presence of outliers in the data. Twenty-five percent of calls were 4 minutes or shorter, and seventy-five percent of calls were 16 minutes or shorter.

Table 5: Hotline Call Duration (in Minutes)

Mean	12.46
Median	8.00
Std. Deviation	34.63
Minimum	0.00
Maximum	10,132.00
Percentiles	
25 th	4.00
75 th	16.00

Figure 3 displays how the median call duration time has increased considerably over the study period, more than doubling from 2012 to 2018.

Figure 3: Changes in Median Call Duration Time

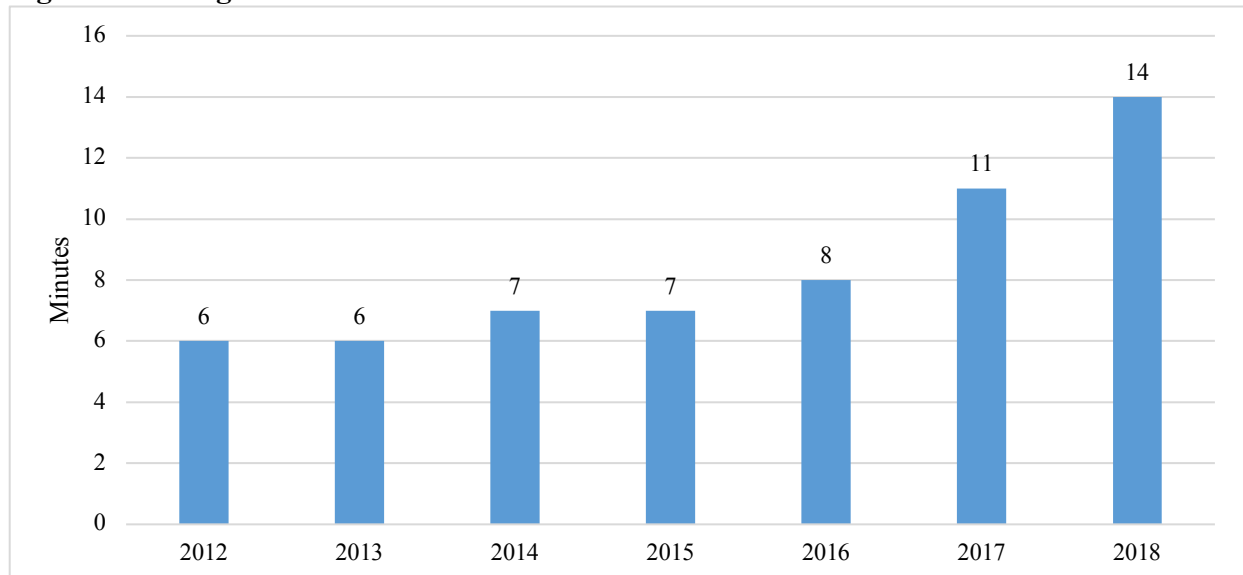


Table 6 summarizes the caller type for all signals, rank ordered by frequency for ease of comparison. Community members represent the most frequent category (32.85%). The three categories of victims (Potential Victim of Trafficking, Potential Victim of Labor Exploitation, and Potential Victim of Other Crime) collectively account for 22.64% of all signal caller types. The various categories representing family or friends of potential victims collectively represent 11.44% of all callers. Note that many of the signals received from law enforcement and other officials are confirmations acknowledging receipt of a report from Polaris about a particular case, not origin signals. The level of specificity collected by Polaris for this field has been stable over time, with 41 of the 45 categories listed below for the full data appearing in 2012, and 44 of the 45 categories appearing in 2017.

Table 6: Signals – Caller Type

	Frequency	Percent
Community Member	79,053	32.9%
Potential Victim of Trafficking	29,611	12.3%
Potential Victim of Other Crime	15,048	6.3%
Family Member of Potential Victim	12,521	5.2%
Potential Victim of Labor Exploitation	9,809	4.1%
Unknown	9,259	3.8%
Family/Friend of Potential Victim of Other Crime	8,508	3.5%
NGO - Anti-trafficking	7,973	3.3%
Federal Law Enforcement	7,002	2.9%
Local Law Enforcement	6,644	2.8%
Student	5,778	2.4%
Government	5,131	2.1%
Friend of Potential Victim	4,962	2.1%
Medical Professional	4,137	1.7%
NGO - General Social Services	3,895	1.6%
Legal Professional	3,320	1.4%
NGO - Other	2,839	1.2%
Other	2,709	1.1%
Faith-based Organization/Representative	2,521	1.0%
Trucker	2,147	0.9%
NGO - DV/SA	1,999	0.8%
[MISSING VALUE]	1,833	0.8%
Educator/School Personnel	1,705	0.7%
Visa Holder	1,620	0.7%
Business	1,585	0.7%
Family/Friend of Potential Victim of Labor Exploitation	1,545	0.6%
Mental Health Professional	1,471	0.6%
Possible Buyer of Commercial Sex	1,157	0.5%
Press/Media	943	0.4%
NGO - Immigrant/Refugee	691	0.3%
Family/Friend/Acquaintance of Potential Controller	688	0.3%
DOJ/BJA Task Force Member	427	0.2%
Military Personnel	377	0.2%
NGO - RHY	310	0.1%
Airline/Airport Personnel	307	0.1%
State Law Enforcement	292	0.1%
Educator	209	0.1%
Rescue and Restore Coalition Member	181	0.1%
Potential Controller	139	0.1%
NGO - Worker Rights	70	0.0%
Asylee/Refugee	59	0.0%
Foreign Government	55	0.0%
Truck Stop Employee	43	0.0%
211/311 Operator	35	0.0%
Bus Industry Employee	16	0.0%
Total	240,624	100.0%

Table 7 summarizes caller gender. Female callers represent the most prevalent category (60.9%). Polaris does have fields to capture Transgender Males, Transgender Females, and Non-Conforming Values in Gender. These fields were collapsed by Polaris into the Gender Minority category as part of the data de-identification process.

Table 7: Caller Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Female	146,652	60.9%
Male	70,566	29.3%
Unknown by Polaris Staff	21,573	9.0%
Gender Minority	1,043	0.4%
[MISSING VALUE]	790	0.3%
Total	240,624	100.0%

As Table 8 indicates, it is unclear how most callers find out about the Hotline; 77.7% of Signals are either missing data for this field or have a value of Unknown. Reducing missing data on this field may prove useful for better understanding and enhancing the effectiveness of various outreach campaigns.

Table 8: How Did the Caller Find Out about the Hotline

	Frequency	Percent
[MISSING VALUE]	147,487	61.3%
Unknown	39,465	16.4%
Referral	13,952	5.8%
Internet	13,519	5.6%
Previously Tracked Campaign	9,228	3.8%
DOS Know Your Rights Pamphlet	4,763	2.0%
Print Media	3,061	1.3%
Training/Conference	2,816	1.2%
Television	2,393	1.0%
Truckers Against Trafficking Outreach	1,471	0.6%
US Government Campaign	1,061	0.4%
Radio	461	0.2%
Billboard	344	0.1%
Film	175	0.1%
National Hotline	141	0.1%
Other	77	0.0%
Social Media Site	75	0.0%
Stickers	43	0.0%
Verite	36	0.0%
Street Outreach	28	0.0%
Delta	12	0.0%
Unete a la Solucion/Join the Solution	11	0.0%
Consejo	3	0.0%
Prior Knowledge	2	0.0%
Total	240,624	100.0%

Cases Dataset (January 2012 – July 2018)

Cases represent all substantive situations reported to Polaris through the NHTH, including situations completely unrelated to human trafficking and those at high risk for human trafficking. Each case has at least one hotline call, webform, or email (i.e., signal) associated with it. All signals will generate a new case or be linked to an existing case. Of the original 149,631 cases, 1,812 had no signals and no Parent Case ID and thus likely represent cases that were merged together by Polaris data analysts and a failure to remove the initial case (i.e., the signal was moved elsewhere and is already accounted for in the data). Polaris advised the UTSA research team to remove these cases, as they represent a lack of “data cleanup” by Polaris in earlier years, and these cases appear elsewhere in the data, leaving 147,819 cases for analysis.

Table 9 summarizes case record type by year. Trafficking cases are those that reference a specific incident/situation of commercial sex or labor with potential elements of force, fraud, or coercion, or potential commercial sex involving a minor. As Table 9 indicates, non-trafficking cases make up the majority (64.3%) of all Polaris cases during the study period. Trafficking cases make up 29.4% of all cases and have been increasing over time, both in sheer volume and as a percentage share of all Polaris cases. There were 9,002 trafficking cases in 2017 compared to 3,390 trafficking cases in 2012, representing a 165.5% increase in five years. Trafficking cases as a percentage share of all cases rose from 25.4% in 2012 to 35.0% in 2018. Conversely, labor exploitation cases have decreased over time, both in terms of raw numbers (from 1,204 in 2012 to 984 in 2017) and as a percentage share of all cases (from 9.0% to 3.1% in 2018). Figure 4 visually displays these trends. Note that the 2018 numbers only include cases through July.

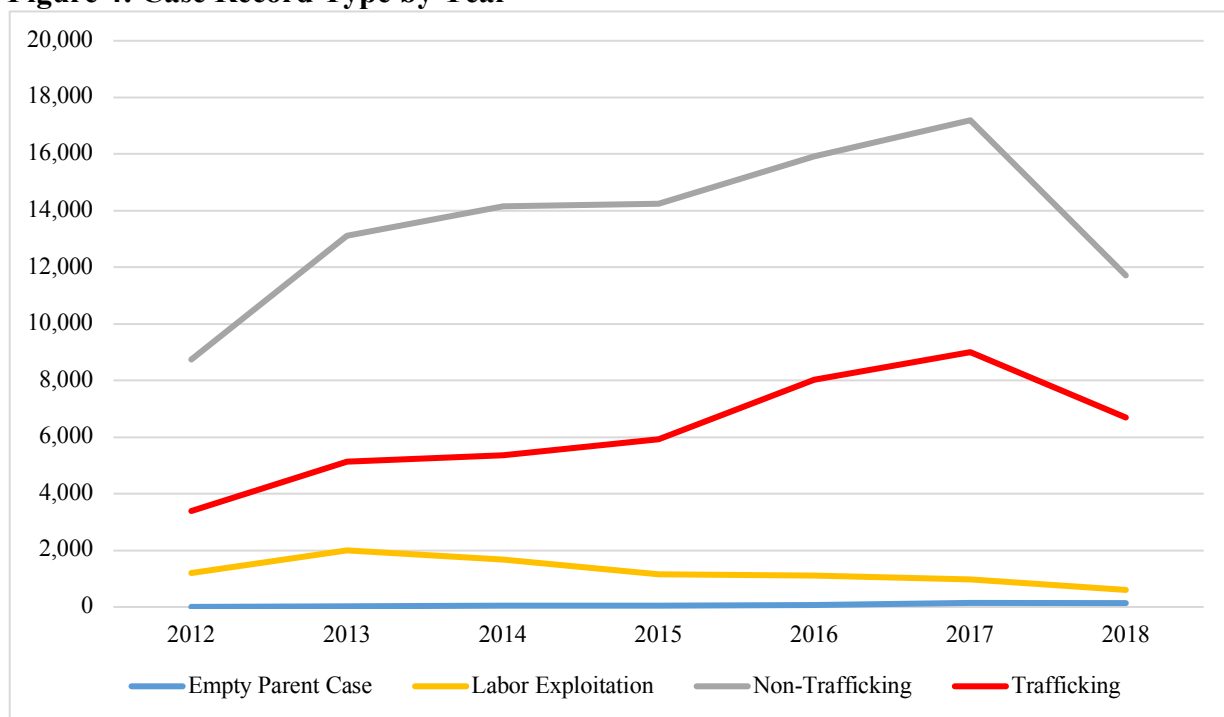
Table 9: Summary of Full Cases Dataset: Case Record Type by Year (N=147,819)

	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		Total	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Empty Parent Case	3	0.0	22	0.1	52	0.2	46	0.2	76	0.3	144	0.5	132	0.7	475	0.3
Labor Exploitation	1,204	9.0	1,999	9.9	1,683	7.9	1,151	5.4	1,115	4.4	984	3.6	603	3.1	8,739	5.9
Non-Trafficking	8,742	65.5	13,105	64.7	14,161	66.6	14,251	66.7	15,916	63.3	17,193	62.9	11,714	61.2	95,082	64.3
Trafficking	3,390	25.4	5,129	25.3	5,356	25.2	5,930	27.7	8,021	31.9	9,002	32.9	6,695	35.0	43,523	29.4
Total	13,339	100	20,255	100	21,252	100	21,378	100	25,128	100	27,323	100	19,144	100	147,819	100

Human Trafficking Cases (January 2012 – July 2018)

The remainder of this section describes the 43,523 human trafficking cases. Trafficking cases reference a specific incident or situation of commercial sex or labor with potential elements of force, fraud, or coercion, or potential commercial sex involving a minor. There are four³ forms of potential trafficking listed for the trafficking cases. Table 10 describes the form of potential trafficking for cases, distinguishing between cases involving a minor and cases not involving a minor. Sex trafficking makes up the majority of all trafficking cases (71.94%), and a small percentage of cases include both sex trafficking and labor trafficking (3.87%). Cases involving minors are more likely to be sex trafficking cases, relative to those that do not involve minors (81.16% compared 68.1%).

Figure 4: Case Record Type by Year



³ In the original Polaris data, there was an “Other” category and an “Other/Not Specified” category. Because there were very few cases (n=13) were in the “Other” category, these two categories are collapsed.

Table 10: Forms of Potential Trafficking in Cases Dataset (N = 43,523)

	Cases Not Involving Minors		Cases Involving Minors		All Trafficking Cases	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Sex	20,864	68.1%	10,447	81.16%	31,311	71.94%
Labor	5,198	17.0%	1,284	9.98%	6,482	14.89%
Sex and Labor	1,251	4.1%	433	3.36%	1,684	3.87%
Other/Not Specified	3,338	10.9%	708	5.50%	4,046	9.30%
Total	30,651	100.0%	12,872	100.00%	43,523	100.00%

Table 11 describes the origin of the trafficking cases in the Polaris data. This is different from the information in Table 2, which summarized all signals. Table 11 focuses on trafficking cases only and the initial signal that generated a new trafficking case. Hotline calls represent the overwhelming majority of origin signals for trafficking cases (80.8%), followed by online reports (13.6%).

Table 11: Case Origin of Trafficking Cases

	Frequency	Percent
Hotline	35,174	80.8%
Online Report	5,910	13.6%
SMS	1,229	2.8%
Email	1,129	2.6%
Web Chat	81	0.2%
Total	43,523	100.0%

Recall that Table 2 indicated that despite the increase in Hotline calls each year, they were a diminishing percentage of overall signals received by Polaris, dropping from 85.6% of all signals in 2012 to 62.3% in 2018. Figure 5 displays the case origin of trafficking cases by year and a slightly different picture emerges. Specifically, Polaris human trafficking cases have originated from the Hotline about 80-85% of the time. The only exception to this is for the first seven months of 2018, during which 74.2% of human trafficking cases originated from the Hotline. In sum, the Hotline has consistently been the primary origin of trafficking cases.

Figure 5: Case Origin of Trafficking Cases

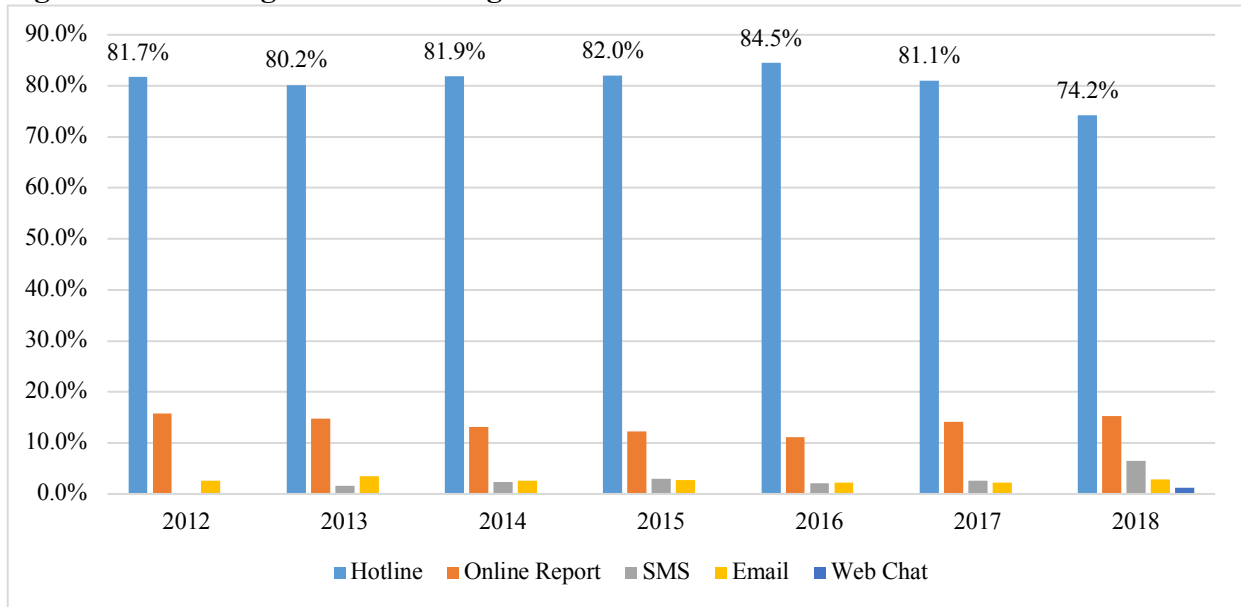


Figure 6 summarizes the color-coded category of the case. Cases are categorized based on the answer to the question, “What was the caller’s primary reason for calling?” If a case could fit into multiple categories, Polaris staff choose the code that best represents the primary purpose for the call, the more urgent request, or the situation/request most related to human trafficking. The majority of calls (67%) fell under the Tip/Intelligence category, indicating a potential human trafficking situation. About a quarter of the calls were Referrals (24%) in which the caller requests a referral for services for a potential victim of trafficking. Seven percent of calls were in the Crisis category and involve an immediate need for assistance for a potential victim of trafficking, and are described in detail below.

Figure 6: Color-Coded Category of Case

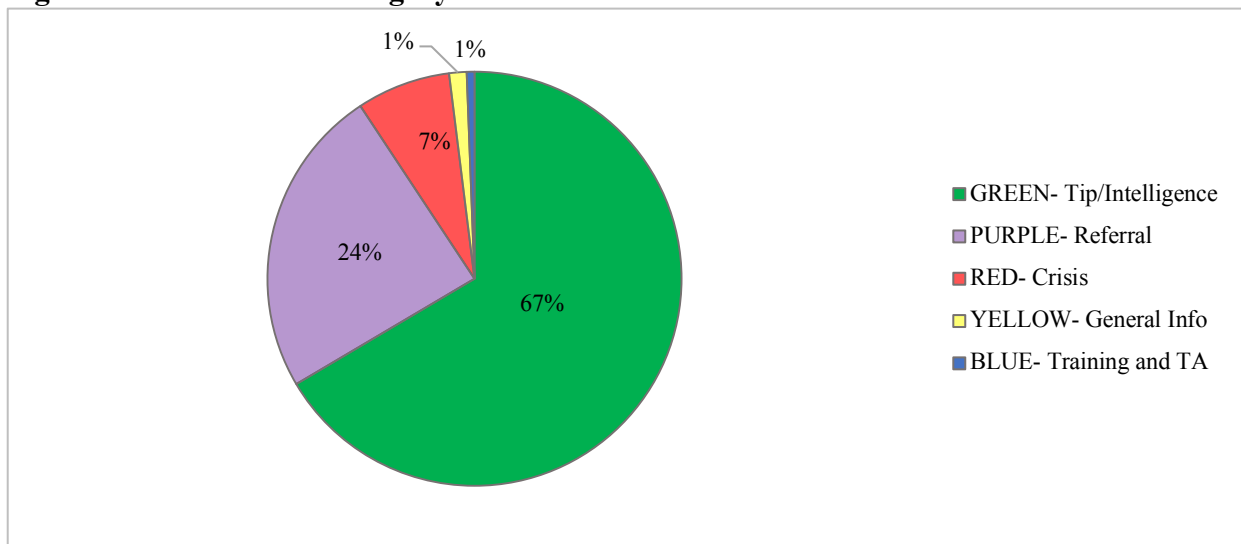


Figure 7 further describes the 7% of human trafficking cases in Figure 5 that fall into the Crisis category. This field was only available in crisis cases and describes the caller’s request, even if Polaris was unsuccessful in obtaining that form of assistance on the case. The most common request was for Emergency Shelter (50.5%) where the caller is in immediate need of emergency shelter after leaving a potential human trafficking situation and may encounter significant risk/danger if shelter is not obtained. Nearly 27% of crisis cases involve an extraction request in which the caller was contemplating or planning to leave a potential human trafficking situation and needed assistance to do so (e.g., safety planning, risk assessment, identifying options, coordinating services, or law enforcement).

Figure 7: Crisis Case in Relation to (RED-Crisis Cases Only, N=3,189)

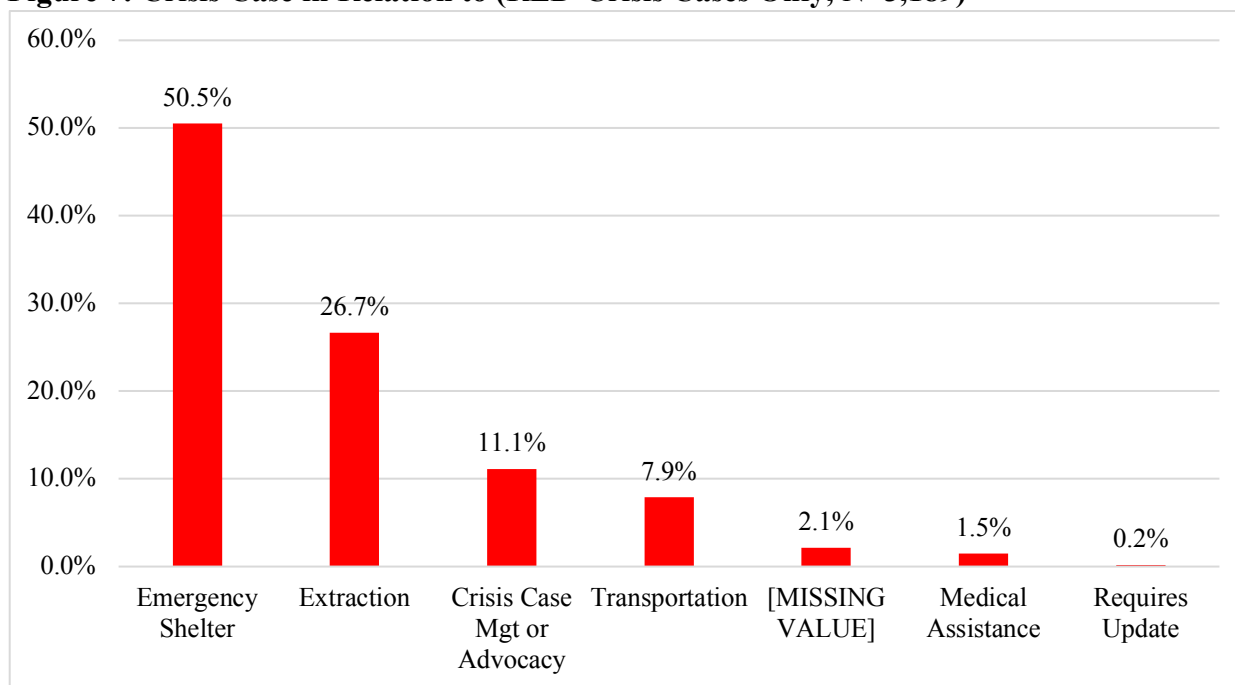


Table 12 summarizes the level of trafficking indicators among human trafficking cases. The overwhelming majority of cases had moderate (56.9%) or high (43.0%) indicators of trafficking (56.9%) (i.e., force, fraud, or coercion in relation to a potential labor or commercial sex situation).⁴

Table 12: Level of Trafficking Indicators

	Frequency	Percent
High Indicators	18,727	43.0%
Moderate Indicators	24,773	56.9%
Low or No Indicators	23	0.1%
Total	43,523	100.0%

⁴ Polaris reports that the 23 cases with low or no indicators represent errors, as all cases designated as “human trafficking” should have moderate or high indicators.

Figure 8 describes the caller’s proximity to the situation in trafficking cases. If a single caller meets more than one category (e.g., both observed suspicious activity AND had direct contact with a victim), only the closest contact is recorded (e.g., Direct Contact with Potential Victim). The exception to this is if there are multiple callers with multiple proximities to the same case. Under those circumstances, more than one category will be recorded. As such, the categories below are not mutually exclusive, as a small percentage of cases (2.3%) had more than one category listed, and 5 cases had blank fields. Among human trafficking cases, Direct Contact with Potential Victim was the most prevalent category, followed by Observation of Suspicious Activity, Victim Self-Report, and Indirect Contact with Potential Victim.

Figure 8: Caller Proximity to Situation in Trafficking Cases

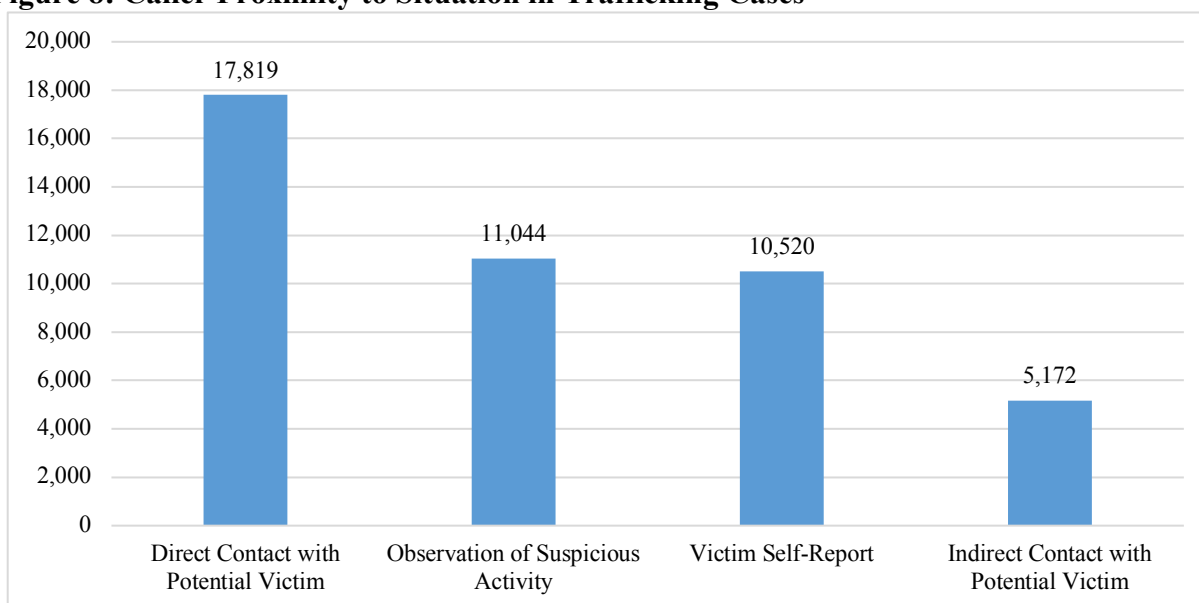


Table 13 summarizes the venue or industry of trafficking cases by the form of potential trafficking. “Not Specified” was the most prevalent venue/industry category (31.8%). An additional 9.1% of human trafficking cases were missing values on this field; 2.5% of cases had a value of “Other” listed for Venue or Industry. When the analysis is limited to human trafficking cases from 2017, 41.4% of cases had venue or industry listed as “Not Specified, missing, or “Other.” In other words, the lack of information on this variable is not driven by the inclusion of earlier years of data. Among sex trafficking cases with a specified venue or industry, Illicit Massage/Spa Business is the most prevalent category, followed by Hotel/Motel-Based Commercial Sex, Internet-Based Commercial Sex, Residence-Based Commercial Sex, and Escort Service/Delivery Service. For cases that include both sex and labor trafficking with a specified venue/industry category, the most prevalent venue/industry category is Illicit Massage/Spa Business. Among labor trafficking cases with a specified venue/industry, Domestic Work is the most prevalent category, followed by Traveling Sales Crews and Agriculture/Farms/Animal Husbandry.

Table 13: Venue/Industry of Trafficking Cases by Form of Potential Trafficking

	All		Sex		Sex and Labor		Labor	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Not Specified	13,849	31.8%	12,479	39.9%	404	24.0%	871	13.4%
[MISSING VALUE - FIELD BLANK]	3,964	9.1%	0	0.0%	14	0.8%	0	0.0%
Illicit Massage/Spa Business	3,807	8.7%	3,555	11.4%	252	15.0%	0	0.0%
Hotel/Motel-Based Commercial Sex	2,937	6.7%	2,902	9.3%	35	2.1%	0	0.0%
Internet-Based Commercial Sex	2,550	5.9%	2,518	8.0%	32	1.9%	0	0.0%
Residence-Based Commercial Sex	2,103	4.8%	2,040	6.5%	63	3.7%	0	0.0%
Escort Service/Delivery Service	1,588	3.6%	1,555	5.0%	33	2.0%	0	0.0%
Pornography	1,453	3.3%	1,421	4.5%	32	1.9%	0	0.0%
Domestic Work	1,412	3.2%	0	0.0%	102	6.1%	1,310	20.2%
Street-Based Commercial Sex	1,351	3.1%	1,333	4.3%	18	1.1%	0	0.0%
Other	1,106	2.5%	947	3.0%	35	2.1%	124	1.9%
Personal Sexual Servitude	778	1.8%	702	2.2%	75	4.5%	0	0.0%
Truck Stop	695	1.6%	690	2.2%	5	0.3%	0	0.0%
Traveling Sales Crews	671	1.5%	0	0.0%	12	0.7%	659	10.2%
Hostess/Strip Club	621	1.4%	440	1.4%	114	6.8%	67	1.0%
Agriculture/Farms/Animal Husbandry	619	1.4%	0	0.0%	16	1.0%	603	9.3%
Restaurant/Food Service	509	1.2%	0	0.0%	39	2.3%	470	7.3%
Bar/Club/Cantina	479	1.1%	364	1.2%	89	5.3%	26	0.4%
Illicit Activities	384	0.9%	0	0.0%	162	9.6%	222	3.4%
Health & Beauty Services	317	0.7%	0	0.0%	48	2.9%	269	4.1%
Peddling Rings	279	0.6%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	277	4.3%
Begging Rings	261	0.6%	0	0.0%	10	0.6%	251	3.9%
Remote Interactive Sexual Acts	236	0.5%	226	0.7%	10	0.6%	0	0.0%
Construction	205	0.5%	0	0.0%	7	0.4%	198	3.1%
Hospitality	161	0.4%	0	0.0%	5	0.3%	156	2.4%
Landscaping Services	148	0.3%	0	0.0%	6	0.4%	142	2.2%
Retail	138	0.3%	0	0.0%	10	0.6%	128	2.0%
Janitorial/Out-Call Cleaning Services	130	0.3%	0	0.0%	7	0.4%	123	1.9%
Sex Tourism	117	0.3%	113	0.4%	4	0.2%	0	0.0%
Manufacturing/Factories	90	0.2%	0	0.0%	4	0.2%	86	1.3%
Arts & Entertainment	87	0.2%	0	0.0%	14	0.8%	73	1.1%
Health Care	69	0.2%	0	0.0%	3	0.2%	66	1.0%
Other Small Business	63	0.1%	0	0.0%	6	0.4%	57	0.9%
Forestry/Reforestation	58	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	57	0.9%
Traveling Carnivals	53	0.1%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	51	0.8%
Professional/Scientific/Tech Services	51	0.1%	0	0.0%	4	0.2%	47	0.7%
Recreational Facilities	44	0.1%	0	0.0%	4	0.2%	40	0.6%
Education	38	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	38	0.6%
Transportation	37	0.1%	0	0.0%	3	0.2%	34	0.5%
Legal Brothel	28	0.1%	26	0.1%	2	0.1%	0	0.0%
Aquafarming/Fishing	18	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	18	0.3%
Pre-school/Child Day Care Service	14	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	0.2%
Mining, Quarrying, Oil/Gas Extraction	5	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	0.1%
Total	43,523	100.0	31,311	100.0	1,684	100.0	6,482	100.0

Note: There were an additional 4,046 trafficking cases that were not classified as Sex, Labor, or Sex and Labor that are not captured in last three columns. All but one of these cases had “Not Specified” or a blank field for the Venue or Industry variable.

Figure 9 summarizes the location type of the human trafficking cases. Note that cases may be associated with more than one location. Of the 43,523 trafficking cases, 2,934 had two or more types of locations recorded. Location type is missing for many human trafficking cases; 20,799 cases are either missing values or listed as “Not Specified” or “Other” on this field. Of those with a specified location, business is the most prevalent category, followed by residence, website/internet location, and hotel/motel.

Figure 9: Location Type of Trafficking Cases

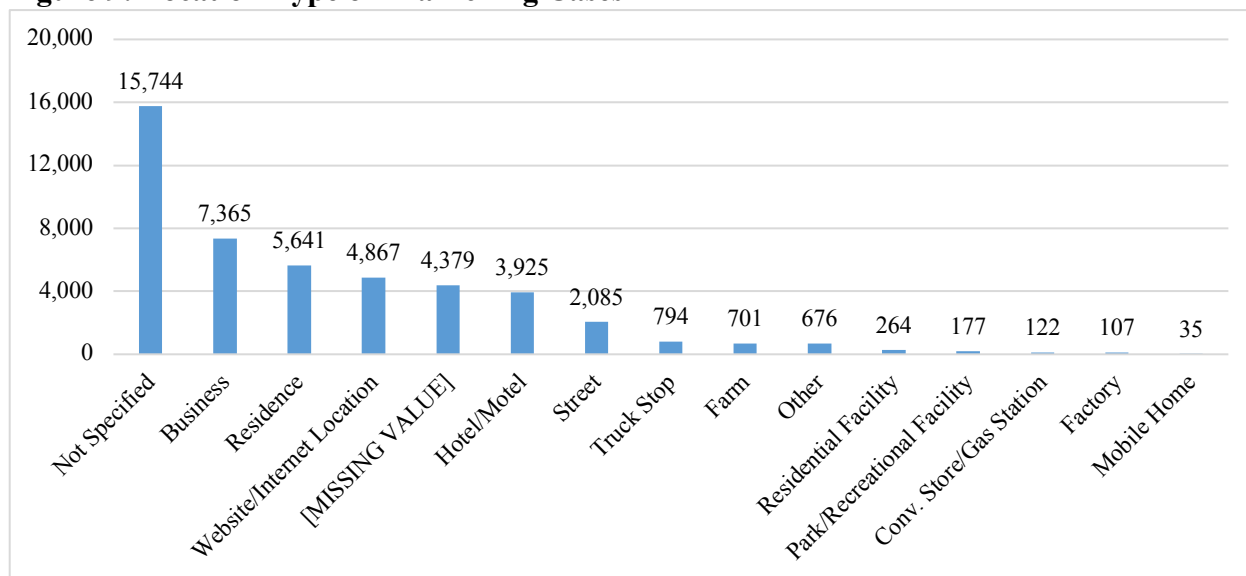
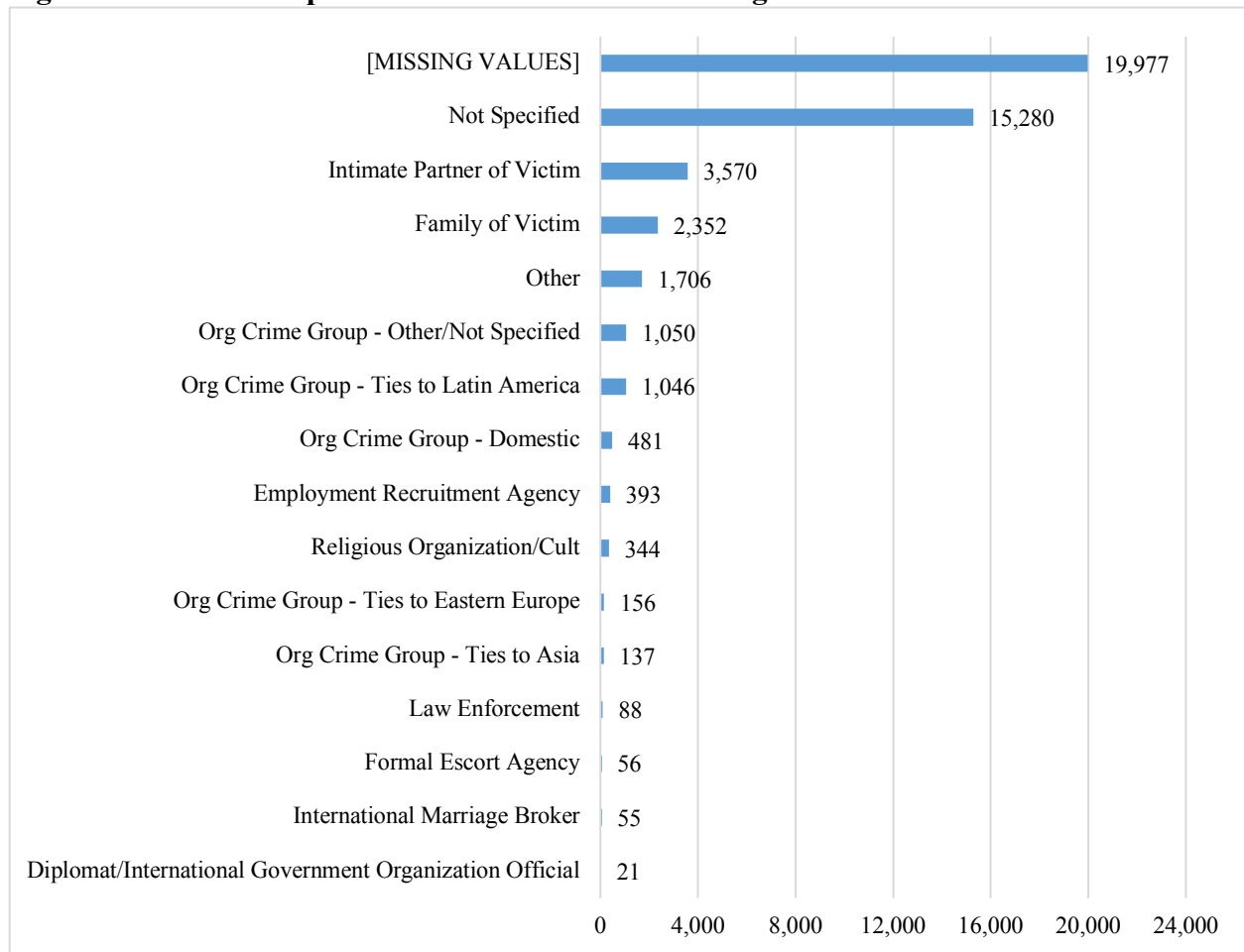


Figure 10 describes Notable Exploiter Affiliations of the trafficking cases. This variable captures potential connections the controller has with organized crime, groups facilitating trafficking/exploitation, and the relationship of the potential controller to the potential victim(s). Trafficking cases may have more than one notable exploiter affiliations. Of the 43,523 trafficking cases, 1,810 had two or more notable exploiter affiliations recorded. An overwhelming majority of trafficking cases (84.9%) were either missing information on this variable or were listed as Not Specified or Other. Among trafficking cases with a specified notable exploiter affiliation, Intimate Partner of Victim was the most prevalent affiliation, followed by Family of Victim. Approximately 6.6% of trafficking cases had organized crime affiliations. Note that Polaris operates under the FBI definition of organized crime as “any group having some manner of a formalized structure and whose primary objective is to obtain money through illegal activities.” Polaris staff choose an Organized Crime Group category if 1) the caller expressly states any party involved in the exploitation has connections with a gang, mafia, cartel, or some sort of organized crime group, or 2) there are indicators that there are three or more controllers involved in the exploitation/trafficking and have ties to a certain region/country.

Figure 10: Notable Exploiter Affiliations for Trafficking Cases



Of the 43,523 human trafficking cases, 1.3% had one or more notable organized crime groups listed (e.g., Bloods, Crips, Italian Mafia, Motorcycle gangs, Mexican Mafia, MS – 13, White Supremacist Groups, Zetas, etc.). Table 14 further describes the notable organized crime groups associated with these 556 human trafficking cases. Note that the total sums to greater than 556 because 38 cases had two notable organized crime groups listed and 5 cases had 3 notable organized crime groups listed. Motorcycle gangs were associated with the most human trafficking cases (n=108), followed by Bloods (n=82), and MS-13 / Mara Salvatrucha (n=73).

Table 14: Notable Organized Crime Groups

	Frequency
Barrio 18 / 18th Street / Mara-18	16
Bloods	82
Caballeros Templarios / Knights Templar	1
Crips	50
Familia Michoacana / La Familia	3
Gulf Cartel / Golfos / CDG	8
Italian mafia (general)	24
Latin Kings	24
Mexican Mafia / La Eme / La M	46
Motorcycle gangs (general)	108
MS-13 / Mara Salvatrucha	73
Nortenos	11
Russian mafia (general)	20
Sinaloa Cartel/CDS	14
Surenos/Sur 13/ Surenos X3	13
Tenancingo network	13
Triads	7
White supremacist group (general)	39
Yakuza	3
Zetas / Los Zetas	49

While only a small fraction of human trafficking cases have notable organized crime group affiliations (1.28%), these cases involve significantly more victims than cases with no organized crime group affiliation. Specifically, cases with notable organized crime group affiliations have on average 4.06 victims (based on the Total No. of Potential Victims Described variable in the *Cases* data), compared to 2.39 victims on average for cases with no organized crime group affiliations ($p < 0.001$). If we limit the comparison to the number of potential victims listed in the Case Roles data, cases with notable organized crime group affiliations have on average 1.30 victims listed compared to 0.85 victims listed for those cases without notable organized crime group affiliations.

Table 15 describes the total number of individual victims reported by the caller. If the caller has not physically observed any potential victims, Polaris staff enter 1 potential victim. If the caller references multiple victims or uses plural language to describe victims, but does not or cannot provide a specific number, Polaris staff enter 2 potential victims. The majority of trafficking cases have a single potential victim (69.1%); a small percentage (1%) include over 20 potential victims.

Table 15: Total Number of Potential Victims in Trafficking Cases (based on Cases data)

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	30,093	69.1%	69.1%
2	7,545	17.3%	86.5%
3	2,145	4.9%	91.4%
4	1,001	2.3%	93.7%
5	684	1.6%	95.3%
6	350	0.8%	96.1%
7	190	0.4%	96.5%
8	172	0.4%	96.9%
9	90	0.2%	97.1%
10	276	0.6%	97.8%
11	54	0.1%	97.9%
12	111	0.3%	98.1%
13	40	0.1%	98.2%
14	28	0.1%	98.3%
15	100	0.2%	98.5%
16	41	0.1%	98.6%
17	13	0.0%	98.6%
18	22	0.1%	98.7%
19	5	0.0%	98.7%
20	119	0.3%	99.0%
More than 20	444	1.0%	100.0%
Total	43,523	100.0	

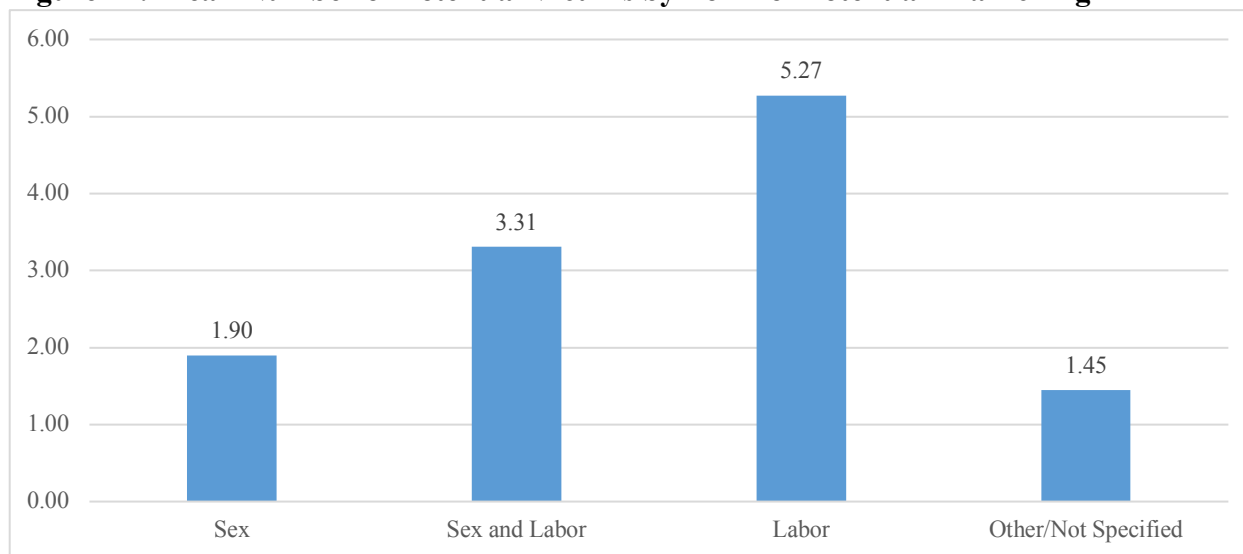
Table 16 displays the mean number of potential victims in trafficking cases by year. The mean number of potential victims in trafficking cases has risen steadily from 2.03 in 2013 to 3.52 in 2018, representing a 73.4% percent increase.⁵

Table 16: Mean Number of Potential Victims in Trafficking Cases by Year

Reported Year	Mean	Frequency	Std. Deviation
2012	2.1	3,390	5.5
2013	2.0	5,129	5.0
2014	2.1	5,356	8.5
2015	2.2	5,930	11.7
2016	2.2	8,021	6.2
2017	2.4	9,002	9.9
2018	3.5	6,695	25.8
Total	2.4	43,523	12.8

Figure 11 summarizes the mean number of potential victims by the form of potential trafficking. Labor trafficking cases have more potential victims on average ($M = 5.3$) than sex trafficking cases ($M = 1.9$).

Figure 11: Mean Number of Potential Victims by Form of Potential Trafficking



⁵ This increase may be the result of changes in how Polaris logs potential trafficking victims. Improvements to the system now allow large volumes of potential victims to be logged much more quickly. Thus, Polaris has been more diligent in logging all potential victims in recent years.

Table 17 describes the current demographics of potential victims at the time of the call based on the *Cases* data. Note that these categories are not mutually exclusive because they are measured at the case-level, not the victim-level (some cases involve both adults and minors, for example). They also are not exhaustive (some cases have no information on victim age, for example). Polaris does have fields to capture Transgender Males, Transgender Females, and Non-Conforming Values in Gender. These fields were collapsed by Polaris into the Gender Minority category as part of the data de-identification process. Sex trafficking cases are more likely than labor trafficking cases to involve victims who are minors. Labor trafficking cases are more likely to involve male victims, while sex trafficking cases are more likely to involve female victims. A majority of labor trafficking cases (63.9%) involve potential victims who are foreign nationals.

Table 17: Potential Victims’ Demographics in Trafficking Cases (based on *Cases* dataset)

	All	Sex	Sex and Labor	Labor
Situation Involves Adults	60.3%	58.1%	70.5%	75.5%
Situation Involves Minors	29.6%	33.4%	25.7%	19.8%
Situation Involves Females	80.2%	86.9%	83.6%	55.9%
Situation Involves Males	12.8%	5.6%	14.5%	48.5%
Situation Involves Gender Minorities	0.7%	0.7%	1.2%	0.4%
Situation Involves US Citizens / Legal Permanent Residents	28.5%	32.9%	26.9%	15.7%
Situation Involves Foreign Nationals	22.3%	13.1%	34.0%	63.9%

Table 18 summarizes the Keyword Trend Locator variable meant to track important trends within situations. Polaris staff select all appropriate keywords from a menu. Of the 43,523 human trafficking cases, 3,356 (7.7%) had no keyword listed. An additional 21,095 had “No Applicable Keyword” selected for that field, though 285 of those cases actually one or more additional keywords listed.⁶ Approximately 15.5% of trafficking cases (N=6,748) had more than one keyword. Visa was the most common keyword; it was recorded for 7.2% of cases. Polaris captures 13 different keywords that contain the word “visa”; collectively these keywords were selected 4,494 times (though note that it is possible for a case to have multiple visa keywords). Backpage was the next frequent keyword in trafficking cases, appearing in 7.1% of cases, followed by Facebook (6.7%). Given that the majority of human trafficking cases do not have any keyword selected, the question becomes whether the Polaris staff are failing to record relevant keywords and/or if the menu of options needs to be more inclusive to capture additional relevant keywords.

Table 18: Keyword Trend Locator Summary

	Frequency	Percent
No Applicable Keyword	21,095	48.5%
Visa	3,149	7.2%
Backpage	3,094	7.1%
Facebook	2,922	6.7%
Foster Care/Child Welfare	2,152	4.9%
Gang/Organized Criminal Syndicate	1,976	4.5%
Hotel/Motel	1,910	4.4%
Commercial-Front Brothel	1,824	4.2%
Drug Running/Drug Smuggling	980	2.3%
Tattoo/Brand	800	1.8%
Bus	730	1.7%
Unaccompanied Foreign Minor	683	1.6%
Instagram	680	1.6%
LGBTQI	674	1.5%
Money Transfer/Credit Card/Bank	618	1.4%
Airline	574	1.3%
Drug Recovery Center	549	1.3%
Truck Stop	528	1.2%
H-2A Visa	374	0.9%
Webcam	371	0.9%
H-2B Visa	348	0.8%
Adoption	312	0.7%
Taxi/Commercial Driving Service	301	0.7%
Traveling Sales Crews	274	0.6%

⁶ Polaris intentionally wanted keywords to be somewhat exclusive, as their primary purpose is to flag cases which may warrant further study or investigation in the future given topics of interest to the Polaris team. They have frequently changed over time and their use has been inconsistent because they were not intended to serve as a primary analytical field, but rather as a baseline parker for potential future research.

U.S. Military	272	0.6%
Forced Marriage	244	0.6%
Refugee/Asylee	231	0.5%
Human Smuggling w/ Ransom	211	0.5%
American Indian/Native American	181	0.4%
Nail Salon	160	0.4%
Begging	136	0.3%
J-1 Visa	132	0.3%
B-1 Visa	131	0.3%
A-3/G-5/NATO-7 Visa	109	0.3%
Chinese Restaurant	104	0.2%
International Marriage Broker	94	0.2%
Train/Rail	86	0.2%
Mobile Brothel	72	0.2%
Revenge Porn/NCDII	71	0.2%
F-1 Visa	71	0.2%
Train/Metro	68	0.2%
K-1 Visa	68	0.2%
H-1B Visa	68	0.2%
Biker Gang	51	0.1%
Au Pair	47	0.1%
Sexual Assault and Agriculture	38	0.1%
Cruise Ships/Cargo Ships	34	0.1%
Carnival Worker	34	0.1%
DC Sales Crew	30	0.1%
Airbnb	27	0.1%
B-2 Visa	25	0.1%
Boomtown	12	0.0%
Prison Labor	11	0.0%
R-1 Visa	11	0.0%
Honor Violence	10	0.0%
Israeli Mall Kiosks	9	0.0%
Indian Restaurant	8	0.0%
Camp	8	0.0%
L-1 Visa	5	0.0%
E-2 Visa	3	0.0%
Drug Trafficking	2	0.0%

Note: Frequencies do not sum to 43,523 and percentages do not sum to 100% because not all trafficking cases have keywords, and cases may have more than one keyword.

Table 19 describes the location of trafficking cases by country. Cases can occur across multiple countries. An overwhelming majority (90.3%) of Polaris trafficking cases are located in the United States only. Of the 43,523 human trafficking cases, 29,850 (68.6%) have one or more valid county FIPS codes; 2,241 trafficking cases span 2 or more U.S. counties.

Table 19: Location of Situation (Country/Countries)

	Frequency	Percent
United States	39,321	90.3%
Unknown	1,290	3.0%
United States and Mexico	368	0.8%
United States and Unknown	357	0.8%
Mexico	168	0.4%
Canada	148	0.3%
Philippines	79	0.2%
Other	1,792	4.1%
Total	43,523	100.0

Note: The “other” category represents 382 different countries/combination of countries that appear in the Polaris data.

Case Contact Roles Data (January 2015 – July 2018)

Polaris creates Case Contact Roles for most identifiable people (i.e., those who are individually distinguishable) involved in trafficking or labor exploitation situations. The following description focuses on the individuals identified in human trafficking cases from January 2015 through July 2018. Of the 54,164 Case Contact Roles associated with human trafficking cases, 68.7% (n=37,211) were potential victims. The remaining 31.3% (n=16,953) were employers/exploiters, which will be described in further detail below.

Potential victims are logged if they are individually distinguishable (based on different names, ages, nationalities, perceived races, etc.). The Case Contact Roles data do not include all potential victims captured by the “Total No. of Potential Victims Described” variable in the Cases data (see Table 14 above). The 37,211 case contact roles listed as potential victims represent 36,753 unique individuals; 411 individuals appeared two or more times in the Case Contact Role data (maximum = 8). These recurring victims are described in more detail below. As Figure 12 displays, the majority of potential victim case contact roles were associated with sex trafficking cases (67.0%), followed by labor trafficking cases (20.9%), and sex and labor trafficking cases (4.9%).

Figure 12: Form of Trafficking Among Potential Victim Case Roles

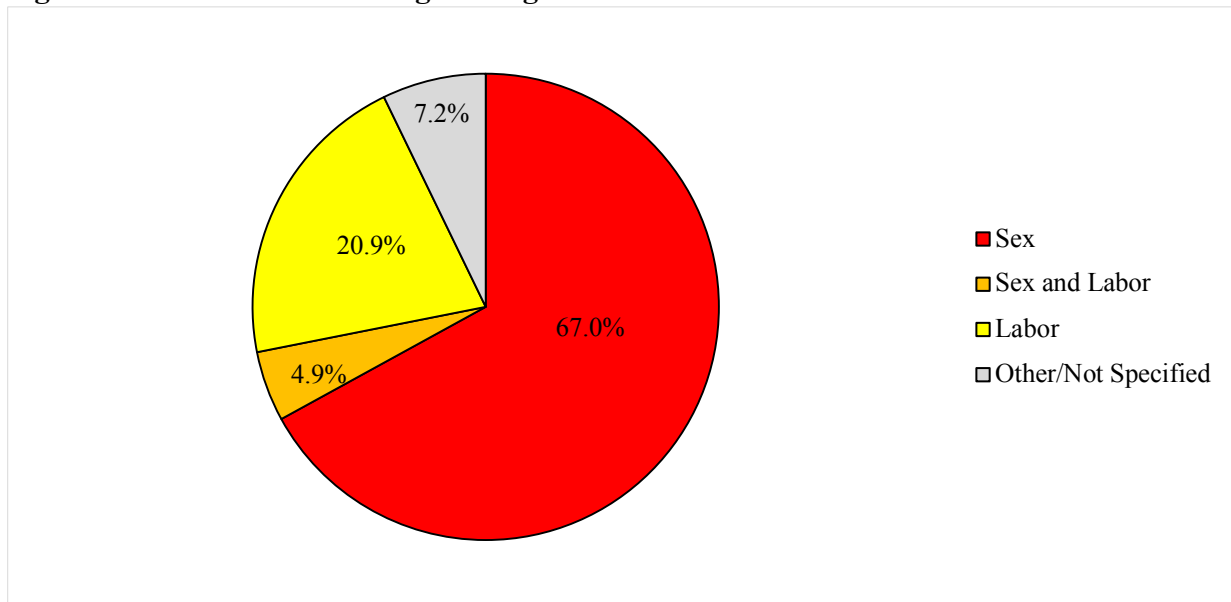
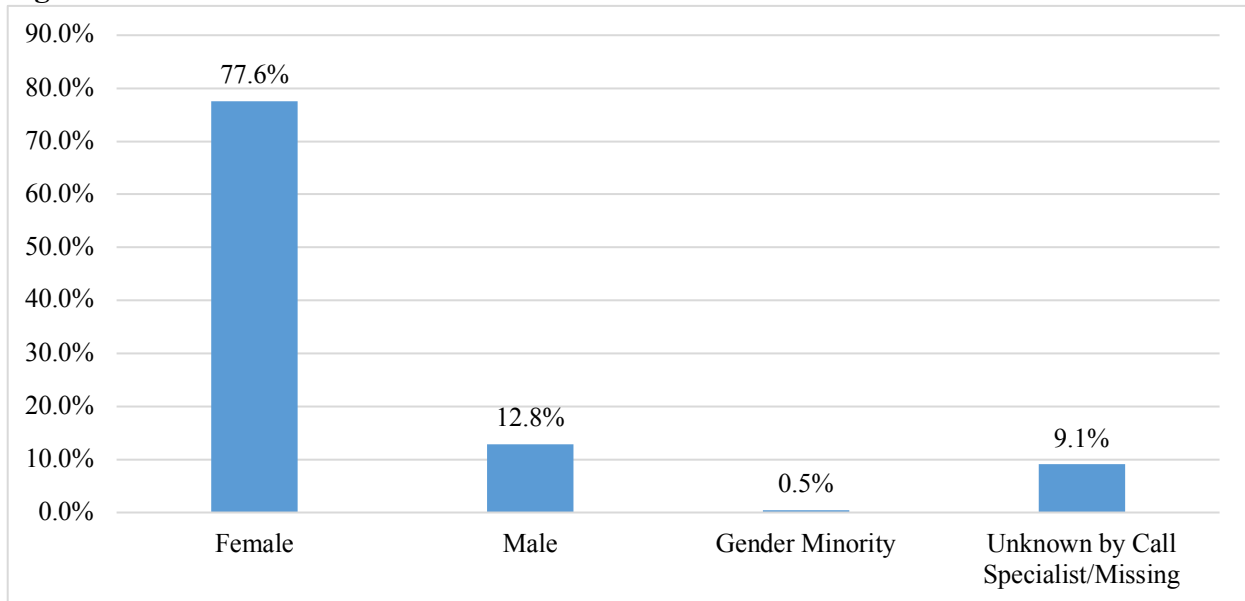


Figure 13 describes the gender of potential victims. An overwhelming majority of potential victims (77.6%) were female.

Figure 13: Gender of Potential Victim Case Roles



Of the 37,211 case contact roles listed as potential victims, 26.4% were younger than 18 years of age upon entering the trafficking situation, while 15.5% were 18 or older (Figure 14 below). The remaining potential victims were either missing values or had a value of Unknown for this field.

Figure 14: Adult/Minor at Start of Exploitation

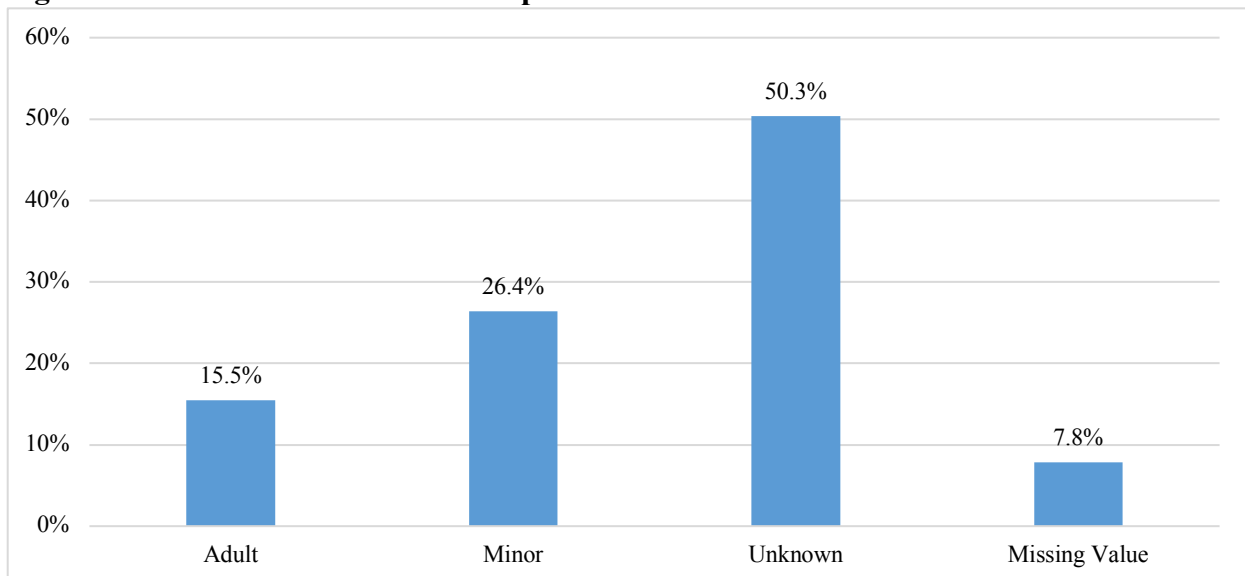


Table 20 further describes the age of potential victims. Age at First Contact tracks the age of the potential victim when recruitment first began or the age of the potential victim when they first met their recruiter and/or exploiter. Age at Entry into Trafficking tracks the age of the potential victim when the first commercial sex act or the first time forced labor/services occurred. There is considerable missing data on these variables, with only 3.5% of potential victims having a valid value for Age at First Contact and 12.8% of potential victims having a valid value for Age at Entry into Trafficking. The mean Age at First Contact is 19.7 years; the mean Age at Entry into Trafficking is 19.2. Logically, one would expect victims to be younger at first contact relative to their age at entry into trafficking, but the statistics below are based on different sample sizes. When we limit the mean computations to victims who have valid values on both variables (N=1,078), there is on average 4.2 months in between initial contact with a recruiter/exploiter and entry into trafficking.

Table 20: Age of Potential Victims

	Age at First Contact	Age at Entry into Trafficking
Valid N	1,285.0	4,777.0
Missing	35,926.0	32,434.0
Mean	19.7	19.2
Median	18.0	17.0
Std. Deviation	9.2	9.1
Minimum	0.0	0.0
Maximum	83.0	85.0
Percentiles		
25 th	15.0	15.0
75 th	23.0	22.0

Figure 15 describes the mean age of potential victims by form of trafficking for those victims with valid values on the Age at First Contact (N=1,285) and Age at Entry into Trafficking (N=4,777) fields. Victims of sex trafficking tend to be younger than victims of labor trafficking.

Figure 15: Mean Age of Potential Victims by Form of Trafficking

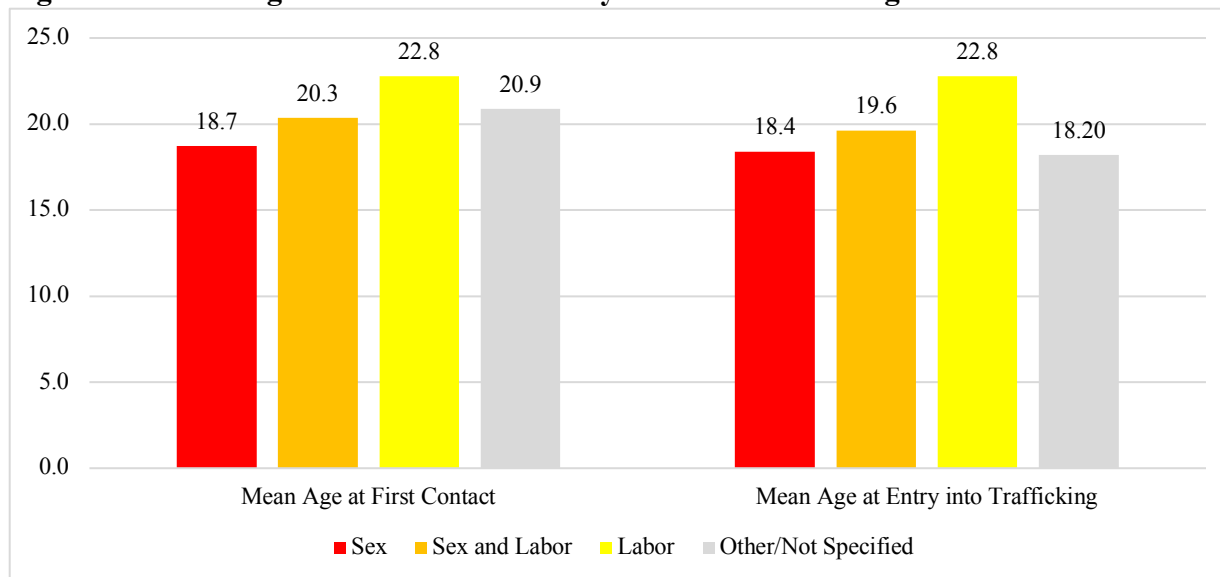


Table 21 describes the race/ethnicity of potential victims recorded in the Case Contact Roles data. For most victims (66.0%), there is no information on race or ethnicity.⁷ For those potential victims with race/ethnicity information available, Latinx is the most prevalent category (11.1%), followed by Asian (8.9%), Caucasian or White (5.8%), and African American or Black (4.3%).

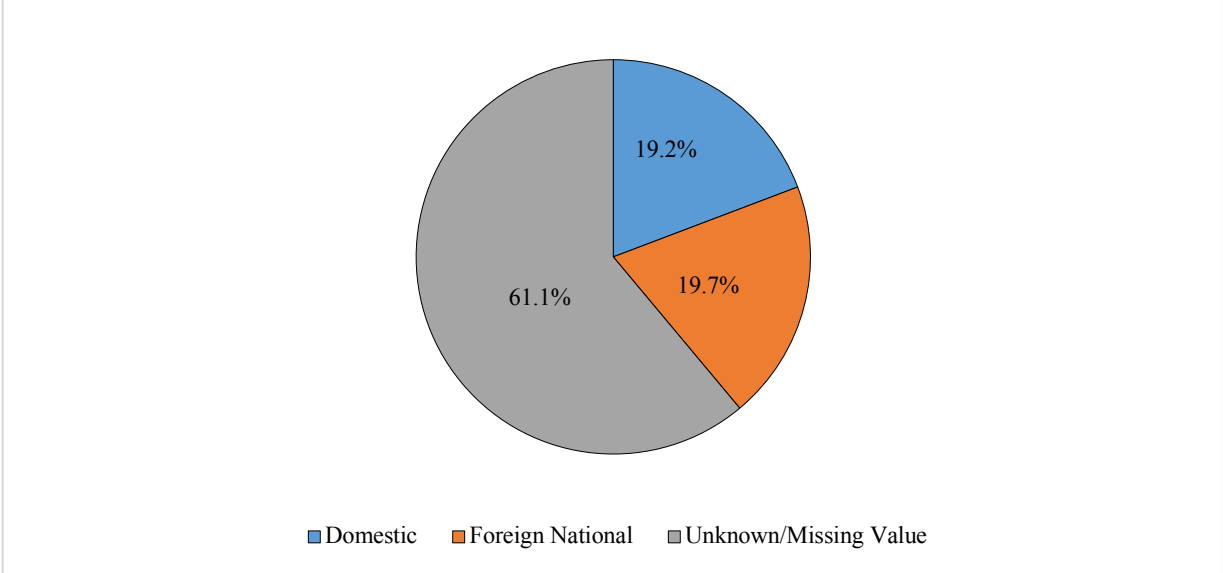
Table 21: Race/Ethnicity of Potential Victims

	Frequency	Percent
Unknown or Missing Value	24,577	66.0%
Latinx	4,127	11.1%
Asian	3,307	8.9%
Caucasian or White	2,145	5.8%
African American or Black	1,606	4.3%
African	592	1.6%
Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic	154	0.4%
Caribbean	111	0.3%
Middle Eastern	92	0.2%
American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous American	89	0.2%
Other	72	0.2%
Two or more categories listed	339	0.9%
Total	37,211	100.0%

⁷ Note that information on victim race/ethnicity is only available if is known and shared by the purpose who contacted the National Hotline.

Figure 16 describes the immigration status of potential victims. The majority (61.1%) of potential victims are missing data on this variable.

Figure 16: Immigration Status of Potential Victims



The Risk Factors/Vulnerabilities field describes various risk factors and vulnerabilities experienced by the potential victims prior to or at the time of entry into the trafficking situation. Table 22 summarizes the risk factors and vulnerabilities among potential victims of human trafficking. Not Specified was the most prevalent category (56.3%), followed by Recent Migration/Relocation (13.2%), Substance Use Concern (4.8%), and Runaway/Homeless Youth (3.3%).

Table 22: Risk Factors/Vulnerabilities Among Potential Victims of Human Trafficking

	Frequency	Percent
Not Specified	20,951	56.3%
Recent Migration/Relocation	4,927	13.2%
Substance Use Concern	1,789	4.8%
Runaway/Homeless Youth	1,216	3.3%
Mental Health Concern	1,129	3.0%
Unstable Housing	1,033	2.8%
Welfare System Involvement	945	2.5%
Child Welfare System Involvement	863	2.3%
Experienced Sexual Abuse/Violence	794	2.1%
Prior Involvement in Sexualized Industry	705	1.9%
Experienced Abuse/Violence (Non-Sexual)	557	1.5%
Physical Health Concern	506	1.4%
Foster Care	493	1.3%
Criminal Record/Criminal History	460	1.2%
Self-Reported Economic Hardship	370	1.0%
Gender/Romantic/Sexual Minority	359	1.0%
Caretaker Substance Use Concern	320	0.9%
Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM)	292	0.8%
Caretaker Involvement in Sexualized Industry	278	0.7%
Recent Financial Debt	259	0.7%
Intellectual/Developmental Disability	258	0.7%
Witnessed Abuse/Violence	166	0.4%
Recent Unemployment/Underemployment	160	0.4%
Gang Involvement	152	0.4%
Juvenile Justice System Involvement	139	0.4%
Negligible/Absent Caretaker	102	0.3%
Recent Loss of Economic Provider	94	0.3%
Adult with Legal Guardian/Conservator	56	0.2%
Illiterate or Semiliterate	33	0.1%

Note: Frequencies do not sum to 37,211 and percentages do not sum to 100% because not all potential victims have Risk Factors, and potential victims may have more than one Risk Factor.

Table 23 describes the number of risk factors and vulnerabilities recorded for potential victims of human trafficking (excluding the Not Specified category). The majority of potential victims (69.4%) had no recorded risk factors or vulnerabilities. Approximately 20.4% of potential victims of trafficking had one risk factor or vulnerability; 10.2% had two or more risk factors or vulnerabilities recorded.

Table 23: Number of Risk Factors/Vulnerabilities

	Frequency	Percent
0	25,841	69.4%
1	7,587	20.4%
2	2,010	5.4%
3	916	2.5%
4	479	1.3%
5	201	0.5%
6	101	0.3%
7	47	0.1%
8	22	0.1%
9	3	0.0%
10	3	0.0%
11	1	0.0%
Total	37,211	100.0%

As noted in Table 23 above, 4.8% of potential victims had 3 or more risk factors or vulnerabilities recorded. Table 24 below compares these victims to those with fewer than 3 risk factors. Compared to other victims, those with three or more risk factors were younger, more likely to be female, have high levels of trafficking indicators, and be a victim in a sex trafficking case. They were also more likely to appear more than once in the Case Roles dataset, indicating that Polaris has information on them being trafficked in more than one situation. These victims' cases were also more likely to have an organized crime affiliation and be reported to both law enforcement and non-law enforcement agencies by Polaris.⁸

⁸ Note that the comparisons made in Table 24 should not be used to infer causality. The number of risk factors listed is likely correlated with the amount of information provided to Polaris, which may help to explain the differences above (e.g., cases with more risk factors have more information about victims and their experiences, thus making it more likely that Polaris can categorize a case as having a high level of trafficking indicators).

Table 24: Victims with Three or More Risk Factors

	Fewer than three risk factors	Three or more risk factors
Average age at first contact	20.01	17.82
Female	77.3%	83.8%
High level of trafficking indicators	47.8%	56.2%
Sex trafficking case	71.3%	84.2%
Recurring victim	2.1%	7.6%
Case has organized crime affiliation	1.9%	3.6%
Polaris reported the case to LE agency	37.0%	52.8%
Polaris reported the case to non-LE agency	12.1%	15.6%
One or more referrals given to callers	40.5%	40.9%

Table 25 describes the noteworthy/common types of people who recruited or enticed the victims of human trafficking into commercial sex or labor/services (Notable Recruiter Type). The most prevalent category was Not Specified/Not Applicable (64.8%), followed by Intimate Partner (8.7%), Family Member/Caregiver (7.1%), and Employer (5.2%).

Table 25: Notable Recruiter Types for Victims of Human Trafficking

	Frequency	Percent
Not Specified/Not Applicable	24,130	64.8%
Intimate Partner	3,232	8.7%
Family Member/Caregiver	2,631	7.1%
Employer	1,921	5.2%
Other	1,545	4.2%
Friend/Acquaintance/Coworker	1,198	3.2%
Labor Recruiter/Contractor	1,014	2.7%
Smuggler	817	2.2%
Other Potential Victim	290	0.8%
Dealer/Illicit Substance Provider	150	0.4%
Landlord	58	0.2%
International Marriage Broker	45	0.1%

Note: Frequencies do not sum to 37,211 and percentages do not sum to 100% because not all potential victims have Notable Recruiters listed, and potential victims may have more than one Notable Recruiter.

Table 26 describes the various recruitment tactics employed by potential recruiters and/or exploiters/traffickers to initially entice a potential victim into commercial sex or labor or services for the 37,211 potential victims of human trafficking in the Case Contact Roles data. The most prevalent category among potential victims was Not Specified (60.8%), followed by Job Offer/Advertisement (10.5%), Intimate Partner/Marriage Proposal (8.8%), and Familial (7.0%).

Table 26: Recruitment Tactics used to Entice Trafficking Victims

	<i>f</i>	%
Not Specified	22,633	60.8%
Job Offer/Advertisement	3,897	10.5%
Intimate Partner/Marriage Proposition	3,284	8.8%
Familial	2,596	7.0%
False Promises/Fraud	2,415	6.5%
Posing as Benefactor	1,843	5.0%
Coercion (Threats, Blackmail, etc.)	1,093	2.9%
Smuggling-Related	999	2.7%
Abduction	958	2.6%
Other	572	1.5%

Note: Frequencies do not sum to 37,211 and percentages do not sum to 100% because not all potential victims have Recruitment Tactics listed, and potential victims may have more than one Recruitment Tactic listed.

Table 27 describes the number of recruitment tactics recorded for potential victims of human trafficking (excluding the Not Specified category). The majority of potential victims (64.1%) had no recorded recruitment tactics. Approximately 26.3% of potential victims of trafficking had one, 7.9% had two, and 1.7% had three or more recruitment tactics recorded.

Table 27: Number of Recruitment Tactics

	Frequency	Percent
0	23,838	64.1%
1	9,796	26.3%
2	2,944	7.9%
3 or more	633	1.7%
Total	37,211	100.0%

The Exploiter Relationship to Victim variable tracks how potential victims define their relationship with their exploiter. Table 28 summarizes these relationships. The most prevalent category was Not Specified (53.8%), followed by Employer (15.5%), Other (12.9%), and Intimate Partner (9.1%).

Table 28: Exploiter Relationship to Trafficking Victims

	Frequency	Percent
Not Specified	20,032	53.8%
Employer	5,752	15.5%
Other	4,808	12.9%
Intimate Partner of Victim(s)	3,382	9.1%
No Other Relationship	3,015	8.1%
Familial Relationship to Victim(s)	2,483	6.7%
Smuggler	772	2.1%
Recruiter (Non-Employer)	710	1.9%
CSEC: No Controller ⁹	419	1.1%
Dealer/Illicit Substance Provider	136	0.4%
Foster Parent of Victim(s)	106	0.3%
Landlord	73	0.2%

Note: Frequencies do not sum to 37,211 and percentages do not sum to 100% because not all potential victims have an Exploiter Relationship listed, and potential victims may have more than one Exploiter Relationship type listed.

Table 29 describes the number of Exploiter Relationship types recorded for potential victims of human trafficking (excluding the Not Specified category). The majority of potential victims (55.0%) had no recorded Exploiter Relationship. Approximately 33.1% of potential victims of trafficking had one, 10.9% had two, and 1.0% had three or more Exploiter Relationships recorded.

Table 29: Number of Exploiter Relationship Types

	Frequency	Percent
0	20,467	55.0%
1	12,316	33.1%
2	4,050	10.9%
3 or more	378	1.0%
Total	37,211	100.0%

⁹ CSEC: No Controller is recorded in sex trafficking situations when it is indicated to the National Hotline that a minor victim of trafficking is engaging in commercial sex independently and does not have a third party trafficker.

The Access Points field tracks systems, institutions, or people the victim interacted with or had access to during the exploitative situation or immediately after/upon escape. Potential victims can have more than one access point. Table 30 summarizes the access points of potential victims of trafficking. The most prevalent Access Point category was Not Specified (62.5%); an additional 1.7% of victims (n=618) had no Access Point listed. Among specified categories, the most prevalent were Interaction with Friends/Family, Interaction with Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice System (10.3%), Access to Health Services (6.7%), and Access to General Social Services (6.6%).

Table 30: Access Points of Potential Victims

	Frequency	Percent
Not Specified	23,239	62.5%
Interaction with Friends/Family	5,274	14.2%
Interaction w LE/Criminal Justice System	3,845	10.3%
Access to Health Services	2,507	6.7%
Access to General Social Services	2,446	6.6%
Access to Mobile Apps/Social Media	1,462	3.9%
Interaction with Child Welfare System	1,404	3.8%
Access to Shelter	1,101	3.0%
Access to Education	917	2.5%
Access to Transportation	865	2.3%
Interaction w Civil Justice/Legal Help	859	2.3%
Potential Buyer of Commercial Sex	505	1.4%
Other	448	1.2%
Interaction with Religious Community	356	1.0%
Interaction with Financial Institutions	156	0.4%

Note: Frequencies do not sum to 37,211 and percentages do not sum to 100% because not all potential victims have Access Points, and potential victims may have more than one Access Point.

Table 31 describes the frequent methods of control and abuse employed by traffickers to compel a potential victim to remain in the trafficking situation for the 37,211 potential victims of human trafficking in the Case Contact Roles data. The most prevalent category was Potential Minor in Commercial Sex (27.7%), followed by Not Specified (23.5%), Other (20.7%), Physical Abuse (15.2%), and Economic – Takes/Withholds Earnings (12.7%).

Table 31: Force, Fraud, and Coercion (FFC) Used Against Victims of Human Trafficking

	Frequency	Percent
Economic - Debt/Quota Related	2,796	7.5%
Economic - Limits Access to Finances	528	1.4%
Economic - Other Abuse	951	2.6%
Economic - Takes/Withholds Earnings	4,729	12.7%
Economic - Threat to Blacklist	643	1.7%
Emotional Abuse - Familial Related	2,187	5.9%
Emotional Abuse - Intimacy Related	2,981	8.0%
Emotional Abuse - Other	449	1.2%
Emotional Abuse - Verbal/Manipulation	3,194	8.6%
Excessive Working Hours	2,057	5.5%
Fraud/Misrepresentation of Job	2,407	6.5%
Induces/Exploits Substance Abuse Issues	4,096	11.0%
Intimidation - Destroys Property	119	0.3%
Intimidation - Displays/Threatens Weapon	1,982	5.3%
Intimidation - Harms Others/Animals	583	1.6%
Intimidation - Other	1,906	5.1%
Isolation - Controls in Public	974	2.6%
Isolation - Creates Distrust of Others	454	1.2%
Isolation - Denies Access to Support	2,793	7.5%
Isolation - Keeps Confined	3,740	10.1%
Isolation - Limits Access to Medical	502	1.3%
Isolation - Moves Subjects Frequently	2,204	5.9%
Isolation - Other	496	1.3%
Monitoring/Stalking	4,125	11.1%
Not Specified	8,748	23.5%
Other	7,708	20.7%
Physical Abuse	5,657	15.2%
Potential Minor in Commercial Sex	10,313	27.7%
Reproductive Coercion	239	0.6%
Restricts Access to/Manipulates Children	420	1.1%
Sexual Abuse	2,997	8.1%
Threat - Other	1,227	3.3%
Threat to Expose or Shame Subject	436	1.2%
Threat to Harm Subject, Family or Other	3,648	9.8%
Threat to Report to Immigration	1,821	4.9%
Threat to Report to Police	513	1.4%
Withholds/Denies Needs or Wants	3,574	9.6%
Withholds/Destroys Important Documents	2,070	5.6%

Note: Frequencies do not sum to 37,211 and percentages do not sum to 100% because not all potential victims have FFC methods listed, and potential victims may have more than one FFC method listed. Note that Potential Minor in Commercial Sex is deemed a method of coercion because of the victim's age.

Table 32 describes the number of force, fraud, and coercion (FFC) methods recorded for potential victims of human trafficking (excluding the Not Specified category). Approximately 24.1% of potential victims had no recorded FFC methods. Approximately 20.4% of potential victims of trafficking had one risk factor or vulnerability; 10.2% had two or more risk factors or vulnerabilities recorded.¹⁰

Table 32: Number of Force, Fraud, and Coercion Methods Among Trafficking Victims

	Frequency	Percent
0	8,975	24.1%
1	9,624	25.9%
2	5,511	14.8%
3	3,987	10.7%
4	2,675	7.2%
5	2,151	5.8%
6	1,541	4.1%
7	1,025	2.8%
8	608	1.6%
9	364	1.0%
10	250	0.7%
More than 10	500	1.3%
Total	37,211	100.0

Recall that 411 potential victims of human trafficking appeared two or more times in the Case Roles dataset. To better understand the characteristics associated with recurrence in the Case Roles data as a human trafficking victim, a series of preliminary bivariate and multivariate analyses (not pictured) were conducted to identify the correlates of recurrence. These preliminary analyses were used to develop the multivariate logistic regression model below, which predicts the risk of recurrence (i.e., appearing more than once in the Case Roles data) among victims of human trafficking. Multivariate analysis is a key technique for observing the effects of each independent variable (Hanushek & Jackson, 1977) by identifying the impact of a single variable on a dependent variable while considering the effect of all other variables simultaneously. Logistic regression is the appropriate multivariate modeling strategy when the dependent variable is a dichotomy (e.g., whether or not something occurred). Note that this model is intended to highlight the correlates of recurrence among victims; causality cannot be established with these data.

¹⁰ In addition to the variables described above, the Case Contact Roles dataset also includes a Notable Recruitment Location Type variable that tracks noteworthy/common specific locations that recruitment of exploitative commercial sex or labor is known to occur, with 21 possible categories. An overwhelming majority of Case Contact Roles (92.5%) were missing data on this variable.

Table 33: Logistic Regression Predicting Victim Recurrence in Case Roles Data

	B	SE	OR
Female victim	0.37*	0.17	1.45
Sex trafficking case	0.54**	0.17	1.72
High level of trafficking indicators	0.52***	0.11	1.68
One or more referrals given to caller	-0.34**	0.11	0.71
Polaris reported the case to one or more LE agencies	-0.89***	0.12	0.41
Keyword Trend Locators			
Adoption	0.47	0.39	--
Backpage.com	0.35*	0.17	1.42
Foster Care/Child Welfare	0.02	0.19	--
Refugee/Asylee	0.92*	0.42	2.52
Visa	0.37†	0.20	1.45
Risk Factors			
Experienced Abuse/Violence (Non-Sexual)	0.61**	0.25	1.84
Unstable Housing	0.53**	0.21	1.69
Runaway/Homeless Youth	1.12***	0.19	3.07
Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM)	0.99**	0.38	2.70
Prior Involvement in Sexualized Industry	1.95***	0.16	7.03
Recruitment Tactics			
Abduction	0.87***	0.21	2.39
Posing as Benefactor	0.71***	0.17	2.03
Notable Exploiters			
Family of Victim	0.64***	0.17	1.90

†p≤0.10, *p≤0.05, **p≤0.01, ***p≤0.001

Victim recurrence is more likely among female victims, sex trafficking victims, and victims in cases with a high level of trafficking indicators. Victims are less likely to recur when their case results in one or more referrals and when the case is reported to law enforcement.¹¹ Three Keyword Trend Locators – Backpage.com, Refugee/Asylee, and Visa – are associated with an increased risk of recurrence. Victims with the following Risk Factors are also more likely to appear more than once: Experienced Abuse/Violence (Non-Sexual), Unstable Housing, Runaway/Homeless Youth, Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM), and Prior Involvement in Sexualized Industry.¹² The Recruitment Tactics of Abduction and Posing as a Benefactor were associated with a higher risk of recurrence, as was being exploited by family.

Employers/Exploiters include controllers, recruiters, formal employers, pimps, abductors, supervisors, bosses, illicit drivers, suspicious business accountants, etc. Employers/exploiters are logged if they are individually distinguishable (based on different names, ages, nationalities,

¹¹ In many instances, individuals contacting the National Hotline report more than one potential situation of trafficking during the course of the call. Because Polaris may have learned of the initial and recurring victimizations simultaneously, Polaris referrals or reports to law enforcement would not necessarily have influenced the likelihood of victim recurrence in the Polaris data. As noted above, the model identifies correlates of recurrence and should not be used to infer causality.

¹² As noted above, having risk factors listed is likely correlated with the amount of information provided to Polaris; if a risk factor is not listed, it does not necessarily mean that it is truly absent in the case.

perceived races, etc.). The 16,953 case contact roles listed as employers/exploiters represent 16,649 unique individuals; 251 individuals appeared two or more times in the Case Contact Role data (maximum = 14). As Figure 17 displays, the majority of employer/exploiter case contact roles were associated with sex trafficking cases (32.7%), followed by labor trafficking cases (8.8%), and sex and labor trafficking cases (2.7%).

Figure 17: Form of Trafficking Among Employer/Exploiter Case Contact Roles

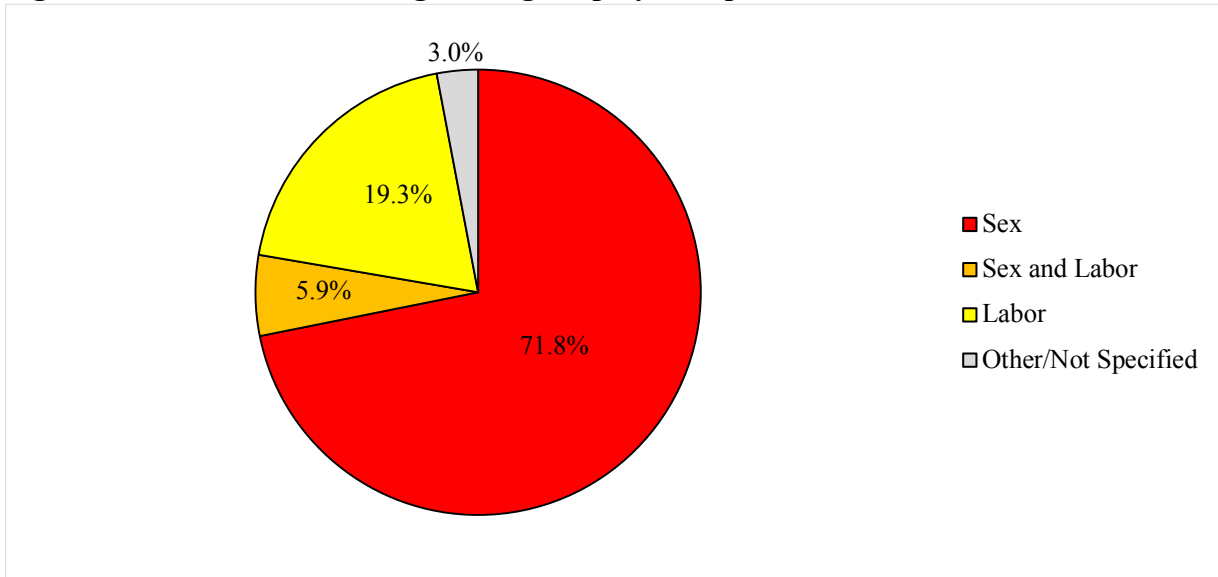


Figure 18 describes the gender of the employers/exploiters. An overwhelming majority of employers/exploiters (70.8%) were male.

Figure 18: Gender of Employer/Exploiter Case Roles

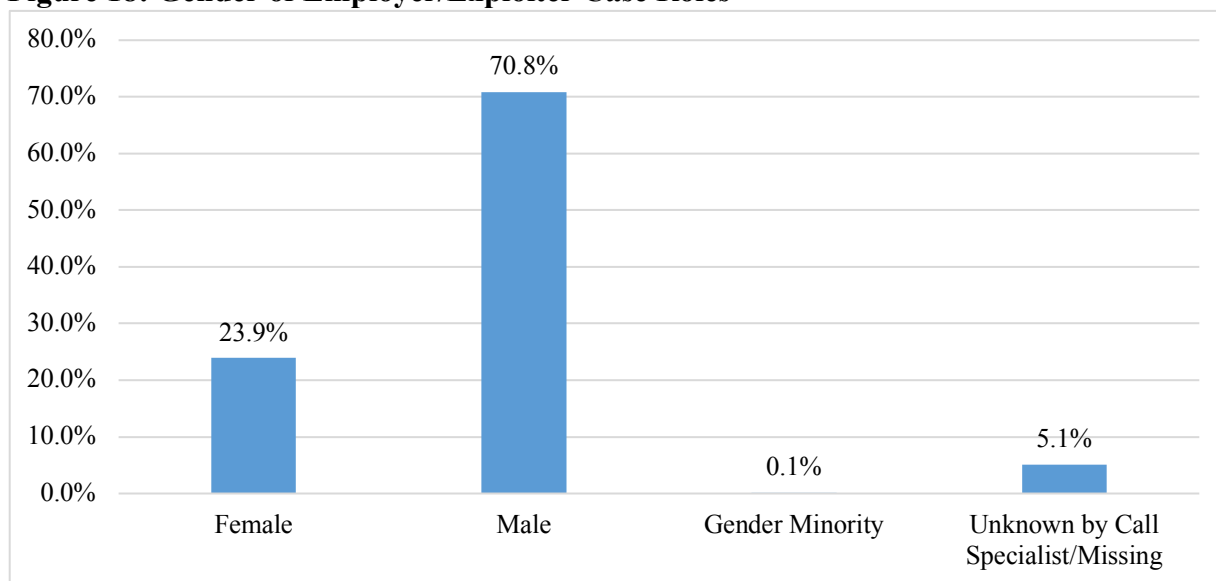


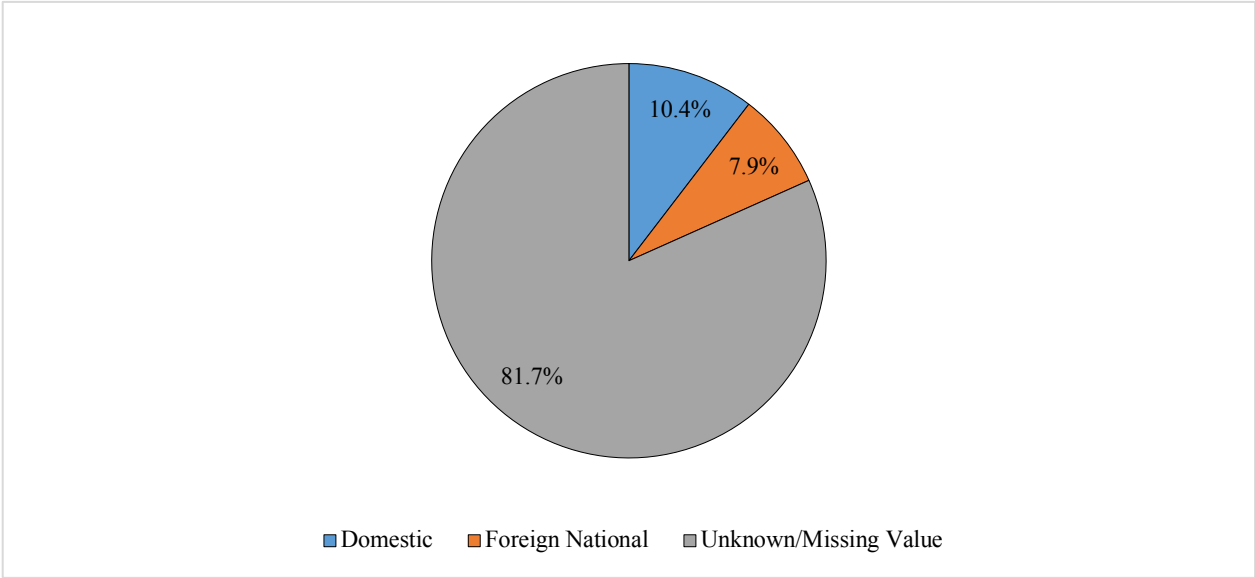
Table 34 describes the race/ethnicity of employers/exploiters recorded in the Case Contact Roles data. For most employers/exploiters (62.8%), there is no information on race or ethnicity. For those with race/ethnicity information available, African American or Black is the most prevalent category (10.5%), followed by Latinx (10.2%), Caucasian or White (8.1%), and Asian (4.8%).

Table 34: Race/Ethnicity of Employers/Exploiters

	Frequency	Percent
Unknown or Missing Value	10,644	62.8%
African American or Black	1,783	10.5%
Latinx	1,726	10.2%
Caucasian or White	1,365	8.1%
Asian	812	4.8%
Middle Eastern	180	1.1%
Two or more categories listed	144	0.8%
African	141	0.8%
Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic	55	0.3%
Caribbean	51	0.3%
American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous American	36	0.2%
Other	16	0.1%
Total	16,953	100.0%

Figure 19 describes the immigration status of employers/exploiters. The overwhelming majority (81.7%) of employers/exploiters are missing data on this variable.

Figure 19: Immigration Status of Employers/Exploiters

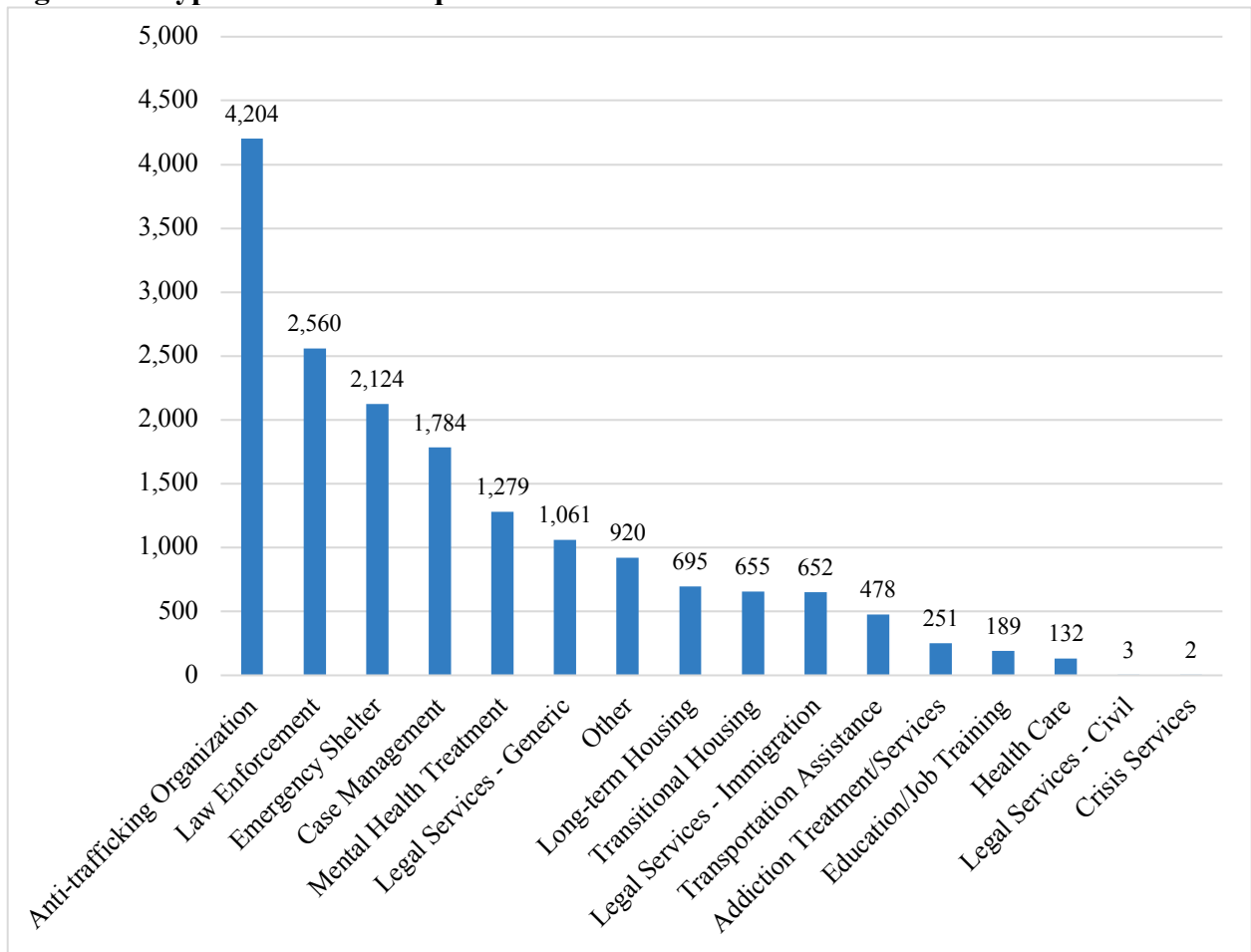


Referral Data (January 2015 – July 2018)

Figure 20 describes the types of referrals requested by and/or given to callers in trafficking cases. A referral occurs when Polaris refers a caller to a third party organization or agency and is distinct from a “report” (see below), which involves Polaris itself making a report directly to an outside entity. Of the 29,648 trafficking cases from January 2015 to July 2018, 1,304 were blank on this field; an additional 16,571 cases had a value of Not Applicable (i.e., the caller did not request any referrals or was not given any) and no other type of referral listed. Of the trafficking cases with a referral listed, 3,606 had more than one referral listed. The most common type of referral was Anti-Trafficking Organization, followed by Law Enforcement, Emergency Shelter, and Case Management,¹³ and Law Enforcement.

¹³ The hotline uses “Case Management” as a broad category to indicate when providers offer advocacy and assistance connecting callers to a variety of social services. Many shelter programs offer case management concurrent with shelter and some organizations will provide case management on an ongoing basis to individuals or families who have otherwise been discharged from services.

Figure 20: Type of Referral Requested



Reports Data (January 2015 – July 2018)

The *Reports* data summarizes reports made to law enforcement and service providers. The data include the method of reporting and the types of agencies receiving the report. Agencies are categorized as Law Enforcement (LE) or Non-Law Enforcement (Non-LE). The description below is limited to *Reports* associated with the 29,648 trafficking cases occurring from January 2015 – July 2018. Reports may be sent to multiple agencies and/or a report may be sent multiple times to the same agency. There were reports made to 40,779 agencies about 9,052 of the 29,648 human trafficking cases in the Polaris data from January 2015 to July 2018. Approximately 90.8% of agencies were law enforcement agencies. The remaining 9.2% were non-law enforcement agencies.

Table 35: Types of Agencies Receiving Reports from Polaris about Trafficking Cases

	Frequency	Percent
LE-FBI Civil Rights	6,656	16.3%
LE-HSI/ICE	5,767	14.1%
LE-Local LE	5,338	13.1%
LE-FBI/CAC-Innocence Lost Task Force	3,961	9.7%
LE-HTPU	3,611	8.9%
LE-DOJ	2,550	6.3%
LE-State LE	2,439	6.0%
LE-USAOs Office	2,128	5.2%
LE-Human Trafficking Task Force	1,658	4.1%
LE-NCMEC	1,098	2.7%
LE-FBI Other	725	1.8%
LE-Other	402	1.0%
LE-AUSA	316	0.8%
LE-DOLOIG	103	0.3%
LE-Federal	101	0.2%
LE-ICAC Task Force	65	0.2%
LE-ICE Headquarters	54	0.1%
LE-CBP	10	0.0%
LE-DOSOIG	10	0.0%
LE-DOD	7	0.0%
LE-National	7	0.0%
LE-Non U.S.LE	5	0.0%
Non-LE-Service Provider	1,289	3.2%
Non-LE-Other Government	1,153	2.8%
Non-LE-	704	1.7%
Non-LE-Child Protective Services	420	1.0%
Non-LE-Other	69	0.2%
Non-LE-Reporting Protocol	56	0.1%
Non-LE-DOLWHD	44	0.1%
Non-LE-Indirect Services Only	25	0.1%
Non-LE-Not Specified	4	0.0%
Non-LE-911	2	0.0%
Non-LE-HHS Headquarters	2	0.0%
Total	40,779	100.0%

Note: This table summarizes the *agencies* contacted, not the number of reports. If a report was made to multiple agencies about a single case, all agencies receiving the report are included in Table 35.

Table 36 describes the number of law enforcement agencies receiving reports about the 43,523 human trafficking cases at the case-level.¹⁴ The overwhelming majority of human trafficking cases were not reported to law enforcement, with 77.0% of sex trafficking cases, 72.5% of sex and labor trafficking cases, and 83.2% of labor trafficking cases not reported.¹⁵

Table 36: Number Law Enforcement Receiving Reports about Human Trafficking Cases

	Sex		Sex and Labor		Labor		Other/Not Specified	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
None	24,103	77.0%	1,221	72.5%	5,396	83.2%	3,835	94.8%
One	1,718	5.5%	99	5.9%	163	2.5%	73	1.8%
Two	924	3.0%	55	3.3%	178	2.7%	21	0.5%
Three or more	4,566	14.6%	309	18.3%	745	11.5%	117	2.9%
Total	31,311	100.0%	1,684	100.0%	6,482	100.0%	4,046	100.0%

Table 37 summarizes the number of non-law enforcement agencies receiving reports about the 43,523 human trafficking cases at the case-level. Most human trafficking cases were not reported to non-law enforcement agencies.

Table 37: Number of Non-LE Agencies Receiving Reports about Human Trafficking Cases

	Sex		Sex and Labor		Labor		Other/Not Specified	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
None	29,268	93.5%	1,549	92.0%	6,117	94.4%	3,977	98.3%
One	1,557	5.0%	96	5.7%	243	3.7%	60	1.5%
Two	357	1.1%	30	1.8%	90	1.4%	9	0.2%
Three or more	129	0.4%	9	0.5%	32	0.5%	0	0.0%
Total	31,311	100.0%	1,684	100.0%	6,482	100.0%	4,046	100.0%

¹⁴ These counts were computed using data transposed and aggregated from the Reports dataset to the case-level. If two different agencies were contacted at the same time about a single case, both were counted. If the same agencies was contacted multiple times about a single case, all contacts were counted. Note that the original Cases data provided by Polaris does include a “CaseReportedto” variable, with possible outcomes of Law Enforcement (LE), Non-Law Enforcement (Non-LE), or both. Closer inspection revealed that this variable was not always consistent with the information appearing in the Reports dataset. The UTSA research team reached out to Polaris for further clarification. In late 2017 and early 2018, the CaseReportedto field in the Cases object was auto-populated based on the Reported to object. Upon closer inspection, it appears that the roll-up filed was set to only draw data from the most recent report sent on the case.

¹⁵ The Data Dictionary provided by Polaris indicates that Polaris Regional Specialists, Shift Supervisors, and Case Analysts do complete a Reason for Not Reporting Case field for Trafficking Case Record Types in which Polaris did not make a direct report to law enforcement or another government agency. This variable was not included in the Cases dataset provided to the UTSA research team.

Outcome Data (January 2015 – July 2018)

This section summarizes the outcomes of human trafficking cases. The Outcome data represent case results and reflect information received by the hotline about the resolution of a case. These data allow the hotline staff to demonstrate the effectiveness of the hotline, as well as illustrate gaps in a community’s anti-trafficking infrastructure. That said, Polaris has not had the capacity to systematically follow up with law enforcement agencies after a report is made. Therefore, the outcome data largely reflect information that law enforcement agencies have contacted Polaris to provide; rarely is it the result of Polaris requesting information about a case’s outcome. As a result, the availability of outcome data varies by agency. Polaris is exploring ways to improve this process so that follow up can be done in a more systematic way

Outcome data were limited to cases from January 2015 to July 2018 (N = 29,648 human trafficking cases). There were 36 unique outcomes listed in the Polaris data. Multiple outcomes may be associated with a single trafficking case. Only 13.6 % of trafficking cases have one or more recorded outcomes. As Figure 21 displays, this varies somewhat by form of trafficking, with labor trafficking cases less likely than sex trafficking cases to have a recorded outcome.

Figure 21: Trafficking Cases with One or More Recorded Outcomes

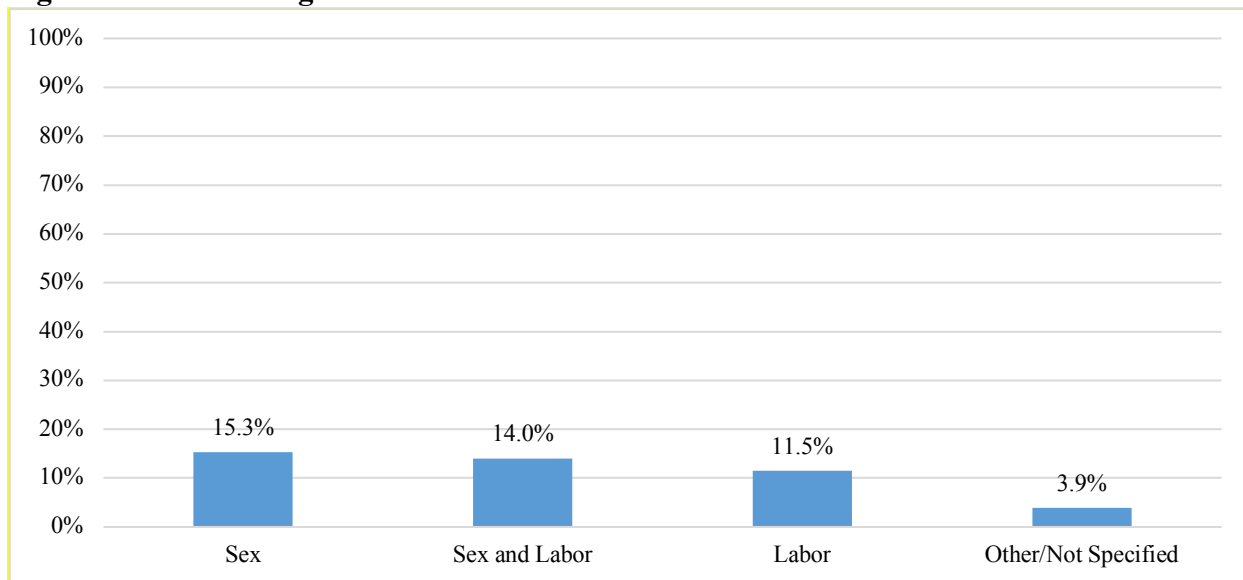


Table 38 describes the various outcomes of trafficking cases from 2015 to 2018. Investigation opened (9.5%) was the most prevalent case outcome category among human trafficking cases with recorded outcomes, followed by LE referred to another LE agency (2.8%), LE collaborated with another LE on case (1.7%), and Investigation already in progress (1.0%). All other case outcome categories were recorded in less than 1% of cases.

Table 38: Trafficking Case Outcomes, January 2015 – July 2018 (N=29,648)

	Frequency	Percent
Investigation opened	2,818	9.5%
LE referred to another LE agency	818	2.8%
LE collaborated with other LE on case	512	1.7%
Investigation already in progress	310	1.0%
PV(s) received services from referral organization	178	0.6%
Case unfounded	137	0.5%
LE immediately dispatched	129	0.4%
PV(s) extracted	128	0.4%
PV(s) located	98	0.3%
Insufficient evidence found to proceed with investigation	89	0.3%
Referral Miscellaneous	70	0.2%
PT(s) arrested	56	0.2%
Case found to be other crime	44	0.1%
PV(s) returned home/to home country	35	0.1%
PT(s) charged with Human Trafficking	23	0.1%
PT(s) located	18	0.1%
PV(s) not willing to cooperate with investigation	18	0.1%
LE referred to a non-LE agency for services	17	0.1%
Case found to be trafficking	14	0.0%
PV(s) arrested	14	0.0%
PV(s) cooperating with investigation	9	0.0%
PV(s) returned to trafficking situation	6	0.0%
PT(s) prosecuted	6	0.0%
PV(s) ineligible for services because referral organization assessed as non-trafficking	5	0.0%
PT(s) charged with other crime	5	0.0%
PV(s) opted not to pursue referrals from Hotline	4	0.0%
PT(s) convicted	4	0.0%
Location of potential trafficking shut down	3	0.0%
PV(s) unable to connect with referral organization	3	0.0%
PV(s) received immigration remedy	3	0.0%

Note: Frequencies do not sum to 29,648 and percentages do not sum to 100% because not all trafficking cases have outcomes, and cases may have more than one outcome. “LE” = Law Enforcement, “PV” = Potential Victim, “PT” = Potential Trafficker.

As expected, cases that were reported to law enforcement by Polaris are much more likely to have at least one recorded outcome. Of the cases reported to law enforcement, 41.6% have one or more recorded outcomes, compared to just 1.5% of cases not reported to law enforcement. Therefore, the subsequent multivariate analyses in Section III examining the predictors of a case having a recorded outcome will focus on the 8,968 human trafficking cases reported to law enforcement by Polaris.

Table 39: Cases Reported to Law Enforcement by Recorded Outcome(s)

	Case Reported to LE	
	No	Yes
Case has no recorded outcome	20,369 (98.5%)	5,236 (58.4%)
Case has recorded outcome(s)	311 (1.5%)	3,432 (41.6%)
	20,680 (100.0%)	8,968 (100.0%)

REPORTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASES TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Recall that Polaris reported 9,052 of the 29,648 (30.5%) human trafficking cases occurring between January 2015 and July 2018 to one or more government agencies. Polaris reported 8,968 human trafficking cases to law enforcement agencies (see Table 36 above). This section examines the relationship between the characteristics of human trafficking cases and whether Polaris reported the case to law enforcement. To help develop a multivariate model, bivariate relationships between various case characteristics and Polaris reporting the case to law enforcement are examined. Tables 40 and 41 summarize these bivariate relationships. Due to data availability (see Table 1 above), these analyses are limited to the 29,648 human trafficking cases occurring from January 2015 to July 2018.

Table 40 summarizes the percent of human trafficking cases reported to law enforcement based on a case characteristics across a number of categorical variables (i.e., variables in which the characteristic is present or absent). The “No” column describes the percent of human trafficking cases that were reported to law enforcement when the characteristic was not present; the Yes column describes the percent of cases reported to law enforcement when the characteristic was present. For example, 64.1% of human trafficking cases involving minors were reported to law enforcement, compared to only 16.6% of cases not involving minors.¹⁶ The table also flags statistically significant differences based on Chi-square tests.

Polaris is more likely to report human trafficking cases to law enforcement when the situation involves minors, females, sex trafficking, a high level of trafficking indicators, and affiliations with one or more notable organized crime groups. They are also more likely to report the case when the caller has observed suspicious activity and/or had indirect contact with a potential victim of trafficking. Cases with the following keywords are more likely to be reported to law enforcement: Backpage, Facebook, Foster Care/Child Welfare, Gang/Organized Criminal Syndicate, Hotel/Motel, and Drug Running/Drug Smuggling. Cases occurring at the following location types are more likely to be reported to law enforcement by Polaris: Business, Residence, Website/Internet, Hotel/Motel, and Street. Finally, Polaris is more likely to report human trafficking cases in which a notable exploiter is a family member of a potential victim. Polaris is less likely to report cases with the following characteristic: situation involves foreign nationals, the caller had direct contact with a potential victim, the caller was a victim making a self-report, Keyword – Visa, and the notable exploiter is an intimate partner.

¹⁶ Note that some cases that mention minors may not be reported to law enforcement due to lack of reportable/actionable details. In addition, cases involving minors may not contain sufficient indicators of trafficking but pertain instead to situations of abuse and/or neglect. Such cases are instead reported to Child Protective Services and/or National Center for Missing and Exploited Children depending on the specific circumstances involved.

Table 40: Percent of Human Trafficking Cases Reported to Law Enforcement by Polaris

	No	Yes
Situation Involves Minors ^{***}	16.6%	64.1%
Situation Involves Females ^{***}	25.5%	31.4%
Situation Involves Foreign Nationals ^{**}	30.6%	28.8%
Sex trafficking ^{***}	18.8%	33.7%
High level of trafficking indicators ^{***}	27.7%	33.7%
Color-Coded Category of Case – Red (Crisis) ^{***}	30.7%	25.4%
Notable Organized Crime Group(s) ^{**}	30.0%	47.4%
Caller proximity – direct contact with potential victim ^{***}	33.4%	25.9%
Caller proximity – observation of suspicious activity ^{***}	25.3%	46.3%
Caller proximity – victim self-report ^{***}	33.3%	21.4%
Caller proximity – indirect contact with potential victim ^{***}	29.5%	36.4%
Keyword – Visa [*]	30.4%	28.2%
Keyword – Backpage ^{***}	28.4%	53.8%
Keyword – Facebook ^{***}	28.6%	50.4%
Keyword – Foster Care/Child Welfare ^{***}	28.8%	53.7%
Keyword – Gang/Organized Criminal Syndicate ^{***}	29.5%	43.7%
Keyword – Hotel/Motel ^{***}	30.0%	38.7%
Keyword – Commercial-Front Brothel	30.3%	26.7%
Keyword – Drug Running/Drug Smuggling ^{***}	29.8%	48.7%
Location Type – Business ^{***}	29.7%	33.1%
Location Type – Residence ^{***}	27.7%	47.0%
Location Type – Website/Internet ^{***}	27.6%	50.2%
Location Type – Hotel/Motel ^{***}	28.5%	47.0%
Location Type – Street ^{***}	29.6%	42.7%
Notable Exploiter – Family of Victim ^{***}	29.3%	45.4%
Notable Exploiter – Intimate Partner ^{**}	30.5%	27.6%

Keywords, location types, and notable exploiter types are limited to those that appeared in 2% or more cases.

* p≤0.05, ** p≤0.01, *** p≤0.001

Table 41 describes mean differences in continuous variables (i.e., variables with numeric values) for human trafficking cases based on whether or not Polaris reported the case to law enforcement. For example, cases reported to law enforcement had on average 3.62 victims, compared to 2.11 victims for cases not reported to law enforcement, based on the Total Number of Potential Victims Described variable in the Cases data.

Cases reported to law enforcement have significantly more victims, keywords, employers/exploiters, potential victims, access points to victims, risk factors for victims, FFC methods, recruitment tactics, and exploiter relationships listed, compared to human trafficking cases not reported to law enforcement. In other words, Polaris reports cases that have more available information on average.¹⁷

Table 41: Mean Differences in Human Trafficking Cases Based on Polaris Report to Law Enforcement

	Polaris Reported Case To Law Enforcement	
	No	Yes
Total No. of Potential Victims Described in Cases data	2.11	3.62
Number of Keywords	1.17	1.37
Number of employers/exploiters listed in the Case Roles data	0.33	0.72
Number of potential victims listed in the Case Roles data set	1.11	1.57
Number of access points to victims listed in the Case Roles data	1.33	1.97
Number of risk factors for victims listed in the Case Roles data	0.50	0.91
Number of FFC methods used on victims listed in the Case Roles data	2.24	4.57
Number of recruitment tactics used on victims listed in the Case Roles data	0.50	0.82
Number of exploiter relationships to the victim listed in the Case Roles data	0.62	0.99

All mean differences were statistically at the 0.001 level based on independent sample *t* tests.

The variables in Tables 40 and 41 above were used to estimate a multivariate logistic regression model predicting the reporting of a human trafficking case by Polaris to one or more law enforcement agencies.¹⁸ Note that this model is intended to highlight the correlates of reporting; causality cannot be established with these data.

¹⁷ Feedback from Polaris staff revealed that the decision to report a case to law enforcement will often result in additional information being collected on the phone. In other words, while some level of information is necessary to support the initial decision to report a case to law enforcement, once the decision is made to report a case to law enforcement, Polaris staff make an effort to collect more information.

¹⁸ The “Total No. of Potential Victims Described in Cases data” variable was not used in the multivariate analysis, as Polaris indicated that the “Number of potential victims listed in the Case Roles data set” was a better measure. The following variables were highly correlated with the number of victim and thus were not included: Number of access points to victims, Number of exploiter relationships to the victim, Caller proximity – direct contact with potential victim, and Caller proximity – victim self-report.

Table 42 below displays the results of the multivariate logistic regression analysis. Polaris was more likely to report a human trafficking case to law enforcement when the situation involved minors, included sex trafficking, had a high level of trafficking indicators, and was categorized as a crisis. Cases were also more likely to be reported when the caller observed suspicious activity or had indirect contact with potential victims. Keywords that were associated with an increased likelihood of reporting included “Visa,” “Backpage.com,” and “Facebook.” All of the location types – Business, Residence, Website/Internet Location, Hotel/Motel, and Street – were positively related to reporting. Finally, cases with more Keywords listed, more employers/exploiters, victims with more risk factors, and more force/fraud/coercion methods used on victims were more likely to be reported to law enforcement.

Conversely, cases involving foreign nationals were less likely to be reported to law enforcement. The keywords “Hotel/Motel” and “Commercial-Front Brothel” were also less likely to be reported. The number of victims was inversely related to the likelihood of a case being reported to law enforcement, as was the number of recruitment tactics used on victims.

Table 42: Logistic Regression Predicting Human Trafficking Case Reported to Law Enforcement

	B	SE	OR
Situation Involves Minors	2.14***	0.03	8.51
Situation Involves Females	-0.06	0.04	--
Situation Involves Foreign Nationals	-0.17***	0.05	0.84
Sex trafficking	0.54***	0.05	1.72
High level of trafficking indicators	0.26***	0.03	1.30
Color-Coded Category of Case – Red (Crisis)	0.24***	0.06	1.27
Notable Organized Crime Group(s)	-0.02	0.14	--
Caller Proximity to Situation - Observation of Suspicious Activity	0.90***	0.04	2.46
Caller Proximity to Situation - Indirect Contact with Potential Victim	0.27***	0.05	1.30
Keyword – Visa	0.41***	0.08	1.51
Keyword – Backpage	0.59***	0.06	1.81
Keyword – Facebook	0.31***	0.06	1.36
Keyword – Foster Care/Child Welfare	0.11	0.07	--
Keyword – Gang/Organized Criminal Syndicate	0.10	0.08	--
Keyword – Hotel/Mote	-0.48***	0.10	0.62
Keyword – Commercial-Front Brothel	-0.37***	0.11	0.69
Keyword – Drug Running/Drug Smuggling	0.07	0.10	--
Location Type – Business	0.57***	0.05	1.78
Location Type – Residence	0.86***	0.05	2.36
Location Type – Website/Internet	0.48***	0.05	1.61
Location Type – Hotel/Motel	0.79***	0.05	2.21
Location Type – Street	0.60***	0.07	1.82
Notable Exploiter – Family of Victim	0.07	0.06	--
Notable Exploiter – Intimate Partner	-0.09	0.06	--
Number of Keywords	0.21***	0.03	1.23
Number of employers/exploiters	0.47***	0.02	1.59
Number of potential victims	-0.06***	0.01	0.94
Number of risk factors for victims	0.04**	0.01	1.04
Number of FFC methods used on victims	0.04***	0.00	1.04
Number of recruitment tactics used on victims	-0.03**	0.01	0.97

*p≤0.05, **p≤0.01, ***p≤0.001

HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACROSS U.S. COUNTIES

To better understand the distribution of human trafficking cases across the United States, all trafficking cases from January 2012 through July 2018 were aggregated to the county level. Of the 43,523 human trafficking cases, 29,850 had least one valid U.S. county listed; 2,241 cases had more than one county listed. Cases with more than one county listed contributed to the counts of all listed counties. As Table 43 demonstrates, the distribution of human trafficking is highly skewed, with Polaris recording few or no trafficking cases in most counties each year (i.e., the median value is zero for all variables).

Table 43: County-level Counts of Trafficking Cases by Year (N=3,142)

	Mean	Median	SD	Min.	Max
Count of trafficking cases (2012)	0.82	0	4.93	0	171
Count of trafficking cases (2013)	1.14	0	6.50	0	186
Count of trafficking cases (2014)	1.26	0	7.53	0	239
Count of trafficking cases (2015)	1.39	0	8.09	0	260
Count of trafficking cases (2016)	1.97	0	11.05	0	313
Count of trafficking cases (2017)	2.27	0	12.67	0	368
Count of trafficking cases (Jan - July 2018)	1.70	0	9.18	0	272

Table 44 below lists the counties rank ordered by the number of human trafficking cases per year from 2012 to 2018.¹⁹ The final column ranks counties based on sum totals from 2015 to 2018 to display recent trends and highlight counties where Polaris might prioritize creating strong law enforcement reporting protocols if they are not already in place.

¹⁹ Preliminary analyses explored the ranking of U.S. counties by *rates* of human trafficking (standardized by population), but the results were misleading. Of the top 20 counties in 2012, for example, 19 had only 1 or 2 cases of human trafficking. These were very low population counties. The rankings by rate would be more a reflection of low population size than necessarily an indication of a human trafficking problem in the region.

Table 44: U.S. Counties Rank Ordered by Number of Human Trafficking Cases (2012 – 2018)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2015-2018
1.	Harris, TX	Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles, CA
2.	Los Angeles, CA	Harris, TX	Harris, TX	Harris, TX	Harris, TX	Harris, TX	Clark, NV	Harris, TX
3.	Dist. of Columbia	Cook, IL	Clark, NV	Clark, NV	Franklin, OH	Clark, NV	Harris, TX	Clark, NV
4.	Cook, IL	Dist. of Columbia	Cook, IL	Franklin, OH	Clark, NV	Franklin, OH	San Diego, CA	Franklin, OH
5.	Dallas, TX	Clark, NV	Dallas, TX	Fulton, GA	Cook, IL	Fulton, GA	Cook, IL	Fulton, GA
6.	Fulton, GA	Miami-Dade, FL	San Diego, CA	Dallas, TX	San Diego, CA	Dallas, TX	Dallas, TX	San Diego, CA
7.	Miami-Dade, FL	Dallas, TX	Sacramento, CA	San Diego, CA	Fulton, GA	Cook, IL	Franklin, OH	Cook, IL
8.	Clark, NV	Fulton, GA	Orange, CA	Maricopa, AZ	Dallas, TX	Maricopa, AZ	Fulton, GA	Dallas, TX
9.	San Diego, CA	San Diego, CA	Miami-Dade, FL	Cook, IL	Wayne, MI	San Diego, CA	Wayne, MI	Wayne, MI
10.	Riverside, CA	Orange, CA	Fulton, GA	Orange, CA	Maricopa, AZ	Wayne, MI	Miami-Dade, FL	Maricopa, AZ
11.	Orange, CA	San Francisco, CA	Dist. of Columbia	Miami-Dade, FL	Sacramento, CA	Miami-Dade, FL	Orange, CA	Miami-Dade, FL
12.	Maricopa, AZ	Orleans Parish, LA	Santa Clara, CA	Dist. of Columbia	Alameda, CA	Orange, CA	San Francisco, CA	Orange, CA
13.	Broward, FL	Sacramento, CA	King, WA	San Francisco, CA	Miami-Dade, FL	Orange, FL	Maricopa, AZ	Sacramento, CA
14.	Sacramento, CA	Santa Clara, CA	Maricopa, AZ	Wayne, MI	Dist. of Columbia	Sacramento, CA	Alameda, CA	Dist. of Columbia
15.	Santa Clara, CA	Orange, FL	Alameda, CA	Sacramento, CA	Orange, CA	King, WA	Orange, FL	San Francisco, CA
16.	Wayne, MI	Broward, FL	Wayne, MI	King, WA	San Francisco, CA	Santa Clara, CA	Sacramento, CA	Alameda, CA
17.	Philadelphia, PA	King, WA	Orange, FL	Alameda, CA	Orange, FL	Alameda, CA	Dist. of Columbia	King, WA
18.	Alameda, CA	Hillsborough, FL	San Francisco, CA	Hillsborough, FL	Santa Clara, CA	Travis, TX	King, WA	Orange, FL
19.	Multnomah, OR	Riverside, CA	San Bernardino, CA	Santa Clara, CA	King, WA	Broward, FL	Riverside, CA	Santa Clara, CA
20.	Travis, TX	Bexar, TX	Multnomah, OR	Broward, FL	San Bernardino, CA	Fresno, CA	Mecklenburg, NC	Broward, FL
21.	Marion, IN	Suffolk, MA	Broward, FL	Fresno, CA	Riverside, CA	Dist. of Columbia	Multnomah, OR	Riverside, CA
22.	King, WA	Philadelphia, PA	Hillsborough, FL	Orange, FL	Broward, FL	Bexar, TX	Hillsborough, FL	Hillsborough, FL
23.	San Francisco, CA	Alameda, CA	Franklin, OH	Cuyahoga, OH	Hillsborough, FL	Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia, PA
24.	Suffolk, MA	Wayne, MI	Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia, PA	Bexar, TX	Riverside, CA	Travis, TX	Travis, TX
25.	Orange, FL	San Bernardino, CA	Travis, TX	Suffolk, MA	Queens, NY	Mecklenburg, NC	San Bernardino, CA	San Bernardino, CA
26.	Mecklenburg, NC	Maricopa, AZ	OK, OK	San Bernardino, CA	Philadelphia, PA	San Francisco, CA	Tarrant, TX	Fresno, CA
27.	San Bernardino, CA	Jackson, MO	Riverside, CA	Multnomah, OR	Travis, TX	San Bernardino, CA	Broward, FL	Mecklenburg, NC
28.	Tarrant, TX	Multnomah, OR	Palm Beach, FL	Travis, TX	Kings, NY	Hillsborough, FL	Santa Clara, CA	Bexar, TX
29.	Oklahoma, OK	Palm Beach, FL	Fresno, CA	Queens, NY	Jackson, MO	Palm Beach, FL	Duval, FL	Multnomah, OR
30.	Hillsborough, FL	Hennepin, MN	Mecklenburg, NC	Orleans Parish, LA	Denver, CO	Kern, CA	Denver, CO	Kings, NY

Note: The 2018 data are from January through July

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Reporting Trends

Overall, the number of signals received by Polaris has been steadily rising, with a 147.8% increase from 2012 to 2017. Likewise, the number of human trafficking cases rose by 165.5% from 2012 to 2017. New forms of technology (i.e., Online reports, SMS reports, and Webchats) may allow additional Signalers to reach Polaris. While a majority of signals are received via the Hotline and the Hotline remains the predominate origin of human trafficking cases, these new forms of technology are increasing as percentage shares of Signals. In Crisis cases, the most common request is for Emergency Shelter, followed by Extraction requests. Understanding these trends and other patterns described above may help inform future Hotline staffing and resource needs within Polaris.

Data Quality

Data quality appears to have improved over time for some fields. For example, the missing data on Signal Result has sharply declined in recent years, from a high of 20.20% in 2015 to 1.09% in 2018. That said, there is considerable missing data on many fields, some of which may be useful in informing future practices. As noted above, the primary purpose of the hotline is to serve victims and survivors of trafficking by prioritizing their safety, needs, and preferences. Therefore, Hotline Advocates do not currently ask Signalers a set of standardized questions. While systematically asking about all fields may not be feasible or advisable given the Polaris mission, identifying a few key fields that might help Polaris reach more victims and better serve them may be beneficial. A few possibilities are listed below.

- In a majority of signals, there is missing data on how the caller found out about the hotline (77.7% of Signals are either missing data for this field or have a value of Unknown). Having a better understanding of which marketing tools are effective is important to reaching victims and survivors of human trafficking.
- A majority of potential victims of human trafficking (56.3%) have no risk factor or vulnerability specified. Given the data collection methodology, it is unclear if any of the listed risk factors and vulnerabilities are present for these victims or not. Systematically documenting risk factors and vulnerabilities among victims may better inform the referral process for individual victims. Collectively, these data could help inform prevention efforts by identifying and offering outreach to vulnerable populations (e.g., runaway/homeless youth, those aging out of foster care).
- A majority of potential victims of human trafficking (62.5%) have no access points (i.e., systems, institutions, or people the victim interacted with or had access to during the exploitative situation or immediately after/upon escape) listed. Improving data collection on this field could help identify potential avenues for intervention that are common among victims and provide the necessary outreach to relevant partners on how to

recognize and respond to human trafficking (e.g., public health officials using screening tools).

- While only a small fraction of human trafficking cases had a notable organized crime group affiliation listed, these cases involve significantly more victims than cases with no organized crime group affiliation. An overwhelming majority of trafficking cases (84.9%) were either missing information on the notable exploiter affiliations variable or were listed as Not Specified or Other. Polaris should consider systematically asking about organized crime groups, as it seems to be predictive of greater harm (measured as more victims), and organized crime may offer law enforcement additional avenues to pursue investigation and possible prosecution.

Relationships with Law Enforcement

The overwhelming majority of human trafficking cases were not reported to law enforcement, with 77.0% of sex trafficking cases, 72.5% of sex and labor trafficking cases, and 83.2% of labor trafficking cases not reported. As noted in Section I, the decision to report a human trafficking case to law enforcement is influenced, in part, on the strength of the relationship with a particular law enforcement agency that may have investigative responsibility in the geographic area where the victim or offense is located. If Polaris does not have law enforcement contacts that it perceives are as victim-centered as needed, or if reporting could ultimately make the situation worse for a potential victim/survivor (e.g., arrest, deportation), then the hotline is unlikely to make a report to law enforcement. Developing strong relationships with law enforcement agencies that share Polaris' victim-centered approach may increase the number of cases referred to law enforcement and provide victims and survivors a better chance at receiving justice.

Of human trafficking cases reported to law enforcement, only 41.6% had a recorded outcome. As noted above, Polaris has not had the capacity to systematically follow up with law enforcement agencies after a report is made. Polaris is exploring ways to improve this process, including partnering with federal agencies, so that follow-up can be done in a more systematic way. Developing a better understanding for how law enforcement uses reports made by Polaris is crucial for serving victims and survivors of human trafficking.

In short, Polaris should work to develop strong reporting protocols with key law enforcement agencies *and* systematically prompt those agencies for outcome data after a report is made. We recommend piloting these efforts by prioritizing reporting to law enforcement agencies located in counties with high rates of human trafficking (see Section IV). These are less than 1% of all U.S. counties, and yet approximately 43% of human trafficking cases reported to Polaris come from these counties.