



MANDATED REPORTERS

Texas law requires that any person suspecting child abuse or neglect, which includes child sex/labor trafficking, must make a report. For suspicion of child sex/labor trafficking, this report must be made within eight hours. Suspecting child sex/labor trafficking means that you have a reasonable belief and concern that trafficking has occurred. You are NOT expected to prove that sex or labor trafficking has occurred. A person who reports trafficking in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability. Anyone who does not report suspected trafficking can be held liable for a misdemeanor or felony.

You, as a CASA volunteer, are a consistent presence in a young person's life during their time in foster care. For youth who have been trafficked, this commitment to be dependable, knowledgeable, and trauma-informed is imperative for a healthy and safe future.

CASA ACT (Anti-Child Trafficking) is a framework created by Texas CASA to engage local CASA programs and volunteers to advocate within anti-trafficking spaces in their communities. To learn more about advocating for youth affected by sex trafficking, visit the [Texas CASA ACT Hub](#).

It is not enough to care, we must ACT!

STAY CONNECTED



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OUTCRY OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING OVERVIEW

When a child verbally shares an allegation of abuse with another person, this is considered an 'outcry'. If a child or youth makes an outcry of human trafficking, which is abuse, you are required to report it.

IF A YOUTH MAKES AN OUTCRY OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

DO

- Remain calm
- Listen
- Reassure the youth that you are there for them
- Show concern and care
- Let the youth know a report must be made within eight hours
- Respect the youth's voice and desires, but you must report the outcry with or without the youth's assistance

DO NOT

- Overreact
- Attempt to acquire the full story
- Ask leading questions
- Seek out more details
- Blame the youth

It is important to understand that victims of trafficking do not self-identify. They may not understand that they are victims of a crime. Sometimes, they believe it is their fault because of choices that they have made. Victims may be angry or even defiant against law enforcement and advocates. Remember, a child cannot consent to sex; therefore, when a child is involved in sexual exploitation, it is sex trafficking.

STEPS TO TAKE WHEN AN OUTCRY OCCURS

1. Call 911 if the youth is in immediate danger.
2. Discuss with your CASA supervisor if you are unsure about the need to make a report or are uncomfortable making one. Please note, you do not need your CASA supervisor's permission to make a report.
3. Ask the youth if they want to be present when you make the report within eight hours. Report to The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) statewide intake by phone at 1-800-252-5400 (Do not use the online reporting option for child sex or labor trafficking reports).
4. In addition to DFPS, report to local law enforcement within eight hours.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MAKING A REPORT?

1. Notify the child's caseworker, supervisor and attorney ad litem if applicable.
2. Recommend to caseworker a referral to care coordination and CSEY Advocate Agency.
3. If safe and appropriate, discuss safety planning with the youth and provide the youth's caregiver with resources about human trafficking. Offer an open dialogue.
4. DFPS determines if the case meets the criteria for investigation. DFPS investigates when the perpetrator is traditionally responsible for a child's care, custody or welfare, such as a family member or an adult living in the home. Not all reports will be investigated. This could happen if the reported situation is already under investigation, or the alleged perpetrator is not a caregiver.
5. If investigated, investigators must respond within 24-72 hours, depending on the nature of the allegations.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN MAKING A REPORT

1. It is recommended, but not required to discuss the need to make a report with your CASA supervisor before making a report. If you cannot communicate with your CASA supervisor, inform them of the safety concern and situation as soon as possible after making the report.
2. DFPS cannot accept anonymous reports. You will give your first and last name and phone number. Your identity as the reporter will remain confidential from those outside DFPS unless court-ordered by a judge or law enforcement.
3. Before you make a report, remember the "5 Ws": who, what, when, where, and why you are concerned. Focus on the details of the youth's life that resulted in the outcry.
4. If you do not have all the details, it is still essential to make a report. You should not delay in making a report to gather complete information.
5. Be honest and transparent. If you do not have an answer to a question asked, it is acceptable to say, "I do not know."