



UNCLASSIFIED

# New Jersey Transit Police Department

## Intelligence Unit & Office of Emergency Management



Christopher Trucillo  
Chief  
NJ Transit Police

### JOINT EMPLOYEE AWARENESS BULLETIN HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Release Date: 1/27/2026  
Ref #: IU2026-0201

**January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention month, and there has been a significant increase in the number of human trafficking cases in New Jersey over the last year. Since mass transit systems are utilized in the commission of human trafficking, it is important for all NJ TRANSIT employees to recognize indicators of human trafficking and to report suspicious incidents.**

**OVERVIEW.** Human trafficking is defined as the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain labor or commercial sex acts. Men, women, and children can all be victims of human trafficking. Traffickers often use violence, manipulation, or false promises to lure victims into trafficking situations. Many survivors do not initially recognize they have been victims of human trafficking, so building a rapport is crucial when trying to provide assistance.



**NEW JERSEY STATISTICS.** National Human Trafficking Hotline 2024 data ranks New Jersey (NJ) as #13 in the US for the number of human trafficking cases. In 2024, there were 269 human trafficking cases identified in New Jersey, a 56% increase from the 172 cases in 2023. Unlike national and global trends, NJ experienced more labor trafficking cases than sex trafficking cases; however, no reason for the difference is noted. Additionally, Covenant House New Jersey, a non-profit that provides support for youth (ages 18-24) experiencing homelessness or human trafficking, reported the number of victims assisted in 2025 is nearly double the number aided in 2024.

**MASS TRANSIT'S ROLE.** Mass transit facilities and transportation modes are used in all stages of human trafficking, including recruitment, exploitation, and escape. Human trafficking recruitment often occurs at bus stops and train stations, as they are frequented by vulnerable individuals. A 2021 survey found that 81% of human trafficking survivors used public transportation during their recruitment. Other human trafficking survivor surveys have found that traffickers utilized local or long-distance buses 43% of the time during victim exploitation and 19% of survivors were transported by local trains during their trafficking.

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING INDICATORS.** Recognizing indicators of human trafficking is key to identifying potential victims and criminal actors. Not all indicators are present in every situation, nor are they proof of human trafficking. However, personnel should be aware of and consider situations in which multiple of the following conditions are observed.

- Does the person show signs of having been denied food, water, sleep, or medical care?
- Is the person disoriented or confused or showing signs of mental or physical abuse?
- Does the person have difficulty articulating reasonable, logical travel plans, and are they able to explain who is traveling with them or who is meeting them?
- Is the person in the company of someone to whom he or she defers/appears coached by or someone who seems to be in control of the situation (e.g., where they go or to whom they talk)?
- Does the person lack personal possessions such as a ticket, photo ID or cell phone?
- Is the person not adequately or appropriately dressed for their age, weather, destination, and/or the mode of travel they are using?

#### REPORT USING THE FOLLOWING CONTACTS

Call 911 in any life-threatening situations

NJTPD AT (800) 242-0236 or TEXT AGAINST TERROR (NJTPD - 65873)

**RESOURCES.** [NJ Transit Safe Passage Website](#) and [National Human Trafficking Hotline Website](#)

Please refer and comments/questions or requests for information to:

NJ Transit Police Intelligence Unit at [PoliceIntelligence@njtransit.com](mailto:PoliceIntelligence@njtransit.com) or

NJ Transit Office of Emergency Management at [NJTPDOEM@njtransit.com](mailto:NJTPDOEM@njtransit.com)

UNCLASSIFIED