

December 1, 2021

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President of Senate
State House, H-107
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House
State House, H-101
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: MSAR #12140 – Report on Child Sex Trafficking
Completed pursuant to Family Law Article §5-704.4(g)(2)

Dear President Ferguson and Speaker Jones:

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is required to submit an annual report to the Maryland General Assembly, as well as the Department of Legislative Services on child sex trafficking reports and referrals to regional navigators in accordance with provisions of the Family Law Article §5-704.4(g)(2). In accordance with this reporting requirement, DHS is pleased to provide you with the enclosed report.

If you should require additional information please contact the Office of Government Affairs at 410-767-8966.

Sincerely,



Lourdes R. Padilla
Secretary

cc: Sarah Albert, Mandate Reports Specialist, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)



REPORT ON CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Completed pursuant to Family Law Article § 5-704.4(g)(2)

December 1, 2021

REPORT REQUIREMENT

This report is hereby submitted in response to the following reporting requirement found under Family Law Article § 5-704.4(g)(2):

(g)(2) Beginning December 1, 2019, the Department of Human Services shall annually report to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly on:

- (i) the number of reports of child sex trafficking made in the State in the preceding year;*
- (ii) the outcome or disposition of reports of child sex trafficking made in the State in the preceding year; and*
- (iii) the number of referrals made to regional navigators under this section in the preceding year.*

Source: Family Law Article § 5-704.4(g)(2)

BACKGROUND

The Department of Human Services has tracked data on reports of alleged child sex trafficking since 2013. Data collected includes the number of reports received by Child Protective Services (CPS), as well as the disposition of each investigation on a state-wide level. In 2019, the Child Sex Trafficking Screening and Services Act was passed into law, requiring law enforcement agents and local Departments of Social Services who have reason to believe a child is a victim of sex trafficking to notify a Regional Navigator in their jurisdiction or region to obtain needed services for the child. In 2019, three organizations were awarded grants to develop regional navigator programs in Cecil, Montgomery, and Washington counties. In 2020, seven additional organizations were awarded funding to develop regional navigator programs in the following jurisdictions: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Frederick, Harford, Howard, and Prince George's counties, and Baltimore City.

CPS investigations can have one of three dispositions as defined by Family Law §5-701:

- **Indicated** -- a finding that there is credible evidence, which has not been satisfactorily refuted, that physical or sexual abuse, or neglect did occur.
- **Unsubstantiated** -- a finding that there is an insufficient amount of evidence to support a finding of indicated or ruled out.
- **Ruled out** -- a finding that physical or sexual abuse, or neglect did not occur.

Below is the data on reports of child sex trafficking for Calendar Year (CY) 2020:

**Number of Reports of Alleged Child Sex Trafficking
Investigated by Maryland Child Protective Services in Calendar Year 2020**

Total Number of Reports	Indicated	Unsubstantiated	Ruled Out	Number of Referrals Made to a Regional Navigator
121	42 (35%)	30 (25%)	49 (40%)	42*

*Note: The seven (7) organizations awarded funding on October 1, 2020 (Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Frederick, Harford, Howard, and Prince George’s counties and Baltimore City) required time to hire and onboard the Regional Navigator case managers. Many of those organizations received few if any referrals during this reporting period. The majority of the 42 referrals were made to the organizations that were awarded funding on October 1, 2019 (Cecil, Montgomery, and Washington counties).