REPORT ON CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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

December 6, 2023

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:*
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> > *(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 (DHS) 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 (LDSS) 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 City, Baltimore County, Frederick, Harford, Howard, and Prince George's Counties. In 2021, four organizations were awarded funding to serve as Regional Navigator in the following ten jurisdictions: Caroline, Carroll, Charles, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties. In April 2023, the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim Services (GOCPYVS) released a fourth notice of funding application to solicit proposals for Regional Navigator Programs to support the remaining four county jurisdictions in Maryland without a Regional Navigator (Allegany, Calvert, Garrett, and St. Mary's Counties). The goal is to have full statewide implementation of the RNPG in all twenty-four jurisdictions by the end of 2023.

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.

Trafficking Data

Below is the data on reports of child sex trafficking for Calendar Year 2022:

Number of Reports of Alleged Child Sex Trafficking

Investigated by Maryland Child Protective Services in 2022

Total Number of Reports	Indicated	Unsubstantiated	Ruled Out	Risk of Harm for Trafficking
94	36 (38%)	10 (11%)	45 (48%)	3 (3%)

Number of Referrals Made to a Regional Navigator
*115

*Note - In 2022, four additional organizations were awarded funding on October 1, 2022, to implement a Regional Navigator Program within the following ten jurisdictions: Caroline, Carroll, Charles, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties. Those organizations required time to hire and onboard the Regional Navigator case managers, so many of those organizations received few if any referrals during this reporting period. The majority of the 115 referrals were made to the nine organizations receiving prior funding- Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Cecil, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, and Washington Counties.