

**20
16** **FREEDOM
NETWORK**
MEMBER
REPORT

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Who We Are

Freedom Network USA is a national alliance of experienced advocates advancing a human rights-based approach to human trafficking in the United States. Our members believe that empowering survivors with choices and support leads to transformative, meaningful change. Together, we influence federal and state policy through action and advocacy. We prioritize the self-determination and empowerment of survivors in the development of policies, procedures and programs. Our members work directly with survivors whose insights and strengths inform our work. And through our national effort, we increase awareness of human trafficking and provide decision makers, legislators, and other stakeholders with the expertise and tools to make a positive and permanent impact in the lives of all survivors.

Freedom Network USA members are headquartered in 14 states and 27 cities, including Washington, D.C., with 32 member organizations and six individual experts across the United States. Freedom Network USA members include individuals and independent non-governmental organizations who provide direct services to survivors of human trafficking. We support our members through training, technical assistance, and capacity building in order to build an effective and inclusive anti-trafficking movement.

About The Report

This report represents the cumulative services provided by of all of Freedom Network USA's members from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2014. The information was self-reported by members through a simple survey instrument. Not all members responded to the survey, nor were they able to provide all of the requested information about all of the clients they served. No personally identifying information was gathered in the course of developing this report, therefore it is impossible to determine whether these numbers include clients serve by more than one agency. In spite of these limitations, however, we believe that this report contributes to the national understanding of the diversity of trafficking and the needs of survivors in the US. We hope that it helps to develop and support the human trafficking research agenda to inform more effective services for trafficking survivors.

For comparison purposes, our previous report covered the three year period of January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2012. The full report can be found at www.freedomnetworkusa.org. There were few changes to the organizational membership between the reports.

Letter From The Director

Since the term “human trafficking” burst onto the political scene in 2000, the United States has learned a lot. We have refined our response through legislation, policies and procedures. We have invested in a growing body of research to better direct our efforts. And we have provided training and education to federal agencies, community groups, students and others. And yet, we have so much more to learn.

At the Freedom Network USA we are working hard to develop policies, procedures and tools that will support survivors in attaining justice and living the life of their own choosing. We are strengthening our ability to speak up and speak out against policies that harm survivors or divert needed resources into photo ops and tag lines. We are deepening our understanding of, and commitment to, the human rights-based approach to human trafficking. We are developing new avenues for partnership and collaboration.

As we reach for new heights, however, we remain grounded in the realities of the survivors we serve. This report reflects that commitment. It gives us the opportunity to review the amazing work of our members. To identify new trends in client demographics, needs, and challenges. And to challenge ourselves to develop new partnerships to grow and expand our impact.

We hope that you also find this report helpful in your work.

Please note that all names, images, and identifying information in this report have been changed to protect the privacy of survivors.

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CLIENTS SERVED

Freedom Network USA members are now serving more clients that are more evenly spread across age groups. During the three year span of our last report (2010-2012), only 2,236 clients were served, an average of 745 clients per year, compared to an average of 1,166 per year during this reporting period. Additionally, more clients are at the opposite ends of the age spectrum. The percentage of clients aged 18 and under increased from 14% to 17%, while the percent of clients aged 40 and over increased from 15% to 21%. The majority of clients served are still in the middle age groups. The percent aged 19-29 decreased from 41% to 39%, while those aged 30-39 decreased from 30% to 23%.

SPOTLIGHT: Safe Harbor

Safe Harbor is the overarching term used to define state laws designed to protect sex trafficked minors. As of the drafting of this report, 18 states have enacted Safe Harbor laws, while many others are developing legislation. Although there are many variations, most Safe Harbor laws follow one of two approaches: diversion or dismissal. Diversion refers to having the criminal charges (generally prostitution or related offenses) moved from Criminal Court to Family Court. In most diversion states, the charges are eventually dismissed after the youth engages in services such as counseling and education. Dismissal refers to minors having immunity from prosecution for charges related to prostitution. In these states, the charges are automatically dismissed and services are offered, but not required. In all states, minors can refuse services, but in diversion states the minors who refuse services will be returned to Criminal Court for prosecution.

Freedom Network USA supports the dismissal approach. We do not support the arrest and prosecution of crime victims for acts related to their victimization. We believe that it is detrimental to the health, safety and well-being of trafficked youth to be arrested in order to compel them into services. We believe that it is more effective, cost-efficient, and ethical to increase the availability of services to all youth that are at-risk for trafficking, to screen those seeking services for all forms of victimization, and to provide comprehensive care and services that are culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate. We believe that addressing child poverty, child abuse and neglect, discrimination against marginalized youth and youth homelessness is the most effective approach to preventing trafficking of youth.



Age Of Clients

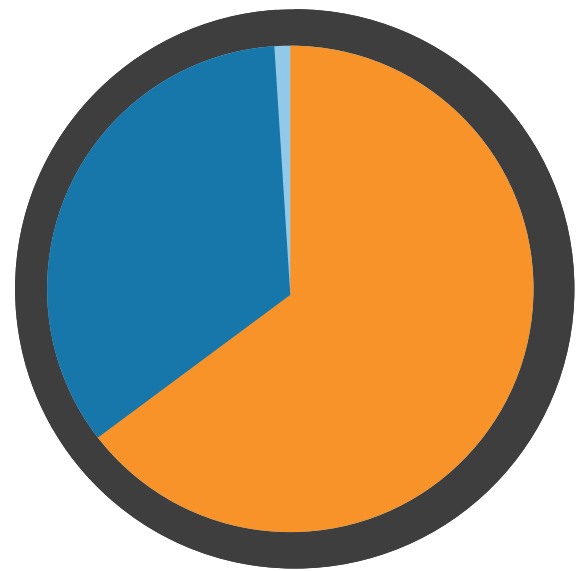
18 or younger	17%
19-29 years old	39%
30-39 years old	23%
40 or older	21%

SPOTLIGHT: Unique Vulnerabilities Of LGBTQI Community Members

Discrimination against LGBTQI community members in the US creates a vulnerability to human trafficking. Freedom Network USA members work with clients who were rejected by their families or communities at a young age. Alone, young, and poor, LGBTQI youth are vulnerable to the false promises of traffickers. Even those with supportive families may suffer discrimination, harassment and abuse from the trafficker, community members, employers, law enforcement and providers. Meeting these needs and addressing these vulnerabilities is a developing aspect of the anti-trafficking movement.

Client Gender

Freedom Network USA members now report that a higher percentage of their clients are female: 65% in this reporting period compared to 54% in the last reporting period (2010-2012). This increase mirrors the roughly 10% shift from labor to sex trafficking. Concurrently, the percentage of US Citizen clients has increased by 16%. As our members are increasingly working with female sex trafficking survivors who are US Citizens, the Freedom Network USA is working to identify and address the new challenges that are being encountered through policy advocacy, training and technical assistance.



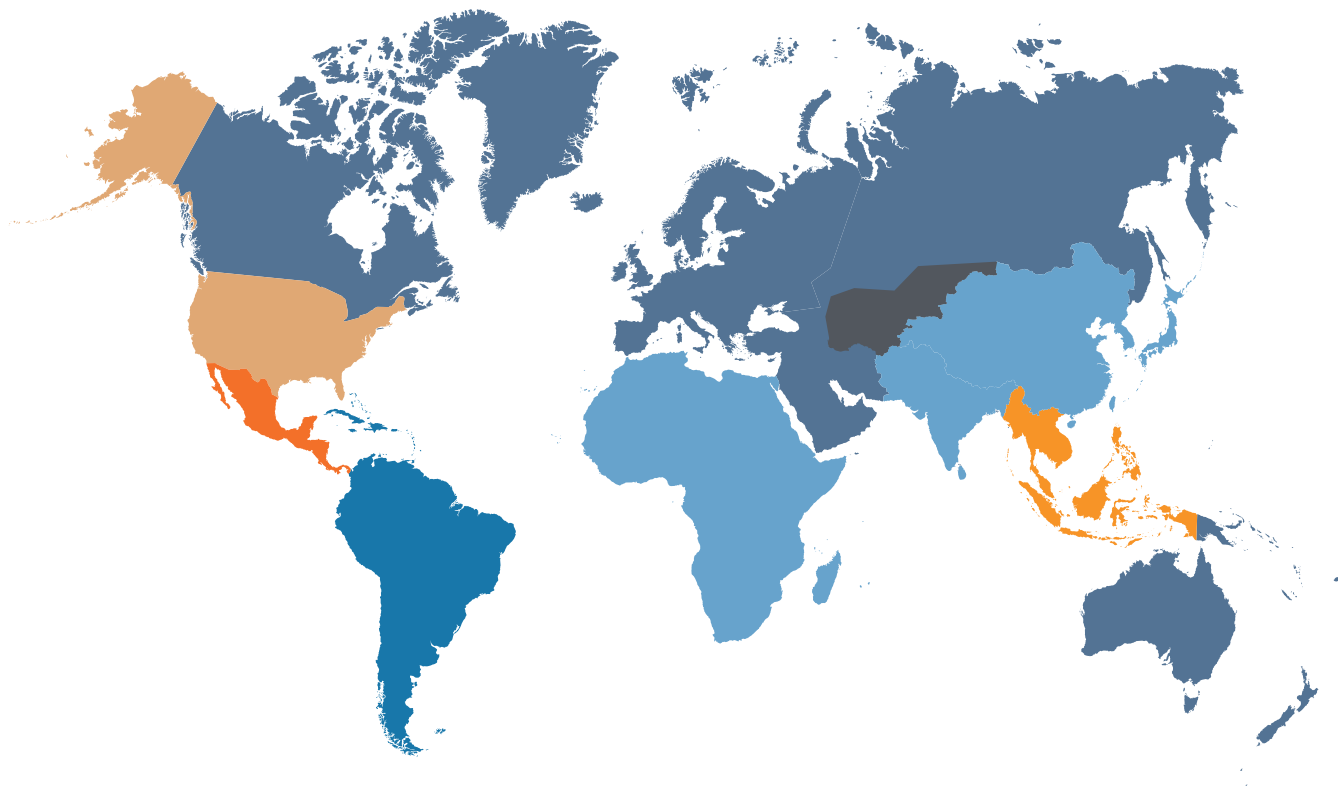
Female - 65%

Male - 34%

Transgender/
Unknown/
Other - 1%

Countries Of Origin

Freedom Network USA members continue to serve survivors from all over the world, including US Citizens. During the three year span of our last report (2010-2012), only 6% of clients were from the U.S., compared to 22% during this reporting period. 37% of the clients were from Asia (a decrease from over 55% during the last reporting period, mostly from South Asia which decreased from 21% to 5%), while 33% were from Latin America (an increase from 28%, stemming from an increase in Central America from 24% to 30%).



Central America - 30%

SE Asia - 26%

US - 22%

East Asia - 5%

South Asia - 5%

Africa - 5%

South America - 3%

Caribbean - 2%

Europe - 1%

Australia - 1%

Other - 1%

Central Asia - <1%

Martin's Story

Martin was 15 years old when he, his mother, and his younger siblings were brought to the US by a relative after his father died. As the eldest child, he was told by his relatives that he would have to work off the large debt that had been incurred to bring his family to the US, instead of being allowed to go to school. Martin's "debt" grew continuously as he was charged for housing, food and transportation. Martin was forced to work in agriculture during the "season," and in construction or landscaping during the off-season. Living conditions were often squalid for Martin and the other workers. Any time Martin or the other workers spoke up, his trafficker would just threaten to call the police and have the men deported. Martin was sexually harassed by the traffickers, and rumors were falsely spread that he was working as a male prostitute. Martin was afraid to tell his family what was happening, because he didn't want them to know about his sexual orientation. Finally, Martin decided he had had enough. He called the number of a local farmworker organization which had visited their camp. Martin and some of the other workers met with law enforcement to report their trafficking, and testified during the federal prosecution of their traffickers.



SPOTLIGHT: Cultural Masks

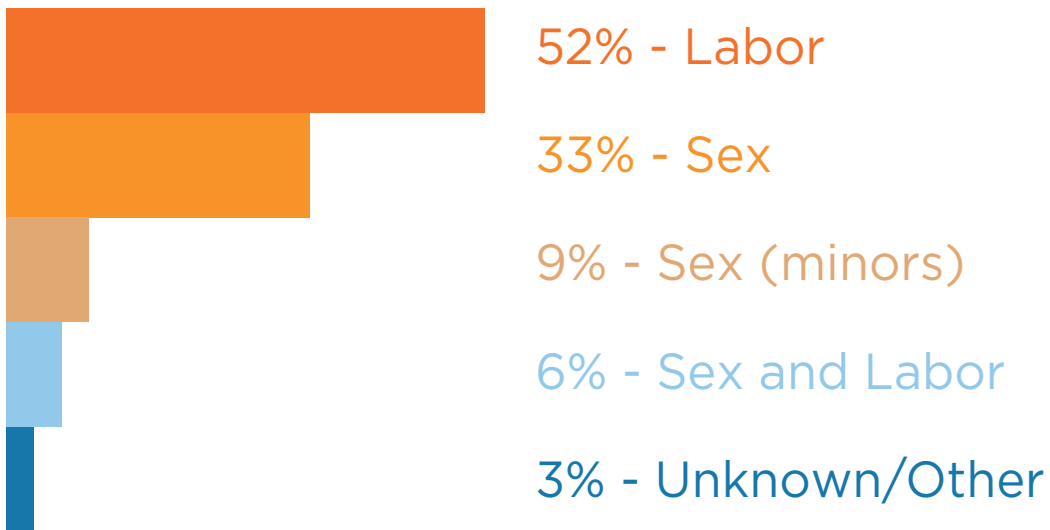
Human trafficking victims in the U.S. come from all over the world, and from just around the corner. The type of trafficking experienced can sometimes reflect the country of origin, creating unique types of trafficking that may be difficult to recognize at first blush. Additionally, many traffickers claim that the survivor is not being abused but rather is being treated in accordance with the cultural traditions or customs of the home country. Luckily, U.S. law rejects these claims. U.S. law does not allow anyone to consent to human trafficking, regardless of the allowable working conditions in the home country.

Aurelia's Story

Aurelia was trafficked into the United States with a group of women to perform African dances. They performed but were never paid, were not provided with regular meals, and were threatened with harm should they attempt to leave the trafficker. A small group of the women escaped to New York, and asked for help from an individual wearing African attire. They did not know anyone in New York, but trusted that a fellow African would help them. Aurelia was provided emergency housing, food, and clothing. She was connected to English classes, given legal assistance to secure her immigration status, and she moved into a housing program that gave her stability to work on her English skills and look for employment. At this time Aurelia is working, speaking English, and moving towards her goal of being fully independent.



Type Of Trafficking



Freedom Network USA members continue to serve survivors of trafficking for all forms of work, and increasingly both minor and adult survivors of sex trafficking. During the three year span of our last report (2010-2012), 73% of clients were survivors of labor trafficking, compared to 52% during this reporting period. Only 23% of the clients were survivors of sex trafficking during the last reporting period, compared to a total of 42% in this period. The percentage of survivors of both sex and labor trafficking has increased from 3% to 6%.



Sarah's Story

While Sarah was being arrested for engaging in prostitution, the undercover officer told her, "If it wasn't for us finding you, you would be dead." Sarah was terrified, angry, and defensive. Due to her arrest and the ensuing stigma and shame, she lied to her family and friends, never telling them that she was arrested. She felt even more alone than ever. The diversion court sentenced her to six months of services from a community agency. While Sarah was thankful to be receiving services instead of jail time, she struggled to find a job because her sessions always seemed to interfere with her interviews and she didn't even bother to complete applications with employers that required her to submit to a criminal record check. Rather than feeling the most pressing needs in her life could be addressed as the courts have been designed to do. Her level of stress, anxiety, and hardship increased as a result of her pending case.

SPOTLIGHT: Criminalization Of Sex Work

Criminalization of sex work contributes to stigma, discrimination, and barriers to reporting victimization. An arrest record can limit a person's ability to find a job, rent an apartment, seek basic social services or get an education. The fear of arrest prevents victims of exploitation, violence, and trafficking from coming forward and seeking justice and services. The end result is further marginalization, vulnerability, and lack of options - three key factors that lead to trafficking.

The indiscriminate targeting of third parties, including clients, management and peers, without regard to force, fraud, coercion, also makes sex workers more vulnerable by taking away safety techniques. Friends, family, bodyguards, drivers, and other community members of sex workers can be arrested and charged under many pimping and promoting laws, putting the family and friends of sex workers at risk of being criminalized for sharing expenses with a sex worker. Thus, sex workers end up further marginalized and isolated.

Freedom Network USA believes that the protection of vulnerable populations, such as those in the sex industry including victims of sex trafficking, must focus on empowerment by increasing resources, addressing discrimination, and improving social safety nets. It is only through addressing the institutional marginalization and barriers that lead to vulnerability, exploitation, and trafficking that we can eliminate sex trafficking.



Ana's Story

Ana is an indigenous Mayan woman who at age 19 was recruited by a woman in her Central American village who promised her a good job in the U.S. When Ana arrived, she was taken to rural Florida, where she began to work at a plant nursery run by Juan. After a few weeks, Juan began to charge Ana for her food, rent and clothing, always reminding her that she owed him for her trip to the U.S. Ana worked every day for 12 hours and the little money she made went to pay for her food and clothes. After six months, Juan raped Ana and demanded that she keep working for him. Ana wanted to flee but was living in a remote area, is illiterate and only speaks her indigenous language. Juan began controlling every aspect of Ana's life. She was forced to work and live as Juan's "wife" for 10 years and was regularly beaten and raped by him, ultimately having three of his children. Juan threatened that Ana would never see her children again if she left. One day, Ana saw a small window of opportunity and, risking everything, called the police, who responded quickly. Ana obtained a T visa and services to help her recover from the abuse. She now lives in safety with her three children.

Types Of Services Provided

Freedom Network USA members provide a wide variety of services to their clients, partners and communities. Below is a list of the services that are most commonly provided, and the number of members that reported providing each service. As during to the previous reporting period, more than half of the responding members provide the services in bold. Even as the demographics of the survivors being served change, the services that are needed stay very much the same.



What Does A Human Rights Approach Mean To You?

The cornerstone of Freedom Network USA's perspective is the use of a Human Rights Approach. This approach respects the survivor's autonomy and individual experience. It relies on the delivery of compassionate, non-judgmental, and empowering services. As direct service providers, our members implement this in the services they provide every day, all across the county.



Seattle

“A Human Rights approach means honoring the individuality, experience, strengths, and choices of each person affected by human trafficking.”

San Francisco

“A holistic human rights approach to trafficking means putting survivors at the center of anti-trafficking policies by prioritizing their empowerment, prioritizing protection of their rights, and ensuring equal protections to all survivors of trafficking regardless of their gender, age, or field of work.”

New York City

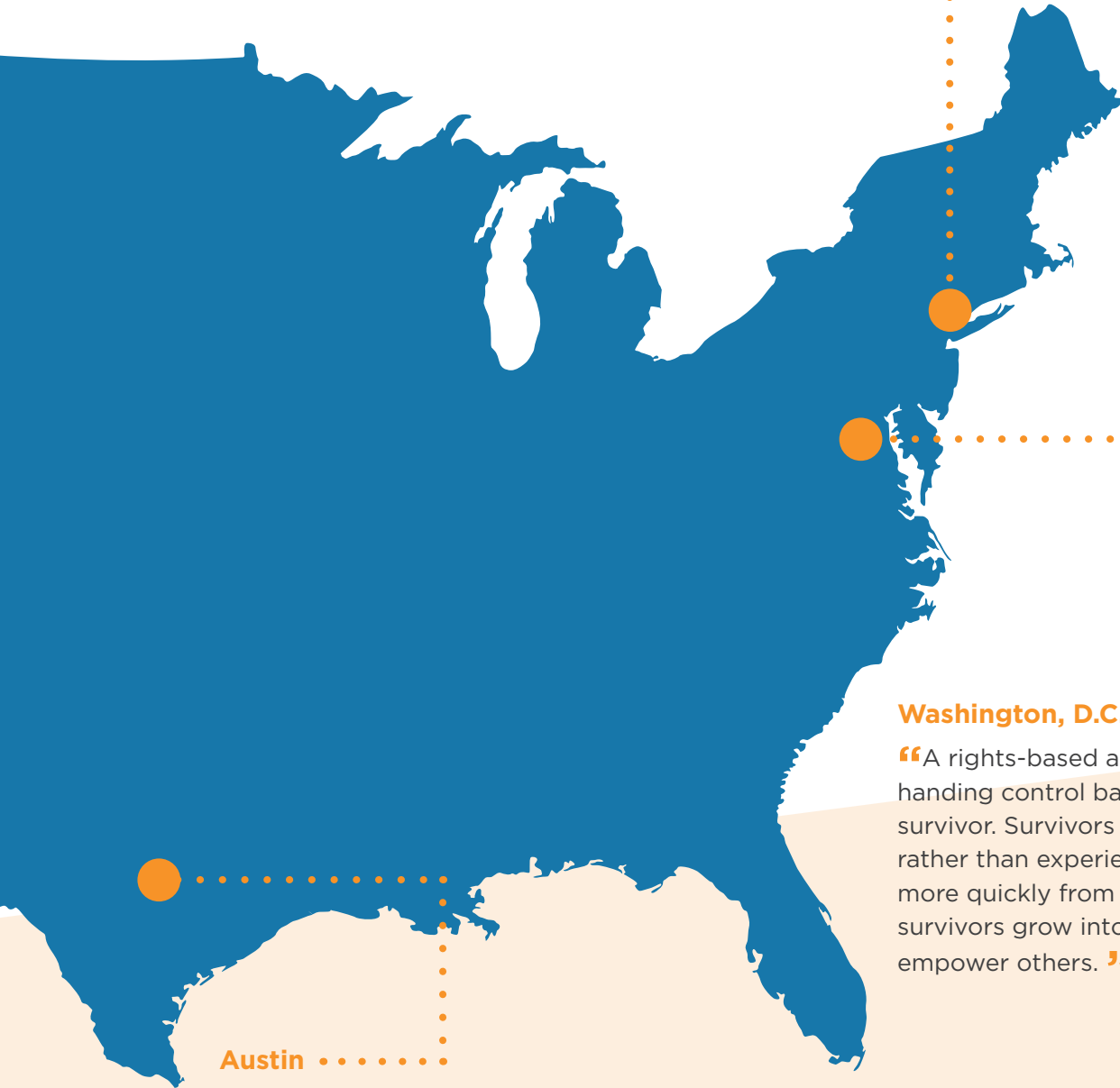
“It means choosing and investing in strategies that enlarge the rights of all people, including rights to health, safety, education, freedom, and opportunity. It means looking critically at institutional actions and structure that abridge these rights.”


Washington, D.C.

“A rights-based approach requires handing control back to the trafficking survivor. Survivors who assert their rights, rather than experience a “rescue” recover more quickly from their trauma. These survivors grow into leaders, working to empower others.”

Austin

“When you adopt a global perspective, considering the push and pull factors that lead to trafficking. Widening your lens and considering all parts of the problem to work with survivors to find a solution.”





Spotlight: Labor or Sex Trafficking or Both?

Unfortunately, traffickers don't always fit into clear boxes. They may force victims to labor in multiple industries over time. Many survivors are victims of sexual harassment or sexual assault while they are forced to work. Others are forced to provide sex acts for friends or family members of the trafficker. These multiple forms of abuse and oppression combine to further intimidate and isolate survivors, and can confuse responders who are looking for a more clear case of domestic violence, sexual assault, or labor trafficking. Freedom Network USA members have seen many cases of these overlapping forms of abuse, and understand that a holistic response, working to support the whole person, is critical; even while legal remedies may be based on a specific piece of the client's story.

Freedom Network USA Members

ARIZONA

[International Rescue Committee](#)
Phoenix • [traffickingaz.org](#)

CALIFORNIA

[Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach](#)
San Francisco • [apilegaloutreach.org](#)

[Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking](#)
Los Angeles • [castla.org](#)

[The Katharine and George Alexander Law Center](#)
San Jose • [law.scu.edu/kgaclc](#)

[Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles](#)
Los Angeles • [lafla.org](#)

[Cindy Liou, Esq.](#)
San Francisco • [liou.cindy@gmail.com](#)

[Opening Doors, Inc.](#)
Sacramento • [openingdoorsinc.org](#)

CONNECTICUT

[International Institute of Connecticut \(IICONN\)](#)
Bridgeport • [iiconn.org](#)

FLORIDA

[Americans for Immigrant Justice](#)
Miami • [aijustice.org](#)

[Coalition of Immokalee Workers](#)
Immokalee • [ciw-online.org](#)

[International Rescue Committee](#)
Miami • [rescue.org/Miami](#)

[VIDA Legal Assistance](#)
Miami • [vidalaw.org](#)

GEORGIA

[Southern Poverty Law Center
Immigrant Justice Project](#)
Atlanta • [splcenter.org](#)

[Tapestri Inc.](#)
Tucker • [tapestri.org](#)

ILLINOIS

[International Organization for Adolescents \(IOFA\)](#)
Chicago • [iofa.org](#)

[Heartland Human Care Services](#)
Chicago • [heartlandalliance.org](#)

[National Immigrant Justice Center](#)
Chicago • [immigrantjustice.org](#)

MISSOURI

[International Institute of St. Louis](#)
St. Louis • [iistl.org](#)

NEW YORK

[Asian American Legal Defense and Education
Fund](#)
New York City • [aaldef.org](#)

[Florrie Burke](#)

New York City • [florrie.burke@gmail.com](#)

NEW YORK, cont.

[City Bar Justice Center, Immigrant
Women and Children Project](#)
New York City • [citybarjusticecenter.org](#)

[International Institute of Buffalo](#)
Buffalo • [iibuff.org](#)

[International Organization for Adolescents](#)
New York City • [iofa.org](#)

[Kristin Heffernan](#)
Brockport • [kheffern@brockport.edu](#)

[My Sisters' Place](#)
White Plains • [mspony.org](#)

[New York Asian Women's Center](#)
New York City • [nyawc.org](#)

[Safe Horizon](#)
New York City • [safehorizon.org](#)

[Sex Workers Project, Urban Justice Center](#)
New York City • [sexworkersproject.org](#)

[Worker Justice Center of New York](#)
Kingston|Rochester|Albany • [wjcnyc.org](#)

OHIO

[Advocating Opportunity](#)
Toledo • [advocatingopportunity.com](#)

TEXAS

[American Gateways](#)
Austin • [americangateways.org](#)

[Mosaic Family Services](#)
Dallas • [mosaicfamily.org](#)

UTAH

[Annie Fukushima, Ph.D.](#)
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VERMONT

[Give Way to Freedom](#)
Burlington • [givewaytofreedom.org](#)

WASHINGTON

[API Chaya](#)
Seattle • [apiwfsc.org](#)

[International Rescue Committee
Washington Anti-Trafficking Response
Network \(WARN\)](#)
Seattle • [warn-trafficking.org](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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[Human Trafficking Pro Bono Legal Center](#)
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