

Required Human Trafficking Training

Virginia Department of Health Office of Environmental Health Services Update
(Version 9/22/2022)



WHAT

What's coming?

Certain lodging (e.g., hotels, motels, inns and bed and breakfast) employees will be required to complete training on recognizing and reporting instances of suspected human trafficking.



WHY

Why?

[Chapter 751 of the 2022 Acts of Assembly \(HB258\)](#) directed changes to the Code of Virginia ([§35.1-15.1](#)) to require hotel owners and their employees, as defined in the code, to recognize and report instances of suspected human trafficking.



What is human trafficking?

[Human trafficking](#) involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act. Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked worldwide – including right here in the United States. It can happen in any community and victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality.



WHO

Which employees are affected by this requirement?

For this requirement, "employee" means any person employed by a hotel that (i) has frequent or regular interactions with guests, such as front desk staff, hotel porters, hotel concierge, restaurant waiting and bartending staff, or room service staff; (ii) is in a management position; or (iii) has access to the guest's room, including housekeeping staff.



WHEN

When does this requirement take effect?

The law becomes effective January 1, 2023.

Who enforces the training requirement?

The [Virginia Department of Health \(VDH\)](#) regulates [hotels, motels, inns and bed and breakfasts](#) through the [Sanitary Regulations for Hotels \(12VAC5-431\)](#) and the [Code of Virginia \(Title 35.1\)](#).



Starting in July 2023, VDH environmental health inspectors will check hotel employee training records during routine inspections.

This requirement does not apply to short term rental properties.



What does it mean for hotel owners and employees?

Starting January 1, 2023, every hotel owner, operator, or manager shall require employees to complete a training course on recognizing and reporting instances of suspected human trafficking.

Starting January 1, 2023, each hotel employee must complete the human trafficking training course within six months of being employed by a hotel. After the initial training, employees must take the course at least once every two years, for as long as they are employed by a hotel.

When is the training due?

The law is effective January 1, 2023. If the employee is employed by a hotel on January 1, 2023, they must complete the training no later than June 30, 2023.



If an employee is hired sometime after January 1, 2023, then they are required to complete the training 6 months after their hire date. For example, if the employee is hired on March 1, 2023, then the training must be completed no later than August 31, 2023.



Who provides the training?

The [Department of Criminal Justice Services \(DCJS\)](#) will provide a free online course. DCJS will also approve other training courses provided by other groups and organizations. This information will be posted on the DCJS website.



How much does the training cost?

The training is FREE. The law directs DCJS to provide an online course at no cost to the hotel owners or their employees.

Where can I find more information?



Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)

<https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/>

DCJS Human Trafficking Response in Virginia

<https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/human-trafficking/human-trafficking-response-virginia>



VDH Tourist Lodging <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-health/touristlodging/>

VDH Office of Family Health Services: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/injury-and-violence-prevention/preventing-violence/>

VDH Emergency Medical Services (EMS): First Responders Against Human Trafficking <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/human-trafficking-information-for-ems-providers/>



Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign

<https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/about-blue-campaign>

Human Trafficking 101 Information Sheets (in 11 different languages)

<https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/materials/human-trafficking-101>