

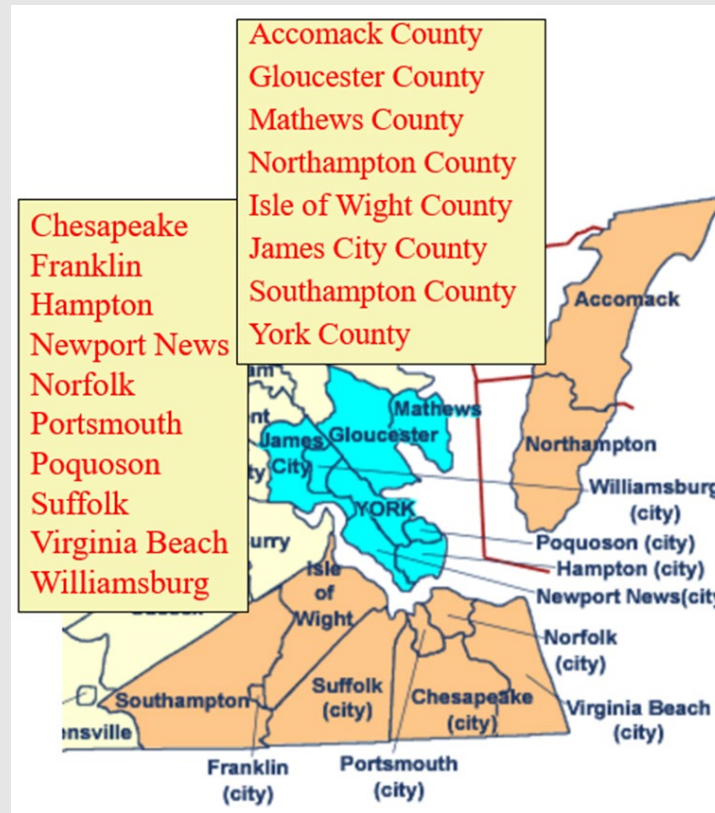
Hampton Roads Human
Trafficking Task Force
Virginia Beach Court
Improvement Conference

January 2026

Bringing Knowledge,
Advancing Child
Welfare



HRHTTF coverage area



- 3rd largest seaport on E. Coast
- Military installations
- Manufacturing, processing
- Agriculture, aquaculture
- tourism industry
- Colleges, universities

HRHTTF coverage area

- Established and funded in 2016 through a grant from the Department of Justice.
- HRHTTF brought together local/state/federal law enforcement & prosecutors along with victim service agencies
- Created human trafficking shelters and victim service programs





How some minor victims intersect paths with the criminal justice fields

Not all victims are identified before going in front of a Judge

Case examples from past cases

- CHINS
- Missing and located in multiple locations in Virginia and other states
- Truancy
- Gang affrications
- Drug usage
- Assault and Battery
- Domestic Violence
- Larceny
- Shoplifting
-

Who may have had a piece of the puzzle



CPS

Foster care

Parent or Guardian

Teachers

Other family members

Probation and Parole

Medical personal

Child Advocacy Center staff

Law Enforcement

Friends/peers

Different paths to finding assistance

For minors being victimized via Sex and Labor Trafficking

Labor Trafficking

Victims of labor trafficking have a higher percentage of coming from another country and will need additional resources than United States citizens

- Immigration relief
- Citizenship tracks via T visas and Green card process
- Interrupter's
- International CPS
- Human Health Services

Labor trafficking victims also have concerns over their families in their home countries and if other family members are working with the same recruiters or business. If the victims were also sexually abused or sex trafficked their victimization will also be more complex and other services and needs will come up as they progress in trusting us

Sex Trafficking

Sex Trafficking victims unlike labor trafficking victims do not see themselves as victims and will at times derail their own recovery. This is due to not acknowledging what has happened to them

It is also not uncommon for these minors to be combative with the people assisting them and their recovery. These victims do not need plan a. They may need plan T

Their mechanism for finding support may be a direct result to some type of criminal act and is they have disclosed to Probation or a Counselor at Detention why they are going thru the criminal justice system

They may also have been in Juvenile Court multiple times due to parent neglect or removal and placement. Familial sex trafficking and labor trafficking has been steadily rising

Case Study

Pierre De Romeo SMITH a 40-year-old male Blood Gang member.
He is also 9 times Convicted felon

Initial Meeting with Jane Doe

-The minor victim was taken to an ER Hospital due to the condition she was in when she was first encountered

-The next night the victim contacted the HSI Victim Assistance Specialist and stated she was running away from foster care

-After several days VB SID was able to convince the minor victim, she was in danger and to meet them so we could place her somewhere safe and secure

-The minor told VB SID she had been raped the previous evening

On April 30, 2022, Pierre De Romeo Smith, 40, met 16-year-old Jane Doe

The same day, he took sexually explicit photographs of her

Hours later, he posted these photos online advertising her for commercial sex

For the next 3 weeks, Smith forced her to have commercial sex with as many “dates” a night as he could

He gave her amphetamines to keep her awake and alcohol to keep her controlled

Smith's State Charges

- Sex Trafficking of a Juvenile
- Use of a Vehicle to Promote Prostitution
- Felon in Possession of a Firearm
- Possessions of a Controlled Substance with a Firearm
- Possession of a Controlled Substance X4
- SMITH was held without bond.

Death threat toward Jane Doe

- The Minor victim contacted VB SID that she needed to speak with them
- The victim was told by her mother that she was “green lit”
- The victim then advised she was told there was money on her head
- Agents corroborated the threat through other sources



Sentencing of Pierre De Romeo Smith

*“Virginia Man Sentenced to 32 Years for
Sex Trafficking, Production of Child Sexual
Abuse Material”*

NORFOLK, Va. — An investigation conducted by Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Norfolk and the Virginia Beach Police Department resulted in a Portsmouth man being sentenced to 32 years in federal prison.

Case Study

Labor Trafficking

Location of where Victim 1 and her son slept



Where on of the Traffickers slept



This 8 –month- old was also part of the labor trafficking. His mom was Victim 1



How did we recovery the minor victim

- The minor victim told a classmate she was working all hours of the night and still attending school. She was also told by the organization to never say anything about the laundry business
- The classmate told the guidance counselor, and the counselor notified JCCSS
- JCCSS immediately contacted agents worked with the Victim Assistance Specialist (VAS) to secure housing for her. The minor victim told JCCSS and agents she wanted to leave her current situation. We then secured housing for her and her aunt and cousin to live at a NGO we vetted and trusted

Charges for the defendants

March 23, 2023 Ana
ARAGON LANDAVERDE
entered a guilty plea

- 18 USC 371 – Conspiracy
- 18 USC 1590 – Human Trafficking of Labor
- 18 USC 1957 – Money Laundering
- Forfeiture Judgement \$213,453

March 23, 2023 Jeffrey
Dean VAUGHAN
entered a guilty plea

- 18 USC 371 – Conspiracy
- 18 USC 1957 – Human Trafficking of Labor
- Forfeiture Judgement \$3.9M

February 14, 2023
Salvador JERONIMO-Sis
entered a guilty plea

- 18 USC 371 – Conspiracy
- 18 USC 1028 – Unlawful Transfer of False Identification Documents

January 31, 2023
George William EVANS
entered a guilty plea

- 18 USC 371 – Conspiracy
- 18 USC 1957 – Human Trafficking of Labor
- Forfeiture Judgement \$3.9M

HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS

Resources

Hampton, Newport News, Williamsburg, Suffolk, Portsmouth, Poquoson



24-Hour Hotline: (757) 723-7774

Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, Eastern Shore



24-Hour Hotline (757) 430-2120



Richmond and surrounding areas

24-Hour Hotline (840) 500-2755



Law Enforcement Sensitive - Not For Further Dissemination
Without Prior HSI Authorization

HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS

You can help. If you see something say something!

*Contact Local Law Enforcement

Call 911

*National Human Trafficking Hotline

Call 1-888-373-7888

Text *233733

or online at humantraffickinghotline.org

NATIONAL
HUMAN
TRAFFICKING
HOTLINE

*Homeland Security Investigations

Call 866-DHS-2-ICE

or online at ice.gov/tipline



Law Enforcement Sensitive - Not For Further Dissemination
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Virginia State Police

How to Report Possible Human Trafficking

Text: 847411. Send a message to that number by typing “VSP” followed by the tip. Messages are anonymous. VSP may make contact with you regarding your tip in efforts to obtain more information. If the information you possess concerns a person (or yourself) in imminent danger, contact 911 or #77 to report that information.

- **Online:** [Submit a Tip Online](#)





Request a Speaker for Your Event

Help build awareness by inviting a Hampton Roads Human Trafficking Task Force (HRHTTF) speaker to your event. If you would like the Task Force to conduct a training or participate in a community event, please use our convenient online form. In order to help us facilitate your request, please complete **at least 4 weeks prior to the event**.

- [REQUEST A HAMPTON ROADS HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE SPEAKER](#)

Supervisory Special Agent, Hampton Roads Human Trafficking Task Force Coordinator



- Jennifer Fisher
- Supervisory Special Agent | Hampton Roads Human Trafficking Task Force Coordinator
- Virginia State Police, BCI- Special Investigations & Programs
- Cell Phone 434-962-5071
- EMAIL HRHTTF@vsp.virginia.gov
-

HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS

Contact Information

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HSI TIPLINE 1-866-347-2423 | Follow us on Twitter @HSI_HQ

| Visit us at <https://t.co/GEAF00ErKI?amp=1>



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