

## **Durham Human Trafficking Coalition**

*Terms of Reference September 2023*

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### **Purpose**

The Coalition is a diverse group of multi-sectoral service providers and survivors of human trafficking. It developed in response to the alarming number of human trafficking cases identified within Durham Region. The Coalition is a cross-sectoral collaboration, built upon special agreements between over 30 partnering agencies who share a commitment to prevention and offering support to survivors of human trafficking. These agencies work together to provide client-centered, wraparound services and advocacy that are crucial to mitigating the effects of trauma experienced by survivors, which has become the cornerstone of the Coalition model.

### **Mandate**

We work collaboratively to prevent, disrupt and eliminate human trafficking and advocate for inclusive services that are anti-oppressive, trauma informed, and survivor informed.

### **Guiding Principles and Values**

Each of the organizations within the Coalition operate with their own mandates but share overarching principles and values that shape prevention and intervention responses. All partner agencies of the Coalition demonstrate a commitment to offer or *actively* work towards services based on the following Core Values:

## *Approach*

1. Survivor-lead/informed
  - Offering programs and services that are informed by lived experiences of Survivors;
  - Providing services that are guided by self-determined needs of Survivors;
  - and engaging with survivors as critical partners.
2. Relational Approach
  - Understanding that Human Trafficking is a relational crime, which requires a relational response;
  - Taking a Needs first approach to meet the physiological and safety needs of survivors and replace dependence on having basic needs fulfilled by traffickers;
  - and building trusting therapeutic relationships with Survivors by providing services and resources without expecting anything in return.
3. Trauma-Informed Lens
  - Utilizing a trauma-informed lens; understanding that those who have experienced poverty, inter-generational trauma, sexual abuse, prior involvement with child protection and/or criminal justice systems are at dramatically increased risk of trafficking, and that these systems disproportionately impact marginalized groups;
  - Building trust and rapport through active listening as a primary focus;
  - Minimizing the number of times survivors have to share their story
  - and ensuring staff, students and volunteers who support HT survivors are offered training and education on trauma-informed service provision.
4. Client-Centered
  - Collaborating to provide seamless and coordinated, multisectoral wraparound services through strong communication and partnerships;
  - Providing a continuum of care which meets survivors where they're at given their psychological, social and physical state;
  - and where possible, offering warm transfers or personal introductions between service providers to increase trust and rapport for those navigating multiple services.

## *Practice*

As a Coalition we seek to embody and work from the following principles:

- Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression Lens
  - Acknowledging the context of colonialism, patriarchy and systemic racism as it relates to HT and advocating for systemic change;
  - Recognizing that those who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) are disproportionately impacted by violence and HT;

- Ensuring BIPOC representation on the Coalition as critical partners in our work and honoring BIPOC voices and ways of knowing as central and paramount to all Anti-Human Trafficking efforts;
  - Ensuring survivors are connected with culturally responsive services that are best suited to meet their self-identified needs;
  - Demonstrating a commitment to continuous learning, cultural safety, diversity, equity, and inclusion; and
  - Ensuring Coalition members are committed to the provision and completion of training on anti-racism, anti-oppressive practice, and trauma-informed care.
- Equity Lens
    - Understanding how the intersections of factors including socio-economic status, race, class, gender, sex, sexualities, health, ability, geographic location, culture, refugee and immigrant status combine with broader historical and current systems of discrimination such as colonialism and globalization to disproportionately impact individuals and communities;
    - Acknowledging the intersectionality of the above factors can lead to increased barriers for survivors of HT from marginalized communities such as those from Indigenous communities, refugees, immigrants, those without status, those individuals with disabilities and those individuals from the Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning and additional sexual orientations and gender identities communities (2SLGBTQIA+);
    - As a Coalition we believe in taking individual and collective action to support continuous learning, accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion to reduce barriers for all populations.
- Feminist Lens
    - Recognizing that women and girls and gender diverse individuals are disproportionately impacted by violence and HT;
    - Recognizing that Indigenous and Black women in particular have been disproportionately impacted by violence as a result of systemic discrimination, the over-sexualization of BIPOC women and the impact of colonization;
    - Recognizing the intersections of gender based violence, human trafficking and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, girls and 2 spirited individuals;
- Harm Reduction
    - Meeting people where they are at with compassion, understanding and knowledge, providing support and resources that foster connection regardless of their stage of change or personal choices;
    - Supporting with safety planning regardless of decisions about whether or not individuals are remaining involved in trafficking, working in the sex trade, remaining in an unhealthy relationship, continuing substance use, etc.
    - Recognizing that all decision-making, including the decision on whether or not to exit a trafficking situation or use substances is self-determined by survivors and

support is not contingent on these decisions; while at the same time, promoting safety (ie. promotion of safer sex work, not using drugs alone)

- We recognize substance use as a common coping mechanism, and do not request or require abstinence from substance use for individuals to access service, while at the same time, promoting safety (ie. promotion of safer substance use)

## Goals and Responsibilities

- To build sustainable partnerships in a cross-sectoral approach to support survivors
- To provide a platform for collaboration between community organizations, police services, social service providers, health care workers and trafficked persons
- To build capacity amongst stakeholders to identify, respond, work with and support those that are trafficked within our communities
- To deliver evidence-based prevention and awareness education that is both holistically and culturally relevant
- To advocate for and promote survivor led initiatives and be a focal point for information and resource sharing
- To work with the community to build capacity to respond to the needs of survivors
- Act as a link between local, regional, national and where possible, international groups who work in the field

## Decision Making

Decisions will be made through consensus whenever possible. Voting can take place in person or electronically. Each organization has one vote. Majority voting rules apply – in order for a motion to be approved, there must be 50% +1 in favour.

## Confidentiality Agreement

- All members are committed to protecting and ensuring the confidentiality of any and all information shared regarding individuals we serve. Where case examples are discussed non-identifying information should be used and all precautions taken to protect the privacy of those we serve.
- Membership will not disclose any information and/or business of the Coalition identified as confidential outside of membership.
- Terms of confidentiality used within individual member organizations are recognized and respected by the Coalition.

## General Requirements and Membership

- All members will abide by the confidentiality agreement of the Coalition
- All members uphold and support the mandate, goals, aims and guiding principles of the Coalition.
- The Coalition welcomes membership from Survivors, and organizations in all sectors committed to ending human trafficking, including:
  - Representatives of agencies providing direct service to victims and survivors of domestic or international human trafficking
  - Representatives of agencies providing support to agencies serving those involved with human trafficking
  - Representatives of government sectors who are involved in policy and funding supports
  - Representatives of child protection and child well-being sector
  - Representatives of law enforcement
  - Representatives of healthcare, mental health and addiction agencies
  - Representatives of Elementary, Secondary and Post-Secondary Education
  - Representatives of justice sector
  - Representatives of the hospitality industry

## Membership Responsibilities

- Commit to consistent attendance at meetings and where unable to attend, ensure a delegate from your agency attends on your behalf;
- Provide, where and when responsible, updates on services
- Actively participate in and contribute to projects related to the Coalition, including participation on sub-committee(s)
- Ensure agency and committee representative contact information is up to date
- Members must respect diversity and differing opinions
- Work collectively and collaboratively with other agency representatives
- Provide feedback on current best practices
- Members that attend meetings must be authorized by their organization to make decisions on their behalf
- Each member agency is asked to limit representation to 1 staff member unless additional members are required and requested by the Coalition (ie. varying departments serving substantially different purposes such as Pinewood Centre and Emergency Department/DVSACC; where multiple members are required in order to ensure survivor representation; or to fill specific roles to support functioning of the Coalition).

## Process of Becoming a Member

- Survivor Members should be endorsed by an existing partner agency who is able to substantiate the survivor's readiness to ensure participation does not adversely impact the survivor (or other survivors), or their healing

- All Organizations must submit a Membership Application that requires two endorsements by existing Coalition Organizations (Senior Leadership with signing authority) and meets all requirements outlined in the Application form

## Removal of Members

- Where there are concerns regarding a member or organizations' adherence to the Guiding Principles, Values or Membership Requirements any member of the Coalition may bring a motion for the Coalition to vote on removal of the member/organization;
- Removal would require a vote of 50% + 1 and voting would not include the agency in question;
- The member or agency in question shall be notified of the vote prior to it occurring and the reasons for the proposed removal;
- The member or agency shall be notified of the voting outcome and final decision of the Coalition in writing, signed by at least two member organizations.
- Where members/organizations are in attendance for less than 2/3 annual meetings (ie. less than 4 of 6 meetings), automatic withdrawal from the Coalition will be assumed.

## Reporting Responsibilities

- The Coalition shall maintain minutes of meetings including action items. Action items will be recorded for monitoring completion and future reference.
- Minutes will be circulated via e-mail to members following each meeting and approved (or adjusted) based on consensus of the Coalition.
- A list of membership and contact information will be maintained.
- The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed by the Coalition every two years (on or about September-October) or upon recommendation by member organizations.

## Designated Roles

### Chair:

As determined by Consensus of the Coalition, the chair role should:

- be assigned to an "agency" rather than an individual allow the chairing agency to re-assign the role as needed in the event of staffing turnover;
- has the capacity to fulfill all duties of the Chair (as listed below);
- should be held by an agency that has dedicated human trafficking services and works well with and in close proximity to partner agencies doing direct HT work, namely Durham Regional Police.

By Consensus of the Coalition it was determined that Victim Services of Durham Region shall continue to hold the role of Chair due to its provision of both human trafficking prevention and

intervention programs, its partnerships in and outside the Region (namely with police) and multi-systems work in the human trafficking sector.

The Chair duties within the Coalition are:

- Facilitate and plan meetings;
- Provide and distribute an agenda and any previous meeting minutes;
- Update and maintain a list of action items as identified by the Coalition;
- Include items of concern from Coalition Members on the agenda for discussion;
- Maintain hard copies of memberships, meeting minutes and other relevant documents;
- Maintain and update membership list and contact information;
- Ensure all new Member Applications are reviewed and approved/denied by at least two different, existing Member Organizations; and
- Support the operation and maintenance of StopHT website including efforts to secure funding to ensure its continuation.

### Agenda and Meeting Structure

- The Coalition will generally meet 4-6 times per year (September - June) dependent on the needs and schedule determined by the Coalition
- Meeting location is determined by consensus or majority (50%+1)
- Structure of the Meetings may vary but would typically include:
  - ❖ Volunteer minute taker
  - ❖ Attendance
  - ❖ Land Acknowledgement
  - ❖ Declarations of Conflict of interest
  - ❖ Approval of Previous Minutes
  - ❖ Business arising/action items
  - ❖ Coalition and Sub-Committee updates
  - ❖ Member updates relating to human trafficking or program changes
  - ❖ Case Examples (non-identifying)
  - ❖ Scheduling of next meeting and recommended upcoming agenda items

*Presentations on programming or services should only be recommended for organizations or service providers who have been carefully vetted by an existing member organization(s) who can ensure the presenter's values and principals align with the Coalition's Terms of Reference.*