



IMPLEMENTATION: SB 998 (Rubio)- The Human Trafficking Child Protection Act

SB 998 requires that by January 1, 2026 that child welfare agencies and probation departments expand policies and procedures implemented since 2016 for CSEC only to (1) document human trafficking individuals in the child welfare cases management system; (2) determine appropriate services for all victims of human trafficking; (3) receive relevant training on the identification, documentation and determination of appropriate services for child or youth identified as survivors of human trafficking and (4) update existing policies and procedures to *apply to children who are, or are at risk of becoming, victims of labor trafficking*.

The inclusion of labor trafficked children in child welfare's response can be launched with existing state resources. CSEC only protocols and training can be feasibly updated in 2025 to cover all trafficked children by the Counties.

How can SB 998 be implemented with existing resources?

As reported by the Department of Social Services (DSS):

- \$1.91 million is received annually by Counties for CSEC Protocol, Program Development and training on CSEC
- \$800,000 is currently spent annually by CDSS providing trainings on CSEC only statewide.¹
- \$488,640 is allocated for Child and Family Policy Institute, Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT), to provide technical assistance and support to all Counties on sex and labor trafficking²

This means there is almost \$2.5 million available in 2025 for all the counties to update their trainings and systems. This will ensure all county workers throughout the state are educated and able to identify all children subjected to any form of commercial exploitation by January 1, 2026 as SB 998 requires.

How is this possible using existing funds?

- 6 California counties have already begun integrating labor trafficking trainings, protocols, and outreach materials through existing CSEC Programs. Of the counties we have spoken to, all have reported that they have integrated labor trafficking curriculum, education and responses with existing funds.
- In Los Angeles, the largest county in California, this work was completed in roughly 6 months. Human Trafficking Coordinators in other counties have shared that integrating labor trafficking training and education was as simple as updating a few trainings slides, or updating educational materials to use the word 'human trafficking' instead of 'sex

¹ California Dept. of Social Services, "CSEC Program Allowable Expenditures and Claiming" at Slide 2, [available at https://lmu.app.box.com/file/1519910939726](https://lmu.app.box.com/file/1519910939726)

trafficking' as to be more inclusive in outreach efforts.

- PACT is the DSS funded program supporting the Counties work on sex and labor trafficking. PACT has helped launch a 10-county pilot program focused on sex and labor trafficking and continues to provide on-going support to the Counties who continue to expand their trainings and protocol to address all forms of human trafficking.
- PACT has already developed resources and tools that can be utilized by the 37 other counties who will now need to update their protocols and training to address all forms of trafficking. These template resources are available online for Counties as highlighted in the ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 1-17-21 released May 11, 2021.³

Summary of Current Resources Available from PACT

- [Child Welfare Policy Procedure and Protocol Templates](#)
- [Child Labor Trafficking Desk Guide](#)
- [Child Welfare Response To Labor Trafficking - Info Sheet](#)
- [Child Labor Trafficking Readiness Questionnaire & County Action Plan](#)
- [Child Labor Trafficking Flow Chart](#)
- [Child Labor Trafficking Identification Tool](#)
- [Quick Guide To Data Entry For Child Labor Trafficking](#)

Supporting All Children Who Are Commercially Exploited Is Possible Using Funding from the Commercial Sexually Exploited Children's Program (CSEC Program)

- Less than 2,000 CSEC children were identified in the 1st three years of the CSEC program launch, demonstrating that identification is a slow process and the system has not been overwhelmed.
- When the specialized CSEC program first launched in [2015-2018 only 1807 actual child victims of CSEC were identified by the program in three years.](#) **If we assume similar levels of identification of child labor trafficking victims that is 8 children per county per year.**
- County welfare systems draw a distinction between children who are "CSEC" and children who are "at-risk of CSEC." The majority of children identified and served through the CSEC Program from 2015-2018 were "at-risk of CSEC" indicating that existing funds can be used to accommodate specialized services for all victims of human trafficking and will not deprive CSEC only children of any resources. Because the vulnerability factors that underlie both forms of human trafficking are the same – that is children who are labor trafficked are also children who come from abusive homes, are in unstable housing situations and/or have experienced past trauma – children who are labor trafficked are 'at-risk of CSEC.' Most of the counties that have expanded their trainings and protocols to address child labor trafficking have been able to serve children subjected exclusively to

³ The ten pilot counties including Alameda, Los Angeles, Madera, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura who participated in the PACT cohort. There were four distinct goals of the PACT project, including the goal to broaden the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Program's collaborative structure, model, and protocols to serve children and youth who are at risk of or experiencing labor trafficking and/or the co-occurrence of commercial sexual exploitation and labor trafficking See https://cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Additional-Resources/Letters-and-Notices/ACINs/2021/I-17_21.pdfhttps://cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Additional-Resources/Letters-and-Notices/ACINs/2021/I-17_21.pdf

labor trafficking as children “at-risk of CSEC” under the CSEC program.

- On average in 2202 the last complete data set available from CDSS they served 1951 CSEC at risk cases and only 750 children identified as CSEC. Thus the majority of those served were under the at-risk category and labor trafficked children can be absorbed and served with existing funding.
- County workers who have begun identifying and servicing youth who are subjected to labor trafficking through the CSEC Program have indicated that the same programs and services that currently serve CSEC youth are what labor trafficked youth need as well.
- Fresno County, which began integrating labor trafficking training through its CSEC Program a few years ago, said because “the same vulnerabilities exist between the sex trafficking and labor trafficking, the dangers are impacting them both, the work is very similar, there are just small things that we need to adapt to...The work is very similar and can be easily incorporated.” **They further stated that “for over 4 years we have been able to service labor trafficked and sex trafficked youth equally.”**
- DSS policy of serving labor trafficked youth as at risk of CSEC means that all service provider contracts can be used to serve labor trafficked youth as at-risk of CSEC and contractors do not need to be updated until they expire.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Aradhana Tiwari, Esq. (she/her) || Senior Policy Counsel
Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Initiative at Loyola Law School
Email: aradhana.tiwari@lls.edu || Phone: 213-736-8377

ABOUT SJI

Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Policy Initiative (SJI) is a practitioner led, evidence-based and survivor informed think tank that intentionally fills gaps in human trafficking prevention with an intersectional approach through systemic change and policy innovation