



Why a City/County wide Human Trafficking Prevalence Study Is Needed

Human Trafficking (HT) is when traffickers exploit and profit at the expense of adults or children by forcing them to perform labor and/or engage in commercial sex.¹ Los Angeles County is a city with a population of almost 10 million people², and Los Angeles City alone is home to almost 4 million individuals³. California is one of the largest sites with human trafficking activity in our country, with Los Angeles identified as a major site for exploitation and abuse. Better data is needed to fully understand how to address human trafficking in Los Angeles. Currently, the City of Los Angeles is home to a large number of unhoused individuals. Every year, a Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count is done in the LA area. In 2022, the data from the count shows that 20% of unhoused individuals in the City of Los Angeles self-identify as victims of human trafficking,⁴ and 18% of unhoused individuals in Los Angeles County self-identify as victims of human trafficking.⁵

Now is the time for the City and the County to come together to work collaboratively on addressing the needs of ALL trafficking survivors. A significant first step is to ensure that we have a thorough grasp on the prevalence of human trafficking in the Los Angeles area. This baseline data will give Los Angeles the ability to: (1) invest appropriately in prevention strategies; (2) invest appropriately in intervention and outreach strategies and; (3) invest appropriately in specialized service needs for survivors.

Cost of Completing Study

In order to more holistically address the needs of trafficking survivors in the Los Angeles area, a comprehensive prevalence study needs to

be conducted. By looking at the cost of other comparable studies on human trafficking, it can be estimated that an LA County wide comprehensive prevalence study focusing on both sex and labor trafficking would cost approximately \$1.5 million and take around 3 years to complete.⁶ City wide, it would cost \$1 million and take 3 years to complete.

Benefits of Comprehensive Study

Completing a comprehensive trafficking prevalence study will help Los Angeles area officials combat trafficking and serve survivors by:

- Collecting data informed information on the prevalence of HT;
- Collecting demographic data on who is experiencing HT such as data on gender, race, age, and type of human trafficking;
- Identifying geographic areas, labor and service industries experiencing HT, including HT for forced criminality.

About SJI

The Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Initiative (“SJI”) is an evidenced based and community-informed think tank that intentionally fills gaps in human trafficking prevention with an intersectional approach through systemic change and policy innovation. SJI focuses its policy work under 5 pillars: Government Accountability, Racial Justice, Immigrant Justice, Climate Justice and Economic Justice.

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¹ <https://www.state.gov/what-is-trafficking-in-persons/>

² <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/losangelescounty/california,CA/PST045221>

³ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/losangelescity/california>

⁴ Based on the 2022 Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority: The Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Data- LA City

⁵ Based on the 2022 Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority: The Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Data- LA County (excludes data from Glendale, Pasadena, and Long Beach)

⁶ <https://www.castla.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/CAST-Prevalence-Study-County-of-Los-Angeles-2019.pdf>