



# Kansas RTAP Fact Sheet

A Service of the Kansas Rural Transit Assistance Program — for Transit Agencies



## Human Trafficking

### And How Transit Providers Can Help Fight It

By Janellys Long



#### Introduction

#### The Legal Background and Incentive

In support of anti-human trafficking efforts, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt announced a mandate on commercial driver's license (CDL) holders in July 2018. The mandate requires truck and bus drivers applying for a new CDL or for a renewal of their current CDL to receive anti-human trafficking training. A certificate must accompany the CDL application as proof of training completion. The training has to be completed only once rather than before each renewal application.

This article discusses the CDL requirements and how others are getting involved to fight human trafficking.

#### Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT)

Schmidt approved the national non-profit organization Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) as a trainer for the anti-human trafficking effort. The training for truck and bus drivers focuses on recognizing signs of human trafficking and methods of reporting human trafficking activities to authorities.

#### TAT's Partnership with Law Enforcement Officials

Annie Sovcik with Truckers against Trafficking shared with us ways TAT is partnering with law enforcement officials including, but not limited to, state and highway patrol officers. TAT has created a 38-minute video for law enforcement that the organization shares free of charge. TAT also hosts "Coalition Builds," that builds partnerships at all levels of government in trucking and busing to network and build connections with law enforcement officials.

Sovcik emphasized the impact trucking and busing industries can have on the anti-human trafficking movement by highlighting the greater volume of employees in the trucking and busing industry compared to the law enforcement industry. Sovcik stated that with truck and bus drivers serving as an extra set of eyes and ears, they can support law enforcement officials in building cases and prosecuting identified traffickers.

#### TAT Training

TAT, as an approved trainer for Kansas, provides free, 30-minute industry-specific videos as part of

the educational training. Truckers are required to watch the video “Truckers Against Trafficking.”

Bus drivers are required to watch the video “Busing on the Lookout.” For truckers and bus drivers completing the training online, the videos are followed by a 15-question quiz. A score of 11/15 is required to earn a certificate.

### Ways to Take the Training

There are three methods of taking TAT training.

1. Companies can integrate anti-human

trafficking training into on-boarding and continuing training for their staff, and co-brand certificates with TAT to share with their drivers after they watch the video.

2. CDL applicants can complete the training online, take the required quiz individually and receive their certification prior to going to the Department of Motorized Vehicles (DMV) office to get or renew their CDL. To access certification online, go to <https://education.truckersagainstrafficking.org/courses/>

3. CDL applicants can watch the training video and take the required quiz at a DMV kiosk.

## Red Flag Indicators of Human Trafficking

- Passengers who are not allowed to speak for self.
- Passengers who are not in possession of their own bus/rail pass, money, or ID.
- Disheveled appearance, agitated, scared/crying, or showing signs of abuse.
- Minors traveling without adult supervision.
- Minors traveling during the school day.
- Offers to exchange sex for a ride, meal, etc.
- Does not know the person who purchased their bus/rail pass or is meeting them at the stop.
- Any acknowledgement of having a pimp or needing to make a quota.
- An individual who indicates they are being held against their will.
- Signs of branding or tattooing (often of a trafficker’s name or nickname).
- Individuals who work excessively long hours and are provided few or no breaks and/or who have indicated their employer is withholding pay.
- Signs of bedding in odd locations (i.e. back room of a convenience store).

### What to Do?

Report suspicious behavior based on red flags, the same way you are already doing with packages or unruly passenger behavior.

All reporting of human trafficking incidents should go to the National Human Trafficking Hotline (888) 373-7888 or to 911 if there is imminent danger.

Source: *METRO* Magazine, “How Transit Can Help Prevent Human Trafficking,” May 13, 2019 <https://www.metro-magazine.com/security-and-safety/article/733940/how-transit-can-help-prevent-human-trafficking>

## Advice to Transit Providers

Tom Baumgartner, Safety and Security Supervisor with Topeka Metro, said operators have expressed concern they would be unable to abide by the procedures shared in the TAT training without having their primary tasks affected. Baumgartner recommended his operators enforce their agency's rule of not allowing passengers to board if the operator is not in the vehicle and for operators to be highly vigilant while passengers are boarding. This will allow operators to pay attention to the people boarding their buses and watch for signs of human trafficking. (See more information in "Red Flag Indicators of Human Trafficking" on page 2.)

All reporting of human trafficking incidents should go to the National Human Trafficking Hotline (888) 373-7888 or to 911 if there is imminent danger.

A recent article in *METRO* Magazine, by Janna Starcic, addressed the role of transit in preventing human trafficking. Starcic pointed out that transit and frontline employees can be "the eyes and ears of the community, with the opportunity to see something and say something." Starcic wrote that management should never ask an employee to step in and "rescue," but ask employees to report suspicious behavior based on red flags, the same way they are already doing with packages or unruly passenger behavior.

All reporting of human trafficking incidents should go to the National Human Trafficking Hotline (888) 373-7888 or to 911 if there is imminent danger.

Baumgartner said his agency complies with the CDL mandate and provides a two-hour training on anti-human trafficking annually to all employees. He encourages all transit agencies to do the same and insists the CDL mandate should be treated as the bare minimum, because transit agencies owe their community protection from human trafficking. He added that transit agencies should lean on other transit agencies for support if they struggle to implement continued training courses on the topic.

## Conclusion

Human trafficking is an insidious crime that law enforcement can more effectively combat with the help of the trucking and busing industries. Mandating CDL seekers to obtain training in anti-human trafficking is a step in the right direction. However, continued education is required to ensure success in these efforts over the long-term.

## Sources for this Article

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