The Safe Harbor Law, passed in 2011, ensures that youth who are sexually exploited are treated as victims and survivors, not criminals. Recommendations from the Governor’s Task Force on the Protection of Children and changes to state and federal law led to the formation of the Minnesota Department of Human Services Child Trafficking and Exploitation Work Group to prevent trafficking victimization; to develop effective child protection and child welfare responses to human trafficking; and to promote the collaborative response to all trafficked children using trauma-informed, victim-centered, and strengths-based strategies. The work group will aim to complete this work in Minnesota by October 2019.

Desired outcomes: This work group will address human trafficking and sexual exploitation of youth within the child welfare system. The group will work toward four outcomes:

- Improved collaborative and coordinated response to trafficked and exploited youth and their families
- Recommendations for systems’ changes to address barriers and challenges in response to trafficking and exploitation of children and youth
- Enhanced experience and positive outcomes for children, youth and families encountering the child welfare response to trafficking and exploitation.

Plan of action: Convene bi-monthly group of multidisciplinary stakeholders from across Minnesota to develop desired outcomes. This group should include:

- County attorneys
- County child welfare and child protection staff
- Tribal governments, services, advisory councils and child welfare initiative tribes
- Community-based service providers
- Criminal justice system (law enforcement, probation, corrections) experts
- Safe Harbor grantees (shelter, navigators, services)
- Judiciary (civil, criminal, juvenile) experts
- Medical and mental health experts
- School administrators and educators
- Parents, youth and survivors
- Researchers/academic professionals
- State agency representatives
- Other professionals involved in child protection anti-trafficking response

Contacts: To learn more or join the work group, please contact Sarah Ladd at sarah.ladd@state.mn.us or Dina Chou at dina.chou@state.mn.us
For accessible formats of this publication or additional equal access to human services, write to DHS.info@state.mn.us, call 651-431-4670, or use your preferred relay service. (ADA 9-15)