



General Assembly

**Substitute Bill No. 5476**

February Session, 2026



**AN ACT CONCERNING OVERSIGHT OF EFFORTS TO PREVENT HUMAN TRAFFICKING.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) There is established, within  
2 the Office of Policy and Management, a Human Trafficking Prevention  
3 Coordinator. The coordinator shall be appointed by the Secretary of the  
4 Office of Policy and Management, and shall have experience with  
5 working with victims of human trafficking. The coordinator shall  
6 coordinate the efforts among executive branch state agencies and law  
7 enforcement to prevent human trafficking in the state.

8 (b) The coordinator (1) shall conduct comprehensive planning on  
9 efforts to combat human trafficking in the state and coordinate the  
10 activities and programs of executive branch state agencies in prevention  
11 efforts; (2) shall work in partnership with the Trafficking in Persons  
12 Council, established pursuant to section 46a-170 of the general statutes,  
13 as amended by this act, and other multidisciplinary partners to help  
14 align state-wide prevention, identification and response activities; (3)  
15 may enter into such contractual agreements, in accordance with  
16 established procedures, as may be necessary for the discharge of the  
17 coordinator's duties; and (4) unless otherwise provided by law, may  
18 receive any money, revenue or services from the federal government,  
19 corporations, associations or individuals. All executive branch state

20 agencies shall provide any assistance, information or data needed by the  
21 coordinator to perform the duties established under this section, to the  
22 extent permitted under state and federal law.

23 (c) The coordinator shall develop and implement a training  
24 curriculum which may consist of recorded trainings, which can be  
25 adapted for specific state agencies. Such training shall implement best  
26 practices and include, but need not be limited to, (1) awareness and  
27 compliance with the laws and protocols concerning trafficking of minor  
28 children, (2) identification of, access to and provision of services for  
29 victims of trafficking, (3) de-escalation and harm reduction techniques  
30 when encountering victims of trafficking, and (4) techniques on  
31 receiving disclosures of trauma from minor children and adults. The  
32 coordinator may offer such training to state agencies, law enforcement  
33 agencies, health care facilities, human services agencies, school  
34 personnel and nonprofit organizations.

35 (d) The coordinator shall create a database for state agencies to report  
36 incidents of human trafficking in the state. Such database shall protect  
37 the personal information of any victims of human trafficking and such  
38 information shall not be disclosed under the Freedom of Information  
39 Act, as defined in section 1-200 of the general statutes.

40 (e) The coordinator shall develop and maintain a state-wide  
41 directory, organized by region, that identifies providers of services for  
42 victims of human trafficking. The coordinator shall evaluate the  
43 availability of such services and identify any gaps in funding or  
44 geographic regions where services are lacking.

45 (f) Not later than January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the  
46 coordinator shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of  
47 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of  
48 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
49 government oversight, the judiciary and appropriations and the  
50 budgets of state agencies. Such report shall include, but need not be  
51 limited to, the activities of the coordinator during the prior year and any

52 recommendations for legislation to implement the coordinator's  
53 recommendations.

54 Sec. 2. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 46a-170 of the 2026  
55 supplement to the general statutes are repealed and the following is  
56 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

57 (a) There is established a Trafficking in Persons Council that shall be  
58 within the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and  
59 Opportunity for administrative purposes only.

60 (b) The council shall consist of the following members: (1) The Chief  
61 State's Attorney, or a designee; (2) the Chief Public Defender, or a  
62 designee; (3) the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public  
63 Protection, or the commissioner's designee; (4) the Labor Commissioner,  
64 or the commissioner's designee; (5) the Commissioner of Social Services,  
65 or the commissioner's designee; (6) the Commissioner of Public Health,  
66 or the commissioner's designee; (7) the Commissioner of Mental Health  
67 and Addiction Services, or the commissioner's designee; (8) the  
68 Commissioner of Children and Families, or the commissioner's  
69 designee; (9) the Commissioner of Consumer Protection, or the  
70 commissioner's designee; (10) the Commissioner of Developmental  
71 Services, or the commissioner's designee; (11) the Commissioner of  
72 Transportation, or the commissioner's designee; (12) the director of the  
73 Basic Training Division of the Police Officer Standards and Training  
74 Council, or the director's designee; (13) the Child Advocate, or the Child  
75 Advocate's designee; (14) the Victim Advocate, or the Victim Advocate's  
76 designee; (15) a chairperson of the Commission on Women, Children,  
77 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the chairperson's designee; (16) the  
78 Secretary of the State, or the Secretary's designee; (17) the Human  
79 Trafficking Prevention Coordinator; (18) one representative of the Office  
80 of Victim Services of the Judicial Branch appointed by the Chief Court  
81 Administrator; [(17)] (19) a municipal police chief appointed by the  
82 Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, or a designee; [(18)] (20) the  
83 Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee; [(19)] (21)  
84 a judge of the Superior Court, appointed by the Chief Court

85 Administrator; [(20)] (22) a state's attorney appointed by the Chief  
86 State's Attorney; [(21)] (23) a public defender appointed by the Chief  
87 Public Defender; and [(22)] (24) sixteen public members appointed as  
88 follows: The Governor shall appoint four members, one of whom shall  
89 represent victims of commercial exploitation of children, one of whom  
90 shall represent sex trafficking victims who are children and one of  
91 whom shall represent a coalition of children's advocacy centers and  
92 multidisciplinary teams that are dedicated to serving child abuse  
93 victims and their families, the president pro tempore of the Senate shall  
94 appoint two members, one of whom shall represent the Connecticut  
95 Alliance to End Sexual Violence and one of whom shall represent an  
96 organization that provides civil legal services to low-income  
97 individuals, the speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint  
98 two members, one of whom shall represent the Connecticut Coalition  
99 Against Domestic Violence and one of whom shall represent the  
100 Connecticut Lodging Association, the majority leader of the Senate shall  
101 appoint two members, one of whom shall represent an organization that  
102 deals with behavioral health needs of women and children and one of  
103 whom shall represent the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness,  
104 the majority leader of the House of Representatives shall appoint two  
105 members, one of whom shall represent an organization that advocates  
106 on social justice and human rights issues and one of whom shall  
107 represent the Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, the  
108 minority leader of the Senate shall appoint two members, one of whom  
109 shall represent the Connecticut Immigrant and Refugee Coalition and  
110 one of whom shall represent massage therapists, and the minority  
111 leader of the House of Representatives shall appoint two members, one  
112 of whom shall represent the Motor Transport Association of  
113 Connecticut, Inc. and one of whom shall represent an organization that  
114 works with adult victims of trafficking.

115 Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 17a-3 of the general statutes is  
116 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*  
117 *1, 2026*):

118 (b) The state-wide program of services shall provide services and

119 placements that are clinically indicated and appropriate to the needs of  
120 each child or youth. In furtherance of this purpose, the department shall:  
121 (1) Develop a comprehensive program for prevention and treatment of  
122 problems experienced by children and youths and provide a flexible,  
123 innovative and effective program for the placement, care and treatment  
124 of children and youths committed by any court to the department,  
125 transferred to the department by other departments, or voluntarily  
126 admitted to the department; (2) provide appropriate services to the  
127 families of children and youths as needed to achieve the purposes of  
128 sections 17a-1 to 17a-26, inclusive, 17a-28 to 17a-49, inclusive, and 17a-  
129 51; (3) establish incentive paid work programs for children and youths  
130 under the care of the department and the rates to be paid such children  
131 and youths for work done in such programs, and may provide  
132 allowances to children and youths in the custody of the department; (4)  
133 collect, interpret and publish statistics relating to children and youths  
134 committed to the department; (5) conduct studies of any program,  
135 service or facility developed, operated, contracted for, licensed or  
136 supported by the department in order to evaluate its effectiveness; (6)  
137 establish staff development and other training and educational  
138 programs designed to improve the quality of departmental services and  
139 programs, which shall include, but not be limited to, training in the  
140 prevention, identification and effects of family violence and the training  
141 on human trafficking developed under section 17a-106h, as amended by  
142 this act, and may establish educational or training programs for  
143 children, youths, parents or other interested persons on any matter  
144 related to the promotion of the well-being of children, including, but not  
145 limited to, the prevention and treatment of mental illness, substance use  
146 disorders and other disabilities in children and youths; (7) require each  
147 social worker trainee to complete the training in the prevention,  
148 identification and effects of family violence established pursuant to  
149 subdivision (6) of this subsection and on and after January 1, 2027, the  
150 training on human trafficking developed under section 17a-106h, as  
151 amended by this act, prior to being assigned a case load; (8) develop and  
152 implement aftercare and follow-up services appropriate to the needs of  
153 any child or youth under the care of the department; (9) establish a case

154 audit unit to monitor each regional office's compliance with regulations  
155 and procedures; (10) develop and maintain a database listing available  
156 community service programs funded by the department; (11) provide  
157 outreach and assistance to persons caring for children whose parents are  
158 unable to care for such children by informing such persons of programs  
159 and benefits for which they may be eligible; and (12) collect data  
160 sufficient to identify the housing needs of children served by the  
161 department and share such data with the Department of Housing.

162 Sec. 4. Section 17a-106h of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes  
163 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
164 *passage*):

165 (a) The Commissioner of Children and Families, in consultation with  
166 the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, shall  
167 develop an initial educational training program and refresher training  
168 program for the accurate and prompt identification and reporting of  
169 suspected human trafficking.

170 (b) The training program shall include a presentation, developed and  
171 approved by said commissioners, that offers awareness of human  
172 trafficking issues and guidance to (1) law enforcement personnel, (2)  
173 judges of the Superior Court, (3) prosecutors, (4) public defenders and  
174 other attorneys who represent criminal defendants, (5) hospital  
175 emergency room staff, urgent care facility staff and emergency medical  
176 services personnel who have contact with patients, and (6) persons  
177 employed by a local or regional board of education or a constituent unit,  
178 as defined in section 10a-1, who have contact with students. The  
179 Commissioner of Children and Families shall, within available  
180 appropriations, provide the training developed pursuant to this section  
181 to all employees of the Department of Children and Families and all  
182 providers that provide services pursuant to a contract with the  
183 department.

184 (c) [Any] (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection,  
185 any person described in subsection (b) of this section shall complete the

186 initial educational training program not later than July 1, 2018, and shall  
187 complete the refresher training program every three years thereafter,  
188 provided any person being employed as such a person shall complete  
189 such initial educational training program not later than six months after  
190 beginning such employment or July 1, 2018, whichever is later.

191 (2) Each employee of the Department of Children and Families or  
192 contracted-with provider shall complete the initial educational training  
193 program not later than July 1, 2027, and shall complete the refresher  
194 training program every three years thereafter, provided any such  
195 employee shall complete such initial educational training program not  
196 later than six months after beginning such employment or July 1, 2027,  
197 whichever is later, or in the case of a provider, not later than six months  
198 after entering into a contract with the department or July 1, 2027,  
199 whichever is later.

200 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) (a) The Chief Court  
201 Administrator shall, within available appropriations, develop and  
202 provide training to all employees of the Court Support Services Division  
203 within the Judicial Branch regarding the trafficking of minor children.  
204 The training shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) awareness and  
205 compliance with the laws and protocols concerning human trafficking,  
206 (2) identification of, access to and provision of services for victims of  
207 trafficking, (3) de-escalation and harm reduction techniques when  
208 encountering victims of human trafficking, and (4) techniques on  
209 receiving disclosures of trauma from minor children. The Chief Court  
210 Administrator may use the training curriculum developed by the  
211 Human Trafficking Prevention Coordinator pursuant to section 1 of this  
212 act to satisfy the requirements of this section.

213 (b) Each employee of the division shall complete the initial  
214 educational training program not later than July 1, 2027, and shall  
215 complete the refresher training program every three years thereafter,  
216 provided any such employee shall complete such initial educational  
217 training program not later than six months after beginning such  
218 employment or July 1, 2027, whichever is later.

219       Sec. 6. (*Effective from passage*) Not later than July 1, 2027, the  
220 Commissioner of Children and Families, in conjunction with the  
221 appropriate local law enforcement agency, shall assess the security of  
222 the placement location, whether public or private, of any child who is  
223 placed in out-of-home care by the Department of Children and Families  
224 pursuant to an emergency order under subsection (e) of section 17a-101g  
225 of the general statutes or an order of temporary custody or an order of  
226 commitment under section 46b-129 of the general statutes, and  
227 determine whether additional lighting, security cameras or other  
228 measures are needed to increase the security of such location. Not later  
229 than August 1, 2027, the commissioner shall submit a report containing  
230 the results of such assessment, in accordance with the provisions of  
231 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of  
232 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children  
233 and government oversight.

234       Sec. 7. Subsection (a) of section 46a-13l of the general statutes is  
235 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
236 *2026*):

237       (a) The Child Advocate shall:

238       (1) Evaluate the delivery of services to children by state agencies and  
239 those entities that provide services to children through funds provided  
240 by the state;

241       (2) Review periodically the procedures established by any state  
242 agency providing services to children to carry out the provisions of  
243 sections 46a-13k to 46a-13p, inclusive, with a view toward the rights of  
244 the children and recommend revisions to such procedures;

245       (3) Review complaints of persons concerning the actions of any state  
246 or municipal agency providing services to children and of any entity  
247 that provides services to children through funds provided by the state,  
248 make appropriate referrals and investigate those where the Child  
249 Advocate determines that a child or family may be in need of assistance  
250 from the Child Advocate or that a systemic issue in the state's provision

251 of services to children is raised by the complaint;

252 (4) Pursuant to an investigation, provide assistance to a child or  
253 family who the Child Advocate determines is in need of such assistance  
254 including, but not limited to, advocating with an agency, provider or  
255 others on behalf of the best interests of the child;

256 (5) Periodically review the facilities and procedures of any and all  
257 institutions or residences, public or private, where a juvenile has been  
258 placed by any agency or department, including, but not limited to,  
259 Specialized Trauma-Informed Treatment Assessment and Reunification  
260 Enhancement Plan homes;

261 (6) Recommend changes in state policies concerning children  
262 including changes in the system of providing juvenile justice, child care,  
263 foster care and treatment;

264 (7) Take all possible action including, but not limited to, conducting  
265 programs of public education, undertaking legislative advocacy and  
266 making proposals for systemic reform and formal legal action, in order  
267 to secure and ensure the legal, civil and special rights of children who  
268 reside in this state;

269 (8) Provide training and technical assistance to attorneys  
270 representing children and guardians ad litem appointed by the Superior  
271 Court;

272 (9) Periodically review the number of special needs children in any  
273 foster care or permanent care facility and recommend changes in the  
274 policies and procedures for the placement of such children;

275 (10) Serve or designate a person to serve as a member of the child  
276 fatality review panel established in subsection (b) of this section;

277 (11) Take appropriate steps to advise the public of the services of the  
278 Office of the Child Advocate, the purpose of the office and procedures  
279 to contact the office;

280 (12) Prepare an in-depth report on conditions of confinement,  
281 including, but not limited to, compliance with section 46a-152,  
282 regarding children twenty-one years of age or younger who are held in  
283 secure detention or correctional confinement in any facility operated by  
284 a state agency. Such report shall be submitted, in accordance with the  
285 provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committee of the  
286 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children not  
287 later than March 1, 2017, and every two years thereafter; and

288 (13) Present to the advisory committee, established pursuant to  
289 section 46a-13r at least three times each year, a report on the goals of and  
290 projects undertaken by the Office of the Child Advocate, within  
291 available appropriations, that are consistent with the responsibilities of  
292 the Child Advocate.

293 Sec. 8. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a temporary task  
294 force to be known as the Human Trafficking Prevention and Response  
295 Task Force, which shall (1) be made up of the existing membership of  
296 the Statewide Steering Committee of the Regionalized Human  
297 Trafficking Recovery Taskforce established by the Division of Criminal  
298 Justice, including representation from relevant state agencies, law  
299 enforcement, prosecutors, providers that specialize in providing  
300 services to trafficking victims, child advocacy centers and  
301 multidisciplinary teams, survivor-informed representatives and other  
302 members appointed by the Regionalized Human Trafficking Recovery  
303 Taskforce as necessary to carry out the purposes of this section, and (2)  
304 serve as a public-private partnership to implement the  
305 recommendations set forth in the Regionalized Human Trafficking  
306 Recovery Taskforce's report entitled "A Blueprint to Strengthen  
307 Connecticut's Response to Human Trafficking".

308 (b) Such implementation shall include, but need not be limited to:

309 (1) Advancing development of a permanent state-wide governing  
310 body to coordinate the state's anti-trafficking response across agencies  
311 and service providers and to create state-wide standards related to such

312 coordination;

313 (2) Creating and implementing a standardized, cross-disciplinary  
314 human trafficking training framework and centralized learning  
315 management system;

316 (3) Developing and implementing a unified state-wide data collection  
317 process based on shared definitions, standardized reporting fields and  
318 secure data-sharing protocols;

319 (4) Designing and implementing standardized, trauma-informed  
320 screening questions and referral pathways to ensure consistent  
321 identification of and response to victims of human trafficking across  
322 systems;

323 (5) Expanding and strengthening state-wide service capacity by  
324 mapping and verifying existing providers, identifying service and  
325 funding gaps and supporting development of a vetted state-wide  
326 resource directory; and

327 (6) Reviewing trafficking trends, identifying systemic gaps and  
328 developing policy recommendations to be submitted to the Trafficking  
329 in Persons Council, established pursuant to section 46a-170 of the  
330 general statutes, as amended by this act, consistent with the work  
331 undertaken pursuant to this subsection.

332 (c) The task force shall not replace or supersede the statutory  
333 authority of Trafficking in Persons Council, established pursuant to  
334 section 46a-170 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

335 (d) Not later than January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter until three  
336 years after the effective date of this section or the submission of a final  
337 report, whichever is later, the task force shall submit a report, in  
338 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
339 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having  
340 cognizance of matters relating to government oversight and the  
341 judiciary. Such report shall include any activities of the task force during

342 the year preceding the report, and the final report shall detail the  
343 proposed structure, authority and funding of the permanent state-wide  
344 governing body described in subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this  
345 section. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such  
346 final report.

347 Sec. 9. Subsection (b) of section 17a-106a of the general statutes is  
348 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
349 *2026*):

350 (b) The Commissioner of Children and Families, as department head  
351 of the lead agency, and the appropriate state's attorney [may] shall  
352 establish multidisciplinary teams for the purposes of (1) reviewing  
353 particular cases or particular types of cases, (2) coordinating the  
354 intervention in and prevention of child abuse or neglect or trafficking of  
355 children and the treatment of abused, neglected or trafficked children in  
356 each judicial district, (3) reviewing selected cases of child abuse or  
357 neglect or trafficking of children, (4) advancing and coordinating the  
358 prompt investigation of suspected cases of child abuse or neglect or  
359 trafficking of children, (5) reducing the trauma experienced by alleged  
360 victims of such abuse or neglect or trafficking and, (6) ensuring the  
361 treatment of abused, neglected or trafficked children and the protection  
362 of such children and their families. The head of the local law  
363 enforcement agency or such head's designee may request the assistance  
364 of the Division of State Police within the Department of Emergency  
365 Services and Public Protection in order to accomplish such purposes.

366 Sec. 10. Section 17a-106f of the general statutes is repealed and the  
367 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

368 (a) The Commissioner of Children and Families may: (1) Provide  
369 child welfare services for any minor child residing in the state who is  
370 identified by the Department of Children and Families as a victim of  
371 trafficking, as defined in section 46a-170, as amended by this act; and (2)  
372 provide appropriate services to a minor child residing in the state who  
373 the Department of Children and Families reasonably believes may be a

374 victim of trafficking in order to safeguard the welfare of such minor  
375 child. For purposes of this section and section 17a-106a, as amended by  
376 this act, "minor child" means any person under eighteen years of age.

377 (b) The Commissioner of Children and Families [may] shall, within  
378 available appropriations, provide training to law enforcement officials  
379 regarding the trafficking of minor children. The training shall include,  
380 but not be limited to, (1) awareness and compliance with the laws and  
381 protocols concerning trafficking of minor children, (2) identification of,  
382 access to and provision of services for minor children who are victims  
383 of trafficking, and (3) any other services the department deems  
384 necessary to carry out the provisions of this section and section 17a-106a,  
385 as amended by this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 2	July 1, 2026	46a-170(a) and (b)
Sec. 3	October 1, 2026	17a-3(b)
Sec. 4	from passage	17a-106h
Sec. 5	October 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 6	from passage	New section
Sec. 7	July 1, 2026	46a-131(a)
Sec. 8	from passage	New section
Sec. 9	July 1, 2026	17a-106a(b)
Sec. 10	July 1, 2026	17a-106f

**GOS** Joint Favorable Subst.

**APP** Joint Favorable