



Arizona Human  
Trafficking Council

**Arizona Human Trafficking Council**

**June 1, 2022, 9:00 AM**

**Remote Meeting**

1700 West Washington Street, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

A general meeting of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council was convened on **June 1, 2022**  
1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

Members Present (21)	Members Absent (7)
Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair	Senator T.J. Shope
Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair	Representative Regina Cobb
Jeramia Garcia Ramadan (Proxy for Michael Wisehart)	Marsha Calhoun
Dominique Roe-Sepowitz	Nathaniel Brown
David Curry	Heather Carter
Sarah Chung	Doug Coleman
Jennifer Crawford	Jim Gallagher
Joseph Kelroy	
Jill Rable	
Lois Lucas	
Keith Moffitt (Proxy for Mike Faust)	
Jennifer Pinnow (Proxy for Heston Silbert)	
Brian Steele	
Sara Mickflikier (Proxy for Rachel Mitchell)	
Sarah Beaumont	
Tim Roemer	
Zora Manjencich	
Eric Swanson	
Debbie Johnson	
Jim Waring	
Rachel Zenuk Garcia (Proxy for Don Herrington)	
Staff and Guests Present (9)	
Kim Brooks	Courtney Bollinger
Kristin Sorensen	Mary Kaye Garcia
Amy Peep	Hanifa Jones
Joanna Jauregui	Megan Fitzgerald
Kainoa Spenser	

**Call to Order**

- Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair, called the Arizona Human Trafficking Council meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. with 21 members and 9 staff and guests present. She then reviewed the procedures of the Council meeting and welcomed all those joining via Zoom and thanked them for their flexibility.

**Roll Call**

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, conducted a roll call of the Council and took note of Councilmember proxies with quorum met.

### Approval of Minutes

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, requested a review of the **April 6, 2022** meeting minutes.
  - **Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** moved to accept the **April 6, 2022** minutes.
  - **Zora Manjencich** seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed with no dissenting votes at **9:05 a.m.**

### MIND 24/7: Filling the Gap in Behavioral Health

- **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced **Dr. Hanifa Jones, Courtney Bollinger, and Mary Kaye Garcia** for an update from MIND 24/7.
- **Dr. Jones** shared that MIND 24/7 opened in June 2021 with the purpose of filling the gap in the behavioral healthcare system, providing express and crisis behavioral health services. **Dr. Jones** explained the three tenants that MIND 24/7 is founded on: accepting everyone regardless of insurance, background, age, acuity of situation, or ability to pay; that clinical needs drive the actions to stabilize each patient; and building a strong ecosystem for patients and other service providers to provide access to the best resources for patients.
- **Dr. Jones** stressed the importance of having strong relationships with good providers for a safe, reliable, and stable handoff when the patient leaves, whether that is into a hospital or in someone else's care. MIND 24/7 operates three programs to achieve these goals: the psychological crisis unit, a 24-hour observation unit that takes in the patients, assesses the situation, medically treats them, and determines what further care is needed; the psychological express unit which helps with inpatient and walk-in patients who require behavioral health specialists and resources; and the psychological progression program which is outpatient therapy. This gives the ability to manage patients that would otherwise be concerning discharges, allowing MIND 24/7 to provide resources for 90 days and transition patients to the most appropriate community provider, if needed.
- **Courtney Bollinger** explained MIND 24/7's protocol surrounding human trafficking. The organization has created a trafficking assessment and will be providing a copy of the flyer describing their trafficking efforts to GOYFF staff to share with the Council. All patients who come into the care of Mind 24/7, child or adult, will have an automatic 23-hour hold in their crisis facility. In the occurrence of trafficking, this provides distance between the victim and the trafficker or abuser, allows staff to assess their trauma, and coordinate care with community partners, reducing the likelihood that the victim is not returned to a harmful situation. If the patient cannot be stabilized in the initial 23-hours, MIND 24/7 will work with local hospitals to find a safe transition of care.
- **Joseph Kelroy** thanked the team from MIND 24/7 for the services they provide and asked how MIND 24/7 is doing as a company and with their communication within the community. **Ms. Bollinger** responded that their Human Trafficking component has only been active for the last 2 months but the vision has been adopted very well across their employees. **Dr. Jones** shared that MIND 24/7 is a space for someone to enter the behavioral health care system and reduce the amount of time those individuals wait to receive the necessary mental health services. After its first year of operations, MIND 24/7 has seen a decrease in unnecessary hospitalizations, time spent within the facilities, and a decrease in time spent in Emergency departments at partner hospitals. **Dr. Jones** stated that MIND 24/7 would like more integration with the community and is looking to expand its communication efforts. **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair**, asked how can the Council help spread information regarding services to law enforcement. **Ms. Bollinger** responded that MIND 24/7 has a monthly Law Enforcement meeting that is currently only with Maricopa Police Department but they are seeking more involvement from other Police Departments. They have also sent out their flyer to Mercy Care to share within their departments. **Dr. Jones** stated their community relations team provides tours of the facility in order to support stakeholder education. **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair**, then asked **Major Jennifer Pinnow** with the Department of Public Safety and **Captain David Curry** with the Department of Transportation to ensure that their teams receive information on the services provided by MIND 24/7, sharing that if there is anything the Council can do to support the efforts of MIND 24/7, to please be in communication and that the council members and the McCain Institute will help to expand the organizational reach across Arizona.

### Arizona Criminal Justice Commission: Crime Victim Compensation

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced **Heather Bohnet** who serves as the Crime Victim Services Program Manager with the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) and is currently a board member of the National Association of Crime Victims Compensation Board. **Ms. Bohnet** shared that the victim compensation program provides financial assistance to victims of crime or others who may have experienced a financial loss as a direct result of a crime. The program covers expenses of physical harm, mental distress, and economic loss directly resulting from victimization. Eligibility to receive benefits from the program does not require the apprehension or conviction of an offender, and the compensation program is always the payer of last resort. All other sources of economic recovery must be exhausted before compensation benefits can be paid.
- Arizona is unique as it is one of two states that manage a decentralized program for Crime Victim Compensation and each county has a compensation board and each award decision is made at a local level. **Ms. Bohnet** explained that the funding sources for the compensation program include: the federal government through the Victims of Crime Act funds; State funding; and other sources including restitution or subrogation from offenders who are arrested and convicted.
- Pivoting to program eligibility, **Ms. Bohnet** stated that any victim of a crime in Arizona or under Federal law qualifies for the program. The crime must be reported within 72 hours, the victim must cooperate with law enforcement, and the victim must submit an application within 2 years of the crime. Compensation can cover the victim's loss that is not covered by any other collateral source such as insurance. The victim cannot have contributed to or provoked their own victimization such as intentional criminal activity. Arizona residents who are victimized abroad and non-Arizona residents who are victims of a crime that took place in Arizona are eligible to apply to the Victim Compensation program. The program recognizes "good cause" exceptions for the 72-hour crime report and 2-year application eligibility requirement based on individual victim situations. **Ms. Bohnet** shared that Victims' Compensation's largest cost is medical costs associated with harm to the victim.
- **Ms. Bohnet** shared the application process for the Compensation program. While ACJC is responsible for administering the program at the state level, claims are processed at the county level. Each county program has a compensation coordinator, who is responsible for investigating claims and collecting supporting documentation. This begins with a completed application, police reports, and any bills or invoices that victims or claimants are requesting to be paid by the program. After the background work is completed, the county coordinator prepares for and conducts compensation board meetings. Compensation board meetings are where decisions are made on whether or not to pay out compensation funds to victims of crime. The compensation coordinator serves as a point of contact for victims, claimants, members of the community, or victim services personnel that would like more information about the victim compensation program.
- **Major Jennifer Pinnow** asked how is it taken into account if the victims are forced to make contributory illegal actions out of fear of their abusers or traffickers, especially young victims of sex trafficking. **Ms. Bohnet** stated the board takes this into account and is part of the investigative process to verify that the victim took "purposeful and intentional contributory actions" but relies heavily on the investigative report and information from law enforcement. **Major Jennifer Pinnow** responded that the report may not capture the manipulation by the abuser of the victim since the report is just stating the facts not the psychology behind the crime. **Ms. Bohnet** agreed that this is especially important when dealing with children.
- **Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** expressed her gratitude and thanks for a grant they received from the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family, and she, is looking forward to working together to provide county-level training sessions. **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** stated that only 4 out of 3,000 applications were for victims of sex trafficking. She stated that it is apparent that they are missing this component of correctly tracking human trafficking victims. **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** is interested in how they can get the council members trained in human trafficking signs to better understand the complex layers that come along with unusual crimes. **Ms. Bohnet** responded that a significant challenge is a decrease in funding annually by \$1-1.5 million which is not allowing the desired amount of outreach. **Ms. Bohnet** is working with the Arizona legislature to increase funding for resources to create "Victim Compensation Toolkits". These are to teach law enforcement, medical providers, and victims themselves about the tools they have at their disposal on how to sign up for victim compensation.

### McCain Institute: Combatting Human Trafficking Certificate

- **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair**, introduced **Kelsey Syms** who serves as the Program Manager for the Combatting Human Trafficking Certificate program at the McCain Institute for International Leadership. **Ms. Syms** oversees the development and implementation of programmatic work, in addition to leading the program's education and outreach initiatives. **Ms. Syms** stated the Combatting Human Trafficking Certificate program is offered through ASU's online courses, and it is designed for any service providers that are working with at-risk youth. The course is open to the public and accredited by the National Association of Social Workers. Each of the two self-paced courses is comprised of six modules, including lectures by social workers, discussion posts after each module for student interaction, and extra supplemental resources. Coursework includes understanding the basic definitions, concepts, and relevant laws associated with Human Trafficking, addressing trafficking trauma and its impacts, building relationships with youth and case management, accessing additional resources, and responding to local variations such as rural vs urban communities. Additional focuses include: how to screen youth clients for sex and/or labor trafficking, assessing the needs of trafficked youth, understanding the science of trauma and its impact on clients, and helping staff cope with secondary trauma.

### Workgroup Updates

- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced **Dominique Roe-Sepowitz** for an update from the Data and Research Workgroup. **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** shared that they are creating data-driven intervention instruments with data collected from working with Phoenix Police Department. The group is working with Project Alto on events surrounding labor trafficking and is pivoting to collecting day labor trafficking data by working with over 200 day laborers. This is in response to recent research spotlighting foreign undocumented day laborers as highly profitable people to rob and target for trafficking. The workgroup is developing and implementing training across the state for the Super Bowl while tracking organizations coming into the Phoenix area for the Super Bowl, as well as working with the Las Vegas Police Department to create a better partnership as the Super Bowl will take place in Las Vegas in 2025. Additionally, there is a new project with the Human Service Campus, recognizing that a homeless encampment in downtown Phoenix has around 1,000 people and about 300 of those people are under the age of 24. This population is very susceptible to both labor and sex traffickers so the Workgroup hopes to foster more partnerships to increase outreach and awareness in that community. The Starfish Place only has two rooms available so if any council members have clients who are victims of sex trafficking and are guardians of children, please have them apply. **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, discussed the State self-assessment on human trafficking conducted by National Advisory Committee and thanked all of the council members, specifically **Dr. Roe-Sepowitz** for her support.
- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, provided an update from the Outreach and Awareness Workgroup, sharing that there is a heavy focus on the upcoming Super Bowl as large events are a hotspot for trafficking and victimization. With this in mind, the workgroup is focused on expanding training, connections, and awareness campaigns across Arizona. **Debbie Johnson** has made huge inroads by reaching out to the hospitality and transportation industries to get them involved. There are presentations planned for the September Council meeting regarding this issue.
- **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair**, introduced **Sarah Chung** to provide the report for the Victim Service Workgroup. The Workgroup's main focus has been to finalize the resource matrix and dismantle it so it can be used in the most effective way possible to reach the public. Denise Chen from the Department of Child Safety (DCS) attended the recent meeting to share DCS's anti-trafficking efforts.

### Upcoming Meeting

- **Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair**, reminded Councilmembers to mark their calendars for the next Council meeting on September 21, 2022, at 9 a.m. The meeting will be held in person at the Executive Tower.

### Adjournment

- **Claire Sechler-Merkel, Co-Chair**, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

- **Keith Moffitt** moved to adjourn.
- **Joseph Kelroy** seconded the motion.
- The motion passed with no dissenting votes and the meeting adjourned at 10:46 a.m.

Dated 2 of June 2022  
Arizona Human Trafficking Council  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Kainoa Spenser  
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