

Healing, Support, and Transition Services for Adults with Lived Experience of Sex Trafficking

Submitted pursuant to Section 2(4(f)) of Chapter 268, Laws of 2023

January 2025

Report to the Legislature

Director Joe Nguyễn

Acknowledgments

Washington State Department of Commerce

Cindy Guertin-Anderson, Assistant Director
Community Services Division

Trisha Smith, Managing Director
Office of Crime Victims Advocacy

Stephanie Pratt, Program Manager
Victims of Crime Program
Office of Crime Victims Advocacy

Suzanne Hall, Management Analyst
Office of Crime Victim Advocacy

Katie Meehan, Policy and Community Relations
Manager
Community Services Division

Hyeen Park, Policy Analyst
Community Services Division

1011 Plum St. SE
P.O. Box 42525
Olympia, WA 98504-2525

www.commerce.wa.gov

For people with disabilities, this report is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 7-1-1 and ask to be connected to 360-725-4000.

Table of contents

Executive summary	4
Program activities in 2024	5
Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Conclusion	10

Executive summary

This report, submitted under [Chapter 268, Laws of 2023](#) (Substitute Senate Bill 5114), outlines progress in creating the Healing Support and Transition Services Program. This trauma-informed, survivor-centered network addresses gaps in care, prioritizes culturally specific services, and fosters trust among survivors of sex trafficking. Key achievements include:

- 676 survivors served, with tailored care for foster youth and underserved groups.
- Emphasis on inclusive demographic tracking and culturally specific programming.
- Strategic use of funding to enhance service delivery and inform future policies.

Washington's geographic and economic factors, including its role as a trade hub and home to people living in vulnerable rural areas, underscore the importance of targeting resources where needs are greatest. Challenges like systemic mistrust and limited public awareness complicate survivor outreach. By addressing these gaps, the program fosters safety, stability, and recovery for survivors statewide.

Legislative mandate

This report is submitted pursuant to Section 2(4(f)) of [Chapter 268, Laws of 2023](#), which requires Commerce's Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA) to:

(f) By December 1, 2024, submit an initial report to the relevant committees of the legislature that includes the following information by service providers:

(i) The number of clients served;

(ii) Nonidentifiable demographic data of the clients served, including whether clients are current or former foster youth; and

(iii) Data on the services provided to clients

Key findings

- 676 survivors were served from January to September 2024.
- 13% of clients were current or former foster youth,¹ underscoring the need for trauma-informed care tailored to the unique vulnerabilities of this group.
- Racial/ethnic breakdown: White (43%), Black/African American (16%), Hispanic/Latino (12%), Multiracial (8%), Native American/Alaska Native (7%), Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian (1%), Asian (1%), Other (7%), Not Reported (18%).
- Gender identity: Most clients identified as female, but many individuals identified as male and non-binary. This demonstrates the need for inclusive and culturally relevant care. While 3% identified as LGBTQIA+, many victims and survivors chose not to share this information, indicating that the LGBTQIA+ population may be underrepresented.

¹ For some agencies, this percentage was closer to 30%; OCVA anticipates this may be a higher percentage overall than these initial reports indicate. OCVA will continue to work with providers on best practices for capturing this important data set.

Key services delivered

- **Housing and safety planning:** Provided to ensure immediate safety and stability.
- **Medical and behavioral health services:** Provided trauma-informed care and substance use treatment.
- **Legal advocacy:** Offered support for immigration issues, vacating criminal records, and other civil legal matters.
- **Culturally specific services:** Healing and supportive services that are in alignment with culturally specific practices and traditions.

Program activities in 2024

Staff allocation

Some of the staff supporting the Healing Support and Transition Services Program are also funded through other grants. This includes both Commerce staff and staff at partner organizations. Sharing funding sources is a common and effective practice, ensuring the sustainability of services and allowing providers to deliver consistent, high-quality support to survivors.

Statewide organization

The Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative (IHTC) serves as the lead organization coordinating services for survivors across Washington. Key responsibilities include:

- Providing tools, resources, and guidance to service providers.
- Hosting quarterly meetings to share best practices and improve collaboration.
- Strengthening statewide connections to ensure consistent, high-quality care.

This grant-funded effort, running from February 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, prioritizes better communication, improved services, and stronger advocacy through a unified service network.

Data visualizations

The program tracks client data through the InfoNet system, capturing information such as race, ethnicity, gender, housing status, disability status, and foster care involvement. Foster youth tracking includes a broad definition, identifying individuals who have experienced care systems, regardless of state or dependency status. This comprehensive tracking ensures services are responsive to the unique vulnerabilities of foster youth.

The data in this report provides a clear picture of the ethnic and racial makeup of the clients served in 2024. These charts are important for understanding who is being reached and where improvements might be needed.

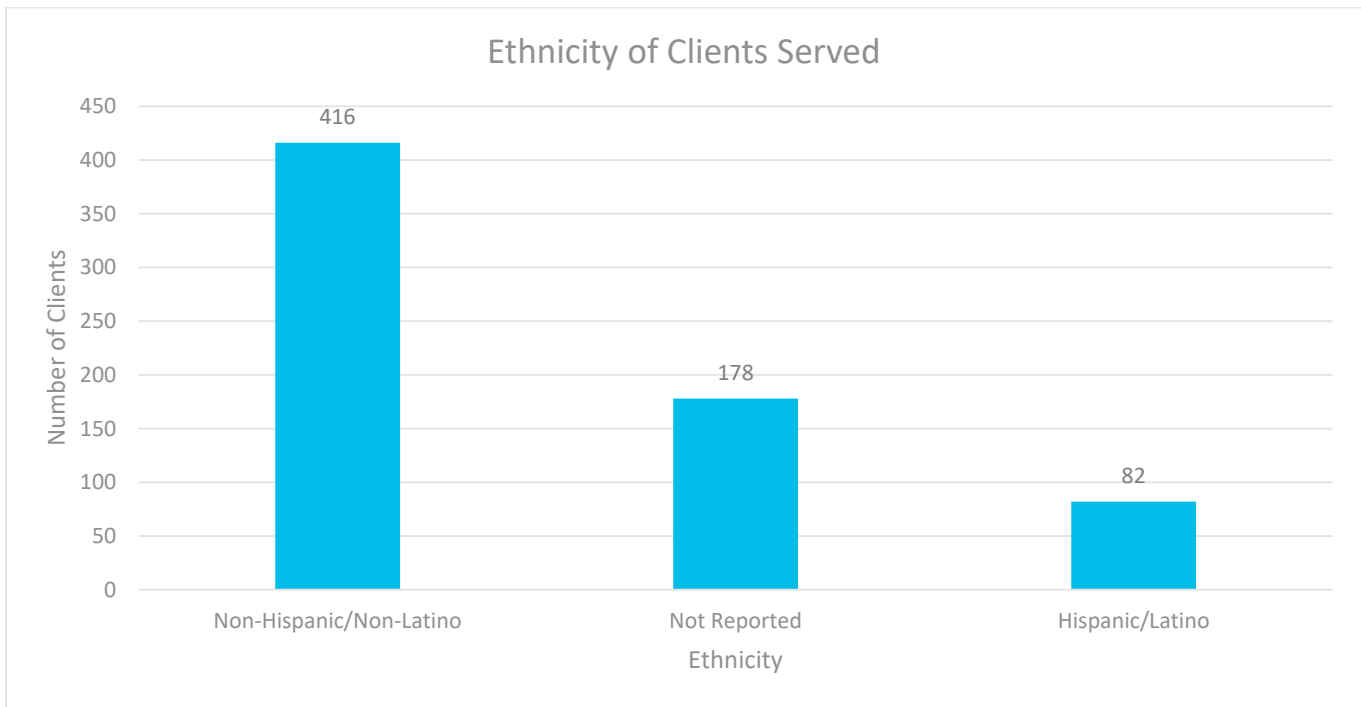


Figure 1. The bar chart breaks down clients by ethnicity: "Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino," "Hispanic/Latino," and "Not Reported." Each bar's height shows the client count in each group, with "Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino" as the largest, followed by "Not Reported" and "Hispanic/Latino." This chart offers a quick look at the client population's ethnic makeup.

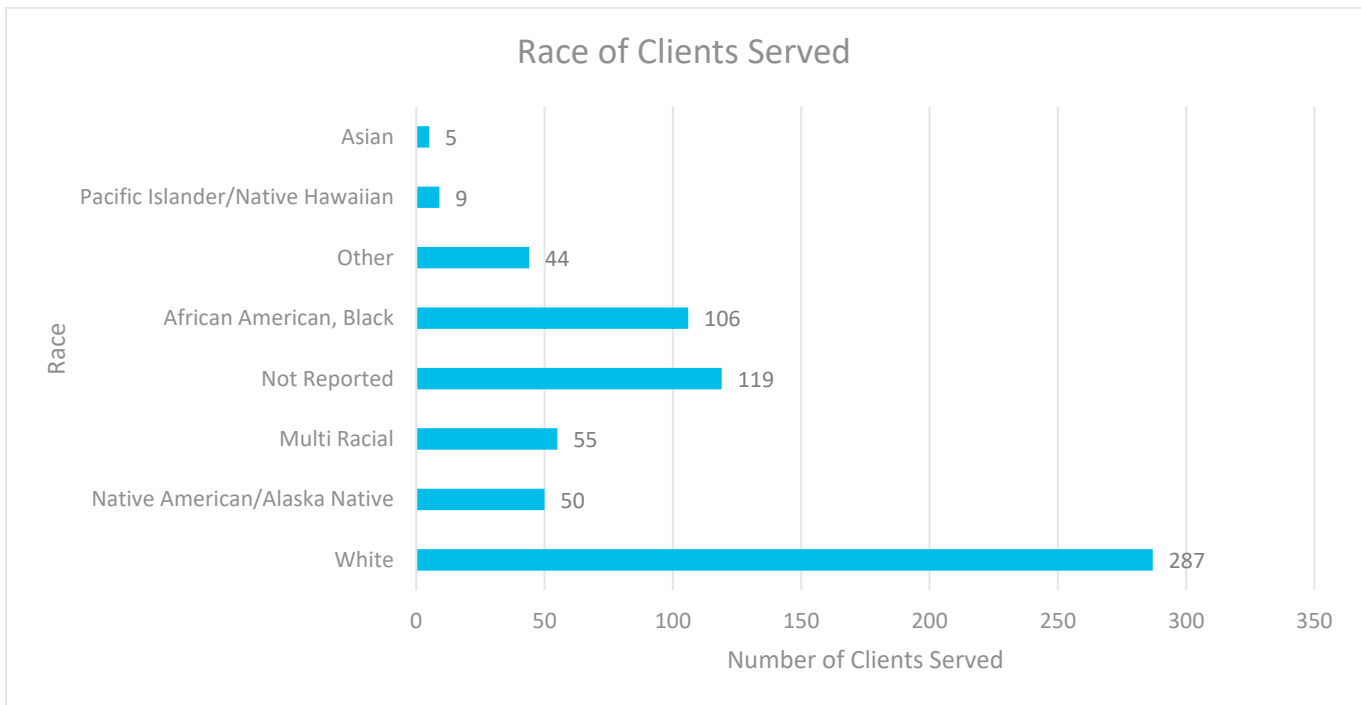


Figure 2. This chart shows the racial distribution of clients, with each row representing a group like White, Black, Native American, Asian, and others. "Not Reported" includes clients who didn't specify a race, giving a snapshot of racial diversity in the client base.

These charts provide insight into the diversity of the client base, helping to identify who is being served and where services can be improved. This information is essential for making sure programs are inclusive and meet the needs of all communities.

Primary client services

The program offers a wide range of services to support survivors, with general advocacy being the most frequently used service. General advocacy helps survivors access resources, navigate systems, work with law enforcement or social services, and learn about their rights and options. This service plays a key role in meeting immediate needs, building trust, and creating stability for survivors.

Other important services include medical and legal support, crisis intervention, support groups, therapy, financial assistance, and housing support. Each service addresses specific challenges survivors face, ensuring a well-rounded approach to recovery.

In 2024, the program recorded 7,585 entries – each representing an interaction or service provided to survivors. A total of 676 individuals were served, with each client receiving multiple services. On average, clients had about 11 interactions, highlighting the ongoing and comprehensive support provided. These efforts also included more than 5,300 service hours, demonstrating the program’s deep commitment to helping survivors heal and rebuild their lives.

Primary client services	Entries	Service hours
General advocacy	3,950	2,500
Medical advocacy	410	130
Legal advocacy	275	110
Civil legal aid	20	16
Crisis intervention	600	240
Information and referral	500	350
Therapy	360	400
Support groups	750	1,050
Emergency financial assistance	520	400
Transitional housing/Relocation assistance	200	150
Total	7,585	5,346

Partnerships and service coverage

The program collaborates with 12 organizations across 20 counties and eight tribes to provide culturally responsive and trauma-informed care. Key service areas include urban centers like King County and underserved rural and tribal communities.

Highlighted partnerships:

- API Chaya (King, Snohomish, Pierce Counties): Supports immigrant and Asian communities.
- Kalispel Tribe of Indians (Pend Oreille and Spokane Counties): Focuses on Native and rural populations.
- Mirror Ministries (Benton and Franklin Counties): Serves BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and foster youth.

- Rebuilding Hope (Pierce and Kitsap Counties): Provides services for BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities.

However, significant gaps remain in Clark County, north-central Washington, and Yakima County, with a need for tailored outreach to individuals with disabilities.

Grantees Grant Period 1/10/24 - 6/30/25	Location	Service area/Counties	Underserved areas and populations
API Chaya	Western – Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ King ○ Snohomish ○ Pierce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Immigrant communities ○ Asian communities ○ Pacific Islander communities
Aurora Commons	Western – Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aurora Avenue ○ Seattle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People living in poverty ○ Aurora Avenue Track
Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative	Western – Olympia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary focus: Olympia, Thurston County ○ Neighboring counties: Pierce, Mason, Lewis, Grays Harbor ○ Tribes: Nisqually, Chehalis, Cowlitz, Puyallup, Quileute, Tulalip, Lummi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Geographic area underserved ○ No anti-human trafficking organizations in Thurston County
Kalispel Tribe of Indians	Eastern – Cusick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kalispel Tribe’s Usk reservation ○ Second reservation land: Airway Heights ○ Pend Oreille County ○ Spokane County ○ Surrounding rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rural communities ○ Native American communities ○ Marshallese and Pacific Islander communities ○ African American communities ○ Asian communities
Lutheran Community Services, Spokane	Eastern – Spokane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spokane ○ Neighboring counties: Ferry, Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield and Asotin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Marshallese community ○ Latino communities
Mirror Ministries	Central – Kennewick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary focus: Benton, Franklin ○ Yakima, Walla Walla, Columbia, when needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People who have aged out of foster care ○ BIPOC communities ○ LGBTQ2+ community
Muslimahs Against Abuse Center	Western – Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ King 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ East African community
New Hope	Eastern – Moses Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grant ○ Adams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rural communities ○ Latino communities
Organization for Prostitution Survivors (OPS)	Western – Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ King 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People living in poverty ○ BIPOC women ○ People who are unhoused/experiencing homelessness ○ LGBTQ2+ community
Rebuilding Hope	Western – Tacoma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pierce ○ South King ○ Kitsap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BIPOC community ○ LGBTQ2+ community
Real Escape from the Sex Trade (REST)	Western – Seattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ King (primary) ○ Accepts referrals from outside King County and across the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BIPOC ○ LGBTQ2+ ○ People living in poverty, homelessness

Grantees Grant Period 1/10/24 - 6/30/25	Location	Service area/Counties	Underserved areas and populations
Scarlet Road	Western – Bremerton	○ Kitsap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Underserved geographic area (Kitsap) ○ BIPOC ○ Incarcerated ○ LGBTQ ○ Male-identified individuals and communities ○ Guatemalan community ○ Guamanian/Chamorro and Filipino communities ○ Port Gamble S'klallam and Suquamish Tribes

Culturally responsive services

Culturally responsive services integrate the traditions, values, and practices of survivors, fostering trust and engagement. Examples include:

- Native communities: Traditional healing practices like ceremonies, drumming, and weaving.
- Multilingual outreach: Materials in Spanish, Russian, Arabic, and other languages to reach immigrant populations.
- LGBTQIA+ outreach: Partnerships with youth centers and community groups.

Staff training emphasizes inclusivity, improving support for communities of color, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and other underserved groups. These efforts reduce barriers, build trust, and create effective support systems.

Examples of culturally responsive practices

- Native communities: Incorporating traditional healing methods, such as ceremonies, elder consultations, prayers, burning sweetgrass, weaving, and attending tribal events.
- Survivor-led healing groups: Offering activities like beading, drumming, and weaving to foster healing and cultural reconnection.
- Trauma-informed care: Delivered by staff who share the cultural background of survivors, ensuring culturally sensitive and empathetic support.

Multilingual and inclusive outreach

Outreach is designed to connect with diverse communities using multilingual materials and culturally appropriate presentations, including:

- Languages: Materials in Spanish, Russian, Marshallese, Arabic, and others to reach immigrant and non-English-speaking populations. These languages were selected to target specific groups who are at higher risk of exploitation or have historically been underserved due to language and cultural barriers. By providing outreach in these languages, the program ensures inclusivity, builds trust, and improves access for vulnerable populations.
- Partnerships: Collaborations with local leaders, Native organizations, mosques, and cultural groups to better serve Native and communities of color.
- LGBTQIA+ communities: Partnerships with youth centers and local groups to provide targeted outreach and support.

Staff training and competency

Training programs focus on improving staff and partner ability to serve survivors from diverse backgrounds, including:

- Communities of color, such as Black and Native communities.
- LGBTQIA+ individuals, emphasizing inclusive and respectful care.

By tailoring services to the cultural and linguistic needs of survivors, these approaches reduce barriers, build trust, and create more effective support systems for all.

Client demographics and services

The program tracks client data through the InfoNet system, capturing information such as race, ethnicity, gender, housing status, disability status, and foster care involvement. Foster youth tracking includes a broad definition, identifying individuals who have experienced care systems, regardless of state or dependency status. This comprehensive tracking ensures services are responsive to the unique vulnerabilities of foster youth.

Data context

The data collection system captures key information about the individuals it serves, such as race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, housing situation, age, and any prior involvement with the foster care system (which is especially relevant to this funding). By looking at race and ethnicity data, it becomes easier to spot any patterns or gaps in who accesses services. Details on gender and disability status give insight into specific needs and whether people are getting the right kind of support. Housing status information can show if clients are dealing with housing instability, which might affect their needs. Tracking foster care involvement allows services to be better tailored to those with foster care experience. Some limitations exist when it comes to breaking down, or disaggregating data. Certain categories might not have enough information or may rely on data that does not capture the full picture.

Service and activity information is reported in InfoNet, a statewide data collection system for victim service funding in Washington. InfoNet data is de-identified to maintain victim confidentiality as required by state law.

Foster youth tracking definition

In response to feedback from the Office of the Attorney General, providers track foster youth with a broad definition, including those who went into care, regardless of whether they were found dependent or fostered out of state. This ensures comprehensive tracking of services provided to current and former foster youth.

Conclusion

The Healing Support and Transition Services Program has made significant progress in establishing a trauma-informed, survivor-centered network of care. Moving forward, efforts will focus on addressing geographic and demographic gaps, particularly in Clark County, tribal areas, and underserved populations such as foster youth and individuals with disabilities. Annual reporting, starting in December 2025, will ensure continuous evaluation and improvement, guiding the program to deliver equitable, effective, and culturally responsive services statewide.