



# A Window into Statewide ECM Task Forces

FOUNDATIONS EDITION

## The Enhanced Collaborative Model (ECM) Task Force to Combat Human Trafficking

is a U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) grant-funded program that brings together key partners to develop, expand, or strengthen multidisciplinary task forces to address human trafficking. With this approach, local, state, or tribal service providers; law enforcement; prosecutors; and other collaborators can:

- Identify victims of trafficking,
- Access a comprehensive array of service options, and
- Seek justice for victims by implementing victim-centered and trauma-informed investigations and prosecutions.

### THE WINDOWS SERIES



Foundations Edition



Case Spotlight Edition



Disciplines Edition

## INTRODUCTION

The **Windows Series** offers insights into the ECM model and task forces with examples from the efforts of ECMs nationwide. These examples showcase different structures, successes, innovations, and ideas that:

- demonstrate a commitment to addressing serious crime and supporting victims and survivors;
- illustrate the spectrum of activities and approaches employed by the ECMs;
- share successful strategies to encourage stakeholder cooperation;
- enhance public awareness by highlighting the nature and scope of work;
- offer a behind-the-scenes look at the field and its day-to-day work to a wider audience.

The **Foundations Edition** looks at how different task forces have approached or implemented key parts of the ECM model, including co-leadership models, enhanced collaborative efforts, engagement with lived experience expertise, statewide efforts, and efforts to identify and respond to labor trafficking.

## STATEWIDE TASK FORCES

Statewide task forces often differ structurally from local task forces due to a larger geography, varying needs of victims throughout the state and differing demographics and industries in urban, rural, and Tribal Nations communities. True statewide reach takes careful planning to ensure the entire state is included in practice, not just in name.

This Window highlights several statewide task forces under the ECM program that have used their funding to tackle such challenges and create solutions for victim identification, statewide service delivery, and investigations.

## Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force



**FUNDED PARTNERS** | Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation & Project Respect (ARC Community Services)



**GEOGRAPHY** | Wisconsin

The **Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force** divided the state into four regions to better achieve comprehensive statewide reach. After determining the regions, they began listening and information-gathering sessions with local agencies (including law

enforcement, victim service providers, and other community partners like child welfare and healthcare) throughout the state. These sessions—organized by region and facilitated by Task Force members—were used to explore trends throughout the state, gather qualitative data, facilitate a forum for networking, and provide outreach and training. Through these sessions, the Task Force was also able to increase local and statewide collaboration among agencies and organizations working to address and identify trends related to trafficking. The Task Force partners with regional service providers, prosecutors, and law enforcement agencies and listens responsively to communities' needs to build partnerships that meet statewide gaps. This practice has been helpful for a geographically large state with resources that vary from region to region.

The **Wisconsin Task Force** invested in local listening and information gathering sessions to inform their strategy, and in doing so increased local connections and collaboration.

*Unless otherwise cited, this information was provided via an interview with Alexandra Stanley; September 2023.*

## Alabama Anti-Human Trafficking Alliance



**FUNDED PARTNERS** | Office of the Alabama Attorney General & Montgomery Area Family Violence Program, dba Family Sunshine Center



**GEOGRAPHY** | Alabama

The **Alabama Anti-Human Trafficking Alliance** received ECM funding from OVC in 2020, co-led by the Office of the Attorney General and Family Sunshine Center, a victim services organization. While pursuing its mandate to investigate cases and provide services to victims under the ECM program, the Alliance developed efforts to work with and complement existing efforts, such as the Alabama governor's Human Trafficking Task Force, established in 2014. Through this partnership, they identified that while the governor's task force focused on providing Human Trafficking 101 training, more advanced training for law enforcement and victim service providers was needed, complementing existing and successful work through the governor's office. By assessing what already existed and developing a strategy that enhanced rather than duplicated efforts, the Alliance maximized resources and strengthened the ability to serve victims of trafficking.

The **Alabama Anti-Human Trafficking Alliance** invested in learning more about and developing plans that compliment other efforts in the state.

The Alliance continues to partner with the governor's task force by participating in several subcommittees. The awareness of other agencies' efforts allows for enhanced collaboration and breaks down barriers between organizations in the fight against human trafficking.

*Unless otherwise cited, this information was provided via an interview with Chris Lim; September 2023.*

# Mississippi Human Trafficking Council



**FUNDED PARTNERS** | Mississippi Bureau of Investigations (MBI), Mississippi Department of Public Safety & The Office Against Interpersonal Violence (OAI), Mississippi State Department of Health



**GEOGRAPHY** | Mississippi

## The **Mississippi Human Trafficking**

**Council** is led by the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the Mississippi Department of Health. To address the challenge of implementing services consistently across the state, Mississippi built a unique navigator program. The Office Against Interpersonal Violence at the Mississippi State Department of Health employs two

Navigators whose roles are to lead the services subcommittee and to manage services across the state through sub-awarded reimbursement-based service providers. The Navigators vet all organizations requesting funds for services provided through site visits. The vetting process was developed to ensure direct service providers deliver trauma-informed services that enhance the quality and quantity of all services available to victims of trafficking in achieving their goals. The navigators collaborate with federal, state, and local law enforcement, service providers, and community and faith-based organizations to ensure victims of trafficking are identified and referred for appropriate services.

*Unless otherwise cited, this information was provided via an interview with Ashlee Lucas; May 2024.*

The **Mississippi Human Trafficking Council** has two Navigators who are tasked with building out service connections across the state, and vetting service providers to ensure that survivors receive trauma-informed support.

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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Dividing the state into regions can help make the process of achieving statewide services more manageable.
- Engaging with various multidisciplinary partners in each state region helps better understand unique needs across different geographic settings and communities.
- Understanding the trends in different state regions helps tailor efforts to that area's circumstances and needs.
- Identifying and learning more about other anti-trafficking efforts across the state and leveraging the work of the different groups enhances overall efforts.
- Having dedicated staff such as Navigators who manage outreach and capacity building across the state can help account for the larger geographic area.

*OVC recognizes the unique needs of a statewide structure and approach and in 2023 created a new statewide category for ECM Task Forces.*