

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 23, 2014

**Contact:** DOH Communications

(850) 245-4111

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RAISES AWARENESS ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

**Tallahassee** –The Florida Department of Health is raising awareness about the presence of human trafficking in Florida and how the Department is addressing the issue. Human trafficking is a human rights violation estimated to involve more than two million victims worldwide annually. January is Human Trafficking Awareness month and statistics rank Florida as the third highest trafficking destination in the country, with half of all trafficking victims younger than 18.

“Raising awareness of human trafficking is essential for the health of Florida’s residents and visitors,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “Our public health professionals in Florida are committed to working together with state and local agencies, as well as community organizations to eliminate human trafficking in Florida.”

With offices in all 67 counties, the Department has a significant presence in Florida’s many unique and diverse communities. As a result, human trafficking has the potential to bring victims into contact with the systems and services the Department provides.

During the month of January a statewide series of targeted educational messages and resources that addresses human trafficking will be provided to all Department employees. Executive leadership, led by Deputy Secretary Marty Stubblefield, are also working with Terry Coonan, J.D., Executive Director with the FSU Center for the Advancement of Human Rights to establish a detailed Department strategic plan to help end human trafficking and develop additional training for specific programs. The Department will continue beyond January to engage in ongoing and sustainable educational efforts for employees across county health departments and programs, playing an important leadership role in statewide efforts to address human trafficking.

The Florida Department of Health protects, promotes and improves the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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**Florida Department of Health**

Office of Communications  
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin A-04 • Tallahassee, FL 32399-1705  
PHONE: 850/245-4111 • FAX 850/488-6495

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