HTLA Class 7 Recommendations

Checklist to Address Inequities and Barriers for Human Trafficking Survivors and Communities of Color

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Acknowledgments

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to recommend minimum expectations for organizations in the anti-human trafficking movement and related fields who receive funding (at either a local, state, or federal level) for the purpose of providing support and services to human trafficking survivors and communities of color. These recommendations are intended to build an organization’s capacity to address institutional inequities and barriers to accessing services for survivors of human trafficking and communities/people of color (POC).

This document includes a checklist to assist organizations, including OTIP grantees, to assess and take steps to strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion in services to survivors of human trafficking. The checklist is organized into five sections: the first four include recommendations under the following goals:

- Goal 1: Provide Professional and Economic Opportunities
- Goal 2: Improve Funding Accessibility
- Goal 3: Ensure Equitable Access to Services
- Goal 4: Improve Accountability and Inclusion

The fifth section includes service-specific recommendations for health care, financial empowerment and literacy, housing, education, employment, legal, and immigration services.

How to Use the Recommendations and Checklist

The focus of the recommendations is to address the purpose and significance of holding service providers accountable to ensure clients have access to equitable resources: health care, education, immigration/citizenship documentation assistance, employment, etc. The checklist is intended to be used by organizations who work in the anti-human trafficking movement and its related fields to better reach survivors and communities of color. Some of the requirements are intended for organizations that provide specific services. Providers can identify the recommendations that best fit their organization and identify growth areas in their services.

Federal agencies that create Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) can use the recommendations to reduce the barriers to access funding for communities of color. Federal agencies could use this checklist as a requirement for grantees to obtain and keep grants. Accountability is key; the checklist shouldn’t just be given to grantees as a standalone tool but used as a working document for grantees and grant monitors. The recommendations are intended to create opportunities and pathways to more expansive service provision because of more accessible resources (funding) and technical assistance.

For grantees, or organizations that receive either local, state, or federal funds, this checklist serves as a roadmap to ensure survivors and communities of color are receiving equitable, high-quality services. This checklist could be used in partnership with grant monitors to ensure the grantee is being held accountable and providing the best services to POC. Historically, the communities most at risk for high trafficking victimization are not the ones that have had the greatest access to funds for programming. In drafting these recommendations, the responsibility remains on organizations to ensure the resources that are provided are reaching marginalized communities that are at a higher risk for human trafficking and are least likely to receive appropriate interventions and services. Additionally, the service-specific section of the checklist
is intended to give agencies a chance to choose specific recommendations to ensure accountability at either a local, state, or federal level and with grantees to ensure funding is reaching communities of color and survivors.

**Goals of the Recommendations**

Our proposed recommendations seek to satisfy four overarching goals:

**Goal 1: Provide Professional and Economic Opportunities**

*To ensure equitable access to professional and economic opportunities for survivors and communities of color.*

Employment opportunities and income security are often the most important and immediate fundamental concerns of survivors of human trafficking and underserved communities of color. It is important to note that employment is the key to their enduring well-being; to achieve this goal, it is essential to ensure we provide them with equal access to economic and professional opportunities. However, several barriers to accessing these opportunities are deeply rooted within inequities intertwined among themselves, and convoluted within systemic and institutional racism, xenophobia, homophobia, and discrimination based on class, caste, race, nationality, immigration and refugee status, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc. These inequities and barriers pose an enormous challenge to achieve this goal and economic freedom.

Recommendations under this goal are intended to address these barriers to ensure equitable access to opportunities for survivors of human trafficking and communities of color in the United States. These recommendations are suggested to those who are within the capacity to provide economic opportunities to communities of color and survivors of trafficking; this includes nongovernmental organizations, federal entities, and other key constituents within the private and public social sectors.

**Goal 2: Improve Funding Accessibility**

*To improve access to federal funds for individuals and agencies led by and serving people of color.*

There are several barriers that contribute to and exacerbate the lack of funding for smaller nonprofits led by POC and the communities they serve. These organizations need federal funding to supplement their limited operating budget to expand service provision. However, there are often not enough staff, or no staff with the skillset or capacity, to apply for these funds. That often leaves these organizations operating with fewer resources — limiting their reach or requiring them to partner with organizations that lack the community and cultural context to deliver services to their specific populations. Additionally, it is not realistic for many of these organizations that have small operating budgets to apply for federal grants that require a higher minimum budget proposal amount for applicants that does not fit with the organization’s strategic growth plans.

Inherent in these barriers is that smaller, POC-run organizations are reliant on other nonprofits to deliver services to their communities, simply because they do not have the skill set, required organizational structure, matching funds, and other requirements to compete for the funding themselves. Recommendations under this goal aim to address this inequity and outline a path forward that will ultimately increase access to federal funds and thereby expand culturally specific service provision for survivors and communities of color.
Goal 3: Ensure Equitable Access to Services

To ensure equitable access to services for survivors and communities of color.

Provision of equitable services for communities of color has been insufficient and almost nonexistent. This is due to the historical oppression that began with the colonization, enslavement, and land removal of Indigenous peoples and communities of color. The consequence of this oppression is still very much prevalent and has continued in various forms for communities of color. Communities of color continue to experience forced labor, tokenism, and discrimination on all levels. As a result, they endure social and economic disparities that are embedded within governing systems that create institutional racism in health care, education, housing, legal/criminal justice, and immigration support and social services. The approach and historical treatment of communities of color being systemic in nature has resulted in institutional barriers that require a culturally inclusive process addressing each community and their specific needs.

To aid in the creation of a culturally inclusive process, we recommend that agencies adjust their policies to be more culturally inclusive when they provide funding and support. In addition, we recommend that all agencies receiving federal funding could adhere to feedback to ensure that survivors of communities of color receive equitable services that begin to break the barriers preventing the continuation, exit, and wraparound support from all forms of human trafficking.

Goal 4: Improve Accountability and Inclusion

To ensure that federal agencies and the organizations they fund are accountable to and inclusive of survivors and communities of color.

As evidenced by building research, marginalized communities including POC are often disproportionately targeted by traffickers given the unique vulnerabilities associated with their intersectional identities. However, members of these same communities have historically been excluded from opportunities to share their lived experiences and expertise, especially among federally funded programs that aim to provide services for those exploited. As such, organizations intending to create programs for this purpose are heavily encouraged to continuously reflect on opportunities to be much more inclusive in their practices throughout the program planning and implementation processes, especially within the realm of survivor and POC involvement.

The purpose of this section is to provide recommendations that funded organizations can use to hold themselves accountable and ensure that efforts for inclusion are being made so the communities being served can benefit from perspectives that more accurately reflect their culture, environment, experiences and needs.
## Recommendations for Federal Funding Agencies

1. **Agency requirement**
   - Agency requires a percentage of funding or other methods of support (e.g., MOUs or contracts for services) to go to service providers and community-based organizations led by POC.

2. **Funding application process**
   - In the case of a funding application process, agency requires organizations applying for funding to provide evidence of outreach in identified geographic areas with large communities of color. Outreach may include canvassing, tabling at community events, providing trainings in communities, phone banking, and holding community events.

3. **Cultural appropriation**
   - Agency designates a percentage of funding that is allowable for culturally appropriate methods of care and alternative methods of healing to include art therapy, storytelling, and healing circles.

4. **Technical assistance**
   - Agency provides technical assistance on how to better reach and serve communities of color if agencies are not serving a comparable percentage of POC as there are in the geographic area served.

5. **Scoring process**
   - Agency will incorporate the following two elements into the scoring process for grant applications:
     - a. The applicant has provided evidence of having previously conducted outreach events within areas that are predominantly communities of color.
     - b. The applicant has demonstrated that their organization currently has staff who identify as individuals of color and has the capacity to retain said staff for a duration of at least 1 year.

6. **Grant review process**
   - Agency will incorporate the following two elements into the grant review process:
     - a. Agency intentionally recruits peer reviewers of color.
     - b. Agency ensures there is sufficient funding available to appropriately compensate, train, and mentor peer reviewers of color.

7. **Mentorship program**
   - Agency develops a mentorship program specifically seeking to recruit and mentor POC-led organizations; the program will explore how to expand nonprofit expertise to further develop and make use of the grant writing and management skills gained through the mentorship program. For those agencies without any mentorship programs, they will seek guidance and leadership from existing agencies. Hence, all agencies will provide ongoing training and technical support for grant writing and grants management for leaders of smaller grant-funded organizations, led by or serving communities of color.

8. **Funding for mentees**
   - Agency designates or identifies funding to compensate mentees of color who enter the program.

9. **RFPs or NOFOs for small agencies**
   - Agency designs separate RFPs or NOFOs for agencies that staff fewer than 10 people or have an operating budget under $200,000.

10. **Minimum funding amount**
    - Agency lowers the minimum funding amount to provide startup or necessary funds for smaller, community-led nonprofit organizations; RFPs and NOFOs for culturally specific services allow for organizational capacity building, staff training, and support.
### Recommendations for Federal Funding Agencies (cont.)

11. Agency creates flexible agreements for grant modifications to make it easier for organizations to spend grant money in a way that expands their capacity to serve communities of color.

12. Agency designates adequate funding for salaries of full-/part-time employees and strongly encourages a wage of at least $25–30 per hour or a comparable livable wage.

13. Agency creates RFPs and NOFOs and designates adequate funding to organizations to conduct free tutorial opportunities for non-English-speaking survivors and communities of color.

14. Agency offers federally funded scholarships for human trafficking POC educational, vocational, and training opportunities with connections to a job coach to ensure job placement and wraparound support.

15. Agency offers federally funded student loan forgiveness for survivors and POC to pursue higher education.

16. Agency ensures funded organizations have access to training from an appointed officer who focuses on diversity and inclusion.

17. Agency creates a listserv or some other HUB at the federal level that is inclusive of survivors, organizations, and other professionals who work in the field.

18. Agency contracts alumni of the Human Trafficking Leadership Academy Class 7 to provide additional support with incorporating the checklist during the program planning and implementation of human trafficking initiatives serving communities of color to ensure they are evidence-based and trauma informed.
# Checklist to Address Inequities and Barriers for Human Trafficking Survivors/Communities of Color

## Provide Economic Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruit and Hire Survivors and People of Color (POC)</th>
<th>Meets Requirement (check all that apply)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My organization partners with institutions serving POC in the area to ensure the job posting reaches POC.</td>
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<td>2. My organization builds and continually adds to a recruitment database with potential POC candidates, including candidates who were interviewed previously and not offered the position.</td>
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<td>4. Job postings at my organization do not require a specific religious affiliation under the eligibility criteria.</td>
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<td>5. My organization gives consideration to prospective employees who have been victims of crime, and have a criminal record related to their exploitation.</td>
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<td>6. Job postings at my organization accept lived experience in lieu of education and work experience under the eligibility criteria.</td>
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<td>7. My organization provides economic and professional opportunities (e.g., fellowships, scholarships, internships, jobs) to communities of color across various immigration statuses.</td>
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<td>8. Interviews at my organization include staff who are POC or my organization formed a hiring committee that includes a survivor consultant and POC.</td>
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<td>9. My organization hires survivor advocates and POC within the field who align with the cultures and language of the clients served.</td>
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<td>10. My organization hires trauma-informed interpreters as a part of the program and builds translator/interpreter networks within the community that is being served.</td>
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<td>11. My organization pays a wage of $25–30 per hour to full- and part-time employees working on federal/state grants or a comparable livable wage and includes pay incentives for those who are bilingual/trilingual.</td>
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## Provide Culturally Responsive Resources and Opportunities

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide Culturally Responsive Resources and Opportunities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My organization provides free tutorial opportunities to non-English speaking survivors and communities of color to increase their English language competency and be able to access employment and educational opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. My organization provides culturally and linguistically appropriate services and resources.</td>
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<td>3. My organization develops and translates materials and tools to be linguistically and culturally appropriate.</td>
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### Ensure Equitable Access to Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conduct Outreach and Marketing</th>
<th>Meets Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> My organization collects demographic information about clients to confirm that communities of color are reached and served.</td>
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<td><strong>2.</strong> My organization solicits feedback from local communities of color on preferred methods of care and culturally appropriate services.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> My organization guarantees services for survivors of human trafficking with different abilities are accessible regardless of when the exploitation occurred, and does not restrict the length of time that survivors can access services.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> My organization offers culturally inclusive screening processes and diverse services that meet the needs of all survivors, including survivors from communities of color.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong> My organization ensures survivors of color have access to culturally appropriate interpreters and translation services.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong> My organization provides wraparound services to meet the needs of all survivors, including survivors from communities of color.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Invite Survivor and POC Voices on Boards</th>
<th>Meets Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> My organization recruits diverse survivors of color and allied professionals representing different cultures to advisory board positions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> If an advisory board is not feasible, my organization contracts survivor consultants or selects survivors to serve on the board of directors.</td>
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### Improve Accountability and Inclusion

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improve Accountability and Inclusion</th>
<th>Meets Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> My organization has created an advisory board where at least 50% of members identify as survivors of color.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> My organization does not use language that is harmful or re-victimizing to communities of color (e.g. ‘modern-day slavery’).</td>
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### Follow Service-Specific Recommendations

#### Health Care Services

1. My organization ensures that at least 25% of all survivors who were assisted with applying for social and medical benefits (including health insurance) during each quarter identify as POC, as evidenced by a demographic tracking tool.

2. My organization provides or builds community-based partnerships to ensure survivors of color have access to culturally specific healing practices and alternative medicine.

3. My organization offers financial assistance for survivors of color to offset prohibitive costs of health care services.

#### Financial Empowerment and Literacy Services

1. My organization provides culturally specific financial planning that can include budgeting, rebuilding credit, savings, loan applications, and entrepreneurship training to survivors of color by members from their culture/community, depending upon what the survivor says they need.

#### Housing Services

1. My organization confirms that shelters and housing options are not located in areas such as food deserts or places with a lack of public transportation.

2. My organization confirms that shelters and housing options for minors do not stop providing services when the client turns 18 years old.

3. My organization ensures that at least 25% of total survivors assisted with applying for housing vouchers, completing rental applications, and applying for mortgage loans during each quarter identify as POC, as evidenced by a demographic tracking tool.

4. My organization designs shelters and housing options that are culturally appropriate to survivors of color and meet physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional needs.

5. If my organization is a federally funded shelter, it provides permanent, safe, and affordable housing for POC survivors of human trafficking that meets emergency, short-term, mid-term, and long-term needs/transition to permanent housing.

6. My organization offers vouchers specific to human trafficking survivors that are as good as cash payments and can be used or converted to rent-to-own when applicable for POC.

#### Education and Employment Services

1. My organization ensures that at least 50% of total survivors are provided with information about scholarships during each quarter identify as POC, as evidenced by a demographic tracking tool.

2. My organization connects survivors of color with educational, vocational, and training opportunities provided by members from their culture/community.

3. My organization ensures that at least 25% of total survivors who were assisted with scholarship, educational, and financial aid applications during each quarter identify as POC, as evidenced by a demographic tracking tool.
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<tr>
<th>Follow Service-Specific Recommendations (cont.)</th>
<th>Meets Requirement (check all that apply)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> My organization offers mentorship services to youth and adult survivors (depending on the organization's client focus) of color beyond the application and acceptance period.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong> My organization ensures that at least 50% of total survivors who were assisted with vocational training and employment applications each quarter identify as POC, as evidenced by a demographic tracking tool.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Services</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1.</strong> My organization advocates for staff providing legal services or supporting survivors of color in the legal process are included on the survivor's multidisciplinary service team.</td>
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<td><strong>2.</strong> My organization provides training to attorneys on how human trafficking impacts communities of color.</td>
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<td><strong>3.</strong> My organization contracts with attorneys who are trained on human trafficking.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> My organization ensures legal service providers are trained on special considerations and unique needs for survivors from all communities of color.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Immigration Services</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> My organization creates programs that address specific needs and provide opportunities to communities and survivors of color across various immigration statuses. My organization has changed its eligibility criteria to access these services to achieve this.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> My organization employs a gap program for survivors who are waiting for asylum petitions to ensure those services are provided throughout this period.</td>
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