

Southwest Airlines Launches Human Trafficking Awareness Curriculum to all Employees

Southwest Airlines operates on the guiding principles of civility and taking care of others with our collective Southwest Heart. As a Company, we have a passion for doing the right thing. With this cornerstone value in mind, today we are reiterating our support of the global efforts to eliminate Human Trafficking by launching online curriculum for all of our Employees.

The purpose of this curriculum is to provide an overview of the crime of Human Trafficking. At the end of the curriculum, our goal is for Employees to better understand what Human Trafficking is, be able to identify Human Trafficking instances, and be prepared to take action, if necessary, if they suspect they have encountered a potential Human Trafficking situation. This commitment is further strengthened by the work of nonprofit organizations Polaris, United against Human Trafficking, and Rethreaded who Southwest proudly supports as they combat Human Trafficking and provide

Human Trafficking is a
\$150 billion
criminal industry



It is estimated there are
40.3 million victims
of human trafficking globally



Most trafficking victims will
use some type of transportation
- like an airplane -
during their recruitment and trafficking



[#EndHumanTrafficking](#)
Facts are courtesy of The International Labour Organization




support to survivors.

Southwest partnered with nonprofit organization [Polaris](#), a leader in the global fight to eradicate modern slavery, for the content included in this curriculum. This initial phase of optional curriculum is just the first step on this journey. Beginning in 2020, we will start introducing a second phase of required training for our Customer-facing Employees that will focus on specific processes and procedures related to this issue.

Southwest is stepping up our commitment to fight against Human Trafficking because this issue is prevalent in our industry and taking place in our own backyard. Even members of our own Southwest Family have been impacted by Human Trafficking.

When Heather Norcilus, a Learning Multimedia Developer in our Southwest Airlines University Department, was assigned to develop a Companywide curriculum, she had no idea just how closely the topic would hit to home.

Heather, and many other collaborators across the Company, have worked with Polaris to create a computer-based curriculum focused on identifying Human Trafficking.

This project had an extra personal connection for Heather as one of her friends is a survivor of Human Trafficking. “My friend was promised all these things, put on a plane to Florida, and then it wasn’t anything she had agreed to,” Heather shared. “When you think of Human Trafficking, it’s easy to picture the victims in some far away land, but it’s an issue that happens closer than you think—including places where Southwest serves.”

In this case, Heather’s friend was trafficked out of East Texas. “She was flown to Florida with the promise of money and perks to get out of a rough background, but she was lied to,” said Heather. “As a human I felt stuck; I didn’t know what to do or how to help. But, in the midst of this darkness we can be a light and a voice for those who are trapped.”

Thankfully Heather's friend has since escaped her situation, but her story is like so many others—many of whom are still in these situations—and makes it clear that this issue can happen anywhere. That is why providing Employees with the resources to help identify and report trafficking and continuing our work with Partners like Polaris is so important to Southwest.

“I am so grateful to work for a Company that is taking important steps toward this major issue, especially because it is so personal for me,” said Heather. “I am excited that this is just the starting point of future awareness and training. I believe all the work everyone is doing is so worth it and the future impact is unmeasurable!”

In recognition of World Day against Trafficking in Persons, I hope you'll join us in this fight by learning more about this important issue.

Learn More

[Polaris](#): A leader in the global fight to eradicate modern slavery, Polaris systematically disrupts the Human Trafficking networks that rob human beings of their lives and their freedom. Polaris' comprehensive model puts victims at the center of what they do—helping survivors restore their freedom, preventing more victims, and leveraging data and technology to pursue traffickers wherever they operate.

[United Against Human Trafficking \(UAHT\)](#): UAHT is dedicated to ending Human Trafficking through awareness, education, and outreach. This organization identifies those trapped in cycles of exploitation and connects them to direct services. They also educate diverse communities to know and report the signs of Human Trafficking, while uniting the Greater Houston area against this crime.

[Rethreaded](#): Rethreaded is a mindful gift company that provides long-term employment coupled with mental health services to survivors of Human Trafficking in Jacksonville, FL. [A Repurpose with](#)

Purpose nonprofit partner, Rethreaded's mission is to renew hope, reignite dreams, and release potential for survivors of Human Trafficking locally and globally through business.