



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 19, 2020

### MEDIA CONTACT FOR AKHLA

Alicia Maltby  
907-252-8111  
alicia@akhla.org

### MEDIA CONTACT FOR BEST

Katie Amodei  
425-787-5128  
katie@bestalliance.org

## Alaskan Hotel Employees Will Now Receive Free Human Trafficking Prevention Training

**Anchorage, AK (February 19, 2020)** – The Alaska Hotel and Lodging Association ([AKHLA](#)) today announced a new partnership with the Seattle-based nonprofit, **Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking** ([BEST](#)) that will make human trafficking awareness training available to all AKHLA’s hotel members across Alaska so they can train their staff in human trafficking prevention.

BEST provides expertise in human trafficking prevention, and BEST’s *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training helps hotel employees learn the indicators of human trafficking in hotels, and how they can safely report it to law enforcement. By partnering with BEST to offer this valuable training for free to their members, AKHLA is helping hotels and lodging facilities all across Alaska learn how to avert human trafficking at their properties.

Human trafficking networks often rely on legitimate businesses, like hotels, to sustain their operations and infrastructure. Given the transient nature of the hotel industry, with its service-focused culture that respects guest privacy, hotels are often an ideal environment for human traffickers to force their victims to meet buyers. Therefore, it is essential that hotel employees are trained in what to look for—so they can recognize the signs of human trafficking. Since hotel employees are frequently in direct contact with so many guests throughout their stay, they work in positions where they are likely to encounter human trafficking victims.

“There is no easy fix to the problem of human trafficking, but combatting this crime starts with increasing awareness,” says Mar Brettmann, executive director for BEST. “That’s why this new partnership with AKHLA is so important. They are making our human trafficking awareness training free to all their hospitality members and staffs. We know that educating employees about the warning signs of human trafficking can help witnesses know when to report suspicious behavior, and this helps recover more victims.”

BEST’s *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training for hotel employees is a 30-minute, online, video-based training. The training is available in English or Spanish, and it has been proven to increase hotel employee reporting. Researchers from the University of Washington evaluated BEST’s hotel training and found that trained employees were more likely to come forward to report human trafficking incidents to their managers. Researchers also learned that 96 percent of hotel employee participants believe that BEST’s training made their hotel safer.

This new partnership will strengthen the safety of Alaska's thriving tourism industry and it will help thwart the crime of human trafficking in Alaskan communities. AKHLA joins 10 other state hotel associations to begin using BEST's *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training.

"The Alaska Hotel and Lodging Association is excited to partner with BEST to provide human trafficking education to our membership. This collaboration can only improve awareness of this national epidemic, and it will allow the Alaska Hotel and Lodging Association to be a leader in combating human trafficking in Alaska," said Alicia Maltby, President & CEO of AKHLA.

###

#### **About Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking (BEST)**

Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking (BEST) is a Seattle-based nonprofit organization with the mission to align and equip leaders to use the power of business to prevent human trafficking. BEST is the first organization in the country dedicated entirely to working with businesses to disrupt human trafficking. BEST has provided consultation and training to hundreds of businesses on how to prevent human trafficking. For more information visit [bestalliance.org](http://bestalliance.org).

#### **About AKHLA**

The Alaska Hotel & Lodging Association (AKHLA) is a nonprofit trade association representing over 70 percent of the lodging rooms in the state of Alaska as well as over 50 industry suppliers. Established in 1983, its mission is to be the leading voice in Alaska's hotel and lodging industry. For more information visit [akhla.org](http://akhla.org).