



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hotels in North Texas Are Getting a New Tool to Prevent Human Trafficking

Dallas, TX (September 4, 2019) – The **Hotel Association of North Texas** ([HANTX](#)) today announced a new partnership with the Seattle-based nonprofit, **Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking** ([BEST](#)) to make human trafficking awareness training available to all HANTX members and their staffs, free of charge. BEST provides training in human trafficking prevention, and BEST's *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training, sponsored by [AAHOA](#), will now be available to help hotel employees in North Texas learn the indicators of human trafficking and how to safely report it to law enforcement. This partnership will give more hotel owners in North Texas a new tool that can help prevent human trafficking and assist in recovering more victims.

Human trafficking networks rely on legitimate businesses to sustain their operations and infrastructure, and hotels are often an ideal environment for human traffickers because they provide a public place of business where traffickers can connect their victims with buyers. According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, almost 74 percent of their sex trafficking cases between 2012 and 2016 involved hotel and motel-based trafficking.

Dallas is one of the leading locations in the US where human trafficking occurs. In a recent FBI-led sting operation that was conducted last July, called "[Operation Independence Day](#)," 103 children were recovered from cities across the country. The City of Dallas came in second to Las Vegas in the month-long sweep for the number of children recovered who agents believed to be child sex trafficking victims.

"There is no easy fix to the problem of human trafficking, but combatting this crime starts with awareness," says Mar Brettmann, Executive Director for BEST. "That's why our new partnership with HANTX 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, so that human trafficking victims can leave their dangerous situations."

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 trained employees were more likely to come forward to report human trafficking incidents to their managers. Researchers also learned 96 percent of hotel employee participants believe the training made their hotel safer.

"We often think of human trafficking happening somewhere else, but it occurs within our own communities," said Rhonda Staples, current HANTX Chair and General Manager for the Hilton Garden Inn Dallas/Lewisville. "To better equip our hospitality employees to recognize the signs of trafficking, the Hotel Association of North Texas is pleased to be partnering with BEST to offer their *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training free to our members. Armed with this knowledge, our employees will be better able to make a difference in their workplace and community and to the lives of those impacted by trafficking."

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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 www.bestalliance.org.

About Hotel Association of North Texas (HANTX)

The Hotel Association of North Texas (HANTX) is a membership-based, not-for-profit, association representing the hotel and lodging industry in the North Texas area. For over 90 years, HANTX has been promoting and furthering the interests of the hospitality industry through community partnerships, political involvement, member benefits, and educational endeavors. For more information visit www.hantx.org.