

Oklahoma's human trafficking law does not require the use of "deception, force, fraud, threat, or coercion" to cause a minor under 18 to engage in commercial sex acts, and penalties reflect the seriousness of the offense. Minors exploited through prostitution are provided an affirmative defense or a presumption of coercion, but are not specifically excluded from prosecution for prostitution.

<b>Final Score</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Final Grade</b>	<b>A</b>

					
<b>10</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>
10	25	15	10	27.5	15

## Criminalization of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking

Oklahoma's human trafficking law imposes heightened penalties when the victim is under 18 years of age regardless of deception, force, fraud, threat, or coercion. Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) laws include: "soliciting," "aiding or participating in child prostitution," "procuring a child for prostitution," "inducing or detaining a child for prostitution," and "procuring minors for participation in pornography." The prostitution law refers to the human trafficking statute to provide an affirmative defense for sex trafficking victims, helping to acknowledge the intersection of prostitution with trafficking victimization. Oklahoma's racketeering statute includes human trafficking offenses and some CSEC offenses as predicate acts, allowing for the prosecution of sex trafficking enterprises.

### Criminal Provisions for Demand



Tracking with federal law, Oklahoma's human trafficking law applies to the purchasing of a minor by any means "for purposes of engaging the minor in a commercial sex act." The CSEC offense of "soliciting child prostitution" includes the crime of buying sex with a minor under 18 years of age. Statutes on "soliciting sexual conduct with a minor" and "indecent proposals to a child under 16" could provide a means of obtaining heightened penalties for buyers who use the Internet or electronic communications to commit illegal sex acts. The trafficking law prohibits an offender from asserting a mistake of age defense, but Oklahoma's CSEC laws do not contain similar prohibitions. Buyers convicted under the trafficking law face 15 years to life imprisonment and a fine up to \$250,000; they are also subject to fines and face mandatory restitution to the victim. Convictions under the CSEC offense are punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment and a \$5,000 fine. Buyers of sex with minors may be required to register as sex offenders if convicted of human trafficking, possession of images of child sexual exploitation (ICSE), "soliciting child prostitution," "soliciting sexual conduct with a minor," or "indecent proposals to child under 16."

### Criminal Provisions for Traffickers



Traffickers face prosecution under human trafficking, CSEC, racketeering, and money laundering laws, with sentences that reflect the seriousness of those offenses. Child sex trafficking is punishable by 15 years–life imprisonment and a fine up to \$250,000, while "participating in child prostitution" is punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment and a fine up to \$10,000. "Procuring a child for prostitution" is punishable by 1–10 years imprisonment, and "detaining a child for prostitution" is punishable by 1–25 years imprisonment and a fine of \$5,000–\$25,000. Offenses related to commercially distributing ICSE, preparing ICSE, and procuring minors for ICSE are punishable by up to 20 years imprisonment and fines up to \$10,000 or \$25,000. The statutes on "facilitating sexual conduct with a minor" and "indecent proposals to child under 16" could reach traffickers who use the Internet to recruit minors for illegal sex acts, which may include human trafficking. When convicted of human trafficking, victim restitution is mandatory. Traffickers convicted of trafficking, "participating in child prostitution," or creating ICSE are subject to civil asset forfeiture. Traffickers must register as sex offenders if convicted of human trafficking, most CSEC crimes, or ICSE-related offenses, but not for "participating in child prostitution." Convictions for human trafficking or CSEC offenses do not result in termination of parental rights.



## Criminal Provisions for Facilitators

The human trafficking law includes the crime of financially benefitting from human trafficking. The crimes of “aiding in child prostitution” and “procuring a child for prostitution” may apply to facilitators, and facilitators could be subject to money laundering laws. CSEC crimes applicable to facilitators may be punishable as felonies: a first conviction under “aiding in child prostitution,” if the child is under 16 years old, is punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment and a fine up to \$5,000, and a first

conviction for “procuring a child for prostitution” is punishable as a misdemeanor, while subsequent convictions are punishable as felonies by 1–10 years imprisonment. Victim restitution is mandatory for human trafficking convictions and may be ordered at the court’s discretion for any other offense. Facilitators convicted of human trafficking, “aiding in child prostitution,” racketeering, or distributing ICSE are subject to civil asset forfeiture. No laws in Oklahoma address sex tourism.

## Protective Provisions for the Child Victims

All commercially sexually exploited children are defined as juvenile sex trafficking victims. The offenses of human trafficking, procuring a minor for participation in ICSE, and parent consenting to a child participating in ICSE prohibit a defense based on the willingness of the minor to engage in the commercial sex act, but other CSEC laws do not prohibit such a defense. Prostitution laws apply to minors under 18, and only minors 16 or 17 years of age are afforded a presumption of coercion; accordingly, juvenile sex trafficking victims could face criminalization for commercial sex acts committed as a result of their victimization. However, all minors may assert the affirmative defense of being a human trafficking victim. Further, law enforcement must notify DHS if a child in their custody is a suspected juvenile sex trafficking victim; if, after an investigation, the child is determined to be a juvenile sex trafficking victim, charges will be dismissed, and DHS will provide specialized services, including housing in appropriate shelters, prompt medical care, and a safety assessment. For purposes of child welfare intervention, child sex trafficking is not included within the definition of abuse or neglect, but a child victim of prostitution or ICSE is considered an abused child; additionally, a child may receive services when identified as abused/neglected or designated for dependency regardless of the child’s relationship to the perpetrator. If identified as a victim, human trafficking and CSEC victims who are suffering from economic loss are eligible for state crime victims’ compensation; however, eligibility criteria, including a requirement that the crime be reported within 72 hours and a claim filed within one year (un-

less good cause is shown to extend the filing time to up to two years), could operate to deny them an award. There is also a bar to recovery if the victim participated or assisted in a criminal act and a possible bar for refusal to cooperate with law enforcement. Victim-friendly court procedures are available to human trafficking victims, which prevent the release of identifying information and make victims eligible for protective orders, but the “rape shield” law, which protects testifying victims from the trauma of cross-examination, is limited to victims of sexual offenses that do not include CSEC or human trafficking. Oklahoma law does not provide a mechanism for minors to vacate delinquency adjudications related to trafficking victimization, and juvenile records may only be expunged after a waiting period. Criminal restitution is mandatory for victims of human trafficking, and restitution may be awarded to other victims. Civil remedies are also provided for human trafficking victims. Prosecutions for human trafficking and CSEC offenses must commence within 3 years after the crime, while prosecutions for “procuring a minor for participation in child pornography” and “parental consent to participation in child pornography” must commence by the victim’s 45th birthday. Statutes of limitations for civil claims based on damages from being trafficked do not begin to run until the later of the victim being freed from the defendant, the victim turning 21, or the victim discovering (or reasonably should have discovered) that he or she was a victim of human trafficking and that the defendant caused, was responsible for, or profited from the human trafficking.

## Criminal Justice Tools for Investigation and Prosecution

Law enforcement training on child sex trafficking is not statutorily mandated or authorized. Single party consent to audiotaping is permitted, and wiretapping is allowed in investigations for human trafficking and some CSEC offenses. A defendant may not assert a defense based on the use of a law enforcement decoy posing as a minor to investigate two CSEC offenses, “facilitating

sexual conduct with a minor” and “indecent proposals to a child under 16,” both of which include electronic communications and online solicitations to engage in sexual activity. Oklahoma has established a statewide reporting and response system for missing children and children identified as sex trafficking victims, but state law does not expressly require reporting of located children.



*The Report Card is based on the Protected Innocence Challenge Legislative Framework, an analysis of state laws performed by Shared Hope International, and sets a national standard of protection against domestic minor sex trafficking. To access the Protected Innocence Challenge Legislative Framework Methodology, all state Report Cards, and foundational analysis and recommendations, please visit: [www.sharedhope.org/reportcards](http://www.sharedhope.org/reportcards).*