

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MEDIA CONTACT FOR MHLA**

Amy Rohrer, CAE  
410-974-4472  
amy@MDLodging.org

**MEDIA CONTACT FOR BEST**

Katie Amodei  
425-280-3347  
katie@bestalliance.org

## **Maryland Hotel Workers Now Required to Receive Annual Training to Spot the Signs of Human Trafficking**

**Annapolis, MD** – A new law went into effect on October 1, 2022, requiring all innkeepers in Maryland provide annual human trafficking prevention training to employees. Hotel operators across the state must now provide employees with annual training that has been certified and approved as meeting the requirements defined by the state. Training must be conducted annually, and within the first 90 days for newly hired employees.

Since 2019, the Maryland Hotel Lodging Association ([MHLA](#)) has partnered with the Seattle-based nonprofit, Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking ([BEST](#)) to provide human trafficking awareness training for MHLA's members and their staff, free of charge. BEST provides expertise in human trafficking prevention, and BEST's *Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training, sponsored by [AAHOA](#), is an online, video-based training developed specifically for the hotel industry that has received approval in Maryland to meet the new law's annual requirement for innkeepers.

"BEST is pleased that our training meets all of the requirements in Maryland to help hotels in providing employees with training on the prevention, identification, and reporting of human trafficking," said Mar Brettmann, CEO and Executive Director for BEST. "We are delighted to continue our partnership with the Maryland Hotel Lodging Association and to support their members in meeting this annual training requirement."

*Inhospitable to Human Trafficking* training is a 30-minute, online, video-based training that can be taken individually or in a group setting. The training is available in English or Spanish, and it has been proven to increase hotel employee reporting. In 2019 researchers from Arizona State University evaluated the training and found that 97 percent of hotel employees who took the training said it will help prevent sex trafficking incidents. Ninety-six percent of employees reported taking at least one recommended step to prevent trafficking at their hotel.

Human trafficking networks often rely on legitimate businesses, such as hotels, to sustain their operations and infrastructure. But when hotel employees are properly trained in what to look for, human trafficking can be identified and safely reported to help keep all guests safe and permitting victims to be connected with the services they need.

Maryland joins nine other states that have already implemented laws regarding human trafficking prevention training for employees in the lodging industry: California, Connecticut, Minnesota, New Jersey, Florida, Iowa, North Dakota, Texas, and Illinois. In 2023, Virginia and New York also plan to begin requiring lodging facilities to provide human trafficking prevention training for employees.

MHLA President & CEO Amy Rohrer stated, “The lodging industry has long united around the ‘No Room for Trafficking’ campaign designed by the American Hotel & Lodging Association and their foundation. We commend the Maryland General Assembly for passing legislation addressing this horrific crime at hotels while also recognizing the industry’s existing efforts to utilize human trafficking awareness training and other techniques to identify, report and stop human trafficking. This illegal activity will not be tolerated in Maryland hotels, and we are proud to continue supporting our members in their efforts to stop it.”

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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 educate employers to prevent human trafficking and create pathways to employment for survivors. BEST is the first organization in the country dedicated entirely to working with employers to disrupt human trafficking. BEST has provided consultation and training to hundreds of employers on how to prevent human trafficking. For more information visit [www.bestalliance.org](http://www.bestalliance.org).

#### **About Maryland Hotel Lodging Association (MHLA)**

The Maryland Hotel Lodging Association (MHLA) is a trade-based membership organization representing Maryland’s \$8 Billion lodging industry with more than 80,000 rooms in 700+ hotels across the state. MHLA provides advocacy, information, recognition, and networking opportunities that benefit lodging industry owners, managers, associates, related businesses, and communities in Maryland. To learn more, please visit [www.mdlodging.org](http://www.mdlodging.org).