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## **March 16, 2015: State Bar Offers Free Program To Help Attorneys Identify Human Trafficking Victims**

A client sitting across from an attorney may be charged with prostitution or drug dealing. What the attorney may not realize is that the client is both a crime suspect and a crime victim. As a victim of human trafficking, she was coerced into the illegal activity.

Human trafficking victims also can be household nannies, landscapers, restaurant workers and others forced to work in dangerous conditions and for substandard wages. Thousands of New Yorkers are exploited by human trafficking.

To educate attorneys about identifying potential victims and bring greater awareness to human trafficking, the New York State Bar Association is offering a Continuing Legal Education program on March 25 in Albany, which will be available by webcast across the country.

“As attorneys, we can play a critical role in ridding society of human trafficking, which has been likened to modern-day slavery” said New York State Bar Association President Glenn Lau-Kee of New York City (Kee & Lau-Kee). “Our program will arm attorneys with tools to identify and best represent victims, helping to end this horrendous practice.”

In 2013, after a year-long study, the Bar Association approved a report prepared by its Special Committee on Human Trafficking. It examines human trafficking in New York state, evaluates existing state laws and recommends solutions.

### **Free CLE Program**

The program, “Human Trafficking in New York State: Legal Issues and Advocating for the Victim,” is designed to help attorneys identify clients who may be victims of human trafficking. Panelists will discuss how to recognize warning signs, and offer advice on competently representing the victims.

The program will be presented live at the State Bar headquarters at One Elk Street, Albany, NY, from noon to 2:30 p.m. on March 25, and available live as a webcast.

The Continuing Legal Education program will be presented free of charge to State Bar members. The cost to non-members is \$50. Upon completing the program, attorneys are eligible for 2.5 MCLE credits. (2.0 areas of professional practice and 0.5 ethics). Newly admitted attorneys must attend the program in Albany to qualify for MCLE credit; however, they may wish to view the webcast for informational purposes.

To register online, go to [www.nysba.org/HumanTraffickingCLE](http://www.nysba.org/HumanTraffickingCLE).

### **Bar Association Report**

The 2013 New York State Bar Association report recommends that the state establish a civil private right of action that would allow victims to sue their abusers in civil court. This would undercut the profit motive of the traffickers and provide compensation to victims. Currently, 29 states and the District of Columbia allow for a private right of action.

“Thousands of people—often women and children—are taken from their families and forced into hard labor or prostitution by human traffickers,” the report states. “They are often threatened and physically abused, and issues such as immigration status can render some victims especially vulnerable to intimidation.”

The 59-page report also contains a list of recommendations specific to three distinct groups who fall prey to labor trafficking, child trafficking and sex trafficking. For more information, including a link to the report, visit: [www.nysba.org/HumanTrafficking](http://www.nysba.org/HumanTrafficking).

In the U.S. Senate, a bipartisan bill has been introduced that would increase penalties for convicted traffickers, and provide protections and services for victims. Growing recognition of human trafficking in the United States has led many organizations to issue reports, including the Obama Administration and the American Bar Association.

### **Program Details**

**What:** “Human Trafficking in New York State: Legal Issues and Advocating for the Victim.”

**Where:** New York State Bar Association, One Elk Street, Albany NY

**When:** Noon to 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 25

**MCLE Credits:** 2.0 Areas of Professional Practice and 0.5 Ethics

**Cost:** Free for NYSBA members; \$50 for non-members.

**More information or to register:** Contact the State Bar Service Center at 800-582-2452 or visit [www.nysba.org/HumanTraffickingCLE](http://www.nysba.org/HumanTraffickingCLE).

**Media inquiries:** Contact Lise Bang-Jensen ([lbang-jensen@nysba.org](mailto:lbang-jensen@nysba.org)) or Christina Couto ([ccouto@nysba.org](mailto:ccouto@nysba.org)).

The New York State Bar Association, with 74,000 members, is the largest voluntary state bar association in the country. It was founded in 1876.