Memorandum

To help combat human trafficking, Public Act 99-0099 requires emergency rooms within general acute care hospitals and urgent care centers to post an informational notice to the public about human trafficking resources.

The law, known as the Human Trafficking Resource Center Notice Act, was effective Jan. 1, 2016. Hospitals and other entities are required to post a notice now that the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) has made a model notice available on its website. See “Model Public Notice” under No. 4.

Hospitals can create their own notice as long as it complies with the law's size, font and message specifications, as well as language requirements.

Required Location of Notice

To comply with the law, the notice must be posted in a conspicuous place near a hospital’s public entrance or in another conspicuous location in clear view of the public and employees, where similar notices are customarily posted.

Required Languages for the Notice (Clarification)

The notice must be printed in English, Spanish and one other language that is the most widely spoken language in the county where the hospital is located and for which translation is mandated by the federal Voting Rights Act. For example, a hospital in a county in which residents speak predominantly Polish must print the notice in English, Spanish and Polish, but not any additional language even if some county residents speak another language. In addition to English and Spanish, DHS has posted the notice in six languages: Polish, French, Chinese, Korean, Urdu, Vietnamese and Tagalog.

Notice Specifications

Required notice size is at least 8.5-by-11 inches, with text in a 16-point font. The notice must state the following:

“If you or someone you know is being forced to engage in any activity and cannot leave, whether it is commercial sex, housework, farm work, construction, factory, retail or restaurant work, or any other activity, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-373-7888 to access help and services.

Victims of slavery and human trafficking are protected under United States and Illinois law. The hotline is:

- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
- Toll-free;
- Operated by nonprofit nongovernmental organizations;
- Anonymous and confidential;
- Accessible in more than 160 languages; and
- Able to provide help, referral to services, training and general information.

Penalties for Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with the law could result in a civil penalty of $500 for a first offense and $1,000 for each subsequent offense. The Department of Labor (DOL) is required to monitor and enforce compliance. Upon discovering a violation, DOL must provide a reasonable notice of noncompliance informing the hospital, business or other establishment that it is subject to a civil penalty.
if it does not correct the violation within 30 days from the date the notice is sent. If DOL verifies that the violation was not corrected within the 30-day period, the Attorney General may bring an action to impose a civil penalty.