



Transportation Report

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Compiled by: Kelsey Conner

Edited by: Jeanne L. Allert, Ph.D.



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For more information contact: Jeanne L. Allert
jallert@instituteforsheltercare.org

Introduction

The Institute for Shelter Care seeks to serve sexual exploitation/trafficking shelters by providing them with research that facilitates decision support. This study is designed to offer a baseline for shelters by summarizing current intake volume and transportation practices among agencies. It is the goal of this report that shelter leaders can take this summary of data and apply it to their shelters, to best serve survivors, staff, and volunteers.

Methodology

The survey population for this report includes the 232 agencies identified as providing residential care to survivors of sexual exploitation/trafficking according to the Institute for Shelter Care's National Landscape Map. The survey population was invited to respond to a survey via email, and 43 responses were received; therefore, this survey sample reflects 19% of the trafficking shelter population in the United States.

Respondents

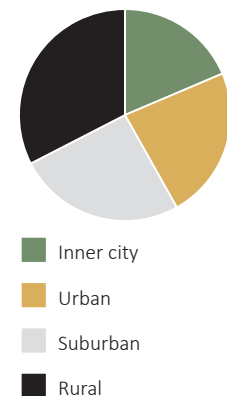
Location

There are 22 states represented in this survey population, with Kansas and California having the most respondents (5 each). Of these locations, 8 (19%) are in the inner city, 10 (23%) are in an urban area, 11 (26%) are located in a suburban area, and 14 (33%) are located in a rural area.

Program Type and Demographic Served

Out of 42 respondents, 6 (14% of survey population) have emergency shelters (1-5 days), 7 (17%) provided stabilization programs (3-6 months), 35 (83%) provided restoration programs (12+ months), and 10 (24%) provided independent housing.¹ Twelve (28%) shelters serve minors, 35 (81%) serve adults, and 7 (16%) serve adults with children.

Shelter Locations



¹ It is important to note that a number of shelters operate more than one program so the percentages amount to more than 100%.

Intakes

Number of Intakes per Shelter

Of 42 responses recorded, these agencies accepted anywhere from 3 to 627 intakes per year according to the last three years of data, with 3 agencies not having reliable data due to their short duration of being open. The variance in this range of 3 to 627 is significant, so the data from this study regarding how many intakes is average is inconclusive.

What can be reasonably concluded, however, is that data derived from our 2022 *Referrals and Intakes study* suggested shelters average 9 intakes per year. Given that the average shelter's bed capacity is also 8, we might broadly assume that many shelters experience a 100% turnover each year. The chart below provides more representations of the data.

Distance

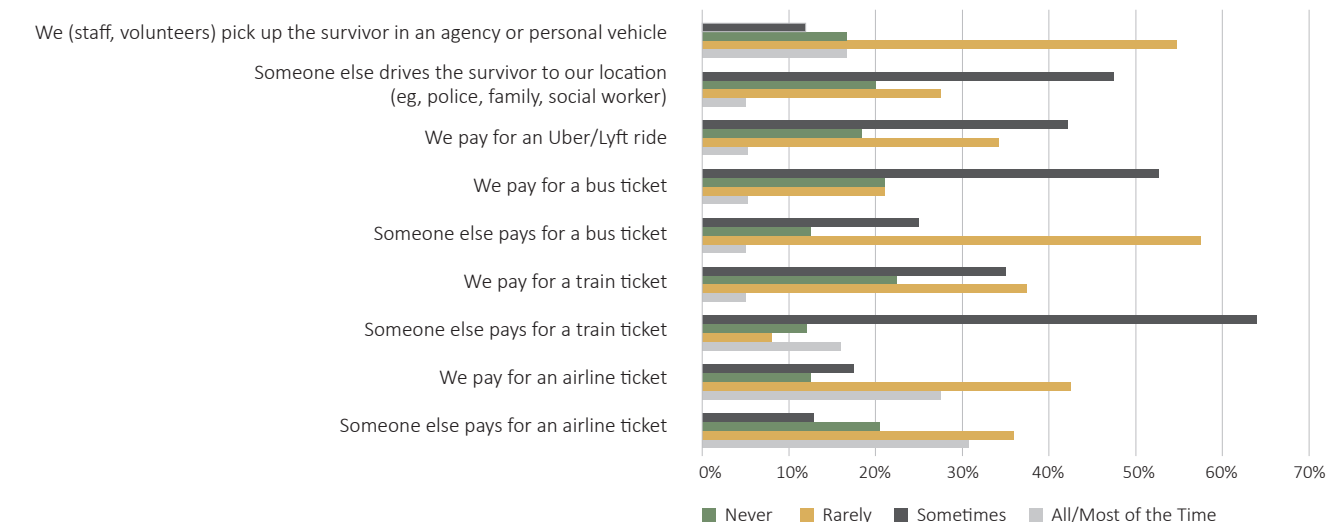
Many shelters take survivors from other parts of the country. The majority of respondents (79%) in this survey do not have a maximum distance from which they accept new intakes, meaning they will consider a survivor referral from anywhere in the United States. 9% take referrals from within their respective states only, and 2% take referrals from within their city. Two respondents (representing 5%) take international referrals.

Transportation

Method of Transportation

Arrivals to the shelters happen in a variety of different ways. While some survivors are at a greater risk for traveling alone or cannot for legal reasons (e.g., minors), others are not. Based on the following data, the most common form of transport that a shelter supports is to have a staff/volunteer pick up the incoming resident. Least common was for the shelter to fund a ride-sharing service such as Uber or Lyft.

How common are the following ways that new intakes are transported to your shelter location?



Days Needed to Arrange Transportation

The number of days required to arrange transportation varied, with 37% needing 4-7 days' notice, 33% needing 1-3 days, 14% needing less than a day, and 5% needing at least two weeks. Four respondents recorded that their time needed to arrange travel was flexible due to the nature of trafficking and needs of the specific survivor. Only one respondent said that arranging transportation was not applicable for their shelter, because a separate case worker arranges the travel for their agency.

Budget

Most respondents (74%) do not have a limit on the amount they are willing to spend to transport a survivor to their program, and the ones that do have a budget average \$300 per individual for transporting. Two agencies reported having a set annual budget (of \$500 and \$600 respectively) for transportation annually.

More than 60% of agencies reported that they have appealed to donors, other nonprofits, or a company to provide their agency with a voucher for air travel, and nearly all agencies (more than 88%) have always found a way to transport a survivor to their facility. This speaks to the determination and resourcefulness of shelters to “do what it takes” to secure placement for qualified survivors.

Transportation Policies and Other Safeguards

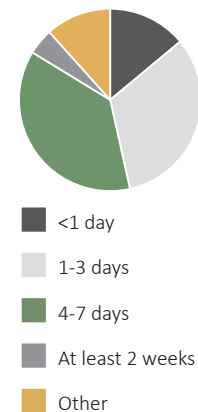
Of 39 respondents, only 15 have a Consent to Transport form that survivors sign before being transported to the shelter, while 24 agencies do not have such a form in place. Twelve agencies reported that clients travel to their shelter alone if they are able, 3 have at least one staff member travel with the client, 4 have two staff travel with the survivor, and 11 report that it depends on the needs of the survivor whether they pay for someone to travel as an escort.

Almost all agencies reported that assessing an individual's needs are crucial to ensuring the safest transportation plan, and that they carefully evaluate each survivor's situation prior to deciding the best way of moving forward. Some other common transportation policies in place included traveling in pairs, picking up survivors from locations other than their shelters to keep the actual location confidential, and taking electronics upon arrival. One agency noted that if the pick-up is an emergency situation, extra safety protocols are in place such as removing the license plate of the vehicle and having a third party watch the pickup from a distance.

Survivor Exit Trends

Like the intake trends, there is wide variance among the exit trends. Based on three years of their historical data, agencies provided responses ranging from 1 to 627 exits per year. Due to this great level of variance, the data is inconclusive as to how many exits take place per year.

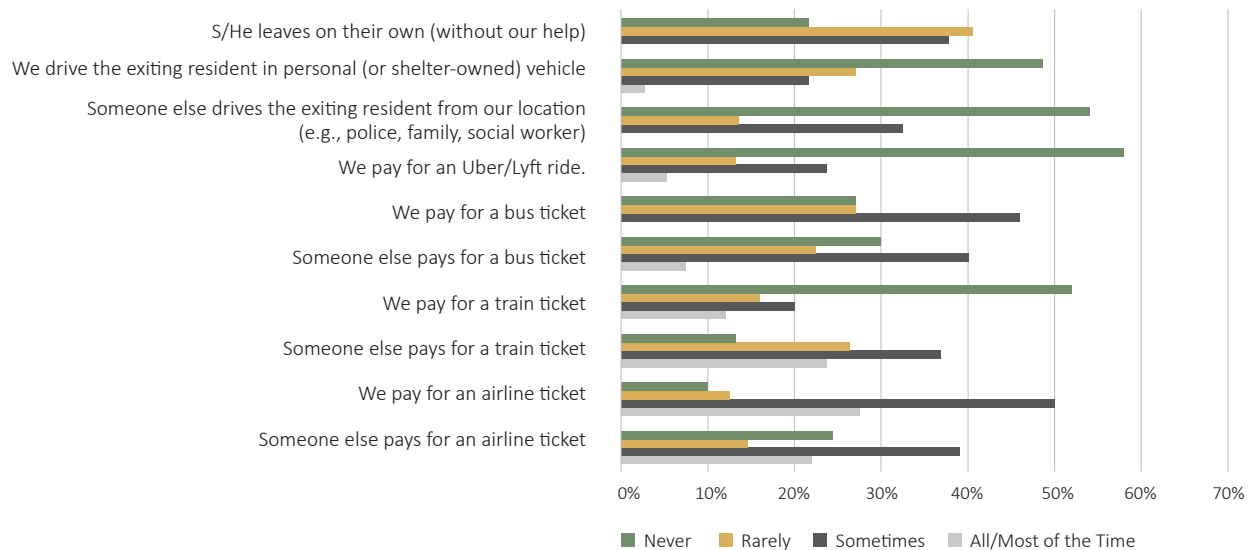
Days Needed to
Arrange Transportation



Exit Methods

Survivors leave shelters in a variety of different ways. Train is used least frequently, followed by ride-sharing services. Interestingly, the most commonly-practiced form of transport for an exiting resident is to have a staff/volunteer of the shelter agency use their personal vehicle to relocate the individual. This study did not ask respondents to distinguish from those exits that were planned/favorable versus unplanned/unfavorable.

How frequent are the following ways that an exiting resident is transported from your shelter location to his/her new destination?



Exit Budgets

Most shelters (79%) do not have a specific amount that they budget for participants exiting the program. Those that do budget average \$209 per individual.

Travel Agency as a Service

Of all 43 respondents, 41 expressed a level of interest in having a vetted agency offer air travel at no cost to the agency or survivor. Of those that expressed interest, 59% believed they would utilize the service 1-3 times per year; 19% reported 4-6 times per year; 12% reported 7-10 times per year; and 10% reported more than 10 times per year. Shelters in California, Kansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee reported that they would likely utilize the service 7-10 times per year; while shelters in Ohio, Nebraska, Kentucky, and Alabama reported that they would likely utilize the service more than 10 times per year.

Due to the sensitive nature of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, concern is to be expected for this kind of offer. Confidentiality was expressed as a primary consideration by many respondents. Among other notable responses were trustworthiness, reliability, and efficiency of the agency. It is also worth noting that the sensitivity of minor care is heightened, so the need to have a trained, vetted, and compassionate travel companions would be of the utmost importance.

Conclusion

The findings of this survey indicate that there is not one single way that shelters use for transporting survivors into or out of the program. What is clear is that shelters “do whatever it takes” and utilize a variety of modes of transportation, including relying on their own resources to fund the transportation. This area of recurring business need may be opportune for transportation providers to partner with shelters to create reciprocal value.

Consideration of safety, confidentiality, and efficiency are vitally important in ensuring effective survivor care. The summary of this data proves that shelters begin to take these factors into consideration before an individual even enters their care; it begins when the agency says yes to a survivor.