



Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

Memorandum

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TO: Interested Persons

FROM: Clayton Mayfield, Fiscal Analyst, 303-866-5851

SUBJECT: Comparing Child Sex Trafficking Penalties Across the 50 States

Summary

Child sex trafficking is a form of human trafficking that occurs when a child under the age of 18 is advertised, solicited, or exploited through a commercial sex act. This memorandum discusses the penalties in Colorado for this crime, and provides information on the penalties in other states for comparison.

Colorado Penalties for Child Sex Trafficking

Colorado law formally refers to child sex trafficking as human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude. It is classified as a class 2 felony,¹ punishable by a fine of between \$5,000 and \$1 million, a prison sentence of at least 8 years up to 24 years, or both.² This crime may also be a crime of violence, which carries an enhanced sentence, if a deadly weapon was present during the commission of the crime, or the perpetrator caused serious bodily injury or death.³ According to the Colorado Human Trafficking Council's [2025 Annual Report](#), between 2022 and 2024, there were about 30 cases filed in Colorado courts involving child sex trafficking.

Other States' Penalties for Child Sex Trafficking

Child sex trafficking is a felony offense in all 50 states. These offenses fall under many different provisions in state laws, such as prohibitions on human trafficking, promotion or advancement of prostitution, commercial sex acts, or similar laws. Most often, child sex trafficking convictions carry lengthy prison sentences, harsh fines, and additional penalties. Sentences range from a

¹ Section 18-3-504, C.R.S.

² Section 18-1.3-401, C.R.S.

³ Section 18-1.3-405, C.R.S.



minimum of two years to a maximum of a life sentence, with considerations like the victim's age and aggravating factors determining the sentence for a particular defendant.

Life Sentences

This analysis found six states (Arizona, Iowa, Louisiana, Missouri, Nevada, and Wisconsin) that have mandatory life sentences for individuals convicted of child sex trafficking crimes. 17 other states have variable sentences that include a maximum sentence of life in prison, or where a life sentence is possible. For example, Kansas imposes a mandatory life sentence when the victim is younger than 14 years old, but otherwise a sentence could range from about 12 years up to 54.

Recent Changes

Several states have recently changed penalties for child sex trafficking, with no state reducing sentences or other conditions of supervision. Utah recently enacted [House Bill 405](#), which elevated trafficking classifications to first-degree felonies, increased mandatory minimum prison sentences, and raised maximum penalties to life in prison. Wisconsin passed [Assembly Bill 265](#), requiring a life sentence without parole for anyone convicted of trafficking three or more children. West Virginia approved [House Bill 4433](#), which established prison sentences for child sex trafficking convictions, removed parole, allowed for asset forfeiture, and created a new smuggling offense.

50-state Table

Table 1 below summarizes the penalties in all 50 states for child sex trafficking crimes and includes the crime classification, the prison sentence authorized, and links to applicable laws. Due to the complexity of criminal sentencing provisions, it is advised to consult each state's laws for additional information.



Table 1
Child Sex Trafficking Penalties in the United States

State	Offense Name	Classification	Prison Sentences	Citation
Alabama	Human Trafficking in the First Degree	Class A Felony	10 years–Life	Ala. Code § 13A-6-152
Alaska	Sex Trafficking in the First Degree	Class A Felony	20–99 years	Alaska Stat. § 11.66.110
Arizona	Child Sex Trafficking	Class 2 Felony	Life	Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 13-3212
Arkansas	Trafficking of Persons	Class Y Felony	10–40 years, or Life	Ark. Code § 5-18-103
California	Human Trafficking	None	5 years–Life	Cal. Pen. Code § 236.1
Colorado	Human Trafficking of a Minor for Sexual Servitude	Class 2 Felony	8–24 years	Section 18-3-504, C.R.S.
Connecticut	Trafficking in Persons	Class A Felony	10–25 years	Conn. Gen. Stat. 53a-192a
Delaware	Sexual Servitude	Class B Felony	2–25 years	Del. Code tit. 11 § 787
Florida	Human Trafficking	First Degree Felony	Up to 30 years	Fla. Stat. § 787.06
Georgia	Trafficking an Individual for Sexual Servitude	Felony	25–50 years, or Life	Ga. Code Ann. § 16-5-46
Hawaii	Sex Trafficking	Class A Felony	Up to 20 years	Haw. Rev. Stat. § 712-1202
Idaho	Human Sex Trafficking of a Child	Felony	10–30 years	Idaho Code Ann. § 18-8608
Illinois	Involuntary Sexual Servitude of a Minor	Class X Felony	6–30 years	720 Ill. Comp. Stat. § 5/10-9
Indiana	Child Sexual Trafficking	Level 2 Felony	10–30 years	Ind. Code § 35-42-3.5-1.3
Iowa	Human Trafficking	Class A Felony	Life	Iowa Code § 710A.2
Kansas	Aggravated Human Trafficking	Severity Level 1, Person Felony	12–54 years, or Life	Kan. Stat. Ann. § 21-5426
Kentucky	Human Trafficking	Class A Felony	20–50 years, or Life	Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 529.100
Louisiana	Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes	Felony	Life	La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 14:46.3



State	Offense Name	Classification	Prison Sentences	Citation
Maine	Aggravated Sex Trafficking	Class A Crime	Up to 30 years	Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 17-A § 852
Maryland	Sex Trafficking	Felony	Up to 25 years	Md. Code, Crim. Law § 3-1102
Massachusetts	Trafficking of Persons for Sexual Servitude	Felony	5 years –Life	Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 265 § 50
Michigan	Forced Labor or Services	Class B Felony	Up to 20 years	Mich. Comp. Laws § 750.462e
Minnesota	Sex Trafficking	Felony	Up to 25 years	Minn. Stat. § 609.322
Mississippi	Procuring Sexual Servitude of a Minor	Felony	20 years –Life	Miss. Code Ann. § 97-3-54.1
Missouri	Sexual Trafficking of a Child, Second Degree	Felony	20 years –Life	Mo. Rev. Stat. § 566.211
Montana	Child Sex Trafficking	Felony	25–100 years	Mont. Code Ann. § 45-5-711
Nebraska	Sex Trafficking of a Minor	Class IB Felony	20 years –Life	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 28-831
Nevada	Sex Trafficking	Category A Felony	Life	Nev. Rev. Stat. § 201.300
New Hampshire	Trafficking in Persons	Class A Felony	18 years –Life	N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 633:7
New Jersey	Human Trafficking	Crime of the 1st Degree	20 years –Life	N.J. Rev. Stat. § 2C: 13-8
New Mexico	Human Trafficking	1st Degree Felony	Up to 18 years	N.M. Stat. § 30-52-1
New York	Sex Trafficking of a Child	Class B Felony	5–25 years	N.Y. Penal Law § 230.34-A
North Carolina	Human Trafficking	Class B2 Felony	10–20 years	N.C. Gen. Stat. § 14-43.11
North Dakota	Trafficking an Individual	Class AA Felony	20 years –Life	N.D. Cent. Code § 12.1-41-02
Ohio	Trafficking in Persons	1st Degree Felony	10–22 years	Ohio Rev. Code § 2905.32
Oklahoma	Human Trafficking for Forced Sexual Exploitation	Class A2 Felony	15 years–Life	Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 21 § 748
Oregon	Trafficking in Persons	Class A Felony	Up to 20 years	Or. Rev. Stat. § 163.266
Pennsylvania	Trafficking in Minors	1st Degree Felony	Up to 40 years	18 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 3011
Rhode Island	Sexual Servitude	Felony	Up to 50 years	R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-67.1-5
South Carolina	Trafficking in Persons	Felony	Up to 30 years	S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-2020
South Dakota	Human Trafficking in the First Degree	Class 2 Felony	15–25 years	S.D. Codified Laws § 22-49-2
Tennessee	Aggravated Human Trafficking	Class A Felony	15–60 years	Tenn. Code Ann. § 39-13-316



State	Offense Name	Classification	Prison Sentences	Citation
Texas	Trafficking of Persons	1st Degree Felony	5 years –Life	Tex. Pen. Code § 20A.02
Utah	Human Trafficking of a Child for Commercial Sexual Exploitation	1st Degree Felony	15 years –Life	Utah Code Ann. § 76-5-308.6
Vermont	Aggravated Human Trafficking	Felony	20 years –Life	Vt. Stat. Ann. tit. 13 § 2653
Virginia	Commercial Sex Trafficking	Class 3 Felony	5–20 years	Va. Code Ann. § 18.2-357.1
Washington	Trafficking in the First Degree	Class A Felony	Up to Life	Wash. Rev. Code § 9A.40.100
West Virginia	Sexual Servitude	Felony	50 years	W. Va. Code § 61-14-5
Wisconsin	Trafficking of a Child	Class A Felony	Life	Wis. Stat. § 948.051
Wyoming	Human Trafficking in the First Degree	Felony	25–50 years	Wyo. Stat. § 6-2-702

Prepared by Legislative Council Staff.