

2017 ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ARKANSAS

FRAMEWORK ISSUE 1: CRIMINALIZATION OF DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING

Legal Components:

- 1.1 *The state human trafficking law addresses sex trafficking and clearly defines a sex trafficking victim as any minor under the age of 18 used in a commercial sex act without regard to use of force, fraud, or coercion, aligning to the federal trafficking law.*
- 1.2 *Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is identified as a separate and distinct offense from general sexual offenses, which may also be used to prosecute those who commit commercial sex offenses against minors.*
- 1.3 *Prostitution statutes refer to the sex trafficking statute to acknowledge the intersection of prostitution with trafficking victimization.*
- 1.4 *The state racketeering or gang crimes statute includes sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) offenses as predicate acts allowing the statute to be used to prosecute child sex trafficking crimes.*

Legal Analysis¹:

- 1.1 *The state human trafficking law addresses sex trafficking and clearly defines a sex trafficking victim as any minor under the age of 18 used in a commercial sex act without regard to use of force, fraud, or coercion, aligning to the federal trafficking law.*

The Arkansas Human Trafficking Act of 2013, codified as Arkansas Code Ann. § 5-18-101 – § 5-18-105 prohibits domestic minor sex trafficking and does not require proof of force, fraud, or coercion if the victim is a minor. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a) (Trafficking of persons), a person commits the offense of trafficking of persons if he or she knowingly:

- (1) Recruits, harbors, transports, or obtains, entices, solicits, isolates, provides, or maintains a person knowing that the person will be subjected to involuntary servitude;
- (2) Benefits financially or benefits by receiving anything of value from participation in a venture under (a)(1) of this section;
- (3) Subjects a person to involuntary servitude;

¹ This report includes legislation enacted as of August 1, 2017.

- (4) Recruits, entices, solicits, isolates, harbors, transports, provides, maintains, or obtains a minor for commercial sexual activity; or
- (5) Sells or offers to sell travel services that he or she knows includes an activity prohibited under subdivision (a)(1)–(4) of this section.

A separate offense under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) covers the purchase of commercial sexual activity. It is a Class B felony to engage in commercial sexual activities if the defendant knows the person performing the sexual activities is a victim of human trafficking. If the victim is a minor at the time of the offense, then the charge is upgraded to a Class A felony. A Class A felony conviction is punishable by 6 to 30 years of imprisonment. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-401.

1.2 Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is identified as a separate and distinct offense from general sexual offenses, which may also be used to prosecute those who commit commercial sex offenses against minors.

The following laws criminalize CSEC in Arkansas:

1. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-104(a)(2), (b) (Promoting prostitution in the first degree) creates a Class D felony if a person “knowingly . . . (2) Advances prostitution or profits from prostitution of a person less than eighteen (18) years of age.” This crime is punishable by imprisonment up to 6 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-4-201(a)(2), 5-4-401(a)(5).
2. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-303(a) (Engaging children in sexually explicit conduct for use in visual or print medium) states when “any person eighteen (18) years of age or older who employs, uses, persuades, induces, entices, or coerces any child² to engage in or who has a child assist any other person to engage in any sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any visual or print medium depicting the sexually explicit conduct is guilty” of a felony. A first offense is a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-303(a)(1), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1). Subsequent offenses are Class A felonies punishable by imprisonment for 6–30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-303(a)(2), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).
3. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct) states,
 - (a) A person commits the offense of transportation of a minor for prohibited sexual conduct if the person transports, finances in whole or part the transportation of, or otherwise causes or facilitates the movement of any minor, and the actor:
 - (1) Knows or has reason to know that prostitution or sexually explicit conduct involving the minor will be commercially exploited by any person; and
 - (2) Acts with the purpose that the minor will engage in:
 - (A) Prostitution; or
 - (B) Sexually explicit conduct.

This crime is a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment for 6–30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-305(b), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

4. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-402(a) (Employing or consenting to the use of a child in a sexual performance), “It is unlawful for a person, knowing the character and content of the performance, to

² “Child” is defined for purposes of subchapter 3 (Arkansas Protection of Children Against Exploitation Act of 1979) as “any person under eighteen (18) years of age.” Ark. Code Ann §5-27-302(1).

employ, authorize, or induce a child under eighteen (18) years of age to engage in a sexual performance.”³ A first offense is a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3–10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-402(c)(1), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2). Second and subsequent offenses are Class B felonies punishable by imprisonment for 5-20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-402(c)(2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).

5. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-403(a) (Producing, directing, or promoting a sexual performance by a child) makes it a crime for a person “knowing the character and content of the material, to produce, direct, or promote a performance that includes sexual conduct by a child under eighteen (18) years of age.” This crime is a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5-20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-403(b), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).
6. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-307 (Sexually grooming a child) states that “A person commits sexually grooming a child if he or she knowingly disseminates to a child thirteen (13) years of age or younger with or without consideration a visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct with the purpose to entice, induce, or groom the child thirteen (13) years of age or younger to engage in the following with a person: (1) Sexual intercourse; (2) Sexually explicit conduct; or (3) Deviate sexual activity.” This crime is a Class A misdemeanor if the actor is younger than 21 years of age, which may be punishable by imprisonment not to exceed 1 year and a possible fine not to exceed \$2,500. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-307(c)(2), 5-4-401(b)(1), 5-4-201(b)(1).

Additionally, although not expressly commercial, the following offenses could apply to cases of domestic minor sex trafficking:

1. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-306(a)(1), (2) (Internet stalking of a child) makes it a crime for a person over the age of 21 to knowingly use the Internet to do the following:
 - (1) Seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child fifteen (15) years of age or younger [or, for purposes of subsection (2), an individual believed to be 15 or younger] in an effort to arrange a meeting with the child for the purpose of engaging in:
 - (A) Sexual intercourse;
 - (B) Sexually explicit conduct; or
 - (C) Deviate sexual activity;
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If the individual merely “attempts to arrange a meeting” with a real child or a person believed to be a child, this crime is a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(1), (2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1). If the meeting with the child actually occurs, even if the sexual activity does not occur, the crime is a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment for 6–30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(3), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

³ “Performance” is defined for purposes of subchapter 4 (Use of children in sexual performance) as “any play, dance, act, drama, piece, interlude, pantomime, show, scene, or other three-dimensional presentation or a part of a play, dance, act, drama, piece, interlude, pantomime, show, scene, or other three-dimensional presentation, whether: (A) Performed live or photographed; (B) Filmed; (C) Videotaped; or (D) Visually depicted by any other photographic, cinematic, magnetic, or electronic means.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-401(1). “Sexual performance” is defined for purposes of subchapter 4 (Use of children in sexual performance) as “any performance or part of a performance that includes sexual conduct by a child under eighteen (18) years of age.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-401(5).

2. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-306(a)(3), (4) (Internet stalking of a child) makes it a crime for a person over the age of 21 to knowingly use the Internet to do the following:

(3) Compile, transmit, publish, reproduce, buy, sell, receive, exchange, or disseminate the name, telephone number, electronic mail address, residence address, picture, physical description, characteristics, or any other identifying information on a child fifteen (15) years of age or younger [or, for purposes of subsection (4), on an individual that the person believes to be 15 or younger] in furtherance of an effort to arrange a meeting with the child for the purpose of engaging in:

- (A) Sexual intercourse;
- (B) Sexually explicit conduct; or
- (C) Deviate sexual activity;

....

If the individual merely “attempts to arrange a meeting,” with either a real child or a person believed to be a child this crime is a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(1), (2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1). If the meeting with the child actually occurs, even if the sexual activity does not occur, the crime is a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment for 6-30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(3), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

3. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-603(a) (Computer child pornography) establishes a crime when a person knowingly “(1) Compiles, enters into, or transmits by means of computer, makes, prints, publishes, or reproduces by other computerized means, knowingly causes or allows to be entered into or transmitted by means of computer or buys, sells, receives, exchanges, or disseminates any notice, statement, or advertisement or any child’s name, telephone number, place of residence, physical characteristics, or other descriptive or identifying information for purposes of facilitating, encouraging, offering, or soliciting sexually explicit conduct of or with any child or another individual believed by the person to be a child, or the visual depiction of the conduct; or (2) Utilizes a computer online service, internet service, or local bulletin board service to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child or another individual believed by the person to be a child, to engage in sexually explicit conduct.” This crime is a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-603(b), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).
4. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-605(a)(1) (Computer exploitation of a child) establishes the crime of computer exploitation in the first degree when a person “(A) Causes or permits a child to engage in sexually explicit conduct; and (B) Knows, has reason to know, or intends that the prohibited conduct may be: (i) Photographed; (ii) Filmed; (iii) Reproduced; (iv) Reconstructed in any manner, including on the internet; or (v) Part of an exhibition or performance.” A first offense of this crime is a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-605(a)(2)(A), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1). Subsequent offenses are Class A felonies punishable by imprisonment for 6-30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-605(a)(2)(B), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).
5. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-605(b)(1) (Computer exploitation of a child) establishes the crime of second degree computer exploitation of a child if the individual does either of the following: “(A) Photographs or films a child engaged in sexually explicit conduct; or (B) Uses any device, including a computer, to reproduce or reconstruct the image of a child engaged in sexually explicit conduct.” This crime is a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3–10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-605(b)(2), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2).

6. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-103(a)(3)(A) (Rape) establishes a crime when a person “engages in sexual intercourse or deviate sexual activity with another person . . . [w]ho is less than fourteen (14) years of age.” However, subsection (3)(B) creates an affirmative defense to this provision if “the actor was not more than three (3) years older than the victim.” Rape is a Class Y felony punishable by imprisonment for 25–40 years or a life sentence. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-103(c), 5-4-401(a)(1).
7. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-125(a)(3)(A) (Sexual assault in the second degree) establishes a crime when a person over 18 “engages in sexual contact with another person who is: (A) Less than fourteen (14) years of age.” This crime is a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-125(b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).
8. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-127(a)(1)(A) (Sexual assault in the fourth degree) establishes a crime if a person 20 or older “[e]ngages in sexual intercourse or deviate sexual activity with another person who is: (i) Less than sixteen (16) years of age; and (ii) Not the person’s spouse.” For a violation of this subsection, a person is guilty of a Class D felony punishable by imprisonment not to exceed 6 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-127(b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(5), 5-4-201(a)(2). The statute also makes it a crime when a person “[e]ngages in sexual contact with another person who is: (i) Less than sixteen (16) years of age; and (ii) Not the person’s spouse.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-127(a)(1)(B). This crime is a Class A misdemeanor, which may be punishable by imprisonment not to exceed 1 year and a possible fine not to exceed \$2,500. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-127(b)(2), 5-4-401(b)(1), 5-4-201(b)(1).
9. A violation of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-110(a)(1) (Sexual indecency with a child) occurs if

Being eighteen (18) years of age or older, the person solicits⁴ another person who is less than fifteen (15) years of age or who is represented to be less than fifteen (15) years of age to engage in:

- (A) Sexual intercourse;
- (B) Deviate sexual activity; or
- (C) Sexual contact.

The crime is a Class D felony punishable by imprisonment not to exceed 6 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-110(b), 5-4-401(a)(5), 5-4-201(a)(2).

1.3 Prostitution statutes refer to the sex trafficking statute to acknowledge the intersection of prostitution with trafficking victimization.

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-102(a) (Prostitution) refers to the human trafficking statute by establishing an affirmative defense to the charge of prostitution for victims of human trafficking under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons). Ark Code Ann. § 5-70-102(c). Ark. Code Ann. 5-18-102(15) (Definitions) defines a victim of human trafficking as a person who has been subjected to trafficking of persons. Additionally, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103 (Sexual solicitation) establishes an affirmative defense to prosecution if a trafficking victim “solicits or requests a person to engage in sexual activity with him or her in return for a fee.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(c).

⁴ In *Heape v. State*, the court “h[e]ld that the evidence was sufficient to show that appellant, by offering the girl money in exchange for sex, solicited her to engage in sexual intercourse, deviate sexual activity, or sexual contact.” *Heape v. State*, 192 S.W.3d 281, 286 (Ark. Ct. App. 2004).

1.4 *The state racketeering or gang crimes statute includes sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) offenses as predicate acts allowing the statute to be used to prosecute child sex trafficking crimes.*

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-104 (Engaging in a continuing criminal gang, organization, or enterprise) states,

- (a) (1) A person commits the offense of engaging in a continuing criminal gang, organization, or enterprise in the first degree if he or she:
 - (A) Commits or attempts to commit or solicits to commit a felony predicate criminal offense; and
 - (B) That offense is part of a continuing series of two (2) or more predicate criminal offenses that are undertaken by that person in concert with two (2) or more other persons with respect to whom that person occupies a position of organizer, a supervisory position, or any other position of management.
- (2) A person who engages in a continuing criminal gang, organization, or enterprise in the first degree is guilty of a felony two (2) classifications higher than the classification of the highest underlying predicate offense referenced in subdivision (a)(1)(A) of this section.
- (b) (1) A person commits the offense of engaging in a continuing criminal gang, organization, or enterprise in the second degree if he or she:
 - (A) Commits or attempts to commit or solicits to commit a felony predicate criminal offense; and
 - (B) That offense is part of a continuing series of two (2) or more predicate criminal offenses that are undertaken by that person in concert with two (2) or more other persons, but with respect to whom that person does not occupy the position of organizer, a supervisory position, or any other position of management.
- (2) A person who engages in a continuing criminal gang, organization, or enterprise in the second degree is guilty of a felony one (1) classification higher than the classification of the highest underlying predicate offense referenced in subdivision (b)(1)(A) of this section.
- (c) A person who engages in a continuing criminal gang, organization, or enterprise when the underlying predicate offense is a Class A felony or a Class Y felony is guilty of a Class Y felony.
- (d) Any sentence of imprisonment imposed pursuant to this section is in addition to any sentence imposed for the violation of a predicate criminal offense.

Under Ark. Stat. Ann. 5-74-103(4) “Predicate criminal offense” means any violation of Arkansas law that is a crime of violence or a crime of pecuniary gain.

Legal Components:

- 2.1 *The state sex trafficking law can be applied to buyers of commercial sex acts with a minor.*
 - 2.2 *Buyers of commercial sex acts with a minor can be prosecuted under commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) laws.*
 - 2.3 *Solicitation of prostitution laws differentiate between buying sex acts with an adult and buying sex acts with a minor under 18.*
 - 2.4 *Penalties for buyers of commercial sex acts with minors are as high as federal penalties.*
 - 2.5 *Using the Internet or other electronic communication to lure, entice, or purchase, or attempt to lure, entice, or purchase commercial sex acts with a minor is a separate crime or results in an enhanced penalty for buyers.*
 - 2.6 *No age mistake defense is permitted for a buyer of commercial sex acts with any minor under 18.*
 - 2.7 *Base penalties for buying sex acts with a minor under 18 are sufficiently high and not reduced for older minors.*
 - 2.8 *Financial penalties for buyers of commercial sex acts with minors are sufficiently high to make it difficult for buyers to hide the crime.*
 - 2.9 *Buying and possessing images of child sexual exploitation carries penalties as high as similar federal offenses.*
 - 2.10 *Convicted buyers of commercial sex acts with minors are required to register as sex offenders.*
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Legal Analysis:

- 2.1 *The state sex trafficking law can be applied to buyers of commercial sex acts with a minor.*

Arkansas law applies to buyers directly under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking). A person patronizes a victim of human trafficking if he or she “knowingly engages in commercial sexual activity with another person knowing that the other person is a victim of human trafficking.” Ark. Code Ann. §5-18-104(a). To be convicted under this provision, the government must prove that the buyer knew the person patronized was a victim of human trafficking.

However, the primary trafficking law, Ark Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a)(4) (Trafficking of persons) also applies to buyers through the term “solicits” and, following federal precedent,⁵ through the term “obtains” without

⁵ See *United States v. Jungers*, 702 F.3d 1066 (8th Cir. 2013). In this case, the Eighth Circuit held that the federal sex trafficking law, 18 U.S.C. § 1591 (Sex trafficking of children or by force, fraud, or coercion) applies to buyers of sex with minors. Reversing a District of South Dakota ruling that Congress did not intend the string of verbs constituting criminal conduct under 18 U.S.C. § 1591(a)(1) (“recruits, entices, harbors, transports, provides, obtains, or maintains”) to reach the conduct of buyers (*United States v. Jungers*, 834 F. Supp. 2d 930, 931 (D.S.D. 2011)), the Eighth Circuit concluded that 18 U.S.C. § 1591 does not contain “a latent exemption for purchasers” because buyers can “engage in at least some of the prohibited conduct.” *Jungers*, 702 F. 3d 1066, 1072. Congress codified *Jungers* clarifying that the federal sex trafficking law is intended to apply to buyers in the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA) of 2015 Pub. L. No. 114-22, 129 Stat 227), enacted on May 29, 2015. The JVTA adds the terms “patronize” and “solicit” to the list of prohibited conduct and expressly states, “section 108 of this title amends section 1591 of title 18, United States Code, to add the words ‘solicits or patronizes’ to the sex trafficking statute making absolutely clear for judges, juries, prosecutors, and law enforcement officials that criminals who purchase sexual acts from human trafficking victims may be arrested, prosecuted, and convicted as sex trafficking offenders when this is merited by the facts of a particular case.” *Id.* at Sec. 109. The Eighth Circuit decision in *United States v. Jungers* and the federal sex trafficking law as amended by the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act establish persuasive authority when state courts interpret the string of verbs constituting prohibited conduct in state sex trafficking laws (in particular the term “obtains”) to the extent such interpretation does not conflict with state case law.

requiring that the buyer had knowledge of the minor’s victim status. It states, “A person commits the offense of trafficking of persons if he or she knowingly Recruits, entices, solicits, isolates, harbors, transports, provides, maintains, or obtains a minor for commercial sexual activity.”

Ark Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a) is a Class Y felony when the victim was a minor at the time of the offense. Ark. Code Ann. 5-18-103(c). A Class Y felony is punishable by 10–40 years, or life. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-4-401, 5-4-201(a)(1). Additionally, violators of this statute must pay \$250 to be deposited in the Safe Harbor Fund for Sexually Exploited Children. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(d). Patronizing a victim of human trafficking under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-104 is a Class A felony, punishable by 6–30 years in prison and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-104(b)(2), 5-4-401(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

2.2 *Buyers of commercial sex acts with a minor can be prosecuted under commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) laws.*

A buyer of commercial sex acts with a minor may be found in violation of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct) under certain circumstances. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) states,

A person commits the offense of transportation of a minor for prohibited sexual conduct if the person transports, finances in whole or part the transportation of, or otherwise causes or facilitates the movement of any minor, and the actor:

- (1) Knows or has reason to know that prostitution or sexually explicit conduct involving the minor will be commercially exploited by any person; and
- (2) Acts with the purpose that the minor will engage in:
 - (A) Prostitution; or
 - (B) Sexually explicit conduct.

This crime is a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment for 6–30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-305(b), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

However, if not identified as a child sex trafficking or CSEC case, a buyer of sex with a minor 15–18 may be charged with Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103 (Sexual solicitation), which also applies for solicitation of adults. Under this statute a buyer of commercial sex is guilty of a crime when “he or she: (1) Offers to pay a fee to a person to engage in sexual activity with him or her or another person; or (2) Solicits or requests a person to engage in sexual activity with him or her in return for a fee.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(a). A first offense is punishable by imprisonment for up to 90 days and a possible fine not to exceed \$2,000, while second and subsequent offenses are punishable by imprisonment for up to 1 year and a possible fine not to exceed \$3,500. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(b).⁶

2.3 *Solicitation of prostitution laws differentiate between buying sex acts with an adult and buying sex acts with a minor under 18.*

Arkansas’s solicitation for prostitution law does not directly distinguish the purchase of commercial sex acts with children from those with adults. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(a) (Sexual solicitation) states, “A person commits the offense of sexual solicitation if he or she: (1) Offers or agrees to pay a fee to a person to engage in sexual activity with him or her or another person; or (2) Solicits or requests a person to engage in sexual activity with him or her in return for a fee.” A first offense is punishable by imprisonment for up to 90 days and a

⁶ The text of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103 cited here and elsewhere in this report includes amendments made by the enactment of House Bill 1417 during the 2017 Regular Session of Arkansas’s 91st General Assembly (effective July 30, 2017).

possible fine not to exceed \$2,000, while second and subsequent offenses are punishable by imprisonment for up to 1 year and a possible fine not to exceed \$3,500. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(b).⁷

2.3.1 Recommendation: Amend Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(a) (Sexual solicitation) to distinguish between soliciting a minor versus an adult for commercial sex and provide a heightened penalty that aligns with penalties under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct).

2.4 Penalties for buyers of commercial sex acts with minors are as high as federal penalties.

Buyers who violate Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a)(4) (Trafficking of persons) will be guilty of a Class Y felony punishable by imprisonment for 10–40 years or life and a mandatory fine of \$250 paid to the Safe Harbor Fund for Sexually Exploited Children. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-103(c)(2), (d), 5-4-201(a)(1). Additionally, pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 16-93-618 (Parole) a person who was found guilty, or pled guilty, to “trafficking persons a Class Y felony, § 5-18-103” may not be eligible for parole or community correction transfer until the guilty party has served 70 percent of their sentence.

A buyer convicted under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) faces a Class A felony punishable by 6–30 years imprisonment and a possible fine not to exceed \$ 15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-4-401, 5-4-201(a)(1).

If convicted under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct) a buyer will be guilty of a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment for 6–30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-305(b), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

When the minor is under 15 and the buyer is convicted of violating Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-110(a)(1) (Sexual indecency with a child), the crime is a Class D felony punishable by imprisonment not to exceed 6 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-110(b), 5-4-401(a)(5), 5-4-201(a)(2).

If convicted of violating either Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-209(a) (Contributing to the delinquency of a minor) or Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-220 (Contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile), the buyer is subject to a Class A misdemeanor, which may be punishable by imprisonment up to 1 year and a possible fine not to exceed \$2,500. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-209(b), 5-27-220(d)(1), 5-4-201(b)(1), 5-4-401(b)(1).

Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(b)(1)⁸ (Sexual solicitation), a first offense is punishable by imprisonment for up to 90 days and a possible fine not to exceed \$2,000 regardless of the prostituted person’s age. A second or subsequent offense is punishable by imprisonment for up to 1 year and a possible fine not to exceed \$3,500. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(b)(2). Additionally, anyone convicted will have to pay an additional fine of \$250 to the Safe Harbor Fund for Sexually Exploited Children. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(d).

Sexual offenses that are not specific to commercial sexual exploitation but may be used to prosecute a buyer are felonies. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-306(a) (Internet stalking of a child), if a buyer over 21 attempts to arrange a meeting with a child under 15 for sexual purposes and the meeting never occurs, the buyer is guilty of a Class B felony. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-306(b)(1). As a Class B felony, this crime is punishable by imprisonment for 5-20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1). If the meeting actually occurs, regardless of whether actual sexual intercourse, sexually explicit conduct, or deviate sexual activity occurs, the person is guilty of a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment

⁷ See *supra* note 6.

⁸ See *supra* note 6.

for 6-30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(3), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

When the victim is less than fourteen (14), the buyer could be charged with a Class Y felony under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-103 (Rape), punishable by imprisonment for 25–40 years or a life sentence. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-103(c), 5-4-401(a)(1).

If the buyer is over 18 and charged with a Class B felony under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-125 (Sexual assault in the second degree), the buyer is subject to imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-125(a)(3)(A), (b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1). If the buyer is 20 or older and charged with the Class D felony of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-127 (Sexual assault in the fourth degree), the buyer is subject to imprisonment not to exceed 6 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-127(a)(1)(A), (b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(5), 5-4-201(a)(2).

In comparison, if the victim is under the age of 14, a conviction under the TVPA for child sex trafficking is punishable by 15 years to life imprisonment and a fine not to exceed \$250,000. 18 U.S.C. §§ 1591(b)(1), 3559(a)(1), 3571(b)(3). If the victim is between the ages of 14–17, a conviction is punishable by 10 years to life imprisonment and a fine not to exceed \$250,000. 18 U.S.C. §§ 1591(b)(2), 3559(a)(1), 3571(b)(3). A conviction is punishable by mandatory life imprisonment, however, if the buyer has a prior conviction for a federal sex offense⁹ against a minor. 18 U.S.C. § 3559(e)(1). To the extent buyers can be prosecuted under other federal CSEC laws,¹⁰ a conviction is punishable by penalties ranging from a fine not to exceed \$250,000 to life imprisonment and a fine not to exceed \$250,000.¹¹

2.5 *Using the Internet or other electronic communication to lure, entice, or purchase, or attempt to lure, entice, or purchase commercial sex acts with a minor is a separate crime or results in an enhanced penalty for buyers.*

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-306(a) (Internet stalking of a child) states in part,

A person commits the offense of internet stalking of a child if the person being twenty-one (21) years of age or older knowingly uses a computer online service, internet service, or local internet bulletin board service to:

⁹ Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3559(e)(2), “federal sex offense” is defined as

an offense under section 1591 [18 USCS § 1591] (relating to sex trafficking of children), 2241 [18 USCS § 2241] (relating to aggravated sexual abuse), 2242 [18 USCS § 2242] (relating to sexual abuse), 2244(a)(1) [18 USCS § 2244(a)(1)] (relating to abusive sexual contact), 2245 [18 USCS § 2245] (relating to sexual abuse resulting in death), 2251 [18 USCS § 2251] (relating to sexual exploitation of children), 2251A [18 USCS § 2251A] (relating to selling or buying of children), 2422(b) [18 USCS § 2422(b)] (relating to coercion and enticement of a minor into prostitution), or 2423(a) [18 USCS § 2423(a)] (relating to transportation of minors).

¹⁰ 18 U.S.C. §§ 2251A(b) (Selling or buying of children), 2251(a) (Sexual exploitation of children), 2423(a) (Transportation of a minor with intent for minor to engage in criminal sexual activity), 2422(a) (Coercion and enticement), 2252(a)(2), (a)(4) (Certain activities relating to material involving the sexual exploitation of minors).

¹¹ 18 U.S.C. §§ 2251A(b) (conviction punishable by imprisonment for 30 years to life and a fine), 2251(e) (conviction punishable by imprisonment for 15–30 years and a fine), 2423(a) (conviction punishable by imprisonment for 10 years to life and a fine), 2422(a) (conviction punishable by a fine, imprisonment up to 20 years, or both), 2252(b) (stating that a conviction under subsection (a)(2) is punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a fine, while a conviction under subsection (a)(4) is punishable by imprisonment up to 10 years, a fine, or both.); *see also* 18 U.S.C §§ 3559(a)(1) (classifying all of the above listed offenses as felonies), 3571(b)(3) (providing a fine up to \$250,000 for any felony conviction).

(1) Seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child fifteen (15) years of age or younger in an effort to arrange a meeting with the child for the purpose of engaging in:

- (A) Sexual intercourse;
- (B) Sexually explicit conduct; or
- (C) Deviate sexual activity;

....

(3) Compile, transmit, publish, reproduce, buy, sell, receive, exchange, or disseminate the name, telephone number, electronic mail address, residence address, picture, physical description, characteristics, or any other identifying information on a child fifteen (15) years of age or younger in furtherance of an effort to arrange a meeting with the child for the purpose of engaging in:

- (A) Sexual intercourse;
- (B) Sexually explicit conduct; or
- (C) Deviate sexual activity;

....

If the individual “attempts to arrange a meeting,” the buyer is guilty of a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(1), (2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1). If the meeting with the child actually occurs, even if the sexual activity does not occur, the person is guilty of a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment for 6-30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(3), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

Further, a buyer could be prosecuted under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-603 (Computer child pornography), which makes it a Class B felony for a person to “[u]tilize[] a computer online service, internet service, or local bulletin board service to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child or another individual believed by the person to be a child, to engage in sexually explicit conduct.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-603(a)(2), (b). Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-601(2)(15) (Definitions), “sexually explicit conduct” includes sexual intercourse and deviate sexual activity. For the purpose of this statute, a child is defined as “any person under seventeen (17) years of age.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-601(1).

2.6 *No age mistake defense is permitted for a buyer of commercial sex acts with any minor under 18.*

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) expressly prohibits a mistake of age defense. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(b)(1–2) states, “It is not a defense to prosecution under subdivision (a)(4) of this section that the actor . . . [d]id not have knowledge of a victim's age; or . . . [m]istakenly believed a victim was not a minor.” However, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) does not prohibit a defendant from asserting a defense based on mistake of age and expressly requires that a defendant know that the person from whom sexual acts are purchased is a victim of human trafficking.

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct) also does not prohibit a buyer from asserting a mistake of age defense.

In general, a mistake of fact defense is only allowed if “the actor engaged in the conduct charged to constitute the offense under a mistaken belief of fact if: (1) The statute defining the offense or a statute relating to the offense expressly provides that a mistaken belief of fact constitutes a defense; or (2) Mistaken belief of fact establishes a defense of justification provided by § 5-2-601 et seq. [provisions unrelated to CSEC or sexual offenses against children].” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-2-206(a).¹²

¹² Ark. Code Ann. § 5-2-206(e) (Ignorance or mistake) states, “A mistake of law other than as to the existence or meaning of the statute under which the defendant is prosecuted is relevant to disprove the specific culpable mental state required by the statute under which the defendant is prosecuted.”

- 2.6.1 Recommendation: Amend Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) and § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct) to prohibit a mistake of age defense in trafficking and CSEC prosecutions.

2.7 *Base penalties for buying sex acts with a minor under 18 are sufficiently high and not reduced for older minors.*

Arkansas's buyer-applicable trafficking and CSEC laws do not stagger penalties based on a minor's age and provide sufficiently high penalties. Both Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) and § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) provide substantial base penalties for all offenses against a minor under 18. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 is a Class Y felony punishable by imprisonment for 10–40 years. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-103(c), 5-4-401(a)(2). Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) is a Class A felony punishable by 6–30 years imprisonment. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-104, 5-4-401.

Further, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct) likewise does not stagger penalties based on the age of the minor victim. This crime is a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment for 6–30 years. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-305(b), 5-4-401(a)(2).

2.8 *Financial penalties for buyers of commercial sex acts with minors are sufficiently high to make it difficult for buyers to hide the crime.*

Fines for trafficking and CSEC crimes range greatly. While convictions under Ark. Ann. Code § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) do not carry a fine when the victim is a minor, anyone convicted of human trafficking must deposit \$250 into the Safe Harbor Fund for Sexually Exploited Children.¹³ Additionally, buyers convicted under Ark. Code Ann. 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) face a fine of up to \$15,000. If convicted of violating Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-110(a)(1) (Sexual indecency with a child), a fine not to exceed \$10,000 may be assessed for this Class D felony. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-110(b), 5-4-201(a)(2). If convicted of violating either Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-209(a) (Contributing to the delinquency of a minor) or Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-220(a) (Contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile), the buyer is subject to a Class A misdemeanor, which may be punishable by a fine not to exceed \$2,500. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-209(b), 5-27-220(d)(1), 5-4-201(b)(1).

If convicted of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103 (Sexual solicitation), a first offense is punishable by imprisonment for up to 90 days and a possible fine not to exceed \$2,000, while second and subsequent offenses are punishable by imprisonment for up to 1 year and a possible fine not to exceed \$3,500. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103(b).¹⁴ Those convicted will also be ordered to pay an additional \$250 fine to be “deposited into the Safe Harbor Fund for Sexually Exploited Children.” Ark. Ann. Code § 5-70-103(d).

If convicted of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-306(a) (Internet stalking of a child), potentially applicable to CSEC crimes, even if the meeting never occurs, the buyer is still guilty of a Class B felony with a possible fine not to

¹³ Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 16-92-119 (Training regarding fines dedicated for the Safe Harbor Fund for Sexually Exploited Children),

- (a) The Administrative Office of the Courts shall educate judges regarding the fines dedicated for the Safe Harbor Fund for Sexually Exploited Children under §§ 5-18-103(d), 5-70-102(d), and 5-70-103(d).
- (b) The Prosecutor Coordinator's office shall educate prosecutors regarding the fines dedicated for the fund under §§ 5-18-103(d), 5-70-102(d), and 5-70-103(d).
- (c) The Arkansas Circuit Clerks Association and the Arkansas District Court Clerks Association shall educate circuit and district court clerks regarding the fines dedicated for the fund under §§ 5-18-103(d), 5-70-102(d), and 5-70-103(d).

¹⁴ See *supra* note 6.

exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(1), 5-4-201(a)(1). If the meeting does occur, the person is guilty of a Class A felony and subject to a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).

If the buyer is convicted of violating Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-125(a)(3)(A) (Sexual assault in the second degree), the buyer is guilty of a Class B felony and is subject to a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-125(a)(3), (b)(1), 5-4-201(a)(1). Ark. Code Ann. § 5-14-127(a)(1)(A) (Sexual assault in the fourth degree) is a Class D felony with a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-14-127, (b)(1), 5-4-201(a)(2).

In addition to any other sentence, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-703(a)¹⁵ (Additional fine – Offense committed against a child or in the presence of a child.) states,

the court shall assess an additional fine of one hundred dollars (\$100) for the following offenses if the finder of fact determines that the offense was committed against a child or in the presence of a child:

....

(8) § 5-14-110 (Sexual indecency with a child), § 5-14-112 (indecent exposure) . . . ;

(9) § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons), § 5-18-104 (patronizing a victim of human trafficking);

....

(12) § 5-27-303 (Engaging in sexually explicit conduct for use in visual or print medium), § 5-27-304 (Pandering or possessing visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child), § 5-27-305 (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct), § 5-27-306 (Internet stalking of a child), § 5-27-307 (Sexually grooming a child);

(13) § 5-27-402 (Employing or consenting to the use of a child in a sexual performance), or § 5-27-403 (producing, directing, or promoting a sexual performance by a child);

(14) Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child, § 5-27-602, computer child pornography, § 5-27-603, failure to report child pornography, § 5-27-604, or computer exploitation of a child, § 5-27-605;

....

A buyer could also be required to pay restitution to the victim under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-205(a)(1) (Restitution), which states that “[a] defendant who is found guilty or who enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to an offense may be ordered to pay restitution.” The restitution is based on the “actual economic loss caused to a victim by the offense” and if bodily injury has occurred, the restitution order may require the defendant to, among other things, “[p]ay the cost of a necessary medical or related professional service or device relating to physical, psychiatric, and psychological care, including nonmedical care and treatment rendered in accordance with a recognized method of healing; . . . [p]ay the cost of necessary physical and occupational therapy and rehabilitation; [and] . . . [r]eimburse the victim for income lost by the victim as a result of the offense,” with a maximum income reimbursement of \$50,000. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-205(b)(1), (2).

Buyers also face vehicle asset forfeiture pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-201(a)(5) (Forfeiture, criminal conveyances), which requires anyone convicted under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) to forfeit “any conveyance, including an aircraft, motor vehicle, or vessel” if it is used “in the commission or attempt” of the crime. Additionally, any conveyance “may be seized by any law enforcement agent upon process issued by any court having jurisdiction” when there is probable cause indicating that the conveyance was “used in the commission or attempt” of trafficking of persons. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-202.

¹⁵ The text of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-703 cited here and elsewhere in this report includes amendments made by the enactment of Senate Bill 702 during the 2017 Regular Session of Arkansas’s 91st General Assembly (effective July 30, 2017).

Additionally, under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(a) (Disposition of contraband and seized property), “Any seized property shall be returned to the rightful owner or possessor of the seized property except contraband owned by a defendant.” Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(b)(1) contraband is defined as including the following:

- (A) Article possessed under a circumstance prohibited by law;
- (B) Weapon or other instrument used in the commission or attempted commission of a felony;
- (C) Visual, print, or electronic medium that depicts sexually explicit conduct involving a child prohibited under § 5-27-304;
- (D) Visual, print, or electronic medium that contains a sexual performance of a child prohibited under § 5-27-403;
- (E) Item the possession of which is prohibited by § 5-27-602 [Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child];
- (F) Item the production of which is prohibited by § 5-27-603 [Computer child pornography];
- (G) Item the production of which is prohibited by § 5-27-605 [Computer exploitation of a child]; or
- (H) Other article designated “contraband” by law.

Contraband listed in Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(b)(1)(C)(H) shall be destroyed. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(c)(1). Other contraband may be retained for use by law enforcement or sold, the proceeds to be used to reimburse the rightful owner or to be “paid into the general fund of the county, city, or town whose law enforcement agency performed the seizure.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(g).

Buyers are also subject to civil judgments. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 16-118-109 (Civil cause of action for victims of human trafficking), a prevailing plaintiff is entitled to attorney’s fees and costs and may be awarded actual, compensatory, or punitive damages, injunctive relief, and if the defendant’s acts were willful and malicious, the plaintiff may be awarded treble damages. Ark. Code Ann. § 16-118-109 (b)–(e).

2.9 *Buying and possessing images of child sexual exploitation carries penalties as high as similar federal offenses.*

Two offenses criminalize buying and possessing images of child sexual exploitation (ICSE). Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-304(a)(2) (Pandering or possessing visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child) it is illegal to “[k]nowingly solicit, receive, purchase, exchange, possess, view, distribute, or control any visual or print medium depicting a child participating or engaging in sexually explicit conduct.” A first violation of this section is a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3–10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-304(b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2). Subsequent violations are Class B felonies punishable by imprisonment for 5-20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-304(b)(2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).

Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-602(a)(2) (Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child), it is illegal for someone to “knowingly: . . . (2) Possess[] or view[] through any means, including on the internet, any photograph, film, videotape, computer program or file, computer-generated image, video game, or any other reproduction that depicts a child or incorporates the image of a child engaging in sexually explicit conduct.” A first offense is a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3-10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-602(b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2). Subsequent offenses are Class B felonies punishable by imprisonment for 5-20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-602(b)(2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).

In comparison, a federal conviction for possession of ICSE¹⁶ is generally punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a fine not to exceed \$250,000.¹⁷ Subsequent convictions, however, are punishable by imprisonment up to 40 years and a fine not to exceed \$250,000.¹⁸

2.10 *Convicted buyers of commercial sex acts with minors are required to register as sex offenders.*

Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-905(a)(1) applies the registration requirements to, among others, “a person who: (1) Is adjudicated guilty on or after August 1, 1997, of a sex offense, aggravated sex offense, or sexually violent offense.” Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-903(12)(A)(i) states,

“Sex offense” includes, but is not limited to:

(i) The following offenses:

- (a) Rape, § 5-14-103;
- (b) Sexual indecency with a child, § 5-14-110;
- (c) Sexual assault in the first degree, § 5-14-124;
- (d) Sexual assault in the second degree, § 5-14-125;
- (e) Sexual assault in the third degree, § 5-14-126;
- (f) Sexual assault in the fourth degree, § 5-14-127;

.....

(i) Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct, § 5-27-305;

.....

(k) Pandering or possessing visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child, § 5-27-304;

.....

(w) Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child, § 5-27-602;

(x) Internet stalking of a child, § 5-27-306;

.....

(bb) Sexually grooming a child, § 5-27-307;

(cc) Trafficking of persons under § 5-18-103(a)(4); and

(dd) Patronizing a victim of human trafficking, § 5-18-104

Accordingly, those convicted of buying commercial sex acts with minors or possessing images of child sexual exploitation (ICSE) will be required to register as sex offenders. Additionally, defendants convicted of crimes

¹⁶ 18 U.S.C. §§ 2252(a)(2), (a)(4) (Certain activities relating to material involving the sexual exploitation of minors), 2252A(a)(2)–(3) (Certain activities relating to material constituting or containing child pornography), 1466A(a), (b) (Obscene visual representations of the sexual abuse of children).

¹⁷ 18 U.S.C. §§ 2252(b) (stating that a conviction under subsection (a)(2) is punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a fine, while a conviction under subsection (a)(4) is punishable by imprisonment up to 10 years, a fine, or both), 2252A(b)(1) (a conviction is punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a fine), 1466A(a), (b) (stating that a conviction under subsection (a) is “subject to the penalties provided in section 2252A(b)(1),” imprisonment for 5–20 years and a fine, while a conviction under subsection (b) is “subject to the penalties provided in section 2252A(b)(2),” imprisonment up to 10 years, a fine, or both); *see also* 18 U.S.C §§ 3559(a)(1) (classifying all of the above listed offenses as felonies), 3571(b)(3) (providing a fine up to \$250,000 for any felony conviction).

¹⁸ 18 U.S.C. §§ 2252(b) (stating if a person has a prior conviction under subsection (a)(2), or a list of other statutes, a conviction is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for 15–40 years, but if a person has a prior conviction under subsection (a)(4), or a list of other statutes, a conviction is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for 10–20 years), 2252A(b)(1) (stating if a person has a prior conviction under subsection (a)(2), (a)(3), or a list of other statutes, a conviction is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for 15–40 years), 1466A(a), (b) (stating that the penalty scheme for section 2252A(b) applies); *see also* 18 U.S.C §§ 3559(a)(1) (classifying all of the above listed offenses as felonies), 3571(b)(3) (providing a fine up to \$250,000 for any felony conviction).

that are not enumerated may still be required to register as a sex offender because “[t]he sentencing court has the authority to order the registration of any offender shown in court to have attempted to commit or to have committed a sex offense even though the offense is not enumerated in subdivision (12)(A)(i) of this section” unless the state assembly “expresses its intent not to consider the offense to be a true sex offense for the purposes of this subchapter.” Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-903(12)(B).

Legal Components:

- 3.1 Penalties for trafficking a child for sexual exploitation are as high as federal penalties.
- 3.2 Creating and distributing images of child sexual exploitation carries penalties as high as similar federal offenses.
- 3.3 Using the Internet or other electronic communication to lure, entice, recruit, or sell commercial sex acts with a minor is a separate crime or results in an enhanced penalty for traffickers.
- 3.4 Financial penalties for traffickers, including asset forfeiture, are sufficiently high.
- 3.5 Convicted traffickers are required to register as sex offenders.
- 3.6 Laws relating to termination of parental rights include sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) offenses as grounds for termination in order to prevent traffickers from exploiting their parental rights as a form of control.

Legal Analysis:

- 3.1 Penalties for trafficking a child for sexual exploitation are as high as federal penalties.¹⁹

“Trafficking of persons” is defined as a person who “recruits, entices, solicits, isolates, harbors, transports, provides, maintains, or obtains a minor for commercial sexual activity.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(4) (Trafficking of persons). Commercial sexual activity is defined in Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-102 (definitions) as a “sexual act or sexually explicit performance for which anything of value is given, promised, or received” Ark. Code Ann. 5-18-102(1). When the victim is a minor, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 is a Class Y felony punishable by imprisonment for 10-40 years; life. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-103(c), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1). Additionally, \$250 will be paid and deposited to the Safe Harbor Fund for Sexually Exploited Children. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(d). Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 16-93-618 (Parole) a person who was found guilty, or pled guilty, to “trafficking persons a Class Y felony, § 5-18-103” may not be eligible for parole or community correction transfer until the guilty party has served 70 percent of their sentence.

Additionally, a trafficker could be charged with violating Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-104(a)(2) (Promoting prostitution in the first degree) “if he or she knowingly: . . . (2) Advances prostitution or profits from prostitution of a person less than eighteen (18) years of age.” As a Class D felony, this crime is punishable by imprisonment not to exceed 6 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-4-401(a)(5), 5-4-201(a)(2). Similarly, a trafficker could be charged with Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct). This crime is a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment for 6–30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-305(b), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1). A first conviction under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-402(a) (Employing or consenting to the use of a child in a sexual performance) is a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3-10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-402(c)(1), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2). Subsequent offenses are Class B felonies punishable by imprisonment for 5-20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-402(c)(2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).

Additional criminal statutes could be employed to prosecute traffickers. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-104 (Engaging in a continuing criminal gang, organization, or enterprise), a trafficker can be charged with engaging in a continuing criminal gang in the first degree if he “(A) Commits or attempts to commit or solicits to commit a felony predicate criminal offense; and (B) That offense is part of a continuing series of two (2) or more predicate criminal offenses that are undertaken by that person in concert with two (2)

¹⁹ See *supra* Component 1.2 for discussion of relevant provisions.

or more other persons with respect to whom that person occupies a position of organizer, a supervisory position, or any other position of management.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-104(a)(1). A “predicate criminal offense” that can be used to bring an action under this chapter includes a “crime of pecuniary gain,” which is defined as “any violation of Arkansas law that results, or was intended to result, in the defendant receiving income, benefit, property, money, or anything of value.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-103(1), (4). If guilty of this crime as an organizer, the individual “is guilty of a felony two (2) classifications higher than the classification of the highest underlying predicate offense.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-104(a)(2). If the underlying offense is Class A felony or Class Y felony, it becomes a Class Y felony. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-104(c). A person who is guilty of a violation of this crime but is not the organizer, is guilty in the second degree and the offense is classified only one degree higher than the predicate offense. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-104(b).

Additionally, a trafficker could be charged with Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-203(a) (Soliciting or recruiting a minor to join or to remain a member of a criminal gang, organization, or enterprise). This crime occurs when a person “by intimidation or duress causes, aids, abets, encourages, solicits, or recruits a minor to become or to remain a member of any group that the person knows to be a criminal gang, organization, or enterprise that falls into the definition and intent” of the subchapter on “Recruiting Gang Members.” A “criminal gang, organization, or enterprise” is defined in Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-202(3) as “any group of three (3) or more individuals who commit a continuing series of two (2) or more predicate criminal offenses that are undertaken in concert with each other.” A trafficker’s operation can be considered a criminal gang, organization, or enterprise because “predicate criminal offenses” include “crimes of pecuniary gain,” which are defined as “any violation of Arkansas law that results, or was intended to result, in the defendant’s receiving income, benefit, property, money, or anything of value.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-202(1), (4). The crime is punishable as a Class B felony with imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-74-203(b), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).

A trafficker could also be charged with Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-307 (Sexually grooming a child), which is a Class D felony punishable by imprisonment of no more than 6 years. Ark. Code Ann. 5-4-401. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-307 a person is guilty of sexually grooming a child when he “knowingly disseminates to a child thirteen (13) years of age or younger with or without consideration a visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct” with the purpose of “enticing, inducing, or grooming the minor” to engage in sexual intercourse, sexually explicit conduct, or deviate sexual activity. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-307.

A trafficker could be charged with Ark. Code Ann. § 5-42-204 (Criminal use of property or laundering criminal proceeds), which creates a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3–10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000 when a person “[u]ses or makes available for use any property in which he or she has any ownership or lawful possessory interest to facilitate a predicate criminal offense.” Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-42-204(a)(2), (b), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2). A “predicate criminal offense” is defined as “any violation of Arkansas law that is a crime of violence or a crime of pecuniary gain.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-42-203(7). “Crime of violence is defined as “any violation of Arkansas law in which a person purposely or knowingly causes, or threatens to cause, death or physical injury to another person, specifically including rape,” and “crime of pecuniary gain” is defined as “any violation of Arkansas law that results, or was intended to result, in the defendant receiving income, benefit, property, money, or anything of value,” and thus includes crimes by which a trafficker intends to make a profit. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-42-203(3), (7).

In comparison, if the victim is under the age of 14, a conviction under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) for child sex trafficking is punishable by 15 years to life imprisonment and a fine not to exceed \$250,000. 18 U.S.C. §§ 1591(b)(1), 3559(a)(1), 3571(b)(3). If the victim is between the ages of 14–17, a conviction is punishable by 10 years to life imprisonment and a fine not to exceed \$250,000. 18 U.S.C.

§§ 1591(b)(2), 3559(a)(1), 3571(b)(3). A conviction is punishable by mandatory life imprisonment, however, if the trafficker has a prior conviction for a federal sex offense²⁰ against a minor. 18 U.S.C. § 3559(e)(1).

3.2 *Creating and distributing images of child sexual exploitation carries penalties as high as similar federal offenses.*

A person is guilty of the violating Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-303(a) (Engaging children in sexually explicit conduct for use in visual or print medium), a CSEC offense, if he is over the age of 18 and he “employs, uses, persuades, induces, entices, or coerces any child to engage in or who has a child assist any other person to engage in any sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct.” A first offense is a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-303(a)(1), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1). Subsequent offenses are Class A felonies punishable by imprisonment for 6-30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-303(a)(2), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

Other crimes applicable to traffickers who create or distribute images of child sexual exploitation (ICSE) include the following:

1. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-304(a)(2) (Pandering or possessing visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child) makes it illegal to “[w]ith knowledge of the character of the visual or print medium involved, . . . [k]nowingly solicit, receive, purchase, exchange, possess, view, distribute, or control any visual or print medium depicting a child participating or engaging in sexually explicit conduct.” A first violation of this section is a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3-10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-304(b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2). Subsequent violations are Class B felonies punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-304(b)(2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).
2. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-403(a) (Producing, directing, or promoting a sexual performance by a child) it is a crime for a person “knowing the character and content of the material, to produce, direct, or promote a performance that includes sexual conduct by a child under eighteen (18) years of age.” As a Class B felony, this crime is punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-403(b), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).
3. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-602(a)(1) (Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child), a person is guilty of a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3-10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000 for a first offense, when he “[r]eceives for the purpose of selling or knowingly sells, procures, manufactures, gives, provides, lends, trades, mails, delivers, transfers, publishes, distributes, circulates, disseminates, presents, exhibits, advertises, offers, or agrees to offer through any means, including the internet, any photograph, film, videotape, computer program or file, video game, or any other reproduction or reconstruction that depicts a child or incorporates the image of a child engaging in sexually explicit conduct.” Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-602(a)(1), (b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2). Subsequent offenses are Class B felonies punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-602(b)(2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).

In comparison, if the victim is under the age of 14, a conviction under the TVPA for child sex trafficking is punishable by 15 years to life imprisonment and a fine not to exceed \$250,000. 18 U.S.C. §§ 1591(b)(1), 3559(a)(1), 3571(b)(3). If the victim is between the ages of 14–17, a conviction is punishable by 10 years to life imprisonment and a fine not to exceed \$250,000. 18 U.S.C. §§ 1591(b)(2), 3559(a)(1), 3571(b)(3). A

²⁰ See *supra* note 9.

conviction is punishable by mandatory life imprisonment, however, if the trafficker has a prior conviction for a federal sex offense²¹ against a minor. 18 U.S.C. § 3559(e)(1). Additionally, a federal conviction for distribution of ICSE²² is generally punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a fine not to exceed \$250,000.²³ Subsequent convictions, however, are punishable by imprisonment up to 40 years and a fine not to exceed \$250,000.²⁴

3.3 *Using the Internet or other electronic communication to lure, entice, recruit, or sell commercial sex acts with a minor is a separate crime or results in an enhanced penalty for traffickers.*

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-306(a) (Internet stalking of a child) makes it a crime if a person over 21 “knowingly uses a computer online service, internet service, or local internet bulletin board service to: . . . (3) Compile, transmit, publish, reproduce, buy, sell, receive, exchange, or disseminate the name, telephone number, electronic mail address, residence address, picture, physical description, characteristics, or any other identifying information on a child fifteen (15) years of age or younger in furtherance of an effort to arrange a meeting with the child for the purpose of engaging in: (A) Sexual intercourse; (B) Sexually explicit conduct; or (C) Deviate sexual activity.” If the person merely “attempts to arrange a meeting,” this crime is a Class B felony punishable by imprisonment for 5-20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1). If the meeting actually occurs, even if sexual activity does not occur, the person is guilty of a Class A felony punishable by imprisonment for 6–30 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-306(b)(3), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

3.4 *Financial penalties for traffickers, including asset forfeiture, are sufficiently high.*

Fines exist for the various crimes with which the state could charge a trafficker. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) establishes a class Y felony punishable by a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000 and an additional fine of \$250 to be deposited in the Safe Harbor Fund for Sexually Exploited Children.²⁵ Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-103(c), (d), 5-4-201(a)(1). Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-104 (Promoting prostitution in the first degree), establishes a Class D felony punishable by a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-70-104(a)(2), (b), 5-4-201(a)(2). Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct), establishes a Class A felony punishable by a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-305(b), 5-4-201(a)(1). For a first offense of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-402 (Employing or consenting to the use of a child in a sexual performance), as a Class C felony, the trafficker can receive a possible fine not to exceed

²¹ See *supra* note 9.

²² 18 U.S.C. §§ 2252(a)(1), (a)(2), (a)(3) (Certain activities relating to material involving the sexual exploitation of minors), 2252A(a)(2), (a)(3) (Certain activities relating to material constituting or containing child pornography), 1466A(a) (Obscene visual representations of the sexual abuse of children).

²³ 18 U.S.C. §§ 2252(b) (stating that a conviction under subsection (a)(1), (a)(2), or (a)(3) is punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a fine), 2252A(b)(1) (a conviction is punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a fine), 1466A(a), (b) (stating that a conviction under subsection (a) is “subject to the penalties provided in section 2252A(b)(1),” imprisonment for 5–20 years and a fine, while a conviction under subsection (b) is “subject to the penalties provided in section 2252A(b)(2),” imprisonment up to 10 years, a fine, or both); see also 18 U.S.C §§ 3559(a)(1) (classifying all of the above listed offenses as felonies), 3571(b)(3) (providing a fine up to \$250,000 for any felony conviction).

²⁴ 18 U.S.C. §§ 2252(b) (stating if a person has a prior conviction under subsection (a)(1), (a)(2), or (a)(3) or a list of other statutes, a conviction is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for 15–40 years), 2252A(b)(1) (stating if a person has a prior conviction under subsection (a)(2), (a)(3), or a list of other statutes, a conviction is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for 15–40 years), 1466A(a), (b) (stating that the penalty scheme for section 2252A(b) applies); see also 18 U.S.C §§ 3559(a)(1) (classifying all of the above listed offenses as felonies), 3571(b)(3) (providing a fine up to \$250,000 for any felony conviction).

²⁵ See *supra* note 13.

\$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-402 (c)(1), 5-4-201(a)(2). For subsequent offenses, a trafficker faces a Class B felony with a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-402(c)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

When a trafficker is charged with violating Ark. Code Ann. § 5-74-203 (Soliciting or recruiting a minor to join or remain a member of a criminal gang, organization, or enterprise), a Class B felony, the trafficker could be subject to a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-74-203(b), 5-4-201(a)(1).

In addition to any other sentences, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-703(a)²⁶ (Additional fine – Offense committed against a child or in the presence of a child.) states,

the court shall assess an additional fine of one hundred dollars (\$100) for the following offenses if the finder of fact determines that the offense was committed against a child or in the presence of a child:

....

(8) § 5-14-110 (Sexual indecency with a child), § 5-14-112 (indecent exposure) . . . ;

(9) § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons), § 5-18-104 (patronizing a victim of human trafficking);

....

(12) § 5-27-303 (Engaging in sexually explicit conduct for the use in visual or print medium), § 5-27-304 (Pandering or possessing visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child), § 5-27-305 (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct), § 5-27-306 (internet stalking of a child), § 5-27-307 (sexually grooming a child);

(13) § 5-27-402 (Employing or consenting to the use of a child in a sexual performance), or § 5-27-403 (producing, directing, or promoting a sexual performance by a child);

(14) § 5-27-602 (Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child), § 5-27-603 (computer child pornography), § 5-27-604 (Failure to report child pornography), § 5-27-605 (Computer exploitation of a child);

....

A trafficker could also be required to pay discretionary restitution to the victim under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-205(a)(1) (Restitution), which states that “[a] defendant who is found guilty or who enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to an offense may be ordered to pay restitution.” The restitution is based on the “actual economic loss caused to a victim by the offense,” and if bodily injury has occurred, the restitution order may require the defendant to, among other things, “[p]ay the cost of a necessary medical or related professional service or device relating to physical, psychiatric, and psychological care, including nonmedical care and treatment rendered in accordance with a recognized method of healing; . . . [p]ay the cost of necessary physical and occupational therapy and rehabilitation; [and] . . . [r]eimburse the victim for income lost by the victim as a result of the offense” with a maximum income reimbursement of \$50,000. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-205(b)(1), (2).

A violation of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-42-204(a)(2) (Criminal use of property or laundering criminal proceeds) occurs when a person “[u]ses or makes available for use any property in which he or she has any ownership or lawful possessory interest to facilitate a predicate criminal offense.” A “predicate criminal offense” includes a “crime of pecuniary gain,” which is defined as “any violation of Arkansas law that results, or was intended to result, in the defendant receiving income, benefit, property, money, or anything of value.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-42-203(3), (7). The violator may face a civil action brought by a prosecuting attorney “for damages in an amount equal to property, funds, or a monetary instrument involved in the violation as well as the proceeds acquired by any person involved in the enterprise or by reason of conduct in furtherance of the violation, together with costs incurred for resources and personnel used in the investigation and prosecution of both criminal and civil proceedings.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-42-204(c)(1). Therefore, when a trafficker uses funds to

²⁶ See *supra* note 15.

further any offense relating to images of child sexual exploitation (ICSE), the trafficker may become liable in a civil proceeding for damages.

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-201(a)(5) (Forfeiture, criminal conveyances) requires that anyone convicted of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) will forfeit “any conveyance, including an aircraft, motor vehicle, or vessel” if it is used “in the commission or attempt” of the crime. Additionally, any conveyance “may be seized by any law enforcement agent upon process issued by any court having jurisdiction” when there is probable cause that the conveyance was “used in the commission or attempt” of trafficking of persons. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-202.

Finally, a trafficker may face forfeiture of certain illegal assets. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(a) (Disposition of contraband and seized property), “Any seized property shall be returned to the rightful owner or possessor of the seized property except contraband owned by a defendant.”

Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(a) (Disposition of contraband and seized property), “Any seized property shall be returned to the rightful owner or possessor of the seized property except contraband owned by a defendant.” Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(b)(1) contraband is defined as including the following:

- (A) Article possessed under a circumstance prohibited by law;
- (B) Weapon or other instrument used in the commission or attempted commission of a felony;
- (C) Visual, print, or electronic medium that depicts sexually explicit conduct involving a child prohibited under § 5-27-304;
- (D) Visual, print, or electronic medium that contains a sexual performance of a child prohibited under § 5-27-403;
- (E) Item the possession of which is prohibited by § 5-27-602 [Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child];
- (F) Item the production of which is prohibited by § 5-27-603 [Computer child pornography];
- (G) Item the production of which is prohibited by § 5-27-605 [Computer exploitation of a child]; or
- (H) Other article designated “contraband” by law.

Contraband listed in Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(b)(1)(C)–(H) shall be destroyed. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(c)(1). Other contraband may be retained for use by law enforcement or sold, the proceeds to be used to reimburse the rightful owner or to be “paid into the general fund of the county, city, or town whose law enforcement agency performed the seizure.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(g).

Traffickers are also subject to civil judgments. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 16-118-109 (Civil cause of action for victims of human trafficking), a prevailing plaintiff is entitled to attorney’s fees and costs and may be awarded actual, compensatory, or punitive damages, injunctive relief, and if the defendant’s acts were willful and malicious, the plaintiff may be awarded treble damages. Ark. Code Ann. § 16-118-109 (b)–(e).

3.5 *Convicted traffickers are required to register as sex offenders.*

A person who is guilty “of a sex offense, aggravated sex offense, or sexually violent offense” must register as a sex offender. Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-905(a)(1). Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-903(12)(A)(i) states,

“Sex offense” includes, but is not limited to:

(i) The following offenses:

....

- (h) Engaging children in sexually explicit conduct for use in visual or print medium, § 5-27-303;
- (i) Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct, § 5-27-305;

- (j) Employing or consenting to the use of a child in a sexual performance, § 5-27-402;
- (k) Pandering or possessing visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child, § 5-27-304;
- (l) Producing, directing, or promoting a sexual performance by a child, § 5-27-403;
- (m) Promoting prostitution in the first degree, § 5-70-104;
-
- (q) Kidnapping pursuant to § 5-11-102(a) when the victim is a minor and the offender is not the parent of the victim;
- (r) False imprisonment in the first degree and false imprisonment in the second degree, §§ 5-11-103 and 5-11-104, when the victim is a minor and the offender is not the parent of the victim;
- (s) Permitting abuse of a minor, § 5-27-221;
- (t) Computer child pornography, § 5-27-603;
- (u) Computer exploitation of a child, § 5-27-605;
- (v) Permanent detention or restraint, § 5-11-106, when the offender is not the parent of the victim;
- (w) Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child, § 5-27-602;
- (x) Internet stalking of a child, § 5-27-306;
-
- (bb) Sexually grooming a child, § 5-27-307
- (cc) Trafficking of persons under § 5-18-103(a)(4); and

A sex offense also includes “[a]n attempt, solicitation, or conspiracy to commit any of the offenses” listed above, and includes “[a]n adjudication of guilt for an offense of the law of another state, for a federal offense, for a tribal court offense, or for a military offense: (a) Which is similar to any of the offenses enumerated in subdivision (12)(A)(i) of this section; or (b) When that adjudication of guilt requires registration under another state’s sex offender registration laws.” Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-903(12)(A)(ii), (iii).

The crimes of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-103 (Sexual solicitation), § 5-27-220 (Contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile) and § 5-27-209 (Contributing to the delinquency of a minor) are not specifically mentioned as sex offenses. Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-903(12)(A). Those crimes not enumerated are nevertheless not specifically excluded because “[t]he sentencing court has the authority to order the registration of any offender shown in court to have attempted to commit or to have committed a sex offense even though the offense is not enumerated in subdivision (12)(A)(i) of this section” unless the state assembly “expresses its intent not to consider the offense to be a true sex offense for the purposes of this subchapter.” Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-903(12)(B).

3.6 *Laws relating to termination of parental rights include sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) offenses as grounds for termination in order to prevent traffickers from exploiting their parental rights as a form of control.*

Child sex trafficking is included as a ground for terminating parental rights based on the definition of “sexual abuse.”²⁷ To terminate parental rights pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-341(b)(3)²⁸ (Termination of parental rights), the court order must:

be based upon a finding by clear and convincing evidence:

²⁷ See *infra* Component 5.5 for full discussion of the terms “dependent-neglected juvenile” and “sexual abuse.”

²⁸ The text of Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-341 cited here and elsewhere in this report includes amendments made by the enactment of Senate Bill 306 during the 2017 Regular Session of Arkansas’s 91st General Assembly (effective July 30, 2017).

- (A) That it is in the best interest of the juvenile, including consideration of the following factors:
 - (i) The likelihood that the juvenile will be adopted if the termination petition is granted; and
 - (ii) The potential harm, specifically addressing the effect on the health and safety of the child, caused by returning the child to the custody of the parent, parents, or putative parent or parents; and
- (B) Of one (1) or more of the following grounds:
 -
 - (vi) (a) The court has found the juvenile or a sibling dependent-neglected as a result of neglect or abuse that could endanger the life of the child, sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation,²⁹ any of which was perpetrated by the juvenile’s parent or parents or step-parent or step-parents.
 - (b) Such findings by the juvenile division of circuit court shall constitute grounds for immediate termination of the parental rights of one (1) or both of the parents;
 -
 - (ix) (a) The parent is found by a court of competent jurisdiction, including the juvenile division of circuit court, to:
 -
 - (2) Have committed a felony battery that results in serious bodily injury to any juvenile or to have aided or abetted, attempted, conspired, or solicited to commit felony battery that results in serious bodily injury to any juvenile;
 - (3) (A) Have subjected any juvenile to aggravated circumstances.
 - (B) “Aggravated circumstances” means:
 - (i) A juvenile has been abandoned, chronically abused, subjected to extreme or repeated cruelty, sexually abused, sexually exploited, or a determination has been or is made by a judge that there is little likelihood that services to the family will result in successful reunification; or
 - (ii) A juvenile has been removed from the custody of the parent or guardian and placed in foster care or in the custody of another person three (3) or more times in the last fifteen (15) months; or
 - (iii) A child or a sibling has been neglected or abused such that the abuse or neglect could endanger the life of the child;
 -

“Sexual abuse” is defined in part as “the recruiting, harboring, transporting, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a child for the purpose of a commercial sex act.” Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(52)(F) (Definitions). Accordingly, trafficking-related conduct is included as an aggravated circumstance allowing for the termination of parental rights.

²⁹ Pursuant to Ark. Code. Ann. § 9-27-303(54) (Definitions),

“Sexual exploitation” includes:

- (A) Allowing, permitting, or encouraging participation or depiction of the juvenile in:
 - (i) Prostitution;
 - (ii) Obscene photographing; or
 - (iii) Obscene filming; or
- (B) Obscenely depicting, obscenely posing, or obscenely posturing a juvenile for any use or purpose;

Legal Components:

- 4.1 *The acts of assisting, enabling, or financially benefitting from child sex trafficking are included as criminal offenses in the state sex trafficking statute.*
 - 4.2 *Financial penalties, including asset forfeiture laws, are in place for those who benefit financially from or aid and assist in committing domestic minor sex trafficking.*
 - 4.3 *Promoting and selling child sex tourism is illegal.*
 - 4.4 *Promoting and selling images of child sexual exploitation carries penalties as high as similar federal offenses.*
-

Legal Analysis:

- 4.1 *The acts of assisting, enabling, or financially benefitting from child sex trafficking are included as criminal offenses in the state sex trafficking statute.*

Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons), a person commits human trafficking when he or she “[b]enefits financially or benefits by receiving anything of value from participation in a venture under subdivision (a)(1) of this section.” Since there is no provision that applies to those who facilitate the sex trafficking of minors in violation of subsection (a)(3), Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 criminalizes facilitation of trafficking, but only when the trafficking has been accomplished by force, fraud or coercion.

However, organizations that facilitate human trafficking face additional penalties under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-105 (Human trafficking, enhanced liability) which provides, “. . . an organization convicted of an offense under this chapter is subject to any combination of the following: A suspension or revocation of a license, permit, or prior approval granted to the organization by a state or local government agency; A court order to dissolve or reorganize; and other relief is equitable.” Organization refers to “a legal entity and includes: a corporation, company, association, firm, partnership, or joint-stock company; a foundation, institution, society, union, club, or church; or any other group of persons organized for any purpose.” Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-102, 5-2-501.

Facilitation is also included in Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct), which establishes a Class A felony when a person “transports, finances in whole or part the transportation of, or otherwise causes or facilitates the movement of any minor, and . . . (1) Knows or has reason to know that prostitution or sexually explicit conduct involving the minor will be commercially exploited by any person; and (2) Acts with the purpose that the minor will engage in: (A) Prostitution; or (B) Sexually explicit conduct.”

In addition, the crime of facilitation is included in Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-104(a)(2) (Promoting prostitution in the first degree), which makes it a crime when a person knowingly “[a]dvances prostitution or profits from prostitution of a person less than eighteen (18) years of age.” A person “advances prostitution,” when “acting other than as a prostitute or a patron of a prostitute, that person knowingly: . . . (C) Provides a person or premises for prostitution purposes; (D) Operates or assists in the operation of a house of prostitution or a prostitution enterprise; or (E) Engages in any other conduct designed to institute, aid, or facilitate an act or enterprise of prostitution.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-101(1)(C), (D), (E). Promoting prostitution is a Class D felony punishable by imprisonment not to exceed 6 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-70-104(b), 5-4-401(a)(5), 5-4-201(a)(2).

4.1.1 Recommendation: Amend Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) so that facilitators can be liable for facilitating and benefiting financially from all instances of domestic minor sex trafficking, regardless of whether force, fraud, or coercion has been used.

4.2 *Financial penalties, including asset forfeiture laws, are in place for those who benefit financially from or aid and assist in committing domestic minor sex trafficking.*

Financial penalties against facilitators are incomplete. Only when force, fraud, or coercion is used to traffic minors,³⁰ may facilitators be convicted under Arkansas’s human trafficking law. When this happens, they will be subject to additional financial penalties.

Facilitators convicted under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) face a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-103(c), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1), and if convicted under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-305(a) (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct), facilitators face a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-305(b), 5-4-401(a)(2), 5-4-201(a)(1).

In addition to any other sentences, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-703(a)³¹ (Additional fine – Offense committed against a child or in the presence of a child.) states,

the court shall assess an additional fine of one hundred dollars (\$100) for the following offenses if the finder of fact determines that the offense was committed against a child or in the presence of a child:

.....

(9) § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons), § 5-18-104 (patronizing a victim of human trafficking);

.....

(12) § 5-27-303 (Engaging in sexually explicit conduct for the use in visual or print medium), § 5-27-304 (Pandering or possessing visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child), § 5-27-305 (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct), § 5-27-306 (internet stalking of a child), § 5-27-307 (sexually grooming a child);

.....

(14) § 5-27-602 (Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child), § 5-27-603 (computer child pornography), § 5-27-604 (Failure to report child pornography), § 5-27-605 (Computer exploitation of a child);

.....

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-201(a)(5) (Forfeiture, criminal conveyances) requires that anyone convicted under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 will forfeit “any conveyance, including an aircraft, motor vehicle, or vessel” if it is used “in the commission or attempt” of the crime. Additionally, any conveyance “may be seized by any law enforcement agent upon process issued by any court having jurisdiction” when there is probable cause that the conveyance was “used in the commission or attempt” of Trafficking of persons, Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-103, 5-5-202.

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-105 (enhanced liability) provides,

In addition to any other statutorily authorized sentence or fine, an organization convicted of an offense under this chapter is subject to any combination of the following:

- (1) A suspension or revocation of a license, permit, or prior approval granted to the organization by a state or local government agency;
- (2) A court order to dissolve or reorganize; and

³⁰ See *supra* Component 4.1 for a discussion of limitations on facilitator liability.

³¹ See *supra* note 15.

(3) other relief as is equitable.

Organization refers to “a legal entity and includes: a corporation, company, association, firm, partnership, or joint-stock company; a foundation, institution, society, union, club, or church; or any other group of persons organized for any purpose.” Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-18-102(9), 5-2-501.

Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(a) (Disposition of contraband and seized property), “Any seized property shall be returned to the rightful owner or possessor of the seized property except contraband owned by a defendant.” Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(b)(1) contraband is defined as including the following:

- (A) Article possessed under a circumstance prohibited by law;
- (B) Weapon or other instrument used in the commission or attempted commission of a felony;
- (C) Visual, print, or electronic medium that depicts sexually explicit conduct involving a child prohibited under § 5-27-304;
- (D) Visual, print, or electronic medium that contains a sexual performance of a child prohibited under § 5-27-403;
- (E) Item the possession of which is prohibited by § 5-27-602 [Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child];
- (F) Item the production of which is prohibited by § 5-27-603 [Computer child pornography];
- (G) Item the production of which is prohibited by § 5-27-605 [Computer exploitation of a child]; or
- (H) Other article designated “contraband” by law.

Contraband listed in Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(b)(1)(C)–(H) shall be destroyed. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(c)(1). Other contraband may be retained for use by law enforcement or sold, the proceeds to be used to reimburse the rightful owner or to be “paid into the general fund of the county, city, or town whose law enforcement agency performed the seizure.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-5-101(g).

A facilitator could also be required to pay discretionary restitution to the victim under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-205(a)(1) (Restitution), which states that “[a] defendant who is found guilty or who enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to an offense may be ordered to pay restitution.” The restitution is based on the “actual economic loss caused to a victim by the offense,” and if bodily injury has occurred, the restitution order may require the defendant to, among other things, “[p]ay the cost of a necessary medical or related professional service or device relating to physical, psychiatric, and psychological care, including nonmedical care and treatment rendered in accordance with a recognized method of healing; . . . [p]ay the cost of necessary physical and occupational therapy and rehabilitation; [and] . . . [r]eimburse the victim for income lost by the victim as a result of the offense” with a maximum income reimbursement of \$50,000. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-205(b)(1), (2).

4.3 *Promoting and selling child sex tourism is illegal.*

Arkansas criminalizes child sex tourism under its human trafficking statute. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a)(5) (Trafficking of persons), a person commits human trafficking if he or she knowingly “[s]ells or offers to sell travel services that he or she knows includes an activity prohibited under subdivision (a)(1) – (4) of this section.” Subsection (4) of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a) makes it a crime to “[r]ecruit[], entice[], solicit[], isolate[], harbor[], transport[], provide[], maintain[], or obtain[] a minor for commercial sexual activity.”

4.4 *Promoting and selling images of child sexual exploitation carries penalties as high as similar federal offenses.*

Facilitators of conduct involving images of child sexual exploitation (ICSE) may be prosecuted under the following offenses:

1. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-304(a) (Pandering or possessing visual or print medium depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child) makes it illegal to

With knowledge of the character of the visual or print medium involved . . . : (1) Knowingly advertise for sale or distribution, sell, distribute, transport, ship, exhibit, display, or receive for the purpose of sale or distribution any visual or print medium depicting a child participating or engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or (2) Knowingly solicit, receive, purchase, exchange, possess, view, distribute, or control any visual or print medium depicting a child participating or engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

A first violation of this section is a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3–10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-304(b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2). Subsequent violations are Class B felonies punishable by imprisonment for 5-20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-304(b)(2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).

2. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-403(a) (Producing, directing, or promoting a sexual performance by a child) it is a crime for a person “knowing the character and content of the material, to produce, direct, or promote a performance that includes sexual conduct by a child under eighteen (18) years of age.” As a Class B felony, this crime is punishable by imprisonment for 5–20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-403(b), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).
3. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-602(a)(1) (Distributing, possessing, or viewing of matter depicting sexually explicit conduct involving a child), a person is guilty of a Class C felony punishable by imprisonment for 3–10 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$10,000 for a first offense, when he knowingly “[r]eceive[s] for the purpose of selling or knowingly sells, procures, manufactures, gives, provides, lends, trades, mails, delivers, transfers, publishes, distributes, circulates, disseminates, presents, exhibits, advertises, offers, or agrees to offer through any means, including the internet, any photograph, film, videotape, computer program or file, video game, or any other reproduction or reconstruction that depicts a child or incorporates the image of a child engaging in sexually explicit conduct.” Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-602(a)(1), (b)(1), 5-4-401(a)(4), 5-4-201(a)(2). Subsequent offenses are Class B felonies punishable by imprisonment for 5-20 years and a possible fine not to exceed \$15,000. Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-602(b)(2), 5-4-401(a)(3), 5-4-201(a)(1).

Legal Components:

- 5.1 *Victims under the core child sex trafficking offense include all commercially sexually exploited children.*
- 5.2 *The state sex trafficking statute expressly prohibits a defendant from asserting a defense based on the willingness of a minor under 18 to engage in the commercial sex act.*
- 5.3 *State law prohibits the criminalization of minors under 18 for prostitution offenses.*
- 5.4 *State law provides a non-punitive avenue to specialized services through one of more points of entry.*
- 5.5 *Child sex trafficking is identified as a type of abuse and neglect within child protection statutes.*
- 5.6 *The definition of “caregiver” or another related term in the child welfare statutes is not a barrier to a sex trafficked child accessing the protection of child welfare.*
- 5.7 *Crime victims’ compensation is specifically available to a child victim of sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).*
- 5.8 *Victim-friendly procedures and protections are provided in the trial process for minors under 18.*
- 5.9 *Child sex trafficking victims may vacate delinquency adjudications and expunge related records for prostitution and other offenses arising from trafficking victimization, without a waiting period.*
- 5.10 *Victim restitution and civil remedies for victims of domestic minor sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) are authorized by law.*
- 5.11 *Statutes of limitations for civil and criminal actions for child sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) offenses are eliminated or lengthened to allow prosecutors and victims a realistic opportunity to pursue criminal action and legal remedies.*

Legal Analysis:

- 5.1 *Victims under the core child sex trafficking offense include all commercially sexually exploited children.³²*

The Arkansas Human Trafficking Act of 2013, codified as Arkansas Code Ann. § 5-18-101 – § 5-18-105 includes all commercial sexual exploitation of minors. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a)(4) (Trafficking of persons), when the victim is a minor, means of force, fraud, or coercion are not required.³³ In addition, although Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) requires that the buyer know the person patronized was a victim of human trafficking under third party control, Arkansas's core human trafficking law, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103, applies to buyers through the term "obtains," regardless of third party control; thus buying commercial sex with a person who is under the age of eighteen constitutes human trafficking.³⁴ Ark Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a)(4). Consequently, the offense of human trafficking, under Ark Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a), includes any child who is bought for sex, regardless of whether force, fraud, or coercion is used, regardless of whether a buyer exploited the youth without a trafficker's involvement, and regardless of whether the victim identifies a trafficker. Ark Code Ann. § 5-18-103(a).

³² See generally SHARED HOPE INTERNATIONAL, “Eliminating the Third Party Control Barrier to Identifying Juvenile Sex Trafficking Victims,” JuST Response Policy Paper (2015), http://sharedhope.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Policy-Paper_Eliminating-Third-Party-Control_Final1.pdf (discussing need to include buyer conduct in core sex trafficking offense regardless of whether victim is under control of a third party and explaining negative impact on victims and victim-identification when buyers are excluded as sex trafficking offenders).

³³ See *supra* discussion in Component 1.1.

³⁴ See *supra* Component 2.1 for discussion of buyer applicability.

5.2 *The state sex trafficking statute expressly prohibits a defendant from asserting a defense based on the willingness of a minor under 18 to engage in the commercial sex act.*

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) is silent with regard to a defendant’s ability to assert a defense based on the willingness of the minor to engage in the commercial sex act. Additionally, Ark. Code Ann § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) requires that a defendant “knowingly” purchase sex with a human trafficking victim, which may allow a buyer to successfully argue that a victim’s consent made it impossible to “know” that the minor was a victim of sex trafficking.

5.2.1 Recommendation: Amend Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons) and § 5-18-104 (Patronizing a victim of human trafficking) to prohibit a defense based on a minor victim’s willingness to engage in the commercial sex act.

5.3 *State law prohibits the criminalization of minors under 18 for prostitution offenses.*³⁵

Ark Code Ann. § 5-70-102 (Prostitution) does not prohibit the prosecution of minors for prostitution offenses. Additionally, Ark Code Ann. § 5-70-102 does not identify all minors engaged in prostitution as victims of human trafficking.

5.3.1 Recommendation: Amend Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-102(a) (Prostitution) to ensure that all minors are protected from criminalization for prostitution offenses.

5.4 *State law provides a non-punitive avenue to specialized services through one or more points of entry.*

System response to child engaged in commercial sex act

I. Services through child welfare

Under Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(17)(A), (18)(A) (Definitions), a juvenile sex trafficking victim will be identified as a “dependent juvenile” or a “dependent-neglected juvenile.”³⁶ After finding a child to be dependent-neglected, the court may “transfer custody of the juvenile to the Department of Human Services, to another licensed agency responsible for the care of juveniles, or to a relative or other individual,” whichever is in the child’s best interest. Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-334(a)(2)(A) (Disposition—Dependent-neglected—Generally). If custody is transferred to the Department of Human Services, “the juvenile shall be placed in a licensed or approved foster home, shelter, or facility or an exempt child welfare agency.” Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-334(a)(2)(B).

Under Arkansas’s Child Welfare Agency Licensing Act, the definitions of “child welfare agency” and “child placement agency” include entities that house or assist in the placement of juvenile sex trafficking victims. Specifically, Ark. Code Ann. § 9-28-402(8)(D) (Definitions) defines “child welfare agency” to include “any person, corporation, partnership, voluntary association, or other entity or identifiable group of entities having a coordinated ownership of controlling interest, whether established for profit or otherwise, that . . . [r]eceives, places, plans or assists in the placement of a child victim of human trafficking in a home or any type of shelter or facility.” Further, Ark. Code Ann. § 9-28-402(7)(D), defines “child placement agency” to include “a child welfare agency . . . that . . . [p]laces, plans for the placement or assists in the placement of a child victim of human trafficking in a home or any type of

³⁵ For more information regarding recent federal legislation impacting this component see: <http://go.sharedhope.org/stateimpactmemo>.

³⁶ See *infra* Components 5.5 and 5.6 for a complete discussion of identification as a “dependent juvenile” or a “dependent-neglected juvenile.”

shelter or facility.” Thus, the Department of Human Services can refer victims to entities that serve juvenile sex trafficking victims. Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-334(a)(2)(B).

II. Services through juvenile justice

A juvenile sex trafficking victim may be identified as a “delinquent juvenile” for offenses committed pursuant to their victimization. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-323(a) (Diversion—Conditions—Agreement—Completion—Definition), however, a prosecuting attorney may choose to proceed with diversion in some delinquency cases if “it is in the best interests of the juvenile and the community” and the relevant persons consent. Further, Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-323(k)(1), (2) requires the Department of Human Services to develop a statewide protocol for helping to coordinate the delivery of services to sexually exploited children, including juvenile sex trafficking victims, in conjunction with diversion.

Summary

Arkansas law provides juvenile sex trafficking victims with a statutory avenue to specialized services; specifically, the Department of Human Services may refer a juvenile sex trafficking victim who has been identified as a “dependent-neglected juvenile” to a child placement agency that specializes in serving these children. However, Arkansas law does not mandate immunity for offenses committed as a result of the trafficking victimization.

5.4.1 Recommendation: Amend Arkansas’s protective response for juvenile sex trafficking victims to include a mandatory mechanism to prevent delinquency adjudications.

5.5 *Child sex trafficking is identified as a type of abuse and neglect within child protection statutes.*³⁷

Although Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(3)(A) (Definitions) does not identify child sex trafficking as a type of “abuse,” the definition of “dependent juvenile” under Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(17)³⁸ includes child sex trafficking victims. It states in part,

"Dependent juvenile" means:

....

- (G) (i) A child who has been a victim of human trafficking.
- (ii) If the parent knew or should have known the child was a victim of human trafficking, the child is not a dependent juvenile but may be dependent-neglected;

In addition, Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(18)(A) includes child sex trafficking victims within the definition of “dependent-neglected juvenile” through the definition of “sexual abuse.” Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(18) states,

- (A) “Dependent-neglected juvenile” means any juvenile who is at substantial risk of serious harm as a result of the following acts or omissions to the juvenile, a sibling, or another juvenile:
 - (i) Abandonment;
 - (ii) Abuse;
 - (iii) Sexual abuse;

³⁷ For more information regarding recent federal legislation impacting this component see:

<http://go.sharedhope.org/stateimpactmemo>.

³⁸ The text of Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303 cited here and elsewhere in this report includes amendments made by the enactment of Senate Bill 271 during the 2017 Regular Session of Arkansas’s 91st General Assembly (effective July 30, 2017).

- (iv) Sexual exploitation;³⁹
- (v) Neglect;

.....
(B) “Dependent-neglected juvenile” includes dependent juveniles.

In turn, Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(52)(F) defines “sexual abuse” in part as follows:

By a person eighteen (18) years of age or older to a person who is younger than eighteen (18) years of age, the recruiting, harboring, transporting, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a child for the purpose of a commercial sex act.⁴⁰

Further, Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(36)(A)(iii) defines “neglect” to include the “[f]ailure to take reasonable action to protect the juvenile from abandonment, abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, neglect, or parental unfitness when the existence of this condition was known or should have been known.”

As such, a child sex trafficking victim could be identified as neglected, dependent, or dependent-neglected, thus allowing for child welfare intervention.

5.6 The definition of “caregiver” or another related term in the child welfare statutes is not a barrier to a sex trafficked child accessing the protection of child welfare.

While parent or caregiver fault is required under the definition of “abuse” in Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(3)(A) (Definitions),⁴¹ the definition of “dependent juvenile” under Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(17)(G)⁴² specifically includes child sex trafficking victims without regard to whether a parent or caregiver perpetrated the abuse.

³⁹ Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(54) defines “sexual exploitation” as

- (A) Allowing, permitting, or encouraging participation or depiction of the juvenile in:
 - (i) Prostitution;
 - (ii) Obscene photographing; or
 - (iii) Obscene filming; and
- (B) Obscenely depicting, obscenely posing, or obscenely posturing a juvenile for any use or purpose.

⁴⁰ Regarding the definition of “sexual abuse” in the Child Maltreatment Act, Ark. Code Ann. § 12-18-103(20)(F) also includes:

By a person eighteen (18) years of age or older to a person who is younger than eighteen (18) years of age, the recruiting, harboring, transporting, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a child for the purpose of a commercial sex act.

The text of Ark. Code Ann. § 12-18-103 cited here and elsewhere in this report includes amendments made by the enactment of Senate Bill 271 during the 2017 Regular Session of Arkansas’s 91st General Assembly (effective July 30, 2017).

⁴¹ Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(3)(A) limits the definition of “abuse” to “acts or omissions by a parent, guardian, custodian, foster parent, person eighteen (18) years of age or older living in the home with a child, whether related or unrelated to the child, or any person who is entrusted with the juvenile’s care by a parent, guardian, custodian, or foster parent, including, but not limited to, an agent or employee of a public or private residential home, child care facility, public or private school, or any person legally responsible for the juvenile’s welfare.”

⁴² See *supra* note 38.

Further, the definition of “dependent-neglected juvenile” under Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-303(18), which includes child sex trafficking victims through the definition of “sexual abuse,” does not require parent or caregiver fault. Accordingly, a child sex trafficking victim may receive services as a “dependent juvenile” or as a “dependent-neglected juvenile” regardless of whether a parent or caregiver perpetrated the abuse.

5.7 *Crime victims’ compensation is specifically available to a child victim of sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).*

Several problematic conditions could make domestic minor sex trafficking victims ineligible for Crime Victims Reparations. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 16-90-712(a),

Reparations shall not be awarded:

- (1) Unless the claim has been filed with the Crime Victims Reparations Board within one (1) year after the injury or death upon which the claim is based, unless the board finds good cause for the failure to file a timely claim;
- (2) To a claimant who was the offender or an accomplice of the offender;
-
- (5) To any claimant who has been convicted of a felony involving criminally injurious conduct;
- (6) Unless the criminally injurious conduct resulting in injury or death was reported to the proper authorities within seventy-two (72) hours after its occurrence, or the board finds there was good cause for the failure to report within that time;
-

Under subsection (b), “Reparations otherwise payable to a claimant shall be diminished to the extent: . . .

(2) Of the degree of responsibility for the cause of the injury or death attributable to the victim, as determined by the board.” Ark. Code Ann. § 16-90-712(b). Furthermore, under subsection (c), an award may be reduced, denied, or withdrawn if it is found that the victim did not cooperate with law enforcement. Ark. Code Ann. § 16-90-712(c).

- 5.7.1 Recommendation: Amend Ark. Code Ann. § 16-90-712 (Conditions for reparations) to clarify that a claimant who is a victim of domestic minor sex trafficking is exempt from the conditions contained therein.

5.8 *Victim-friendly procedures and protections are provided in the trial process for minors under 18.*

Ark. Code Ann. § 16-42-101(b) (Admissibility of evidence of victim’s prior sexual conduct), which, subject to the provisions in the section, prevents the introduction of “opinion evidence, reputation evidence, or evidence of specific instances of the victim’s prior sexual conduct” applies only “[i]n any criminal prosecution under § 5-14-101 et seq. [Sexual Offenses including rape, sexual indecency with a child, public sexual indecency, sexual Assault] or § 5-26-202 [Incest], or for criminal attempt to commit, criminal solicitation to commit, or criminal conspiracy to commit an offense defined in any of those sections . . .” Ark. Code Ann. § 16-42-101(b). Therefore, the statute does not apply to domestic minor sex trafficking victims if the perpetrators are not charged with the crimes listed.

Similarly, “In any prosecution for a sexual offense or inchoate offense to a sexual offense, upon motion of the prosecuting attorney and after notice to opposing counsel, the court may, for good cause shown, allow the presence of the parent, stepparent, guardian, custodian, or other person with custody of an alleged minor victim of a sexual offense or inchoate offense to a sexual offense during the examination and cross-examination of the minor at any hearing, deposition, or trial.” Ark. Code Ann. § 16-42-102.

However, for child victims of any crime, including domestic minor sex trafficking crimes, it is possible that a child’s testimony may be taken via closed circuit television. Ark. Code Ann. § 16-43-1001(a)(1). Under Ark. Code Ann. § 16-43-1001(a)(1) (Closed-circuit television) in criminal proceedings, upon motion by the prosecution or defense, “the court may, upon a showing of clear and convincing evidence that testifying in open court would be harmful or detrimental to the child, order that the testimony of a victim or witness who is a child twelve (12) years of age or under be taken outside the courtroom.”

Finally, Ark. Code Ann. § 16-43-1202 (Safeguards for child victims testifying in judicial and administrative proceedings) requires that the “prosecuting attorney, victim-witness coordinator, attorney ad litem, or Office of Chief Counsel attorney” provide the child with information about the proceedings and protect the testifying child from “argumentative or harassing questioning” by objecting appropriately. Ark. Code Ann. § 16-43-1202(1), (7). The child is permitted, upon motion by the “prosecuting attorney, attorney ad litem, or Office of Chief Counsel attorney,” a “comfort item,” “support person,” or both during the testimony “[i]f it is in the child’s best interests.” Ark. Code Ann. § 16-43-1202(5), (6).

- 5.8.1 Recommendation: Amend Ark Code Ann. § 16-42-101 (Admissibility of evidence of victim’s prior sexual conduct) to include child victims of § 5-18-103 (Trafficking of persons), § 5-70-104(a)(2) (Promoting prostitution in the first degree), § 5-27-303 (Engaging children in sexually explicit conduct for use in visual or print medium), § 5-27-305 (Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct), § 5-27-402 (Employing or consenting to the use of a child in a sexual performance and § 5-27-403(a) (Producing, directing, or promoting a sexual performance by a child) where commercial sexual abuse of a child is involved.

5.9 *Child sex trafficking victims may vacate delinquency adjudications and expunge related records for prostitution and other offenses arising from trafficking victimization, without a waiting period.*

Arkansas law does not provide a mechanism for minors to vacate delinquency adjudications related to trafficking victimization, but juvenile records may be expunged immediately if the offense was not one for which the minor could have been tried as an adult. Otherwise, expungement is available after a waiting period.

Under Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27-309(b)–(c) (Confidentiality of Records),

- (b) (1) (A) Records of delinquency adjudications for which a juvenile could have been tried as an adult shall be kept for ten (10) years after the last adjudication of delinquency or the date of a plea of guilty or nolo contendere or a finding of guilt as an adult.
(B) Thereafter they may be expunged.
- (2) The court may expunge other juvenile records at any time and shall expunge all the records of a juvenile upon his or her twenty-first birthday, in other types of delinquency, dependency-neglect, or families in need of services cases.
- (3) For purposes of this section, “expunge” means to destroy.
- (c) Records of juveniles who are designated as extended juvenile jurisdiction offenders shall be kept for ten (10) years after the last adjudication of delinquency, date of plea of guilty or nolo contendere, or finding of guilt as an adult or until the juvenile’s twenty-first birthday, whichever is longer.

Ark. Code Ann. § 16-90-1412 (Sealing certain convictions for victims of human trafficking) also removes the waiting period for sealing⁴³ certain records; it states,

⁴³ Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 16-90-1404(4), “‘Seal’ means to expunge, remove, sequester, and treat as confidential the record or records in question”

-
- (b) (1) A person convicted of prostitution, § 5-70-102, may file a uniform petition to seal the conviction under this section if it was obtained as a result of the person's having been a victim of human trafficking.
 - (2) A uniform petition under this section may be filed at any time and may be filed for a conviction imposed at any time.

-
- (d) If the uniform petition under this section is granted, the court shall:
 - (1) Issue a uniform order to seal the conviction; and
 - (2) With respect to the conviction for prostitution, § 5-70-102, redact the petitioner's name from all records and files related to the petitioner's:
 - (A) Arrest;
 - (B) Citation;
 - (C) Criminal investigation;
 - (D) Criminal charge;
 - (E) Adjudication of guilt;
 - (F) Criminal proceedings; and
 - (G) Probation for the offense.
-

Because Ark. Code Ann. § 16-90-1412 applies specifically to records of conviction, however, this protection does not clearly extend to juvenile records related to delinquency adjudications. Further, Ark. Code Ann. § 16-90-1412 applies only to prostitution offenses, foreclosing the law's applicability to other offenses related to trafficking victimization.

5.9.1 Recommendation: Enact a law that allows child sex trafficking victims to vacate delinquency adjudications and expunge related records for prostitution and other offenses arising from trafficking victimization, without a waiting period.

5.10 *Victim restitution and civil remedies for victims of domestic minor sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) are authorized by law.*

A domestic minor sex trafficking victim could receive restitution under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-205(a)(1) (Restitution), which states that “[a] defendant who is found guilty or who enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to an offense may be ordered to pay restitution.” The restitution is based on the “actual economic loss caused to a victim by the offense,” and if bodily injury has occurred, the restitution order may require the defendant, among other things, to “[p]ay the cost of a necessary medical or related professional service or device relating to physical, psychiatric, and psychological care, including nonmedical care and treatment rendered in accordance with a recognized method of healing; . . . [p]ay the cost of necessary physical and occupational therapy and rehabilitation; [and] . . . [r]eimburse the victim for income lost by the victim as a result of the offense” with a maximum income reimbursement of \$50,000. Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-205(b)(1), (2).

Any victim of a felony offense, including domestic minor sex trafficking victims, may bring a civil action. Specifically, under Ark. Code Ann. § 16-118-107(a)(1) (Civil action by crime victim), “Any person injured or damaged by reason of conduct of another person that would constitute a felony under Arkansas law may file a civil action to recover damages based on the conduct.”

A violation of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-42-204(a)(2) (Criminal use of property or laundering criminal proceeds) occurs when a person “[u]ses or makes available for use any property in which he or she has any ownership or lawful possessory interest to facilitate a predicate criminal offense.” A “predicate

criminal offense” includes a “crime of pecuniary gain,” which is defined as “any violation of Arkansas law that results, or was intended to result, in the defendant receiving income, benefit, property, money, or anything of value.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-42-203(3), (7). The violator may face a civil action brought by a prosecuting attorney “for damages in an amount equal to property, funds, or a monetary instrument involved in the violation as well as the proceeds acquired by any person involved in the enterprise or by reason of conduct in furtherance of the violation, together with costs incurred for resources and personnel used in the investigation and prosecution of both criminal and civil proceedings.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-42-204(c)(1).

Additionally, Ark Code Ann. § 16-118-109 (Civil cause of action for human trafficking victims) creates a private right of action for survivors of human trafficking against their exploiters. The statute provides an action for actual damages, compensatory damages, punitive damages, and injunctive relief. A prevailing plaintiff will be awarded attorneys’ fees, and if the plaintiff can prove the defendant acted maliciously and willfully, he or she may be awarded 3 times the actual damages. Ark Code Ann. § 16-118-109(d), (e).

- 5.10.1 Recommendation: Amend Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4-205(a)(1) (Restitution) to make restitution mandatory for victims of domestic minor sex trafficking and to expand the basis for restitution so that victims do not need to prove bodily injury before receiving restitution to cover the costs of psychiatric and psychological care.

5.11 Statutes of limitations for civil and criminal actions for child sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) offenses are eliminated or lengthened to allow prosecutors and victims a realistic opportunity to pursue criminal action and legal remedies.

Although minor sex trafficking is not specifically included as an offense that has no statute of limitations, several CSEC statutes are included. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-1-109(a)(1), (2) (Statute of limitations),

- (1) A prosecution for the following offenses may be commenced at any time:

.....

- (D) Rape, § 5-14-103, if the victim was a minor at the time of the offense;
- (E) Sexual indecency with a child, § 5-14-110;
- (F) Sexual assault in the first degree, § 15-14-124;
- (G) Sexual assault in the second degree, § 5-14-125, if the victim was a minor at the time of the offense;
- (H) Incest, § 5-226-202, if the victim was a minor at the time of the offense;
- (I) Engaging children in sexually explicit conduct for use in visual or print medium, § 5-27-303
- (J) Transportation of minors for prohibited sexual conduct, § 5-27-305;
- (K) Employing or consenting to the use of a child in a sexual performance, § 5-27-402;
- (L) Producing, directing, or promoting a sexual performance by a child, § 5-27-403; and
- (M) Computer exploitation of a child in the first degree, § 5-27-605.

- (2) A prosecution may be commenced for a violation of the following offenses, if, when the alleged violation occurred, the offense was committed against a minor, the violation has not been previously reported to a law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney, and the victim has not reached the age of twenty-eight (28) years of age:

- (A) Sexual assault in the third degree, § 5-14-126;
- (B) Sexual assault in the fourth degree, § 5-14-127;
- (C) Endangering the welfare of a minor in the first degree, § 5-27-205;
- (D) Permitting the abuse of a minor, § 5-27-221; and
- (E) Computer child pornography, § 5-27-603.

For civil actions related to trafficking and CSEC offenses, a five year statute of limitations applies. Ark Code Ann. § 16-56-115 (Limitation of action not otherwise provided for). Additionally, the statute of limitations for a minor will not start until he or she has reached 18 years of age. Ark Code Ann. § 16-118-109(f)(2) (Civil cause of action for human trafficking victims). If the minor is being threatened, intimidated, or manipulated “by the defendant or by any person acting in the interest of the defendant, the time period during which the threats, intimidation, manipulation, or fraud occurred will not be part of the statute of limitations for the commencement of this action.” Ark Code Ann. § 16-118-109(f)(4).

- 5.11.1 Recommendation: Amend Ark. Code Ann. § 5-1-109(a)(2) (Statute of limitations) to include Ark. Code Ann. § 5-70-104(a)(2) (Promoting prostitution in the first degree) and Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18-103(b)(1)(G) (Trafficking of persons) when the victim is a minor, or eliminate the statute of limitations for bringing prosecutions of these offenses.

Legal Components:

- 6.1 *Training on human trafficking and domestic minor sex trafficking for law enforcement is statutorily mandated or authorized.*
 - 6.2 *Single party consent to audiotaping is permitted in law enforcement investigations.*
 - 6.3 *Wiretapping is an available tool to investigate domestic minor sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).*
 - 6.4 *Using a law enforcement decoy posing as a minor to investigate buying or selling of commercial sex acts is not a defense to soliciting, purchasing, or selling sex with a minor.*
 - 6.5 *Using the Internet or other electronic communication to investigate buyers and traffickers is a permissible investigative technique.*
 - 6.6 *State law requires reporting of missing children and recovered missing children.*
-

Legal Analysis:

- 6.1 *Training on human trafficking and domestic minor sex trafficking for law enforcement is statutorily mandated or authorized.*

Ark. Code Ann. § 12-18-1202 (Training regarding sexually exploited children) authorizes law enforcement training on the sexual exploitation of children. Specifically, Ark. Code Ann. § 12-18-1202 provides,

The Arkansas Juvenile Officers Association, Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy, or the Prosecutor Coordinator may provide training to intake officers, law enforcement, prosecutors, and any other appropriate staff, concerning how to identify a sexually exploited child and how to obtain appropriate services for a sexually exploited child.

Training on related topics is required. Under Ark. Code Ann. § 12-9-113(a)(1) (Domestic violence training), new law enforcement officers must receive “at least twenty (20) hours of training in domestic violence and twenty (20) hours of training in child abuse.” The training on “child abuse victim interview techniques” must include the following: “(1) Current law, including the Child Maltreatment Act, § 12-18-101 et seq., and the Arkansas Juvenile Code of 1989, § 9-27-301 et seq.; (2) Child sexual abuse; and (3) Physical and behavioral indicators.” Ark. Code Ann. §12-9-113(c).

Additionally, all law enforcement officers must receive 20 hours of training on sexual assaults. Ark. Code Ann. § 12-9-114(a)(1). Ark. Code Ann. § 12-9-114(b) (Training concerning sexual assaults) states, “At a minimum, the training shall cover the following topics: (1) The dynamics of sexual assault; (2) The laws concerning sexual assault; (3) Sexual assault victim interview techniques; and (4) Support services available to sexual assault victims.”

- 6.2 *Single party consent to audiotaping is permitted in law enforcement investigations.*

Arkansas law allows for single party consent to audiotaping. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 5-60-120(a) (Interception and recording), “It is unlawful for a person to intercept a wire, landline, oral, telephonic communication, or wireless communication, and to record or possess a recording of the communication unless the person is a party to the communication or one (1) of the parties to the communication has given prior consent to the interception and recording.” Furthermore, § 5-60-120(c)(1) states, “It is not unlawful for the act to be committed by a person acting under the color of law.”

6.3 *Wiretapping is an available tool to investigate domestic minor sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).*

Ark. Code Ann. § 5-60-120(c)(1) (Interception and recording) states, “It is not unlawful for the act [of intercepting a wire, landline, oral, telephonic communication, or wireless communication, and to record or possess a recording of the communication] to be committed by a person acting under the color of law.”

6.4 *Using a law enforcement decoy posing as a minor to investigate buying or selling of commercial sex acts is not a defense to soliciting, purchasing, or selling sex with a minor.*

As noted below in Component 6.5, Ark. Code Ann. §§ 5-27-603 (Computer child pornography) and 5-27-306 (Internet stalking of a child) use language that indicates a decoy may be used in prosecutions. However, no human trafficking or CSEC law prohibits a defense to prosecution based on the person not in fact being a minor. Thus, a defendant may be able to assert a defense based on a law enforcement decoy posing as a minor to investigate buyer-applicable offenses through reverse sting operations, which are the most likely situations in which a defendant would try to use such a defense.

6.4.1 Recommendation: Enact a law to specifically allow law enforcement to investigate sex trafficking of children through the use of decoys.

6.5 *Using the Internet or other electronic communication to investigate buyers and traffickers is a permissible investigative technique.*

Use of the Internet or electronic communication is allowed for some investigations of traffickers under Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-306(a) (Internet stalking of a child) when a person 21 or older “knowingly uses a computer online service, internet service, or local internet bulletin board service to” do any of the following:

....

(2) Seduce, solicit, lure, or entice an individual that the person believes to be fifteen (15) years of age or younger in an effort to arrange a meeting with the individual for the purpose of engaging in:

- (A) Sexual intercourse;
- (B) Sexually explicit conduct; or
- (C) Deviate sexual activity;

....

(4) Compile, transmit, publish, reproduce, buy, sell, receive, exchange, or disseminate the name, telephone number, electronic mail address, residence address, picture, physical description, characteristics, or any other identifying information on an individual that the person believes to be fifteen (15) years of age or younger in furtherance of an effort to arrange a meeting with the individual for the purpose of engaging in:

- (A) Sexual intercourse;
- (B) Sexually explicit conduct; or
- (C) Deviate sexual activity.

Use of the phrase, “believes to be fifteen (15) years of age or younger,” in both of these subsections, implies that law enforcement officers are allowed to use the Internet or other electronic communication to investigate domestic minor sex trafficking cases when the victim is 15 or younger.

It is also possible that a law enforcement officer could investigate violations of Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-603 (Computer child pornography) against a child under 17 through the Internet or other electronic communication. This crime prohibits using “a computer online service, internet service, or local bulletin board service to seduce,

solicit, lure, or entice or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child or another individual believed by the person to be a child, to engage in sexually explicit conduct.” Ark. Code Ann. § 5-27-603(a)(2), (b).

6.6 *State law requires reporting of missing children and recovered missing children.*

Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-205(d) provides that “[u]pon receiving notice of a missing child, a law enforcement agency shall complete a missing person report and immediately enter identifying and descriptive information about the missing child into the computerized system of the clearinghouse.” Additionally, under Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-801(a)(1) (Report of missing child–Notation on records), “When either a law enforcement officer or the Attorney General is notified by the parents, guardian, or other person having custody of a child that the child is missing, the law enforcement officer or the Attorney General shall: (1) Ensure that the missing child information is entered into the Missing Persons Information Clearinghouse within the Arkansas Crime Information Center under Section 12-12-205 and the National Crime Information Center.” Ark. Code Ann. § 12-12-205(d)(3) specifies that the computer entry should be canceled “when the missing child . . . is located or returned.”

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