

# BUSINESSSAFE

*BusinessSafe is designed to aid businesses in protecting the safety and well-being of Florida's residents and visitors from threats. BusinessSafe provides private sector partners with open source information, analysis and resources to help protect their businesses and communities.*

Florida Fusion Center 19-286

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## BusinessSafe Highlight: Lodging

### Criminal Activity

Hotels and motels have recently been impacted by cybersecurity threats as well as sex and labor trafficking. Lodging facilities are used by traffickers due to the sheer number of hotels and motels across the state, the expectation of frequent comings and goings at these establishments, and the relative ease of remaining anonymous. With a booming tourism industry in Florida, and over 100 million people visiting the state annually, the criminal activities that occur in hotels and motels continue to be a concern.

1. **Cyber Threats** - Hotels and motels have been impacted by cyber incidents resulting in harvested credentials and data breaches of internal systems. Other threats include phishing attacks, malware or ransomware infections, and insider threats. Hospitality establishments often rely on networks and databases to operate effectively. Incidents that impact these systems may negatively impact the reputation and future profits of these establishments.
  - [700,000 Choice Hotels Records Leaked in Data Breach and Ransomware Demanded](#)
  - [Marriott Data Breach Compromised the Personal Information of up to 500 Million People](#)
2. **Sex Trafficking** - Sex trafficking can occur at lodging locations because of how accessible they are and because payment for rooms can be made in non-traceable ways (cash, cryptocurrency, or gift cards). Some hotel and motel chains are facing lawsuits by sex trafficking victims alleging negligence and claiming failure by staff to recognize or ignoring signs of human trafficking.
  - [Motel Named in Federal Sex Trafficking Lawsuit](#)
  - [Training Materials for Human Trafficking in the Hospitality Industry](#)
3. **Labor Trafficking** - Forced labor is also a concern especially when it comes to housekeeping subcontractors. These workers are often employed in factories and produce products used commonly in the hospitality industry including bedsheets and coffee. A lack of understanding of the language, unfamiliarity with the laws, and misunderstanding of illicit activity may all be factors in the victimization of these individuals by traffickers.



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- [Individual Arrived in the U.S. to Send Money Back Home and Instead was Labor Trafficked](#)

### **Terrorist and Targeted Violence**

Hotels and motels continue to be locations for and targets for mass shootings and terroristic activity worldwide due to the large amounts of people who gather in these locations. Being aware of suspicious behavior is a necessity to help prevent nefarious activities.

1. **Mass Shootings** – In October 2017, a gunman in Las Vegas, Nevada, opened fire from his hotel suite on individuals attending the Route 91 Harvest music festival below. 58 people were killed and 413 were injured in the incident.
  - [Las Vegas Hotel Shooting at County Concert Kills 58 People](#)
  - [Man Mimics Conducting a Mass Shooting from a Hotel Room](#)
2. **Targeted Violence** – On April 21, 2019, three luxury hotels and three churches around the Colombo, Sri Lanka area, were targeted in a series of suicide bombings. 290 people were killed and more than 500 were injured in the incident.
  - [Three Sri Lanka Five-Star Hotels were Attacked by Terrorists](#)

### **Resources**

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Blue Campaign provides a variety of indicators for hotel and motel staff to be aware of that may indicate someone is a victim of human trafficking while staying at their establishment.

[DHS Blue Campaign Awareness Materials](#)

The Polaris Project, part of the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH), provides a list of nine recommendations for hotels and motels of ways to mitigate human trafficking from occurring at their individual properties.

[Polaris Project Hotel/Motel Recommendations](#)

The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation provides a human trafficking information sheet about general human trafficking indicators and ways to report suspected human trafficking in Florida.

[Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation Information Sheet](#) (PDF)

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement provides a list of potential indicators of terrorist activities at hotels and motels.

[Florida Department of Law Enforcement Indicators of Terrorist Activities at Hotels/Motels](#) (PDF)

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement BusinessSafe fact sheet highlights general indicators of potential terrorist planning or activities at hotels and motels.

[Florida Department of Law Enforcement BusinessSafe Fact Sheet](#) (PDF)

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