

The page that follows is a screenshot from

<https://www.rubmaps.ch/springfield-massage-parlors-il>

Which was found by google searching "Asian massage springfield il"

It is a directory with reviews. Feel free to read those on your time.

Here are some of the signs of human trafficking in massage parlors:

1. Any sexual or erotic services are provided, or they advertise on illicit websites
2. The providers are wearing very little clothing
3. They refuse to service females
4. You have to buzz in to get into the business
5. The providers are not allowed to handle their own cash
6. The providers speak very little to no English
7. The providers/employees are living in the parlor
8. The windows are completely covered or blacked out
9. The providers are transported to and from the parlor together and live in the same location
10. Providers are there for short periods of time, and new providers show up weekly or monthly

SEARCH: (suggestion Erotic massage Springfield, Asian massage Springfield)

New user Login

Any State ▼

FORUM ESCORT REVIEWS CANCELLATION CONTACT

Safe browsing
ON OFF

» Massage parlors Springfield IL » KK Massage

Other locations

Springfield massage parlors:

Jade Spa
Cozy Cabin Spa
Fitness Massage
Red Bean Massage Spa
GY Massage
Royal Massage
Healthy Spa
Capital Spa
Sunny Massage Spa
Sky Spa Massage
Asian Massage
Relax Spa
Lotus Bloom Spa & Massage
Spring SPA & Massage
A-1 Spa Massage
Day Spa Massage
Warm Spa
Asian Massage
Health & Wellness Center
Massage
5 Star Spa

All Springfield massage parlors

-Select-

Newest Forum Posts

Polite way of scanning the place
for a lady you want.

Tom Brady roast. Did the joke go
too far?

Girl on Girl AMP

Rose Spa Busted

BBFS vs CFS?

Is it ok to call to request a
provider at a new amp?

Any providers that looks like May
Thai?

Appropriate Tipping

Is a location safe if it's been on
the radar previously

Valencia Soa Laguna Hills

Check out the latest massage parlor reviews in Springfield, IL



KK Massage in Springfield, Illinois

Distance to this massage parlor center: 4.4 mi

12 reviews

LEAVE A REVIEW

ADD TO FAVORITES

Masseuse Ethnicity:

Asian

Cards Accepted:

Cash Only

Sauna: No

Jacuzzi: No

Semi-Truck Parking: No

30 min: \$40

60 min: \$60

90 min: \$90



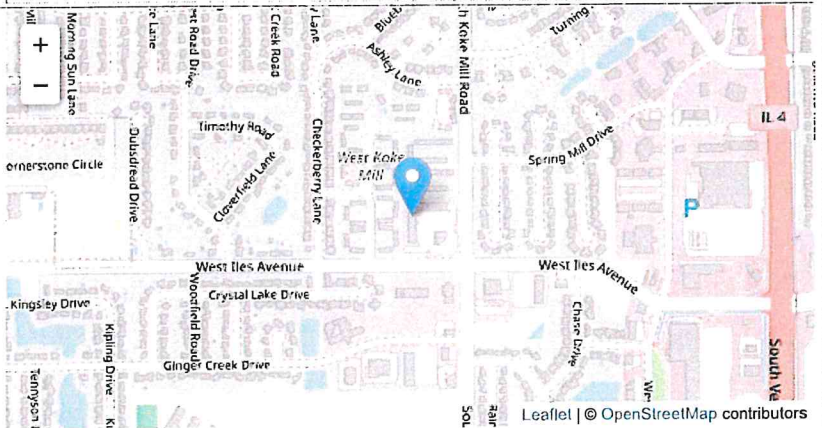
Address:
3247 W Iles Ave
Springfield, Illinois 62711
[Get Driving Directions](#)

Phone Number:
217-415-2215

REPORT

Hours:

Daily 10:00am - 10:00pm



12 reviews (12) Comments

Order: Review Date ▼

	supremacook				
	Lily	#925854	12.14 2019	4	
	simpleman2008				
	Lily	#805882	05.21 2019	1	
	p.moyer1988				
	Lily	#793442	04.26 2019		
	awesomematech				
	Lily	#775278	04.12 2019		
	mr69				
	Lily	#723926	01.09 2019	2	
	cdtraveler1				
	Lily	#711722	12.19 2018	4	
	wyldorchid				
	Lily	#674125	10.18 2018		

10.01 2018

	hodorhodor177	#547273	
	Lisa		
	gazer		
	Lisa	#506113	07.10 2016
	cubstan1975		
	Terry	#433155	07.08 2017
	vito413		
	Lisa	#384312	03.07 2017
	onegoodfimer		
	Terri	#374598	02.14 2017

» Massage parlors Springfield IL

Massage Parlor reviews Springfield, happy ending erotic massages Springfield

Message Parlors Springfield

Springfield erotic massage parlors with reviews - 29

Add MP

☐ Photos only

Sort by Newest Review

Erotic massage near Springfield

Chatham

Message Parlors (3)

Decatur

Message Parlors (9)

Litchfield

Message Parlors (3)

Pekin

Message Parlors (6)

Canton

Message Parlors (1)

Morton

Message Parlors (3)

Bartonville

Message Parlors (2)

East Peoria

Message Parlors (5)

Normal

Message Parlors (4)

Bloomington

Message Parlors (19)

All Illinois massage parlors

Springfield

Newest Forum Posts

Polite way of scanning the place for a lady you want.

Tom Brady roast. Did the joke go too far?

Girl on Girl AMP

Rose Spa Busted

BBFS vs CFS?

Is it ok to call to request a provider at a new amp?

Any providers that looks like May Thai?

Appropriate Tipping

Is a location safe if it's been on the radar previously

Valencia Soa Laguna Hills

Day Spa Massage

224-245-9239

1544 w jefferson st

Springfield, IL, 62702

4 reviews

Spring SPA & Massage

217-588-0383

1617 S Spring St

Springfield, IL, 62704-3846

5 reviews

Sky Spa Massage

217-993-2821

3325 S 6th st #10

Springfield, IL, 62703

9 reviews

Royal Massage

217-679-6586

2745 S 6th St

Springfield, IL, 62703

50 reviews

Capital Spa

217-303-2352

3915 N Dirksen pkwy

Springfield, IL, 62707

53 reviews

Healthy Spa

217-670-2104

613 N 7th St

Springfield, IL, 62702

43 reviews

Warm Spa

217-220-6458

116 N Grand Ave E,

Springfield, IL, 62702

39 reviews

\$ 60

Asian, Chinese massage

Yesterday

\$ 60

Asian massage

1 week ago

\$ 60

Chinese massage

1 month ago

\$ 60

Asian, Chinese massage

2 months ago

\$ 60

Asian massage

2 months ago

\$ 60

Chinese massage

4 months ago

\$ 60

Asian massage

4 months ago

Cozy Cabin Spa

217-819-8139
1144 E Sangamon
Springfield, IL, 62702
[24 reviews](#)

\$ 60

Asian massage

5 months ago

PROVIDENCE SPA

217-806-8588
1613 S Macarthur Blvd
Springfield, IL, 62704
[20 reviews](#)

\$ 60

Asian massage

7 months ago

Relaxing Spa

217-761-9687
526 W South Grand
Springfield, IL, 62704
[8 reviews](#)

\$ 60Asian, Caucasian,
Latina massage

8 months ago

Sunny Massage Spa

217-816-6355
2609 Stevenson Dr.
Springfield, IL, 62703
[27 reviews](#)

\$ 60

Chinese massage

11 months ago

Fitness Massage

217-528-3705
2330 S MacArthur Blvd
Springfield, IL, 62704
[27 reviews](#)

\$ 60

Chinese massage

1 year ago

Jade Spa

217-220-6829
1560 Wabash Avenue
Springfield, IL, 62704
[25 reviews](#)

\$ 60

Asian massage

1 year ago

Red Bean Massage Spa

312-402-6378
1297 Toronto Road
Springfield, IL, 62707
[12 reviews](#)

\$ 60

Asian massage

1 year ago

Relax Spa

217-220-2780
1428 East Sangamon Avenue
Springfield, IL, 62702
[19 reviews](#)

\$ 60

Chinese massage

1 year ago

Human Trafficking Massage Parlor Red Flags To Look Out For

Human trafficking is a phenomenon that is nothing short of modern-day slavery, and one of the hardest-hit industries in the US is the massage business. Illicit human trafficking massage parlors are so ubiquitous in this country that most Americans have at least one located within a short driving distance. In this article, we'll cover the definition of human trafficking, how it manifests specifically in massage businesses, and how to spot the most common tell-tale signs of illicit massage parlors all around us.

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What Is Human Trafficking?

Let's quickly define human trafficking from the perspective of the [US Department of Justice](#)/ law enforcement.

According to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), human trafficking is:

- A) Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- B) The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

Types Of Human Trafficking

Most cases of [types of human trafficking](#) fall into the two broad categories of "forced labor" and "sex trafficking," whereby human beings are forced by traffickers into slavery or "bonded servitude" (working of a never-ending "debt") — or exploited for sexual acts/sexual services against their will through severe coercion, intimidation, threats to their families, or seizing their travel documents and holding them physically captive.

Forced labor and sexual exploitation can sometimes overlap in the commercial sex industry and the massage parlor industry. In those sectors, it is common to see human beings forced into labor against their will or for too little pay and exploited or abused sexually.

The Illegal Sex Trade - Massage Parlors Connection

It is estimated that the erotic massage parlor economy in the US brings in at least [2.5 billion in annual profits](#). In addition to offering regular, legally sanctioned massages, illicit massage parlors also provide a range of illegal sex acts to the customers for extra charge. The term "happy ending" is often used for the type of service they provide to the clients and typically refers to manual erotic stimulation or oral sex performed at the end of the massage.

Many women employed in such establishments are victims of human trafficking: they have been coerced with false promises, threatened with violence, or physically trapped into this situation without understanding what they were getting into.

Recent high-profile instances of massage parlor busts include the 2017 case when the Miami Beach Police raided [four Miami Beach spas](#), finding signs that trafficked women were living on the premises, as well as the infamous 2019 sting operation that implicated the New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft in [human trafficking at the Orchids of Asia Day Spa in Florida](#).

What Attracts Human Traffickers To The Massage Businesses?

Unlike medical facilities that involve physical touch-work as part of diagnosis or treatment, massage parlors are not subject to strict government regulation. Therefore, even though massage therapy is a legitimate practice and there are plenty of professionally trained massage therapists, this profession's uniquely private and intimate nature lends itself to all sorts of boundary-crossing from "therapy" into "pleasure." After all, they are called massage "parlors" and "spas," as opposed to massage "clinics."

This discreetness and ambiguity of massage parlors present an extra challenge to law enforcement in busting human traffickers. The women working in such places are heavily coached (usually involving threats or violence) against speaking with the police and frequently will not cooperate with their legal representation.

Due to these "favorable" conditions, as well as a lack of strict (or any) zoning rules in some areas, a massage parlor can be used by criminals as fronts not only for sex work but other black market activities such as money laundering.

Who Are The Victims In Illicit Massage Parlors?

The victims trafficked within the illicit massage parlor business are typically women between the ages of 35 and 55, flown in from abroad or recent immigrants to the country (typically from South Korea and China), who speak little English, have children, and are desperate to support their families or pay off existing debts.

Recruited through acquaintances or ads promising a high income, by the time these women realize that they are being sexually exploited or underpaid for their work, it's too late to back out, as they are already trapped by the "debt" for travel expenses, room, and board.

Not all illicit masseuses are "owned" by human traffickers. Some enter this arrangement of their own free will, in the capacity of sex workers. Those who enter sex work consensually are not considered victims of trafficking (although, when coercion is involved, the notion of "choice" becomes suspect). It should be noted, however, that any minor under 18 found working in any sexual capacity for any establishment or handler is automatically considered a child sex trafficking victim in the eyes of the law.

How To Spot An Illicit Massage Parlor

Illicit massage parlors operate in plain sight, but many have a particular "look" on the outside and a certain "feel" on the inside that signals they offer more than just massages.

On the outside, such establishments typically have all windows covered or blacked out, usually with a neon sign lit up at the entrance or in the windows. The doors are locked, and one must be buzzed in to enter the business.

Once inside, other indicators of an illicit massage parlor may include:

- the spa outright refuses to admit/service female customers

- the listed rates for massages are lower than the industry standard

- the masseuses speak little to no English

- the masseuses are not allowed to handle money

- the masseuses are wearing very little clothing

- the masseuses all live in the same location (transported to and from work together), or there are signs that they are living right in the parlor

- there is a very high turnover of masseuses, with new ones showing up on a weekly/monthly basis

Those with strong suspicions of human rights violations in a massage parlor can call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at (888) 373-7888.

##Protect Your Business From Complicity In Human Trafficking

Massage parlors are just one private sector of many others to proliferate human trafficking: don't assume that this hideous crime could never affect your industry or company!

If you are a business owner, you can be taken to court for profiting from instances of human trafficking — even if you are not directly causing it but are still involved in financial transactions with suppliers that have their hands dirty in the trade. In the effort to end human trafficking, preventing it is infinitely less costly — in human suffering and financial losses — than dealing with its consequences. Learn more about [human trafficking consequences to the economy](#) here.

##Let EasyLlama Help You With That

As a leader in the e-learning space, EasyLlama recognizes the value of human trafficking awareness, and our [anti-human trafficking training](#) is perfect for your workforce and its leadership. Quickly and easily, your employees and their supervisors will learn how to spot the "red flags" of potential human trafficking victims in their midst, how to report their observations to the proper authorities effectively, and how to avoid associating with businesses that are in some way involved in or contributing to the problem of human trafficking. Access your [free course preview](#) today to learn more!

Written by: Maria Malyk

Hidden in Plain Sight

How Corporate Secrecy Facilitates Human Trafficking in Illicit Massage Parlors

Illicit massage businesses, commonly known as “massage parlors,” have been ubiquitous in the American landscape for decades. Today, new research finds an estimated 9,000-plus of these businesses are operating in every state in the country, with earnings totaling nearly \$2.5 billion a year across the industry.¹ These businesses dot the sides of highways and are tucked into suburban strip malls between fast food restaurants and dollar stores and behind darkened windows in storefronts in some of America’s biggest cities. There may be women who choose to sell sex either along with or under the guise of massage therapy, but evidence suggests that behind these bland facades, many of the thousands of women engaging in commercial sex in illicit massage parlors are victims of human trafficking. And for the most part, thanks to corporate secrecy, their traffickers cannot be traced.

About massage parlor trafficking

Contrary to popular portrayals, human trafficking does not always or even often involve force or the threat of force.

To be considered sex trafficking in any venue, a situation must include one of the following:

- **Force:** Violence or the threat of violence
- **Fraud:** Such as deceitful recruitment practices or fraudulent debt accumulation
- **Coercion:** Including emotional manipulation, document confiscation, or threats using legal processes like deportation

Labor trafficking is defined as force, restraint, threats of harm, abuse or threatened abuse of the legal system, or any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause the person to believe that if they did not perform labor, they would suffer serious harm or restraint.²

The victims of massage parlor trafficking in the United States almost all:

- Recently arrived from China or South Korea
- Carry debts or are otherwise under extreme financial pressure
- Speak little or no English
- Have no more than a high school education
- Are mothers in their mid 30s to late 50s

Force is rarely an element of massage parlor trafficking. Instead, victims are controlled by traffickers through a complex mixture of cultural manipulation, fraud, and coercion. Key among these are telling the women that the police are in the pockets of the traffickers and will simply arrest them, that the rest of society views the women as worthless, and that they have no real options but to stay at the massage parlor and do what the traffickers say.

¹ Keyhan, Rochelle et al, “Trafficking in Illicit Massage Businesses.” Polaris, (January 17, 2018)

² U.S. Code Chapt. 77 Peonage, Slavery and Trafficking in Persons. <http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title18/part1/chapter77&edition=prelim>



Illicit Massage Parlors and Corporate Secrecy

What is unique about this form of trafficking is that massage parlor traffickers actually go through the process of registering their businesses as if they were legitimate.

Conceivably then, it should be relatively simple to determine the basics about these businesses — such as what products or services they provide and who ultimately controls and makes money from the business. The actual or “beneficial” owner would then in most cases be the trafficker and could be prosecuted as such.

In reality, the laws governing business registration are almost tailor-made for massage parlor traffickers to hide behind. Neither states nor the federal government require people setting up companies to include the name of the actual owner of the business in the registration paperwork. What is actually required depends on the jurisdiction. Sometimes the owner’s name is left blank. Sometimes it is filled in with the name of a registered agent or someone else paid to be the front person or point of contact. Sometimes the business is registered under the name of an anonymous shell company — another business that exists in name only but has no actual assets.³ All of this obfuscation is perfectly legal.

In reality, the laws governing business registration are almost tailor-made for massage parlor traffickers to hide behind.

The figure of 9,000 illicit massage businesses operating across the country, first reported in Polaris’s recently released report, “[Human Trafficking in Illicit Massage Businesses](#),” was difficult to come by because of these lax or nonexistent corporate transparency laws. It took extensive research, including cross-referencing publicly available datasets with websites on which commercial sex purchasers leave reviews of their sexual experiences at these illicit businesses, to arrive at this minimum figure.

It is hard to escape the irony here: Someone looking to purchase commercial sex from an illicit massage parlor can log in to any number of review boards and, sometimes for a small fee, get graphic descriptions of individual women’s bodies and specific sexual experiences with those women. Meanwhile, while the businesses themselves are easy to find, the privacy of the actual owners of the businesses where these sexual acts take place is scrupulously protected by U.S. law.

Irony aside, the fact that the United States is among the easiest country in the world in which to hide who actually owns and benefits from a business⁴ is part of the reason why massage parlor trafficking is so difficult to prosecute criminally. There are legitimate reasons why some businesses use anonymous shell companies and there is no reason why they cannot continue to do so. But if we are to end human trafficking in massage parlors, we must begin by lifting the veil of secrecy that protects the criminals who profit from it.

3 Staff, I. (2003, November 26). Shell Corporation. *Investopedia*. Retrieved from <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/shellcorporation.asp#ixzz4vPwXidD>

4 Findley, Michael et al. “Global Shell Games: Experiments in Transnational Relations, Crime, and Terrorism.” *Cambridge University Press* (March 24, 2014), Page 74. <http://bit.ly/2u1LpiQ>.



Who Actually Owns Massage Parlors

Polaris analysts used open-source data⁵ to examine over 9,000 illicit massage parlors and their networks across the country to find ownership information.

- Of the more than 6,000 illicit massage businesses for which Polaris found business records, only 28 percent of these illicit massage businesses have an actual person listed on the business registration records at all.
- Only 21 percent of all the business records found for illicit massage parlors actually specifically name the owner — although even in those cases, there is no way to know for sure if that information is legitimate.

Why corporate transparency matters in massage parlor trafficking

Most illicit massage parlors are part of an organized crime network. Generally, these networks include at least one other illicit massage parlor as well as non-massage venues such as nail salons, restaurants, grocery stores, and cleaners.

Criminal networks are necessary in large part for laundering money from the illicit massage parlors. These businesses generally operate out in the open, paying taxes and otherwise taking steps to avoid drawing attention to the true nature of the operation. A hallmark of an illicit massage business is that it advertises services at significantly lower rates than is the standard. For example, an illicit massage parlor will charge \$40 for a one hour massage in a jurisdiction where a therapeutic massage performed by a licensed massage practitioner averages between \$80 and \$100 an hour. Of course, the \$40 advertised price is just a baseline price. The real price is negotiated and paid based on the specific sexual act requested and performed.

A tax auditor would notice the discrepancy between what the business charges and the far higher amount the business actually brings in. To avoid detection, the business owner spreads the suspicious profits out to other businesses in the network.

If the businesses were all registered under the name of the person who actually owned them — for example, “John Q. Smith,” the connections would be clear and the money laundering operations obvious. Because many of the businesses are registered anonymously, as shell companies (“Massage LLC” for example), or in the name of someone other than the actual owner, these connections are often missed, along with the opportunity to prosecute and shut down these human trafficking venues.

Historically, victims of massage parlor trafficking have been the main target of law enforcement activity, while the owners of the businesses — the traffickers — fly under the radar. Typical law enforcement activity around illicit massage parlors has involved raids in which officers sweep into the facility and arrest everyone on the premises. These raids are highly unlikely to net the actual owners of the businesses, as they are rarely on site or even necessarily involved in the day-to-day operations of the massage venues. That is left to managers (often referred to as “mamasan”), and sometimes a manager-in-training (someone who is still primarily selling sex, but who has begun assisting management in controlling victims).

Raids focusing on employees are antithetical to efforts to shut down human trafficking. First of all, vice raids don’t do much to slow profits from these businesses. If a single venue in a criminal network is shut down, the trafficker is still pulling in profits from the other venues, and can simply

⁵ For a full list of open-source data used, please see methodologies section of full report at <https://polarisproject.org/massage-parlor-trafficking>



transfer the victims to another massage parlor. Rotating victims between businesses in the network, or within other networks in sharing agreements, is routine in massage parlor trafficking. This rotation process keeps the victims disoriented and makes them therefore easier to control while also ensuring buyers at a particular location have a steady supply of new women to choose from. On average, traffickers rotate victims between the businesses every 2-6 weeks.⁶

The frequent arrests of victims — not owners — strengthens the traffickers hold on the women, demonstrating their power while underlining the vulnerability of the victims they control and rotate at will. The traffickers routinely tell the women under their control that they have no options for seeking assistance once they become involved in the massage parlor world. They are told that police see them as prostitutes, not as victims, that they are considered trash, and that no one will help them out of their situations. When the women are then swept up in police raids, the traffickers are proven right.

To effectively and sustainably target massage parlor trafficking, law enforcement must undertake organized crime investigations, which focus on ownership by looking into money laundering or tax evasion. This would shut down entire networks, meaning that the women could not simply be moved around until the police interest had calmed down. Such prosecutions would not only punish perpetrators, but also send a strong signal that human trafficking in massage parlors is no longer a low-risk, high-profit venture, as it is widely seen today. Flipping the perception of the risk versus the reward of human trafficking in these and other venues is key to ending the proliferation of the crime.

Unfortunately, the ability of businesses to obscure ownership and therefore network ties, makes it incredibly time-consuming and resource-intensive, and sometimes impossible, for law enforcement to undertake such investigations.

San Francisco Spa Obscures Ownership⁷

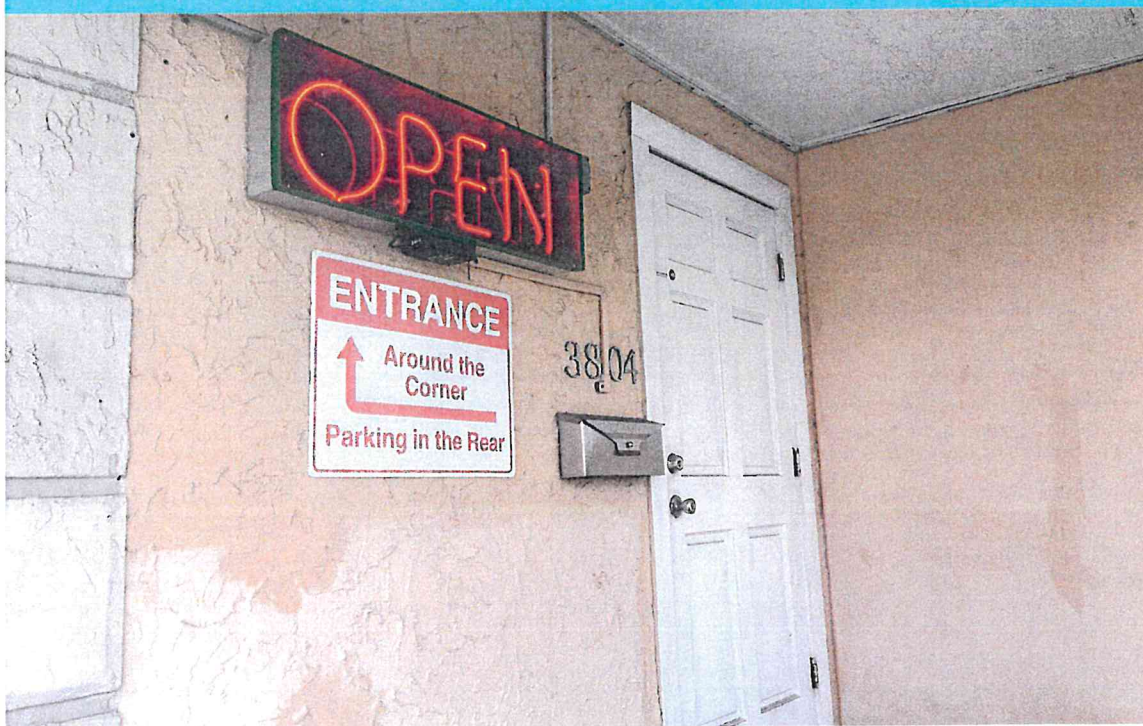
Shell companies are intended to make it difficult to discover true business ownership. One spa in San Francisco, CA, provides a good example of how confusing a purposely obscured business organization can be. The phone number and address for the spa, listed on the massage parlor review site RubMaps, also belong to a business bearing an individual's name. That business is classified under the Standard Industrial Classification: Religious Organizations (pretty unusual for a religious organization to be linked to a spa!). And it isn't the only linked business. The spa's phone number is also connected to another business in Los Angeles with a name advertising sexual products (classified under Miscellaneous Retail Stores), as well as a residential address in LA.

While there is no listed point of contact for the shell company, the address and phone number are that of the original advertised illicit massage business. The business name is also an alias for the name of the owner of the illicit massage business listed on RubMaps. Having a shell company registered at the same address as an illicit massage business facilitates the movement of illicitly gained funds, and allows the spa to keep its reported annual income under a figure that would raise red flags. Additionally, any income the shell company earns that exceeds the reported annual income can be passed off as donations, and because the spa is registered under Religious Organizations, the business owners can qualify for different tax breaks that normal small businesses do not receive.

7 Keyhan, Rochelle et al, "Trafficking in Illicit Massage Businesses." Polaris, (January 17, 2018)

6 Rotation can vary by geographic region. This figure is based on conversations between Polaris and partner city law enforcement and prosecutors between January 2015 and April 2016. (See Methodology, p. 87 of this report).

Code Enforcement and Human Trafficking in Massage Parlors



Along with organized crime investigations and prosecutions, the most powerful tools for shutting down massage parlor trafficking are strong state and local civil laws that regulate how the businesses operate. For example, laws that require massage businesses to have front-door entrances can deter customers, who are often accustomed to frequenting illicit massage parlors with rear entrances, if they think they might be seen or noticed entering such an establishment by others in their community.

Enacting and enforcing such laws is among the most effective ways to shut down massage parlor trafficking and incorporation transparency is a necessary element. It is difficult to enforce civil code if the enforcing agency cannot identify the person who is actually responsible for paying a fine, or remediating a building issue.

Also worth nothing is that effective enforcement requires that businesses actually register that they are, in fact, massage businesses. Today, massage parlors can — and do — register as nail salons, modeling studios — whatever they want. This dishonest self-classification allows them to avoid regulations that would make it difficult for them to conduct illicit business.

For example, in Houston, many illicit massage parlors registered as modeling studios until the city rewrote its local ordinance to close this loophole.⁸ In particularly egregious cases, traffickers register under unrelated industries such as religious organizations or educational institutions, making them eligible for tax breaks.

Again, it is hard to enforce rules requiring honest and accuracy in business registration if there is not a human being responsible for the business that anyone can find and hold accountable.

Unfortunately, even after a city or county closes the loopholes in its ordinance, traffickers have options. They can — and do — simply move to the next town over, where the regulations are still lax. Preventing regulation shopping will take a concerted, nationwide effort at the state and local level.

⁸ Massage Establishment Ordinance « Human Trafficking Houston. (n.d.). Retrieved November 12, 2017, from <http://humantraffickinghouston.org/toolkits/massage-establishment-ordinance-toolkit/>



Recommendations

Requiring transparency around business ownership for law enforcement purposes is key to ending traffickers' ability to hide their networks and cash flow.

Both state and federal laws should:

- **Require businesses to register official operators and primary owners** (aka as the beneficial owner, partner, etc.), all of whom should be required to provide a valid phone number and address and a unique identifying number from a non-expired U.S. passport, a non-expired U.S. state identification card or driver's license, or a non-expired passport issued by a foreign government.
- **Require that covered entities file annual reports of beneficial owners** and provide updates to the government within 60 days of any change in the name or other information previously disclosed about a beneficial owner or in the list of people who are beneficial owners.
- **Provide state, local and federal law enforcement** with direct access to this information
- **Impose criminal and civil liability for failure to report** beneficial ownership information.
- **Hold the official operator listed on all registration records legally liable** for the business, unless it can be confirmed that the listed operator is a victim who was compelled to list herself as an operator.

The U.S. Congress is currently considering several bipartisan pieces of legislation that meet these standards.⁹

Pending proposals differ on how information on beneficial ownership would be collected and stored. Options include having states collect the information or putting the responsibility on FinCen, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Treasury. There are pros and cons to each approach. States already have forms for corporate registration so the transition would be somewhat smoother. The FinCEN approach would house all the information in a single place, which could potentially make it easier for law enforcement to access in a timely manner.

With comprehensive federal legislation setting the standards for incorporation by which federal laws and tax liability are applied, state and local law enforcement investigating massage parlor trafficking networks will have the ability to more easily follow the money and build strong organized crime cases. And most importantly, traffickers will no longer have the strong incentive of a system that allows them to obscure their illicit activities.

⁹ Legislation pending as of 4/1/2018 that meets these standards includes [H.R. 3089](#), introduced 6/28/2017 by Reps. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) and Pete King (R-N.Y.) and [S. 1454](#), introduced 2/6/2018 by Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) and Chuck Grassley (R-IA)

Behind Illicit Massage Parlors Lie a Vast Crime Network and Modern Indentured Servitude

By Nicholas Kulish, Frances Robles and Patricia Mazzei

March 2, 2019

She was 49, a recent immigrant and deeply in debt to a loan shark back home in China when she answered an employment ad three years ago that promised thousands of dollars a month, but offered no job description. She realized too late that she had been tricked into working at a massage parlor in Flushing, Queens, where besides kneading backs, she was expected to sexually service up to a dozen men a day.

Some of the clients were violent, and the boss charged \$10 a day for her to sleep on a sofa in a room at the parlor where rats nibbled on her food. “The customers were very terrible,” said the woman, who, ashamed of the stigma of her former profession, asked that her name not be used. “After you perform a service, they would find an excuse to take the money away.” They would, she said, “do even worse things.”

In strip malls across the country, neon signs and brightly colored placards promise hot stones, acupuncture and shiatsu with photos of women or couples receiving relaxing shoulder rubs. But a traditionally Asian form of therapeutic relaxation with deep roots in big-city Chinatowns has spun off a different kind of massage parlor that has little to do with traditional remedies. It has exploded into a \$3 billion-a-year sex industry that relies on pervasive secrecy, close-knit ownership rings and tens of thousands of mostly foreign women ensnared in a form of modern indentured servitude.

[Read more about a thriving sex trafficking trade in Florida.]

The frequently middle-aged women who work in parlors with names like Orchids of Asia and Rainbow Spa are often struggling to pay off high debts to family members, loan sharks, labor traffickers and lawyers who help them file phony asylum claims. In some cases, their passports are taken and their illegal immigration status keeps them further in the shadows, with some of them rotated every 10 days to two weeks between spas operated by the same owners. Forced to pay for their own supplies and even their own condoms, many women must sleep on the same massage tables where they service customers and cook on hot plates in cramped kitchens or on back steps.

“We stopped thinking about just cages, bars and chains as the means of coercion,” said John Richmond, the State Department’s top anti-trafficking official. “They are using nonviolent forms of coercion.”

The recent arrest warrant filed against Robert K. Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots — and the solicitation charges filed against nearly 300 men in multiple jurisdictions as part of the same case — riveted national attention to a stretch of Highway 1 along Florida’s Treasure Coast dotted with strip malls, gas stations and sapphire ocean views. Across the region, parlors were empty and many frequent clients were phoning their lawyers, wondering if more warrants were going to drop.

Law enforcement officials said there were an estimated 9,000 illicit massage parlors across the country, from Orlando to Los Angeles. The epicenter of this national underground is the bustling Chinatown in Flushing, in the New York City borough of Queens. Women — typically Chinese, but also Korean, Thai and East European — arrive at Kennedy International Airport, learn the trade and are sent out to places like Virginia, Iowa, Texas and Florida. Women are recruited locally through ads in Chinese-language newspapers or over the social network WeChat.

“Flushing is the center of this network,” said Lori Cohen, the director of Sanctuary for Families’ Anti-Trafficking Initiative, which has interviewed around 1,000 massage workers over the past five years and helped the 49-year-old immigrant

who was sexually assaulted leave the business after she was arrested. “They are showing up in different parts of the country, but all of them have addresses in Flushing, Queens,” she said.

[Read: An epic tragedy in the underground sex industry in Flushing.]

The women are paid just a sliver of the \$60 or more the client pays for an hourlong massage. Their real money — and chance at a better life — comes in the form of tips, which they are encouraged or forced to amplify through illegal means.

A 60-year-old former massage worker from Taiwan, who agreed to be identified only by the nickname she commonly uses, Tina, said she was lured into working at a massage parlor in New York a decade ago by the travel agency broker who helped secure her visa to travel to the United States. “People come here and don’t have a place to live,” she said. “These places offer a place to live, and it seems like a nice idea. They say, ‘It’s not safe to keep your passport on hand,’ and they will ask to hold the passport.”

She was arrested several times before getting out of the business, and feels comparatively lucky. One close friend was spirited to Texas by traffickers, she said, had her passport taken and was forced to see eight to 12 customers a day. One day the tearful calls she often received from her friend came to an abrupt halt.

“A lot of the businesses that look like either nail salons or massage places, especially the places that offer massage, there are bad things happening there,” she said. “It’s 100 percent organized crime.”

The ubiquity of the massage parlors offers an accessibility and sheen of normalcy not offered by traditional brothels. And as the massage parlors have expanded even into small-town America in recent years, meticulously detailed review sites like Rubmaps have served as the Yelp and Foursquare of the illicit parlor business, with graphic anatomical descriptions of the women and explicit breakdowns of the sexual services proffered.

Even at illicit parlors, owners and managers can claim ignorance of the additional services offered by employees behind closed doors. The evidence gathered during raids and searches often tells a far different tale. The police say it is common to find ledgers tracking the number of “dates” women have had, as was found in a bust in Dallas in 2016. In one case in Kansas, a search of the premises yielded a notebook with handwritten Chinese-English translations that “included sexually explicit phrases such as ‘did you bring condom’ and ‘happy ending.’”

A federal law enforcement official, speaking on the condition of anonymity because this person is involved in active cases, said that the most common method for smuggling women from Asian countries was either a fraudulent tourist visa or a fraudulent work visa, such as for nursing work. Many came as students, then overstayed to work in the sex industry.

Many women arrive in the United States from China bearing heavy debt burdens and try to find work in restaurants or nail salons. But the money isn’t good enough for the five-figure debts weighing them down. The massage jobs are presented as opportunities for fast, easy money.

“They will talk about how they used to work in a restaurant and it was really hard physically and they couldn’t make that much money, and then they heard from somebody or saw an ad saying they could make a lot more money in a massage parlor,” said Leigh Latimer, a supervising attorney at the Legal Aid Society’s exploitation intervention project in New York.

One reason the Asian massage parlors remain so poorly understood is the extreme reluctance of the women to speak with the police and even with their own lawyers.

“Even though I’ve represented many, many women arrested in unlicensed massage parlors, because of the level of distrust of people working, almost all immigrants, almost all undocumented, they don’t trust even their attorneys enough to let them know what’s happened to them,” Ms. Latimer said.

Some fear retaliation by traffickers to their families in China, and some feel morally indebted to those who helped find them a job, said Chris Muller, the director of training and external affairs at Restore NYC, an anti-sex-trafficking organization.

“This is a powerful exploitation tactic,” he said. “Any favor is implied there is going to be a payment back. ‘Look at what I have done for you. I found you a job. I found you a place to live and this is how you repay me?’”

Small networks of spas are also common, and their ownership structures are complex and opaque. “It’s rare that you have a mom-and-pop business where they’re just running one,” said Lt. Christopher Sharpe of the New York Police Department’s vice section. “Usually if they’re running one, they have a second or a third business.”

Bradley Myles, chief executive of Polaris Project, a nonprofit that works to combat human trafficking, said that the madams arrested on big raids like the recent ones in Florida — known as “mamasans” — are often women in their 60s and 70s who have spent decades in the sex trade but are usually pretty far down in the organization.

Above these site managers is usually a person who appears on paperwork as the massage parlor owner, but is often just a frontman running a shell company. The payouts from the shell company go to what is legally known as the “beneficial owner.”

“Very little is known of the behind-the-scene owners,” Mr. Myles said. “They are hiding behind shell companies, hiding behind mamasans. They are hiding behind fake people.”

In addition, the networks have groups of drivers that help move the women from place to place. Some networks are only two or three layers deep, others four or five.

“I’ve certainly seen indicia of larger networks and indicia of powerful transporters,” said the federal law enforcement official.

The Florida Department of Health disciplined 62 massage parlors or therapists last fiscal year, up from 14 the year before, records show. The agency receives upward of 300 complaints about unlicensed massage facilities each year.

Department inspection reports described women inside the spas living in tight quarters cluttered with essentials, including rolling bath carts stuffed with toiletries, shelves lined with coffee mugs and cooking pots and stashes of assorted snacks. The women slept on individual cots and in some cases appeared to keep their belongings and blankets inside locked plastic trunks.

Their IDs showed that several of them had addresses outside Florida, including in Flushing, N.Y.; Lilburn, Ga.; San Gabriel, Calif.; and Temple City, Calif.

Those who are arrested are not necessarily left to their own resources. When sheriff's deputies in Martin County, Fla., were interviewing Lixia Zhu, 48, one of the massage parlor employees arrested two weeks ago, it wasn't long before a New York lawyer arrived and identified himself as her lawyer. The lawyer, Baya Harrison IV, told The New York Times that Ms. Zhu used to work in New York and that her friends had hired him to defend her.

The county sheriff, William D. Snyder, said Ms. Zhu had tearfully told deputies and a public defender about how her passport was kept from her in a locked safe and how the woman she worked for once threatened her by brandishing a gun.

One woman in the Florida sting has been charged with human trafficking, after police officers conducting surveillance saw her shuttling two other women carrying suitcases in and out of a spa in Vero Beach.

Bob Houston, a former F.B.I. agent who now works as a consultant to combat trafficking, said that Thai traffickers often employ elaborate schemes to help women intended for the massage industry apply for tourist visas. The traffickers create false back stories, giving women the appearance of an established life at home, including a spouse and bank account, all to help them qualify for a tourist visa. They even produce fake diplomas from massage schools. The tab is usually \$40,000 to \$60,000, he said.

“They owe a bunch of money to the people who recruited them,” he said.

In December, 36 people in Minnesota were convicted for their roles in a Thai sex trafficking ring that shuttled hundreds of women from Bangkok to cities across the United States, including Phoenix, Las Vegas, Atlanta and Minneapolis.

The women, referred to as “flowers” by the criminal organizations, were forced to work at massage parlors with no choice about where, when and with whom they performed sex acts until their debts were paid off. They were permitted to move around outside the parlors only with so-called runners working for the organization, evidence in the case showed.

The decision by law enforcement in Florida to focus on patrons of the establishments in such a public way rather than the women working there has generated a lot of fear among clients.

John Musca, a criminal defense lawyer with an office in Vero Beach whose website advertises sex crime defense, said he has received panicked phone calls from many men who frequented the establishments and are worried that the police are about to come knocking.

“There are a great number of folks who are on pins and needles,” Mr. Musca said.

Jeffrey E. Singer contributed reporting in Jupiter, Fla. Kitty Bennett and Alain Delaquerière contributed research.

A version of this article appears in print on , Section A, Page 1 of the New York edition with the headline: Behind Illicit Massage Parlors, a Vast Crime Web


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10 INDICATORS THAT A MASSAGE PARLOR MAY BE FACILITATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING*



**Not an all-inclusive list. One or multiple signs may indicate that the massage parlor is facilitating human trafficking.*

10 Signs of Human Trafficking In Massage Parlors

Education (<https://deliverfund.org/blog/category/education/>), Facts and Statistics

(<https://deliverfund.org/blog/category/facts-and-statistics/>), Uncategorized

(<https://deliverfund.org/blog/category/uncategorized/>)



The nexus between illicit massage parlors and human trafficking can be difficult to see if you don't know how to recognize the signs (<https://deliverfund.org/the-human-trafficking-problem-in-america/know-the-signs/>). The unfortunate truth is that a majority of what appear to be legitimate businesses are actually not what they advertise.

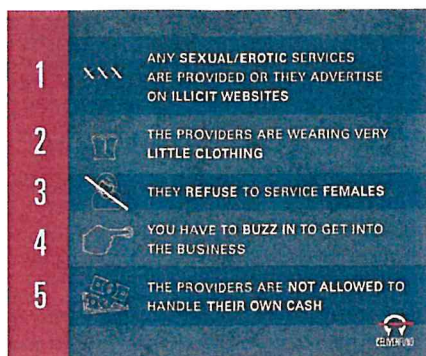
The complexity of this type of human trafficking is a hybrid of crimes including sex trafficking (<https://www.ice.gov/features/human-trafficking>), labor trafficking, conspiracy, immigration fraud, and money laundering.

So how can you tell if a massage parlor is trafficking or taking part in modern slavery?



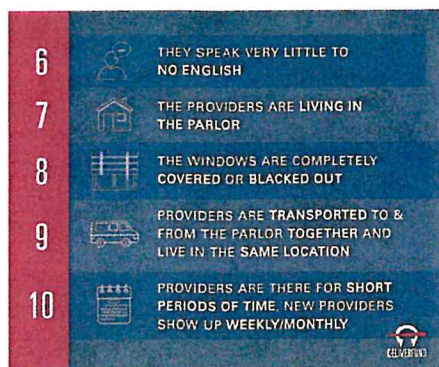
The following signs of human trafficking in massage parlors are not all-encompassing, but there are many indicators that can help identify whether a massage parlor is potentially facilitating human trafficking. <https://www.classy.org/give/513587/#/donation/checkout>

≡ The Indicators



Here are some of the signs of human trafficking in massage parlors:

1. Any sexual or erotic services are provided, or they advertise on illicit websites
2. The providers are wearing very little clothing
3. They refuse to service females
4. You have to buzz in to get into the business
5. The providers are not allowed to handle their own cash



6. The providers speak very little to no English
7. The providers/employees are living in the parlor
8. The windows are completely covered or blacked out
9. The providers are transported to and from the parlor together and live in the same location
10. Providers are there for short periods of time, and new providers show up weekly or monthly

These are some of the most common signs of human trafficking in massage parlors, but there could be others that indicate that a massage parlor is not running a legitimate business.

2021 Mass Killings in Three Atlanta Massage Parlors Drive Attention to Sex Work & Exploitation

As if the human trafficking that occurs in massage parlors wasn't horrific enough, homicide joined the growing list of atrocities, as 8 people across three different massage parlors were murdered in Atlanta, Georgia in March 2021.



A 21-year-old man, Robert Aaron Long, was charged with the shootings a day after the incident at the end of a police chase. The motive of the crime still remains unclear. However, since six of the eight victims were women of Asian descent, it was initially suspected as a hate crime against the Asian-American community that started with the global pandemic last year.

Long later told police that he was a customer at two of the massage parlors he targeted and saw them all as places of temptation. Regardless of the motivation, it was no doubt a horrific act that took the lives of several innocent women.

While it hasn't been publicly confirmed as to whether the targeted massage parlors were involved in human trafficking, the incident has raised concerns about possible sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. It serves as an urgent reminder to fortify our fight against the gravely disturbing issue of slavery in illicit massage parlors.

How You Can Help

DeliverFund is committed to equipping, training, and advising law enforcement (<https://deliverfund.org/about/>) to take down the evil that perpetuates human slavery within the illicit massage parlor network.

DeliverFund has infiltrated their networks, and we are actively supporting local and federal law enforcement in the development and identification of illicit massage parlor and trafficking networks, their actors, and the locations in which victims are being held against their will from coast to coast.

You too can contribute to the cause by donating to DeliverFund. Any support you provide will strengthen the fight against human traffickers and illicit massage parlors.

Donate Now

Updated 2/8/2022

Join a community that protects

Our supporters know that every step, big or small, can make a difference in the fight against human trafficking.

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◀ (<https://deliverfund.org/blog/10-ways-internet-predator-it-does-deliverfund-do-to-fight-against-human-trafficking/>)

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