



COUNTY OF FRESNO

Lisa A. Smittcamp
District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FRESNO COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY FORMS “HUMAN TRAFFICKING” PROSECUTION UNIT AND WILL ASSIST VICTIMS IN THE UPCOMING JUVENILE HUMAN TRAFFICKING COURT

Fresno County District Attorney Lisa A. Smittcamp has announced the formation of a “Human Trafficking” (HT) Prosecution Unit in the District Attorney’s Office, which is dedicated to investigating and prosecuting cases of human trafficking occurring throughout Fresno County.

Recognizing that human trafficking, also known as modern-day slavery, is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world that profits from the exploitation of our most vulnerable populations, the District Attorney’s Office is dedicated to stopping this tide of exploitation. Human trafficking comes in many forms, and primarily involves forcing victims into prostitution and subjecting victims to slavery or involuntary servitude, involving an estimated 21 million victims worldwide.

The perpetrators of human trafficking have become more sophisticated and organized, which requires an equally sophisticated response from law enforcement and its partners to disrupt and dismantle their networks. The District Attorney’s HT Prosecution Unit will work alongside federal, state, and local law enforcement, as well as non-governmental organizations, to enhance the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking cases, develop strategies to help victims of human trafficking while bringing their captors to justice, and engage in training and outreach to various non-governmental organizations.

The HT Prosecution Unit will be led by Deputy District Attorney Miiko Anderson and District Attorney Investigators currently assigned to the Office’s Domestic Violence and Gang Units. DDA Anderson has recently secured several HT convictions, including Fresno County’s first human trafficking jury trial conviction which resulted in a 23 year-to-life sentence for the trafficker.

The District Attorney’s Office will also be taking part in the Fresno County Superior Court’s new Juvenile Human Trafficking Court. This court will use new and innovative approaches to serve trafficked and at-risk youth more effectively in Fresno County. A media demonstration, hosted by the Superior Court, will take place on ***Tuesday, November 28th***.

If you or someone you know is being forced to engage in any activity and cannot leave – whether it is commercial sex, housework, farm work, construction, factory, retail, restaurant work, or any other activity – call the 24 hour hotlines at:

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center at **1-888-373-7888**, or
The California Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking at **1-888-539-2373**.

The Media may email FCDAMedia@co.fresno.ca.us or contact Administrative Assistant Leslie Gillespie at (559) 600-4442 with questions.

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