

MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

PROCLAMATION NO. 44

Proclaiming January 2026 as Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

Multnomah County Finds:

- A. Human Trafficking is the use of force, fraud or coercion by a third party to extract labor for economic gain. Victims and survivors of trafficking are often facing a multitude of challenges and are likely frequent users of the justice and emergency health care systems provided through Multnomah County.
- B. Inherently tied to systemic oppression, victims tend to be those who are in vulnerable circumstances. This is primarily children in our welfare and juvenile justice systems, including foster care, runaway and homeless youth, and unaccompanied youth from other countries. American Indians and Alaska Natives, particularly women and girls; individuals with mental health or substance use issues; individuals without full citizenship and/or are in the process of obtaining legal status, persons with limited English proficiency; persons with disabilities; LGBTQI+ individuals; and victims of intimate partner violence or other forms of domestic violence are disproportionately impacted by human trafficking.
- C. While human trafficking has historically been addressed through the criminal justice system, victims of human trafficking experience higher levels of poor health outcomes; in addition to the criminal justice system, a public health approach must be used to address the mental and behavioral health issues such as depression, PTSD, substance abuse challenges, and other diseases caused by human trafficking.
- D. The voices and expertise of those most impacted must be front and center in every aspect of our effort to prevent and respond to human trafficking. When we follow the lead of survivors, we follow trauma-informed best practices ensuring that solutions are built around the needs of those who are most impacted.
- E. It is essential that residents of Multnomah County work together to raise awareness in a way that honors those impacted. We must educate ourselves about the myths and facts of trafficking, spread the word about prevention and intervention resources, hold buyers and traffickers accountable, and join formal campaigns to end trafficking.
- F. Multnomah County's engagement in local and regional partnerships, such as New Avenues for Youth, UNICA, Volunteers of America, Native American Youth and Family Association, Portland Police Bureau's Human Trafficking Unit and the

Oregon Department of Justice Trafficking Response and Intervention Program, are critical to successfully prevent and respond to human trafficking.

- G. An effective response to human trafficking must include the collaboration of elected officials, governmental departments, law enforcement, and service providers, because without collaboration amongst stakeholders, survivors can fall through the cracks as they seek safety and services throughout their journey. This vulnerability can allow traffickers to elude accountability and prevention for future harm becomes ineffective.
- H. It is critical that we believe people when they tell us they have been harmed; failure to do so may lead to victim self-blaming, self-harming, and will prevent the victim from seeking help or reporting in the future.
- I. The root causes of human trafficking include poverty, trauma, systemic oppression, imperialism, commercial sex demand, and the criminalization of people who trade sex. Our strategies to end trafficking must address these root causes.
- J. Immigrants without full citizenship are at high risk of human trafficking because traffickers take advantage of their lack of support systems and tenuous status in this country. The current increase in anti-immigrant policies and practices increase the likelihood of human trafficking in Multnomah County and create a chilling effect on survivors of trafficking, who are less likely to report abuse or attend court appointments related to their cases. Multnomah County must do all it can to protect immigrant survivors and communities from human trafficking.
- K. In fiscal year 2025, the New Day program, which is funded by the County and operated by New Avenues for Youth, worked with 184 unique youth who were identified as sex trafficking victims or at high risk of being trafficked. Since its inception, New Day has provided outreach, housing, mental health support, and mentorship to a total of 757 youth. The Multnomah County District Attorney's office is victim-centered and trauma-informed. Holding offenders, including traffickers and buyers, accountable while training, educating and participating in national, regional and local initiatives to raise awareness, reduce trafficking and craft national best practices. Recently the Human Trafficking Team has been working with victim and victim advocacy groups to remit funds to victims trafficked online. Since the Multnomah County District Attorney's Human Trafficking Team inception in 2009, over 2000 victims have been identified and/or provided services and over 1000 traffickers and buyers have been prosecuted.
- L. In 2026, the County will begin a dedicated effort to make current shelter and housing resources more accessible to survivors of sex trafficking, as recommended by our Community Advisory Board. We will also be launching a

new website with a resource map to help providers and survivors better connect with anti-trafficking services.

- M. The County will continue to prioritize investment in education and prevention services to address human trafficking with a survivor-focused approach and continue to collaborate with partners to provide crucial services such as mental, behavioral health, housing, and rental assistance services. Nonetheless, we know that the need is greater than the important services our County currently provides. These needs are only deepened by federal funding reductions that diminish local capacity to provide lifesaving services, making county and community based services more essential than ever. We are committed to continuously working toward a future where all survivors and their families can find safety and stability in Multnomah County.

Multnomah County Proclaims:

January 2026 as Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

SIGNED this 14th day of January, 2026.

REVIEWED:
JENNY M. MADKOUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON



By _____
Jenny M. Madkour, County Attorney

SUBMITTED BY: Commissioner Meghan Moyer, District 1