

Human Trafficking Awareness Month:

State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle Continues Advocacy and Education

January is recognized as Human Trafficking Awareness Month but at the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office, the fight to end this scourge of modern-day slavery is a 365 day-a-year and 24 hour a day priority.

State Attorney Fernandez Rundle is a committed and proven leader in the fight against Human Trafficking who has pioneered an innovative trauma-informed law enforcement model for the investigation and prosecution of these cases.

She has created a network of local, state, and federal partnerships in order to maximize resources for law enforcement efforts and services for survivors. Since 2018, the SAO HT Unit and SAO HT Task Force have been housed in our Institute for Coordination, Advocacy and Prosecution (ICAP) Building that was designed with the goal of creating a single location where law enforcement and service providers are able to facilitate the sharing of information.

Finally, the State Attorney has been the catalyst for legislation that protects victims and increase penalties for human traffickers, johns, and those who aid or abet these crimes. These combined efforts have allowed us to file over 760 Human Trafficking related criminal cases and assist over 670 survivors.

As part of her continual advocacy and awareness speaking engagements, State Attorney Fernandez Rundle has participated in a variety of virtual events. During these events, she discusses our various initiatives and future projects and shares the accomplishments of the Miami SAO Human Trafficking Unit and the Miami SAO Human Trafficking Task Force.

On January 28th, 2021, the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Human Trafficking Policy Institute met virtually. Among the topics reviewed and discussed were:

- The success of the Super Bowl LIV Human Trafficking Awareness campaign,
- implementation of the Arrest Form Initiative,
- implementation of the Hotel Initiative
- the continued successes of our SAO Human Trafficking efforts.

The State Attorney was the keynote speaker at the 2nd Annual Human Trafficking Awareness & Prevention Virtually Summit hosted by the Global Innovative Foundation, Inc. and the Human Trafficking Task Force of Miami-Dade College – Medical College. This was the second consecutive year that the State Attorney addressed MDC Medical College nursing students about how to determine

whether one of their patients is a Human Trafficking victim. This training is important as medical professionals often have the opportunity to be alone with victims and provide a safe space where they can disclose their situation.

On January 19th, Hadassah of Greater Miami hosted a virtual event titled “The State of Human Trafficking During the COVID-19 Pandemic”. State Attorney Fernandez Rundle spoke about how the State Attorney’s Office Human Trafficking Unit and SAO Human Trafficking Task Force have been able to continue to operate during the pandemic. She also emphasized that we rescued multiple victims, charged several offenders, implemented new initiatives that allow law enforcement to better identify instances of Human Trafficking, and helped shut down hotels that allowed their facilities to be used for Human Trafficking.

To report Human Trafficking please call our SAO Hotline at

305-FIX-STOP

(305-349-7867).

And for more information please visit: <http://humantrafficking.miamisao.com>