

AG Lynn Fitch Reports on Successful Human Trafficking Operations

Partnerships with private and public state and local entities make the difference



Trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar international criminal enterprise, and it can regrettably be found in communities all across our great State. We are committed to shutting traffickers down in Mississippi and helping their victims recover without shame or blame, but this is going to take a statewide network of law enforcement officers who are trained in carrying out trafficking operations and providing support for those recovered. And our investigators are pleased to offer that training.”

Lynn Fitch

Attorney General Lynn Fitch announced recent successful human trafficking operations in Rankin, Hinds, and Lincoln Counties. Together, they recovered five trafficking victims, including one minor, who were offered care and assistance. These operations included recently trained investigators with local law enforcement agencies.

“Trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar international criminal enterprise, and it can regrettably be found in communities all across our great State,” **said Attorney General Lynn Fitch.** “We are committed to shutting traffickers down in Mississippi and helping their victims recover without shame or blame, but this is going to take a statewide network of law enforcement officers who are trained in carrying out trafficking operations and providing support for those recovered. And our investigators are pleased to offer that training.”

“There is no place for human trafficking in the state of Mississippi,” **said Commissioner Sean Tindell.** “The Mississippi Bureau of Investigation, a division of the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, will continue to partner with the Attorney General’s office to prevent human trafficking, prosecute those involved in human trafficking, and protect the victims of human trafficking.”

In September, at a ceremony marking a year since passage of HB 1559, the bill that established a fund administered by the Attorney General’s Office to aid service providers who assist victims of human trafficking, as well as a coordinated program of emergency assessment teams for suspected trafficking involving minor victims, about 100 certified investigators were honored. There are now 124 certified investigators, from 13 Sheriff’s offices, 27 police departments, 6 State agencies, 3 college/school police departments, and the National Guard across Mississippi.

“The collaboration between law enforcement and victim services is key to effective human trafficking investigations,” **said Sandy Middleton, Executive Director for the Center for Violence Prevention.** “Due to the expertise and specialized training these law enforcement investigators possess, they are able to quickly recognize indicators for trafficking and alert a rapid response from certified advocates. Once victim services are engaged, the emergent response allows for immediate screening of potential victims and the best opportunity for victims to engage in services through the Tower program at the Center for Violence Prevention or another partner agency.”

“We also want to empower Mississippians to help rid their communities of trafficking,” **continued Attorney General Fitch.** “Through our **Be The Solution** initiative, we are sharing with citizens the signs of trafficking and the hotline number to report it. Calling a tip into 1-888-373-7888 or texting INFO to 233733 is the first step these certified investigators need to catch a trafficker and help their victims recover with dignity, hope, and peace of mind. We can all be aware, be prepared, and **Be The Solution.**”

More information on the **Be The Solution** initiative can be found **here.**



MEDIA CONTACT
Susannah Williams
Susannah.Williams@ago.ms.gov
Office: 601-359-4711