



Kevin M. Magnuson
County Attorney

Washington County

Offices of the Sheriff and County Attorney



Dan Starry
County Sheriff

Douglas H. Anschutz
Chief Deputy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Pafoua Lo, Law Enforcement Public Information Officer

651-249-6561

Pafoua.Lo@washingtoncountymn.gov

Human Trafficking Awareness Month Marked by Six Arrests in Stillwater

February 4, 2026 [Stillwater, MN] — Six individuals were arrested between January 28 and 30 following a targeted operation in Stillwater aimed at preventing the sexual exploitation of minors. The Washington County Sheriff's Office, working with detectives from the Stillwater Police Department and Homeland Security Investigations, and the Washington County Attorney's Office, conducted the operation to identify people seeking to engage in commercial sex acts with a 16-year-old.

Undercover agents posed online as a 16-year-old girl, and multiple suspects arranged meetings intending to exchange money for sexual acts. Upon arrival at the predetermined location, suspects were taken into custody. The Washington County Attorney's Office has charged Vishwateja Reddy Guntupally, Christopher James Kohn, Manuel Mateo Chunzho-Canar, Sanyi Mechalu Tefera, Terry Valentino Reynolds, and Dakota Robert Ott with **Prostitution-Actor Hires or Agrees to Hire and Reasonably Believes Under 18 but at least 16**, under Minn. Stat. 609.324(c)(3).

January is recognized nationally as Human Trafficking Awareness Month—a time dedicated to educating the public about the realities of human trafficking and law enforcement's efforts to protect vulnerable individuals, especially minors. This operation underscores the ongoing commitment to combat child sexual exploitation and hold offenders accountable. Under Minnesota and federal law, minors involved in commercial sex acts are victims—not offenders.

“Protecting children and vulnerable populations remains a top priority, and collaborative operations such as this are a critical component in disrupting exploitation and ensuring public safety,” said Sheriff Dan Starry.

“Operations such as this one take tremendous effort from both law enforcement officers and County Attorney's Office staff. We are grateful for the commitment of everyone involved in this operation and in keeping our community safe,” said Washington County Attorney Kevin M. Magnuson.

The Washington County Sheriff's Office encourages community members to remain vigilant and to report suspicious activity. Tips and information related to human trafficking can be reported to local law enforcement at 651-430-7825.

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