



News Release No. 1

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VIRGINIA STATE POLICE HIGHLIGHTS TEXTING TIPLINE TO REPORT HUMAN TRAFFICKING *New Multi-Agency Task Force Announces Arrests*

RICHMOND – As part of its ongoing efforts to prevent and investigate human trafficking occurring within the Commonwealth, the Virginia State Police is highlighting a texting tipline and web form for the public to send anonymous tips to the department’s Human Trafficking Investigative Unit. Any witnesses or victims of human trafficking are encouraged to text 847411 on their phone and then type “VSP” followed by the tip. Anonymous web tips can also be submitted through the tip411 web portal featured on the Virginia State Police website at <https://www.tip411.com/tips/vastatepolice/new>

“The public plays a crucial role with helping state police identify both those perpetuating this crime and those being trafficked,” said Col. Gary T. Settle, Virginia State Police Superintendent. “The free text and web tip sites give victims and the public a safe and secure way to report human trafficking. We especially want those being trafficked to come forward and use either of these tools to secure your freedom and safety. It is an opportunity for you to take back control of your life.”

Information is essential to help law enforcement identify human trafficking and the illegal activities associated with this crime. In December, the Virginia Capital Area Human Trafficking Task Force concluded an operation targeting potential human trafficking in several localities within the Richmond area. The undercover operation took place Dec. 12, 2023, through Dec. 18, 2023, and yielded 16 arrests in Chesterfield, Hanover and Henrico counties. The multi-agency, investigative initiative focused on reducing demand for the purchase of sex. It also aimed to identify and aid potential victims of human trafficking. Of the 16 charged in this operation, eight were arrested in Chesterfield County, five were arrested in Hanover County and three were arrested in Henrico County on charges of keeping or frequenting a bawdy place, prostitution, and solicitation of prostitution. The task force is a collaborative effort between the Virginia State Police, Chesterfield County Police, the Henrico County Police Division and Hanover County Sheriff’s Office with a core focus on identifying potentially trafficked persons and connecting them with available support services and resources. The task force investigates exploitation and trafficking of persons of any age and gender.

The tipline, developed by [tip411](http://tip411.com), is part of a web-based toolset that allows anyone with a cell phone to text anonymous tips that can be responded to in real time by the Virginia State Police. The tip system is 100% anonymous, as the technology removes all identifying information before state police see the tips and there is no way to identify the sender. State police may follow up with a tipster via the app’s text messaging capabilities to obtain more details about the information given.

Regional Media Contacts

Statewide (804)674-2789	Richmond (804)553-3494	Culpeper (540)829-7713	Appomattox (434)352-7128	Wytheville (276)228-3131	Chesapeake (757)424-6827	Salem/Roanoke (540)375-9598	Fairfax (804)674-2789
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Virginia State Police www.vsp.virginia.gov

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Additional reporting resources available to the public include the Virginia Child Protective Services (CPS) Hotline at 1-800-552-7096, the Virginia Victims Assistance Network (VANN) at 1-833-INFO-4-HT and the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888.

If the information you possess concerns a person (or yourself) in imminent danger, call 911 or #77 on a cell phone to reach police.

Anyone observing any of the following indicators* of potential human trafficking is encouraged to use the tip411 app or website link to share your information with the Virginia State Police:

- Does the person appear disconnected from family, friends, community organizations, or houses of worship?
- Has a child stopped attending school?
- Has the person had a sudden or dramatic change in behavior?
- Is a juvenile engaged in commercial sex acts?
- Is the person disoriented or confused, or showing signs of mental or physical abuse?
- Does the person have bruises in various stages of healing?
- Is the person fearful, timid, or submissive?
- Does the person show signs of having been denied food, water, sleep, or medical care?
- Is the person often in the company of someone to whom he or she defers? Or someone who seems to be in control of the situation, e.g., where they go or who they talk to?
- Does the person appear to be coached on what to say?
- Is the person living in unsuitable conditions?
- Does the person lack personal possessions and appear not to have a stable living situation?
- Does the person have freedom of movement? Can the person freely leave where they live? Are there unreasonable security measures?

The Virginia State Police BCI Human Trafficking Investigative Unit is a participant of *A Collaboration to Eradicate Human Trafficking in Virginia*, as established by Governor Glenn Youngkin in [Executive Order 7](#). This working partnership includes First Lady Suzanne S. Youngkin, the Office of the Virginia Attorney General and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). More information on human trafficking, is available on the DCJS website at: <https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/human-trafficking/human-trafficking-response-virginia>.



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*[U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#) Blue Campaign.

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