



NEWS RELEASE

Attorney General Mike Hilgers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 11, 2024

Today, Attorney General Mike Hilgers was joined by Lt. Governor Joe Kelly and Colonel John Bolduc to announce January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Lt. Governor Joe Kelly read and signed an official Proclamation designating the importance of the event. In addition, the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force (NHTTF) released an updated [report](#) outlining progress made in 2023 and highlighting plans for 2024.

“January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month, and it is a reminder that all Nebraskans are resolved to fight and defeat the scourge of human trafficking everywhere it exists in our state. We are grateful for our many partners in law enforcement, [in the Legislature](#), and in the community, who work with our office every day in this fight,” stated Attorney General Mike Hilgers.

This past year was the first full calendar year the [Nebraska Human Trafficking hotline](#) was operational. NHTTF recognized the need for a designated state hotline, which was established and is operated by the Nebraska State Patrol (NSP). In 2023, the hotline received nearly 100 calls, and law enforcement was dispatched 21 times to various locations in Nebraska.

Calls to the hotline are reviewed by a team consisting of local, state, and federal investigators. A member of this team either responds to the reporting party directly, or the tip is forwarded to other local, state, or federal investigators for follow-up.

“The first full year of operation for the Nebraska human trafficking hotline resulted in dozens of tips from the public,” said Colonel John Bolduc, Superintendent of the Nebraska State Patrol. “Each of those tips can be the first step that leads to rescuing a victim and holding a perpetrator accountable. The public can absolutely make a difference in this fight. Know the warning signs, and if you suspect a human trafficking situation is going on, report it,” stated Colonel John Bolduc

The NHTTF report indicated in 2023, nine sex trafficking defendants were convicted of felonies. Since the creation of NHTTF in 2016, there have been 102 prosecutions related to human trafficking cases. Before the creation of NHTTF, there were four prosecutions of sex trafficking in state history.

Notably, NHTTF team members from the Attorney General’s Office presented training to 2,900 Nebraskans, including judges, prosecutors, law enforcement,

DHHS employees, college students, municipality officials, utility linemen, mental health professionals, advocates, and bank employees.

Attorney General Hilgers announced free, [in-person trainings](#) in eight cities this year presented by members from his office. There will be three training sessions in each city, two of which are designated for law enforcement, prosecutors, medical professionals, and advocates. The third training is an evening session open to the general public. Trainings are offered on the following dates:

Scottsbluff – January 29th and 30th
North Platte – January 31st
Beatrice – February 7th
Columbus – February 8th
Grand Island – April 11th
Lexington – April 17th
O’Neill – April 23rd
Lincoln – Date TBD

Additional event information is available at AGO.Nebraska.gov.

For those unable to attend in-person events, educational materials, including videos on how to identify human trafficking in Nebraska, are available at AGO.Nebraska.gov.

Attendees of the proclamation event included LPD Chief Morrow, over a dozen state senators, members from NSP, OPD, LPD, DHHS, child advocacy centers, leaders from government agencies, and non-profits who work to combat trafficking and support human trafficking survivors.

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Photos, Proclamation, and Report available [here](#).

Video available [here](#).

Suzanne Gage
Director of Communications
Nebraska Attorney General’s Office
Office: 402-471-2656
Mobile: 402-560-3518
Suzanne.gage@nebraska.gov

