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Contact Communications

Phone (850) 245-0150



OFFICE OF THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Announces Historic Human Trafficking Enforcement Efforts; Highlights Statewide Criminal Crackdown



Courtesy of the Office of the Attorney General

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier announced record-breaking human trafficking enforcement efforts across Florida, highlighting historic increases in investigations, arrests, prosecutions, and prison sentences.

“With over 1,600 child predators and human traffickers arrested since February of last year, we are setting records that should keep the bad guys up at night,” **said Attorney General James Uthmeier**. “It’s an honor to partner with law enforcement, prosecutors, and private-sector businesses across Florida to educate the public, rescue and provide services to victims, and ensure that predators and traffickers are behind bars for as long as possible.”

“Law enforcement throughout the state has prioritized investigations and operations that combat human trafficking. This mission is only successful when our FDLE partners work together,” **said FDLE Assistant Commissioner John Vecchio**. “While we welcome visitors to Florida to enjoy

events like the FIFA World Cup, that are set on a global stage, we need you to know: if you come to our home and take advantage of Floridians and our visitors, we will hold you accountable.”

“Human trafficking has no place in Florida, and the Florida Chamber, the Florida Prosperity Initiative, and our members stand shoulder to shoulder with Attorney General James Uthmeier, the FDLE, and law enforcement agencies across Florida in the fight,” **said Mark Wilson, President & CEO of the Florida Chamber of Commerce.** “As Florida prepares to welcome visitors from around the world as the host of the World Cup, Florida's business community is serving as another layer of defense by raising awareness, educating employees, and helping identify the warning signs of trafficking.”

“As Florida prepares to host FIFA and welcome visitors from around the world, we have an opportunity to showcase not only our hospitality, but our commitment to protecting vulnerable individuals from exploitation,” **said Erin Collins, Executive Director, Florida Alliance to End Human Trafficking.** “While law enforcement continues to make significant strides in identifying traffickers and holding them accountable, prevention and awareness remain critical parts of the solution. Human trafficking often hides in plain sight, which is why training employees, businesses, volunteers, and community members to recognize the warning signs is so important. If you see something that doesn't seem right, trust your instincts and report it to the hotline at (855) FLA-Safe. Awareness saves lives, and informed communities are one of our strongest tools in the fight against human trafficking.”??

“Uber is honored to stand with Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier in his unwavering efforts to combat human trafficking and ensure Florida remains a safe place for residents and tourists alike to move around the state,” **said Lizzie Pittinger, Senior Associate for Uber Public Policy.** “In addition to our ongoing education efforts for new Uber drivers in identifying and reporting human trafficking, Uber is partnering with It's a Penalty this summer ahead of the anticipated surge in travel to equip both riders and drivers with human trafficking awareness materials. We believe that by educating our community on the signs of exploitation, we can turn every Uber trip into an opportunity to protect the vulnerable.”

Since Attorney General Uthmeier took office in February 2025, Florida law enforcement and prosecutors have aggressively targeted human traffickers and child predators.

Compared to 2024, the Office of Statewide Prosecution's Human Trafficking efforts had the following increases:

- Number of active human trafficking cases increased by 28%
- Number of defendants in active human trafficking cases increased by 22%
- Number of defendants convicted in human trafficking cases increased by 32%

Overall Statewide Prosecution efforts had the following increases:

- Number of total charges filed increased by 54% from 2024 to 2025
- Total prison time increased by 10% from 2024 to 2025
- Number of total defendants charged increased by 30% from 2024 to 2025

- Convicted defendants have been sentenced to a combined total of 3,275 years in prison from February 2025 to present
- 1,600 human trafficking and exploitation-related arrests from February 2025 to present

Several major prosecutions contributed to the large enforcement successes, including a recent [120-year sentence against longtime trafficker Marquett James in Hillsborough County](#), and a [life sentence against child trafficker Raul Brown in Palm Beach County](#).

Attorney General Uthmeier also [signed an historic agreement](#) to combat human trafficking with State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle in the leadup to multiple large-scale events, including the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

In addition to prison time, the Office of Statewide Prosecution has secured fines, restitution, court costs, costs of prosecution, and costs of investigation against defendants in a total amount of \$53,343,708 since February 2025.

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