



OFFICE OF THE  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA  

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TODD SPITZER

August 11, 2023

The Honorable Maria D. Hernandez  
Orange County Superior Court  
Central Justice Center  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: OC District Attorney Response to 2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury Report:  
*"Human Sex Trafficking in Orange County"*

Dear Judge Hernandez:

Please find enclosed a copy of the Orange County District Attorney's response to Findings F1-F11, and Recommendations R1-R6 of the 2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury Report, *"Human Sex Trafficking in Orange County."* Thank you.

Sincerely,

Todd Spitzer  
District Attorney-Public Administrator

Enclosure

REPLY TO: ORANGE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
<http://orangecountyda.org/>

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# MEMO

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OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR  
TODD SPITZER



August 11, 2023

TO: Honorable Maria Hernandez

FROM: Todd Spitzer, District Attorney

SUBJECT: Orange County District Attorney Response to 2022-2023 Orange County Grand Jury Report "*Human Sex Trafficking in Orange County*"

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## SUMMARY RESPONSE STATEMENT

On June 20, 2023, the Orange County Grand Jury (OCGJ) released the report, "*Human Sex Trafficking in Orange County*" (hereinafter referred to as "report".) The report directed a response from the Orange County District Attorney's Office (OCDA) on ten findings and three recommendations that are included below. Pursuant to PC Sections 933 and 933.05(a), the OCDA provides the following responses:

## FINDING AND RESPONSE

### Response to Findings- F1, F2, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10 and F11:

**F1** - Funding to combat human sex trafficking is both inconsistent and insufficient, resulting in less participation in the OCHTTF by law enforcement agencies.

**Response:** Agree.

**F2** - Limited budgets, training, and hiring challenges constrain local law enforcement agencies' ability to devote significant resources toward combating human sex trafficking.

**Response:** Disagree partially. The OCDA devotes significant resources to the fully-funded Human Trafficking and Exploitation (HEAT) Unit, including DDAs, DA Investigators and paralegals. The OCDA does not have information regarding other local law enforcement agencies' funding.

F4 - Education and prevention efforts have increased awareness of human trafficking but remain insufficient to create heightened awareness within the Orange County community.

**Response: Agree.**

F5 - Agencies inadequately record, track, and coordinate their data collection to effectively measure their progress toward addressing human trafficking.

**Response: Disagree Partially. The OCDA keeps records on a continuous basis to track the numbers for human trafficking-related charges, including the number of cases reviewed, filed, or refused as well as the results of prosecution: pleas, dismissals, trials, convictions and acquittals.**

F6 - There is no centralized, coordinated, and specialized database in Orange County that could be utilized across all affiliated agencies to track repeat victimization.

**Response: Agree.**

F7 - Orange County's wealth and tourist attractions make it a magnet for human sex trafficking.

**Response: Agree.**

F8 - Sex trafficking is an underground crime. Trafficked individuals are transient and mobile, making it difficult to discover and identify victims.

**Response: Agree.**

F9 - Law enforcement attitudes and methods have changed to a "victim centered trauma informed" approach, but more training is needed to identify, intervene on behalf of, and support victims.

**Response: Agree.**

F10 - Law enforcement agencies do not focus enough on the demand side of human sex trafficking, and punishment of the clients is minimal.

**Response: Disagree Partially. The OCDA prosecutes sex purchaser cases zealously. However, most sex purchaser cases are misdemeanor-level offenses and are punished according to misdemeanor sentencing laws. In terms of law enforcement focus, the term "enough" must be measured relative to the demands and resources of each local law enforcement agency's community. Human sex trafficking activity varies in concentration within each of the cities of Orange County. Therefore, it is reasonable that each law enforcement agency must distribute**

their resources relative to the types of crimes and other law enforcement needs that affect their local community.

F11 - Victims and survivors need complex ongoing social service support.

**Response:** Agree.

### **OCGJ RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Response to Recommendations - R4, R5, R6:**

##### **Recommendation R4**

By June 30, 2024, the City of Anaheim and the County of Orange should develop a database dedicated to Human Trafficking that specifically tracks Sex Trafficking networks and victims. (F1, F2, F5, F6, F10)

##### **Response to Recommendation R4:**

This recommendation requires further analysis which cannot be completed within the required 6-month time-frame from the date of the Grand Jury report, per Section 933.05(b)(3), and therefore, may not be reasonable at this time. In order to effectively track “networks and victims” in an industry that is transient, with victims that are reluctant to report or cooperate with authority, the development and implementation of such a database would require the ability to capture data from multiple sources: police departments, motels, hotels, hospitals, schools, victim shelters, churches, etc. Database development research and a cost-benefit analysis would require coordination amongst multiple law enforcement and non-law enforcement public and private agencies in order for an analysis to be comprehensive.

##### **Recommendation R5**

By June 30, 2024, the District Attorney should publicize successful prosecution of human trafficking cases. (F4, F7)

##### **Response to Recommendation R5:**

This recommendation has been implemented. Press releases are sent out regarding the successful prosecution of human trafficking cases at the discretion of the OCDA. While many trial verdicts are reported, the OCDA retains its discretion to determine whether a successful trial result or case disposition is distributed in a press release.

##### **Recommendation R6**

By June 30, 2024, the County of Orange should fully fund Education and Prevention Programs to address Human Sex Trafficking. (F1, F2, F4, F6, F7, F8, F9, F11)

**Response to Recommendation R6:**

**The Orange County Board of Supervisors is responsible for the allocation of funding for the operating budgets of County government and only it may implement this recommendation. The OCDA does, however, support the recommendation.**