

**To:** Goodhue County Board

**From:** Safe Harbor Protocol Team

**Subject:** Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Awareness Month

**Date:** January 10, 2022

The Goodhue County Safe Harbor Protocol Team was formed in 2018 to develop a Protocol that serves as a guide for service providers responding to trafficked and sexually exploited youth. The protocol ensures a victim-centered and consistent response to victims of sex trafficking and exploitation. Since the protocol was completed in 2019, the Safe Harbor Protocol Team has trained partner agencies on trafficking and exploitation and is beginning to plan for evaluating how the protocol is working.

Current members of the Goodhue County Safe Harbor Protocol Team include: HOPE Coalition, Red Wing Police Department, Lake City Police Department, Goodhue County Health & Human Services (Child Protection and Public Health), Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC), Goodhue County Court Services, Mayo Clinic Health Systems- Red Wing, Common Ground Outpatient Treatment Center, Goodhue County Attorney's Office, Goodhue County Sheriff's Office, Red Wing Youth Outreach, Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services (SMRLS), and the Southeast Minnesota Safe Harbor Regional Navigator.

The attached Proclamation honors all Minnesotans who have been victims of sex trafficking, as well as those who have dedicated their lives and their time serving victims of sex trafficking and exploitation in Goodhue County and in the State of Minnesota. The Proclamation also urges all residents of Goodhue County to join in promoting a shift away from the culture of tolerance toward human sex trafficking and exploitation.

The members of the Goodhue County Safe Harbor Protocol Team ask the Goodhue County Board to sign the attached Proclamation, recognizing January as Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Awareness Month.

## **Proclamation in Recognition of Sex Trafficking Awareness Month**

**WHEREAS**, Sex Trafficking Awareness Month calls attention to the fact that human trafficking is widespread and impacts every person in this community,

**WHEREAS**, Sex trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery and occurs when an adult or child is recruited, harbored, obtained, or exported through force, fraud or coercion for the purposes of sexual exploitation; and

**WHEREAS**, Sex trafficking is a crime that occurs throughout Minnesota and impacts Minnesota children from diverse geographic and socio-economic backgrounds, and;

**WHEREAS**, Sex trafficking significantly threatens the safety and well-being of the child victims, some as young as infants, and vulnerable adults being purchased, as well as the families of buyers, legitimate businesses and our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Cities and Counties can play a leading role in the fight against sex trafficking in Minnesota through their efforts around child protection, public health, human services, housing, law enforcement, and prosecution and local county corrections, and probation services; and

**WHEREAS**, with leadership, dedication, and encouragement, there is compelling evidence that we can be successful in reducing sex trafficking in our community through prevention education, increased awareness, and hold offenders who participate in sex trafficking responsible for their actions

**WHEREAS**, Community education and parental involvement is crucial in the prevention of children being manipulated and coerced into abusive situations; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we will continue our efforts to combat the sexual exploitation of our children and vulnerable adults, and mitigate the associated public safety, economic, and health risks to our community, in collaboration with other anti-human trafficking organizations by;

Combating sexual exploitation through comprehensive education of our team, and the implementation and enforcement of a zero- tolerance policy against any act which may support the sex trafficking of humans.

And ask ALL residents of Goodhue County to join us in promoting a shift away from the culture of tolerance toward human sex trafficking and exploitation; and supporting and hearing the voices of those who have been victims of sex trafficking and exploitation.

Goodhue County proclaims January 2022 as Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Awareness Month in honor of all the Minnesotans who have been victims of sex trafficking, as well as those who have dedicated their lives and their time serving victims of sex trafficking and exploitation in Goodhue County and in the State of Minnesota.