

Jackie Lacey

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NEWS RELEASE

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District Attorney Jackie Lacey Highlights Human Trafficking Awareness Month

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey announced today the steps her office has taken to combat the fastest-growing trend among criminal street gangs in Los Angeles County – commercial sex trafficking.

“Gang members are luring victims as young as 12 years old into prostitution,” District Attorney Lacey said during a news conference to observe Human Trafficking Awareness Month. “Selling a girl several times a day is more lucrative than selling drugs or guns.”

The District Attorney said she formed the office’s first Human Trafficking Unit and appointed a coordinator last July to combat human trafficking in all forms.

“For too long, these pimps have exploited young women while cowardly hiding in the shadows,” District Attorney Lacey said. “Today, we shine a light on human sex trafficking and pledge to stamp out these criminal enterprises.”

“To gang members – your days of making money from the sexual exploitation of runaways and homeless youth are numbered,” she said.

District Attorney Lacey said the unit streamlines the prosecution of human trafficking cases, bringing together specialized deputy district attorneys from the Sex Crimes, Organized Crime, Hardcore Gang and Juvenile divisions and the Victim Impact Program. The unit also includes representatives from the Victim-Witness Assistance Program and the District Attorney’s Bureau of Investigation.

Deputy District Attorney Jane Creighton was named Human Trafficking Unit Coordinator to lead a committee that tracks and attacks the problem.

In addition to working closely with human trafficking task forces, members of the unit provide training to prosecutors and law enforcement personnel.

District Attorney Lacey said the District Attorney's Criminal Justice Institute already has trained more than 400 law enforcement officers on best practices for investigating human trafficking cases.

Creighton and the committee also are creating uniform policies and protocols for prosecutors and developing a human trafficking case database.

District Attorney Lacey said the unit already is seeing results.

Last year, the District Attorney's office nearly tripled the number of human trafficking charges filed, from 28 in 2013 to 75 in 2014.

Among the notable convictions were three members of a multi-million dollar prostitution ring that called themselves the "Compton Division." The documented gang members were arrested by the Long Beach Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Prosecutors and police believe the ring collected an estimated \$1 million annually by pimping girls as young as 13 years old as prostitutes.

In addition to sexually abusing and brutalizing the girls, they also went as far as branding the girls' bodies with "Compton Division" tattoos to establish ownership.

The last of the three defendants, Robert Walker, 32, is scheduled to be sentenced this Thursday to a maximum of 42 years to life in state prison.

"My prosecutors will seek to secure the maximum possible sentences for these heinous crimes against some of society's most vulnerable victims," District Attorney Lacey said.

Notable convictions in 2014:

- Compton Division trio –
 - Daniel Gunther, 35, sentenced to 12 years in state prison after pleading no contest to human trafficking of a minor for a sex act and dissuading a witness from testifying.
 - David Sheffey, 35, sentenced to seven years in state prison after pleading no contest to pimping a 16-year-old runaway.
 - Robert Walker, 32, facing a maximum of 42 years, eight months to life in state prison after being convicted of four counts of human trafficking of a minor, dissuading a witness and sexually molesting a 12-year-old girl.
- Lebrette Stacey Winn, 23, sentenced to 47 years and four months to life in state prison after being convicted of human trafficking, pimping, sodomy, forcible rape, aggravated mayhem and kidnapping. Two female victims, ages 20 and 18, escaped a locked car in Culver City and sought help from a good Samaritan.
- James Junior Conley, 37, sentenced to 36 years and six months in state prison for multiple counts including human trafficking. He began a sexual relationship with a 15-year-old girl and later demanded that she start prostituting for him. After she became pregnant, he beat her so brutally that she miscarried.
- Rufus McNeely, 37, sentenced to 23 years to life in state prison after being convicted of trafficking a minor for prostitution and pimping. McNeely lured a 16-year-old Oakland girl away

from her home and forced her to prostitute in Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Ventura counties.

- Bruce Kelcy Gordon, 30, sentenced to 27 years to life in state prison for human trafficking, sodomy by use of force and a lewd act on a child. Using the moniker “King Kong,” Gordon forced a 14-year-old girl into prostitution for more than seven years while he also sexually abused her. He "stamped" the victim with tattoos, including one saying "King Kong" above her eyebrow.

These cases were investigated by the Long Beach Police Department, the El Monte Police Department, the Claremont Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

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[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety.