



HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN VIRGINIA

NEWSLETTER
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We Want to Hear from You ...

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HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN VIRGINIA

Human trafficking is described as a “modern day form of slavery.” The U.S. Department of Justice defines it as “a crime that involves exploiting a person for labor, services, or commercial sex.”



According to National Human Trafficking Hotline, Virginia is ranked 15th in the nation for human trafficking. Individuals who are most at risk of falling victim to human trafficking are homeless people, runaway youth, and undocumented immigrants. In 2020, there were 119 identified cases of human trafficking in Virginia. But many victims and cases go unreported.

Law enforcement officers in your community and across the Commonwealth are trained on how to investigate traffickers, know the signs of this crime, and how to interact with victims. And

fortunately, this is a bipartisan issue so lawmakers from both sides of the political aisle are eager to work together to reduce and eliminate human trafficking.

On his first day in office, Governor Glenn Youngkin signed an executive order that creates

a commission on human trafficking prevention and survivor support. An interim report on the commission’s findings and recommendations is expected no later than September 1, 2022.

Your local Sheriff’s Office is committed to fighting against sex and human trafficking, supporting the victims of these crimes, and bringing perpetrators to justice. And we are pleased Governor Youngkin has promised law enforcement more resources and tools to fight this crime.

HOW TO AVOID FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION



Older Virginians are especially at risk of financial exploitation, including scams and fraud. This crime costs older Virginians millions of dollars each year, and unfortunately, a lot of these crimes go unreported, because some victims feel embarrassed that they fell for this type of crime.

The Virginia Office of the Attorney General (OAG) defines financial exploitation as the “mishandling, obtaining by fraud or deception, or theft of someone’s income, money, accounts, assets, or property by another person, either a friend, a family member, a caregiver, a neighbor, a bogus charity, a business, or even a stranger.”

Here are a few tips offered by the OAG to help prevent you or a loved one from becoming a victim of financial exploitation:

- Try to stay socially active and become familiar with programs in your

community that support older adults and individuals with a disability.

- Plan for your future by putting your financial wishes in writing, and if you are giving someone power of attorney, be sure you understand the agreement.
- Never enter into an agreement with someone that exchanges lifelong care for your property. Spell out clearly what type of compensation, if any, will be paid to the caregiver.
- Never sign a document you do not understand. Have someone you trust review it with you.
- Keep track of your accounts, financial documents, and personal items.
- Always be aware of scams, and remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

If you believe you or someone you know is being financially exploited, please call your local department of social services or the 24-hour Adult Protective Services hotline at (888) 832-3858.

FAUQUIER COUNTY SHERIFF APPOINTED TO GOVERNOR'S CABINET



Governor Glenn Youngkin appointed Fauquier County Sheriff Robert “Bob” Mosier to the position of Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Secretary Mosier will play an important role in enhancing the safety of Virginia citizens, visitors, and businesses.

According to Governor Youngkin, *“Bob shares my vision for innovating how our law enforcement officers build trust and engage in their communities they serve by building bridges with local leaders to reduce crime and keep Virginians safe.”*

As a 30-year law enforcement professional, with a career that includes local, county, federal government, domestic, and international law enforcement, Secretary Mosier brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this key post.

In a statement Secretary Mosier released soon after his appointment, he cited the many changes to the Fauquier County Sheriff’s Office that had taken place in the six years since he began serving as sheriff, including ushering in an era of “new accountability and transparency.” He went onto say:

“I am extremely proud of the men and women of the Sheriff’s Office, who risk their lives every day protecting us all. I am confident that all of these positive changes will continue because we cannot afford to go back to the way policing once was because the types of crime have changed and increased. Crime throughout the country continues to rise and we have to continually update and change our methods, with the community’s help.”

We wish Secretary Mosier all the best in his important new leadership role within Governor Youngkin’s cabinet.

SHERIFF OF THE YEAR AWARD

Another Virginia Sheriff making headlines is Sheriff Vanessa Crawford. Sheriff Crawford was just announced as the National Sheriffs’ Association’s Ferris E. Lucas “Sheriff of the Year” award recipient for 2022. Sheriff Crawford is the first female and the only African American to be selected for the award in its 27 year history. This award was created to recognize leaders for their contributions made to improve the Office of Sheriff on the local, state and national level. We congratulate Sheriff Crawford on this tremendous honor.



VSI SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE MAY 1ST

The VSI scholarship — funded by generous VSI supporters like you — is granted to full-time or part-time students majoring in criminal justice and attending a Virginia state college or university. With the help of loyal members like you, we awarded 66 scholarships for 2021-2022 school year to Virginia’s youth.

Scholarship applications are currently available on our website at <https://vasheriffsinstitute.org/scholarship/>. In addition to the application, students must submit transcripts, a copy of the student’s voter registration card if the student is 18, and an essay. A full list of application materials can be found on the website. **Applications are due May 1, 2022.**

SECURE YOUR LOAD

Between 2016–2020, road debris on Virginia roads caused 311 crashes, 2 fatalities & 152 injuries.



No matter their size, secure all items before you travel.

- Tie objects down with rope or straps
- Cover with a tarp
- Don’t overload your vehicle or trailer



NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

On May 15, we remember and honor local, state and federal peace officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice or have been injured while serving in the line of duty.

PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM VSI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOHN W. JONES



On behalf of all of us at the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, I hope you and your family are eager to welcome the return of spring to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Leading up to the busy prom and graduation season for Virginia's youth, law enforcement will be sending a message to students throughout the Commonwealth: underage

drinking is not legal and will not be tolerated.

That's why law enforcement officers in your community will be stepping up enforcement efforts to make sure everyone's safe during this time of celebration for students and their families, as well as, working closely with school officials to stress the importance of making responsible decisions that will prevent alcohol-related crashes and ensure our teens stay safe and alcohol-free on the roads.

I want you to know it is my privilege to serve as Executive Director of VSI, and I urge you to stay safe and to contact your sheriff's office if you have any questions about the subjects we discuss in this issue of the VSI newsletter, or if you have any other concerns about crime prevention or public safety efforts in your community.

No sheriff's office can operate effectively without the support and cooperation of the people it serves. That's why I'm so grateful for your continued support of the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John W. Jones". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

John W. Jones, Executive Director
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IF YOU WITNESS ROAD RAGE



During the pandemic, pent up anxiety and frustration has spilled over onto our roadways. Reports of road rage incidents in Virginia, some caught on camera, are causing concern among many Virginians.

Now that more Virginians have returned to work in person, people are returning to the roadways, and some may end up sharing the road with an aggressive driver who has no concern for their fellow motorists.

If you see someone driving aggressively, (i.e. running stop signs or red lights; speeding or tailgating; weaving in and out of traffic; making hand or facial gestures; making verbal threats; or screaming, honking, or flashing lights), stay relaxed, don't challenge them, give them the benefit of the doubt, don't block the passing lane, and report aggressive driving to law enforcement by providing a license number and direction of travel.

If you are being followed by an aggressive driver, drive to the nearest police or fire station or other safe place where there are people. Use your horn to get someone's attention, and do not get out of your car or drive home.

CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



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The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute solicits articles and comments from associate members of the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute for inclusion in this newsletter. Articles and comments should be directed to: John W. Jones, Executive Director, Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, 901 East Byrd Street, Suite 1301, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or phone (804) 225-7152.