

IMPERIAL COUNTY
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To: Imperial County Community and Business Leaders
From: Gilbert G. Otero, District Attorney *SSO*
Date: March 7, 2017
**Re: Obligation Per Civil Code Section 52.6 to Post Public Notices
For Victims of Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking is the fastest growing criminal enterprise in the United States — a nine-billion-dollar industry. People from other countries seeking work, underage runaways, sex workers, and domestic workers can be particularly vulnerable to being tricked into situations where they are held in virtual slavery. They may be afraid to contact authorities and have limited English skills. Imperial County's geographic location makes it easier to hide and move victims within and through the county, making it difficult for law enforcement to locate and help potential victims.

This memorandum is to inform you about a law intended to protect victims of human trafficking and to assist businesses in Imperial County in meeting the obligation required under the law.

Senate Bill 1193 added Section 52.6 to the California Civil Code. This law requires all specified categories of businesses to post notices in several languages informing the public and victims of human trafficking about telephone hotline numbers they can use to seek help or to report unlawful activity.

According to the law, the following businesses are required to post notices:

- Adult or sexually oriented businesses
- Bus Stations
- Businesses offering massage or bodywork services for compensation
- Emergency rooms within general acute care hospitals
- Farm labor contractors
- Intercity passenger rail or light rail stations
- On-sale general public premises licenses under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Act
- Primary Airports
- Privately operated job recruitment centers

- Roadside rest areas
- Truck stops
- Urgent care centers

Notices must be placed in a conspicuous place near the public entrance or another prominent location in clear view of the public and employees where similar notices are posted. In Imperial County the notice must be posted in English and Spanish. Please note, failure to comply with the provisions of this law is punishable by a civil fine of \$500 for a first offense, and \$1000 for each subsequent offense.

The Imperial County District Attorney's Office formed a Special Victims Unit (SVU) in 2013. The SVU currently consists of two attorneys, two investigators, one legal office assistant and one victim advocate. The unit handles child abuse, sexual assault, commercial sexual exploitation, child pornography, domestic violence and human trafficking cases. Our office also participates in the Imperial Valley Human Exploitation and Trafficking Working Group (IV HEAT). We are working with IV HEAT to implement this law in Imperial County.

To aid local businesses in complying with the law and to remove any cost to the businesses, the District Attorney's Office has developed notice posters and is identifying those businesses in Imperial County that are required to post. We will send notices directly to the businesses and notice posters will also be available in our office. IV HEAT will train volunteers to go out into the community to distribute posters.

Increasing public awareness of human trafficking and the rights of victims is the law in California. We have every expectation that the businesses in our county will comply with the posting requirements.

If you have any questions regarding the requirements, please feel free to contact my office at (442) 265-1175. Representatives from my office are also available to make presentations to any group or organization needing assistance.