

Prevent Sex Trafficking: What to look for and what you can do

The hospitality and tourism industries are common venues used by sex traffickers to exploit their victims¹. While tourism and sporting events may lead to a temporary increase in demand and visibility of trafficking, it is a problem in Minnesota 365 days a year². As a vacation rental host, you can play a role in recognizing, preventing, and reporting this crime. Below is some basic information that may assist you in determining whether sex trafficking is occurring in a vacation rental property.

What is sex trafficking?

Minnesota law defines sex trafficking as “receiving, recruiting, enticing, harboring, providing, or obtaining by any means an individual to aid in the prostitution of the individual or receiving profit or anything of value, knowing or having reason to know it is derived from sex trafficking.” Minnesota law is different from federal law in that it does not require proof of force, fraud, or coercion, and applies to victims of any age³.

How can I prevent sex trafficking and other illegal activity in my property?

- Use an established vacation rental listing service. Review any information they provide and collect payment securely through the service’s website or app.
- Inform your neighbors that you will be renting out your property. Let them know that they can contact you if they have concerns, or call 911 if they witness a crime.
- Remove valuables from the property or lock them in a secure area.
- Welcome your guests to the property in person, and check in with them from time to time to see how their stay is going. If you are leaving town, ask a friend or neighbor to help you.
- Collect a security deposit and have your guests sign a rental agreement that outlines your expectations regarding parties, quiet hours, additional guests, etc. Include these requirements on your property listing so guests see them before making a reservation.

Indicators of sex trafficking

- Guests who ask to pay in cash or pre-paid cards
- Guests who request additional towels or new linens but deny you entry to the property
- Excessive amounts of cash, computers, cell phones, “burner” phones, etc. in the property
- Sex paraphernalia – condoms, lubricant, sex toys, lingerie – in the property
- Excessive pornography or any child pornography
- Unusually large amounts of IDs, birth certificates, passports, or other identifying materials
- Individuals loitering outside or appearing to monitor the area
- Men visiting the property at all hours

Indicators that a person may be a victim of sex trafficking

- Individuals who show signs of fear, nervousness, tension, and/or submissiveness
- Individuals who show signs of being physically abused or confined
- Individuals who appear to be traveling with an older man or woman who is not a parent or guardian
- Individuals traveling without luggage or other personal items.

Remember, if you see any of the signs listed above, that does not mean anything illegal or inappropriate is happening. However, the presence of one or more of these signs may point to the possibility of sex trafficking. Trust your instincts.

¹ The Code

² Women’s Foundation of Minnesota

³ The Advocates for Human Rights

What should I do if I believe that sex trafficking may be happening at my property?

- **Do not** confront a suspected trafficker or victim.
- If you suspect that sex trafficking is occurring at the moment and a victim may be in danger, call 911.
- If you suspect that sex trafficking is happening but there is no immediate threat, call 311 in the City of Minneapolis, or 612-673-3000 outside of the city.

Resources

The Advocates for Human Rights www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/sextrafficking

The Code www.thecode.org

Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking www.bestalliance.org

MN Girls Are Not For Sale www.wfmn.org/mn-girls-are-not-for-sale

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats, please call the Regulatory Services Accessibility Line at 612-673-3221, or email RegulatoryServicesADALine@minneapolismn.gov. People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626. Para asistencia 612-673-2700 - Rau kev pab 612-673-2800 - Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500