



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Contact: Sherry Llewellyn, 410-313-2236
stllewellyn@howardcountymd.gov

Laurel man charged in human trafficking of two girls, 13 and 15

Howard County police have charged a Laurel man with human trafficking in a case involving two young girls, ages 13 and 15. Arthur Coleman, 46, of Larchdale Road, was charged with multiple counts of human trafficking, prostitution and other sex-related offenses.

An undercover female Howard County detective reached out to the 13-year-old girl, who she saw posted in numerous prostitution ads online, including on the website Backpage. The detective posed as a young girl interested in joining the teen to make money. The teen replied to the undercover officer that she and an older man would pick her up in a public place in Columbia.

At the agreed upon location, officers were waiting for the teen and the male driver, who was later identified as Coleman. When they arrived, the 13-year-old and a second girl, 15, were in the car. Through investigation, detectives believe that Coleman was arranging appointments for the girls to have sex for money. In his car, police found condoms, cash, and multiple cell phones belonging to Coleman and the two girls.

Detectives also believe that Coleman has rented hotel rooms to facilitate prostitution of young girls, and has driven girls to “outcall” appointments at locations of the customers’ choosing in Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia. Coleman took some of the money paid to the girls at these meetings.

Coleman was charged with multiple counts of human trafficking, prostitution, sexual solicitation of a minor, sex abuse of a minor and attempted 2nd-degree sex offense. He is being held without bond at the Howard County Detention Center.

Both teen girls have been placed in appropriate services.

Howard County has an ongoing effort to combat prostitution, human trafficking and related offenses. The county recently created a dedicated account to fund victims’ services and additional police training, and added a second full-time detective to investigate human trafficking cases. Investigators are focused on arresting traffickers and offering assistance to victims through housing, treatment, transportation and other help.

Howard County detectives also regularly monitor the website Backpage, which is known by police to be used for prostitution, often involving girls who are victims of trafficking. Police recently placed their own ad on Backpage, warning men not to engage in prostitution or human trafficking in Howard County.

Anyone with information about human trafficking in Howard County should call 410-313-STOP or email HCPDcrimetips@howardcountymd.gov.

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