

Proclamation

26-01

Survivors of trafficking are among the most vulnerable of individuals, and we must work together to address the root causes as well as create sustainable recovery options for those who have survived these atrocities. Survivor perspectives are important to solving the root causes and it is important to include survivors and to keep those survivor-informed perspectives at the forefront of initiatives.

Organizations that are taking the lead on human trafficking initiatives in Franklin County, KS, include but are not limited to the following: Ottawa Police Department, Franklin County Sheriff's Department, Franklin County Attorney's Office, Wellsville Police Department, The Sexual Trauma & Abuse Care Center, Elizabeth Layton Center, Advent Health, Franklin County Coalition to End Homelessness, Ad Astra Advocacy Center of Franklin County, Ottawa University, Neosho County Community College, Unified School Districts #290, #289, #288, & #287, and the Willow Domestic Violence Center.

Whereas, Human trafficking, a modern form of slavery, is one of the largest and fastest-growing criminal industries in the world, and is based on recruiting, harboring, and transporting people for the purpose of exploitation; and

Whereas, Sex trafficking and labor trafficking occur in Kansas, and both adults and children of any gender, socio-economic status, age, race, sexual orientation, or geographic location can become victimized; and

Whereas, Human trafficking includes sexual, verbal, emotional, economic, and physical abuse and exploitation, and all forms of abuse carry long-term complex trauma implications; and

Whereas, Kansas human trafficking laws define commercial exploitation of children, which does not require a showing of force, fraud, threat, or coercion and references the existing statutory definition of human trafficking and aggravated human trafficking; and

Whereas, The effects of human trafficking reach far beyond its victims and perpetrators, causing disruption in our schools, places of work, and neighborhoods; and

Now Therefore, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim the month of January 2026 as Human Trafficking Awareness Month and urge the citizens of Franklin County to speak out against sex and labor trafficking and exploitation, to support survivors of these heinous crimes, to encourage community leaders to hold offenders accountable, and to make preventable efforts a priority by hosting events, by creating policies at work, school, and home, and by supporting and participating in programs designed to reduce and eventually eliminate human trafficking as a societal problem. As a community, we will commit to creating and executing a comprehensive, collaborative, and trauma-informed response for the safety and security of human trafficking survivors.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH

January 2026

Signed this 28th day of January 2026.

Sabrina Meador, Commission Chair

Attested and Recorded this 28th day of January 2026.

Janet Paddock, County Clerk

