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### **Fourth suspect arrested in ongoing human sex trafficking investigation**

PORTLAND, Ore. – Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Mike Schmidt announced for the first time limited details on an ongoing human sex traffic investigation, involving a minor victim, which has resulted in two of the four suspects pleading guilty.

Until today, no information about this case could be provided to the public because the fourth suspect remained in warrant status.

This investigation started in 2019 when the Portland Police Bureau's Human Trafficking Unit developed information about a minor being sold for sex.

During the investigation, four suspects were identified and later indicted:

- Malik Owens, 24;
- Isaac Zapata, 51;
- Jeffrey Nichols, 51;
- Josiah Carmona, 19.

According to publicly available information:

- Owens is charged with seven counts of compelling prostitution, 40 counts of promoting prostitution, one count of unlawful possession of a firearm and two counts of tampering with a witness.
- Zapata is charged with three counts of purchasing sex with a minor, three counts of commercial sexual solicitation, and three counts of sexual abuse in the second degree.
- Nicholas is on 36 months of supervised probation, as of August 2020, after pleading guilty to one count of purchasing sex with a minor, one count of attempted delivery of cocaine, and one count of commercial sexual solicitation.
- Carmona received a 15 month prison sentence after pleading guilty to one count of tampering with a witness and then violating his previously imposed probation. He will be on five years of post-prison supervision.

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The criminal conduct alleged in these four cases occurred in July 2019.

On November 23, 2020, members of the United States Marshals Service located and arrested Zapata in the area of Southeast 90<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Southeast Ellis Street in Portland, Oregon.

All other additional facts in this case, including the charging instruments and plea agreements, remain under court ordered seal.

No additional information can be released by the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office at this time because Owens and Zapata are pending trial.

A charging document is only an accusation of a crime. Owens and Zapata are innocent unless and until proven guilty.

This case is being litigated by the [Multnomah County District Attorney's Human Trafficking Team](#), which includes two attorneys, an investigator and a victim advocate. Additionally, an attorney assigned to the MCDA gang unit is available to help prosecute cases and support the team as trafficking routinely intersects with gang violence.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office's Human Trafficking Team works to protect victims utilizing a three-prong approach: (1) aggressively prosecuting those who traffic victims to sex buyers; (2) reducing demand for exploitation in all forms to include a dedicated focus on a reduction of sex buyers; and (3) ensuring adequate protection and support for victims of human trafficking.

If you are involved in sex trafficking, or know of someone who is being trafficked, call the [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#) at 1-888-373-7888 or 9-1-1.

#MCDA#

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