

Beth McCann
District Attorney
Second Judicial District



370 17th Street Suite 5300
Denver, CO 80202
720-913-9000
Beth.McCann@denverda.org

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Contact: Matt Jablow, Communications Director
Matthew.Jablow@DenverDA.org
(O) 720-913-9025

Human Trafficker Sentenced to 448 Years in Prison

DENVER -- Denver District Attorney Beth McCann today announced that Judge Kandace Gerdes has sentenced Robert Hawkins to 448 years in prison. It's believed to be the longest sentence ever given to a convicted human trafficker in United States history. In March, a jury convicted Hawkins on 18 counts, five of which involved human trafficking.

Between 2018 and 2021, Hawkins exploited four adult women and two children in Denver, preying on the victims' vulnerabilities, using physical violence and threats to keep the victims under his control, and profiting from the sale of their bodies. Hawkins also shot a sex buyer after he dropped off one of the victims.

"Like most human traffickers, Robert Hawkins showed no regard for anybody but himself, taking advantage of six extremely vulnerable victims. This sentence should send the message that human trafficking of any kind will not be allowed in any way in Denver, and that those convicted of the crime will pay a significant price for it," said DA McCann. "I want to thank the prosecutors and investigators in my office's Human Trafficking Unit, as well as the detectives with the Denver Police Department and the agents with FBI, whose collaboration on this case resulted in today's sentence," said DA McCann.

"It's through collaboration as a community that we achieve the greatest impacts in preventing and enforcing against human trafficking, and this outcome serves as a great example of that," said Denver Chief of Police Ron Thomas. "We take a trauma-informed and victim centered approach to human trafficking investigations, encourage victims to come forward to receive support and ask our neighbors to submit tips to police if they suspect or know of these reprehensible crimes occurring in our community."

"It takes a determined and empathetic team to support a human trafficking case, and it could not have been done without the partnership of the investigators, victim specialists, prosecutors, and our victim service providers," said FBI Denver Special Agent in Charge Mark Michalek. "The FBI's commitment to combatting the threat of human trafficking will not waver, and we will continue to send our message that these atrocities will not be tolerated."

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About the Denver DA's Office:

Our mission is to professionally and competently prosecute crimes and investigate criminal activity on behalf of the people of Colorado, and to seek equal justice for all in the criminal justice system. Our mission also includes preventing crime, supporting the well-being of victims, being involved in the community, being transparent and accountable, and improving the criminal justice system to provide fair alternatives to incarceration in appropriate cases.