



Office of the Washington County Attorney

Kevin Magnuson, County Attorney

Press Release

Contact: Laura Perkins, Public Information Manager

Phone: 651-430-7994

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 29, 2023

Anonymous tip leads to arrest, charges against alleged sex trafficker

STILLWATER, Minn. – A St. Paul man is charged with multiple felonies after an anonymous tip alerted police to a woman being sexually trafficked in Oakdale, Washington County Attorney Kevin Magnuson announced.

Ray Jay Dean Thompson, 45, appeared in Washington County District Court Wednesday morning on charges of promoting prostitution and receiving profits from prostitution. Thompson was arrested while providing transportation to woman who later admitted to engaging in commercial sex activities with a male at an Oakdale residence.

According to the criminal complaint, an anonymous tipster sent police a text message expressing concern about a woman who was possibly being sexually trafficked. The tipster provided the location of the woman, what time she would be there, and that the sex buyer was going to pay \$300 for services. Oakdale Police quickly alerted their embedded East Metro Human Trafficking Task Force detective and responded to the residence, where they spotted Thompson leaving the Oakdale residence in a white Cadillac sedan. Authorities conducted a traffic stop and observed a 23-year-old female in the passenger seat. Police spoke with the woman outside of the vehicle, who admitted to posting an advertisement for commercial sex. She stated Thompson was aware of her commercial sex activities and would give her rides. Thompson was observed to be on his cell phone while police were speaking with the woman, and a search warrant later executed on Thompson's phone showed indicators of a factory reset with no history or media files existing.

Thompson told officers the woman was his girlfriend's daughter. He reported he was giving her a ride but denied knowing why she needed the ride. A search of Thompson located \$300 in his front pocket, and text messages between Thompson and the woman recovered during a search of the woman's phone show conversations where Thompson discusses posting commercial sex advertisements and the woman requesting money from him so she can buy clothes. After arresting Thompson, detectives with the East Metro Human Trafficking Task Force provided resources to the woman and gave her a ride home.

Magnuson credits the successful arrest and victim recovery to the actions of the anonymous tipster and the effective response of the Oakdale Police Department and East Metro Human Trafficking Task Force. Founded in 2018, the East Metro Human Trafficking Task Force unites several jurisdictions across Washington County, including Oakdale, to combat the commercial sex trade and provide services and resources for victims. The task force consists of members from the Washington County Sheriff's Office, Woodbury Police Department, Oakdale Police Department, Cottage Grove Police Department, Homeland Security Investigations, and the Washington County Attorney's Office, who use a victim-centered approach to coordinate various community and advocacy resources while investigating, arresting, and submitting charges for those responsible. In addition, the task force spends a significant amount of time conducting recovery operations designed to provide victims of human trafficking with the resources and support to escape the lifestyle rather than relying on criminal prosecution.

Thompson was released late Wednesday on a \$50,000 bail with the condition that he have no contact with the victim, disclose the existence of all internet-capable devices, no use of adult websites or chatrooms, and be placed on a GPS monitor. His next court appearance set for November 6.

The East Metro Human Trafficking Task Force anonymous tip line can be reached at 651-430-7825. Assistant Washington County Attorney Scott Haldeman is prosecuting this case.

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State of Minnesota
County of Washington

District Court
10th Judicial District

Prosecutor File No.
Court File No.

CR-2023-963
82-CR-23-2172

State of Minnesota,

Plaintiff,

vs.

RAY JAY DEAN THOMPSON DOB: 02/17/1978

587 Beaumont Street
St. Paul, MN 55130-4505

Defendant.

COMPLAINT

Order of Detention

The Complainant submits this complaint to the Court and states that there is probable cause to believe Defendant committed the following offense(s):

COUNT I

Charge: Promotes Prostitution of an Individual

Minnesota Statute: 609.322.1a(2), with reference to: 609.322.1a

Maximum Sentence: 15 years and \$30,000

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 06/26/2023

Control #(ICR#): 23008425

Charge Description: intentionally and while acting other than as a prostitute or patron, promoted the prostitution of an individual

COUNT II

Charge: Receives Profits From Prostitution

Minnesota Statute: 609.322.1a(3), with reference to: 609.322.1a

Maximum Sentence: 15 years and \$30,000

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 06/26/2023

Control #(ICR#): 23008425

Charge Description: intentionally and while acting other than as a prostitute or patron, received profit, knowing or having reason to know that it was derived from the prostitution or promotion of the prostitution of an individual

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

The Complainant states that the following facts establish probable cause:

On June 26, 2023, an officer with the Oakdale Police Department received an anonymous text message stating, "I'm concerned with sex worker possibly trafficking called to 495 Hickory Oakdale right now until 5:30 am – 5:45 am." The officer responded back asking for the person to identify themselves. The texter responded, "I'd rather not. I know she got there at 4:43. No one is in danger, I shouldn't be aware of the situation but I saw texts. It may not be trafficking and just service. Sorry I can't talk."

When the officer asked how the person had his phone number, the person referenced receiving the number from a case the officer previously investigated.

The officer then received a screenshot of a text conversation between a Witness 1 and the sex worker. The parties in the text agreed on one hour of service for \$300. Witness provided his address as 495 Hickory Lane in Oakdale, Washington County, Minnesota.

Officers were familiar with Witness 1 from previous contacts and that he lived at the 495 Hickory Lane address. Further screen shots show Witness 1 describing his residence as having a white work truck in the driveway and a door that doesn't face the road. Officers were familiar with Witness 1 driving a white truck from previous contacts.

Officers responded to the address at 5:30 am and saw a Cadillac sedan with its lights on parked facing southbound between 488 and 481 Hickory Lane. The Cadillac had heavily tinted windows and no front license plate. Several minutes later, the Cadillac backed up, turned around, and drove towards 495 Hickory Lane. The road to 495 Hickory is a dead end. Several minutes later, the Cadillac left Hickory Lane and turned north on Helmo Avenue North.

Officers conducted a traffic stop. Officers identified the driver as Ray Jay Dean Thompson, dob 2/17/1978 (Defendant) and the passenger as V.N.K. (dob 1/24/2000). V.N.K. originally gave her sister's name and had to be ID'd using an IBIS fingerprint reader.

Officers spoke to V.N.K. outside of the car. As they spoke to her, Defendant was constantly checking his phone, frantically typing and adjusting his seating position to look back at V.N.K. V.N.K. admitted to officers that she posted an advertisement for commercial sex and set up a date with Wylie, a white male in his 40's. V.N.K. stated that Wylie paid her \$300 dollars for sex. V.N.K. told officers that Defendant was aware of her commercial sex activities and gave her rides to dates when she needed. V.N.K. denied that Defendant received any money from her dates.

Officers spoke with Defendant, who stated V.N.K. was his girlfriend's daughter. Defendant said she asked for a ride and denied knowing why she needed a ride.

Officers took Defendant into custody. Defendant had \$816 in his wallet, and \$300 in his front pants pocket.

Officers seized and executed a search warrant on Defendant's phone. Officers determined that Defendant's phone number ended in 7272. On the device screen there was an alert to "complete device setup," which indicates a factory reset. The extraction recovered 7GB of data, which is consistent with system file data. The phone did not have any history, other than preprogrammed calendar history prior to 6/26/2023. The phone did not have any digital media.

Officers executed a search warrant on V.N.K.'s phone, which showed Defendant's number in her contact list. Text messages between V.N.K. and Defendant show that on June 21, 2023, V.N.K. sent Defendant pictures of her in various stages of undress and matched photos identified in her online commercial sex advertisements. On June 22, 2023, Defendant sent V.N.K. a text saying "I'm posting." V.N.K. replied, "are you posting incall? People keep asking." "Incall" means the sex buyer comes to the victim's location. Other text messages include several addresses of V.N.K.'s location so Defendant can pick her up. Defendant tells V.N.K. to "stop taking fucking cash apps I'm sick of this shit." V.N.K. asked Defendant to send her \$500 dollars so she could buy clothes. V.N.K. told Defendant, ". . . so I don't have to keep wearing the same outfit everyday. Ts embarrassing going to see someone I just did couple days ago and I'm wearing the same shit last time they seen me."

On June 25, 2023, Defendant and V.N.K. got into an argument over text. Defendant wrote, "U really think I'm a let u play me huh, if I have to fuck ur mom house up I will, U have no idea how far I'm a go, But u about to see."

Defendant is in custody.

SIGNATURES AND APPROVALS

Complainant requests that Defendant, subject to bail or conditions of release, be:
(1) arrested or that other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court; or
(2) detained, if already in custody, pending further proceedings; and that said Defendant otherwise be dealt with according to law.

Complainant declares under penalty of perjury that everything stated in this document is true and correct. Minn. Stat. § 358.116; Minn. R. Crim. P. 2.01, subds. 1, 2.

Complainant

Joseph Groppoli
Patrol Officer
1584 Hadley Avenue N
Oakdale, MN 55128
Badge: 159

Electronically Signed:
06/27/2023 02:33 PM
Washington County, Minnesota

Being authorized to prosecute the offenses charged, I approve this complaint.

Prosecuting Attorney

Scott E. Haldeman
PO Box 6
15015 62nd Street North
Stillwater, MN 55082
(651) 430-6115

Electronically Signed:
06/27/2023 02:31 PM

FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE

From the above sworn facts, and any supporting affidavits or supplemental sworn testimony, I, the Issuing Officer, have determined that probable cause exists to support, subject to bail or conditions of release where applicable, Defendant's arrest or other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court, or Defendant's detention, if already in custody, pending further proceedings. Defendant is therefore charged with the above-stated offense(s).

SUMMONS

THEREFORE YOU, THE DEFENDANT, ARE SUMMONED to appear as directed in the Notice of Hearing before the above-named court to answer this complaint.

IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR in response to this SUMMONS, a WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST shall be issued.

WARRANT

To the Sheriff of the above-named county; or other person authorized to execute this warrant: I order, in the name of the State of Minnesota, that the Defendant be apprehended and arrested without delay and brought promptly before the court (if in session), and if not, before a Judge or Judicial Officer of such court without unnecessary delay, and in any event not later than 36 hours after the arrest or as soon as such Judge or Judicial Officer is available to be dealt with according to law.

Execute in MN Only

Execute Nationwide

Execute in Border States

ORDER OF DETENTION

Since the Defendant is already in custody, I order, subject to bail or conditions of release, that the Defendant continue to be detained pending further proceedings.

Bail: \$
Conditions of Release:

This complaint, duly subscribed and sworn to or signed under penalty of perjury, is issued by the undersigned Judicial Officer as of the following date: June 27, 2023.

Judicial Officer

Patrick Flanagan
District Court Judge

Electronically Signed: 06/27/2023 03:00 PM

Sworn testimony has been given before the Judicial Officer by the following witnesses:

**COUNTY OF WASHINGTON
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

State of Minnesota

Plaintiff

vs.

Ray Jay Dean Thompson

Defendant

*LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER RETURN OF SERVICE
I hereby Certify and Return that I have served a copy of this Order of
Detention upon the Defendant herein named.*

Signature of Authorized Service Agent:

STATUTE AND OFFENSE GRID

Cnt Nbr	Statute Type	Offense Date(s)	Statute Nbrs and Descriptions	Offense Level	MOC	GOC	Controlling Agencies	Case Numbers
1	Charge	6/26/2023	609.322.1a(2) Promotes Prostitution of an Individual	Felony	Z1383	N	MN0820800	23008425
	Penalty	6/26/2023	609.322.1a Solicit/Induce/Promote Prostitution, Sex Trafficking	Felony	Z1383	N	MN0820800	23008425
2	Charge	6/26/2023	609.322.1a(3) Receives Profits From Prostitution	Felony	Z1583	N	MN0820800	23008425
	Penalty	6/26/2023	609.322.1a Solicit/Induce/Promote Prostitution, Sex Trafficking	Felony	Z1583	N	MN0820800	23008425