



## BREMERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

A multi-agency operation conducted on Thursday, July 30 resulted in numerous arrests focused on reducing human trafficking and prostitution. The operation was conducted at a hotel in the Poulsbo area, and involved the Special Operations Group, a joint investigative unit of the Bremerton and Poulsbo Police Departments, as well as the following agencies: the FBI's South Sound Child Exploitation Task Force (as Lakewood PD, Tacoma PD, and Pierce County SD participate.) Coast Guard Investigative Services, WestNet through the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office, the Washington State Patrol Missing and Exploited Children's task Force, Port Orchard and Bainbridge Island Police departments, and the Washington State Dept. of Corrections.

The "sting" operation focused on utilizing social media to contact and arrest persons involved in prostitution, as well as the traffickers or "pimps". An adult male from Bremerton and an adult female from Port Orchard will be referred to the Kitsap County Prosecutor's Office for charging for Promoting Prostitution.

Six adult victims were recovered during the operation. The individuals met with specialized staff and were offered assistance and services. One is from Renton, one from Bremerton, one from, Spanaway, one from Bainbridge Island, one from Tacoma, and one from Port Orchard.

"With this kind of operation, we have three goals," said Poulsbo Police Chief Al Townsend. "First, to break the cycle for the women involved and get them into services. Second, to send the clear message that this activity is not tolerated in this area, and third, to go after the traffickers and stop the victimization."

There have been operations in Bremerton, Port Orchard, and unincorporated Kitsap County involving this team in the past, and there will be future "stings" conducted as well.

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