

## United States Attorney's Office District of Oregon

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## Tigard Mother and Daughter Indicted for Holding Three Victims in Indentured Servitude in Adult Foster Care Home

PORTLAND, Ore.—A mother and daughter from Tigard, Oregon were arraigned in federal court today after they were indicted for using force and threats to compel three victims, including a minor victim, to work for little or no pay in an adult foster care home.

Marie Gertrude Jean Valmont, 66, and Yolandita Marie Andre, 30, have been charged in a seven-count indictment with conspiring with one another to commit forced labor, committing forced labor, and benefitting from forced labor.

According to court documents, Valmont and Andre, the owners and operators of Velida's Care Home in Tigard, began their trafficking scheme in 2023 when they convinced two adults and a child from Haiti to travel to the United States to work at Velida's.

In early September 2023, all three victims arrived in Portland and were immediately taken to Velida's where they were forced to work long, difficult hours for little or no pay. Valmont and Andre are also alleged to have taken their victims' immigration paperwork and forbade them from leaving Velida's under any circumstances. Valmont is further alleged to have thrown items at the victims, threatened to send them back to Haiti and have them killed, and threatened to call the police and make false theft allegations against them.

In the summer of 2023, authorities with the Oregon Department of Justice were alerted to the situation at Velida's following the minor victim's disclosure of her indentured servitude to a pediatrician. Shortly after, the minor victim was removed from Velida's and placed in a foster home. On Thursday, the FBI arrested Valmont and Andre at Velida's without incident.

Both defendants made their first appearances in federal court today before a U.S. Magistrate Judge. They were arraigned, pleaded not guilty, and released pending further court proceedings.

Committing and benefitting from forced labor are both punishable by up to 20 years in federal prison per count of conviction.

This case was investigated by the FBI with assistance from the Tigard Police Department. It is being prosecuted by Eliza Carmen-Rodriguez, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

An indictment is only an accusation of a crime, and defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

If you or someone you know are victims of human trafficking or have information about a potential human trafficking situation, please call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) at 1-888-373-7888 or text 233733. NHTRC is a national, toll-free hotline, with specialists available to answer calls from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also submit a tip on the <a href="NHTRC">NHTRC</a> website.

If you believe a child is involved in a trafficking situation, you can also submit a tip via the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's (NCMEC) <u>CyberTipline</u> or call 1-800-THE-LOST. FBI personnel assigned to NCMEC review information provided to the CyberTipline.

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