

What is Modern Slavery?

Modern slavery is illegal. It is an umbrella term for all forms of slavery, human trafficking, and exploitation. It is defined as the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women, or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception, or other means for the purpose of exploitation. It includes holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them. Recent cases have seen the targeting of homeless people, people with a learning disability, and family members brought to the

UK as refugees. Victims are likely to come into contact with many organisations. Each of these organisations has an opportunity to disrupt the individual's trafficking experience and prevent further harm.

Support

Adult victims can access a range of health services, e.g. GP, NHS 111, and A&E. If they give consent to enter the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), they can access a wider range of support. Support for child victims of modern slavery is provided through Local Authorities. Potential child victims must be referred to children's services urgently via 'Duty and Advice': 0161 770 7777. A referral can be made to the NRM, once the child is safeguarded.

What to Do

Should you come across anyone you believe could be a victim of modern slavery and it is safe to do so, ensure their medical and welfare needs are met and have a conversation with them. Use an approved interpreter/language line; do not use anyone accompanying them. Trafficking gangs are dangerous criminals, therefore it is vital you do not attempt to act on suspicions which may put you or the possible victim(s) at risk. If you are unable to speak to them, contact the Modern Slavery Helpline and report your suspicions with as much detail as possible: 08000 121 700.

If there is an immediate risk of harm to an adult or child, contact the police via 999.

Modern slavery cases are likely to have a wider public protection aspect to them, e.g. there may be more than one victim, and therefore, considering the wider public interest, report non urgent cases on 101 or online via the [Greater Manchester Police 'Report a Crime' webpage](#).

The Victims

Victims may be fearful of professionals; threats may have been made against them and their families. Listen, be patient, non-judgemental, and show empathy. Be professional, explain the reasons for your actions, and reassure that you want to help.

Economic triggers: victims may come from a background of poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunity and debt bondage and be driven to earn a better living abroad. Social triggers: vulnerabilities may include homelessness, in the social care system, lack of family support or having a weak social network. Political triggers: those who can be easily exploited come from war/civil upheaval and have come to the UK for a better life. Legal triggers: they may be fleeing a weak judicial system and have little faith in the legal system.

Myth Busting

Modern slavery doesn't have to be cross border, it can be moving someone from one room to another. It shouldn't be confused with illegal immigration or people smuggling. People may have consented to travel but can still be victims; often they have consented under false pretences. Victims are often trafficked from abroad but can be UK citizens too. It's not true that if a victim has a better quality of life exploitation is ok.

The Signs

The first step towards helping victims and preventing modern slavery is to be able to spot it.

Anxiety - Is the person you are speaking to visibly anxious? Are they hesitant to speak or slow to respond to questions? Are they showing signs of trauma or confusion?

Manner - Do they have poor eye contact or seem withdrawn? Are they revealing feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness? Do they distrust authority figures?

Appearance - Do they look malnourished, exhausted or unkempt? Do they have untreated or neglected wounds? Are they poorly dressed or equipped for the job they are carrying out?

Environment - Is their accommodation dirty or cramped? Are they rarely unaccompanied?

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Further Signs

Victims might:

- refuse to give their name or contact information
- have no access to their identification documents e.g. passport
- mention they are in debt
- appear fearful or scared of staff, authorities or a specific individual

Health conditions that victims might suffer from include: Headaches, dizziness, or memory loss. Sexually transmitted infections. Cuts, bruising or broken bones. Weight loss or eating disorders. Anxiety, depression or PTSD.

For more guidance and information, take a look at the [Modern Slavery Toolkit](#)

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