

Even in the modern world, where we have made so many achievements and taken so many steps towards the quality, modern slavery still persists.

Modern slavery is a serious crime and a substantial violation of human rights. In the context of modern slavery, victims are either deceived, forced or threatened into situations of degradation, subjugation, and control at the hands of others which significantly undermine both their sense of self and personal identity.

Modern statutory guidance for slavery is all about the identification, protection, support and care of any victims of modern slavery. Professionals have a responsibility to work proactively to help prevent modern slavery in any form. To this end, they should be trained to take the appropriate action, and to make sure that victims get the necessary support based on their individual needs. It's also important to recognise that survivors of modern slavery may be at further risk of harm and re-trafficking.

In order to help identify, [safeguard](#) and protect victims of modern slavery, it's important that there are multidisciplinary, multi-agency partnerships. Any activities that are conducted should be carried out in conjunction with other agencies, making sure that everybody acts with the end goal of providing victims with fully integrated support.

Finally, it's important for any professional to understand the specific vulnerabilities the victims of modern slavery face. In order to work with these people, it's necessary to employ practical, trauma-informed methods which are based upon the fundamental principles of respect, dignity, and compassion.

What is Modern Slavery?

The right to live a life which is free of slavery seems like it should be a basic principle for everybody. After all, everybody, everywhere in the world should have the opportunity to live a life without being a slave to somebody else. However, even in the UK, there are millions of people that are still trapped in slavery conditions.

Modern slavery is considered to be the substantial exploitation of other people for either commercial or personal gain. Modern slavery is actually everywhere, and all around us, but it's often disguised or kept out of sight.

People can regularly become trapped in modern slavery serving food, working in factories, or making clothes.

The big problem with modern slavery is that it doesn't actually look like slavery from the outside. To the everyday person, slavery just looks like a normal job. However, the people who are working on these jobs are often being controlled. These people might be facing threats of violence, or debt. They may have had their passports confiscated by their employers to stop them from leaving, or they might be being threatened with deportation.

Many people have fallen into the trap of modern slavery because they fled their homes trying to escape poverty or war, only to wind up in a very desperate situation. They can't leave because they are under the control of the person who is exploiting them.

Modern Slavery Act 2015

[The Modern Slavery Act](#) 2015 was created to give law enforcement the tools that they needed to fight modern slavery crimes. The act gives them the power to help ensure that perpetrators can receive the right level of punishment for these disgusting crimes, and also to provide the best possible support and protection for the victims.

This act has a number of objectives.

It has been designed to consolidate and simplify existing offences into a single, unified act which can be used to provide a framework for punishing and supporting both perpetrators and victims respectively.

The [act](#) was also designed to make sure the perpetrators of modern slavery receive suitable punishments for their crimes, which can include imprisonment up to a life sentence. In a similar fashion, the act was also designed to provide the courts with more ability to place restrictions and sanctions on individuals where it would be necessary to protect people from the harm that has been unjustly caused by modern slavery offences.

Other objectives of the act have been to create an independent antislavery commissioner. Their role is to help coordinate the response to modern slavery. It has also been the work of the act to help create a defence for the victims of trafficking and slavery, giving them the support they need.

The act creates a duty which is assigned to the secretary of state to produce statutory guidance for both victim identification and services. The

victim must be the most important part of any new guidance created. The act also enables the Secretary of State to make the proper regulations that relate to supporting and identifying any victim.

The act makes suitable provision for [child trafficking](#) advocates. It also helps to introduce and create a new reparation order that will encourage and enable courts to properly compensate victims in situations where their assets have been confiscated from the perpetrators who originally took them.

Finally, the act allows law-enforcement the right to stop boats if they have reason to believe that slaves are being trafficked or held on them. Finally, from a corporate perspective, the act requires any business over a certain size to disclose each year what actions they have taken as a corporation to help make sure that there is no trace of modern slavery within either their business or their supply chains.

National Referral Mechanism

[The National Referral Mechanism](#) is a framework which has been created for the purposes of not only identifying and referring any potential victims of modern slavery, but also help to make sure that they receive the support that they need.

It is important to notice that modern slavery is a complex crime and there may be multiple forms of exploitation taking place. [modern slavery](#) encompasses slavery, servitude, forced/compulsory labour, and human trafficking.

It is entirely possible for an individual to have been a victim of any of these forms of modern slavery.

Further compounding the situation as the victims may not be aware they are being exploited or trafficked, and in fact some may have consented to certain elements of the exploitation or simply accepted the situation for what it is. If you have reason to believe that modern slavery has taken place, the case should be referred to the NRM so that the relevant authority can fully investigate and identify the situation. you do not have to be certain that somebody is, in fact, a victim in order to make a referral.

Your Duty to Notify and National Referral Mechanism (NRM)

The online referral system which is used by everybody is the system that you use for referrals into both the national referral mechanism and the duty to notify referrals.

It's important to notice that only staff who are at designated first responder organisations have the power to make referrals. The primary difference between an NRM referral and a DTN referral is the consent of the adult that is involved.

In the case of child victims, if the potential victim is under the age of 18, or maybe under that age, then you make an NRM referral. You cannot refer children using a DTN referral process. [Child victims](#) do not have the ability to consent to be referred into the national referral mechanism, and must first be [safeguarded](#) before being referred into the process.

In order to [refer an adult](#) into the national referral mechanism, you must obtain consent. In order for an adult to be able to provide informed consent on this matter, you must explain to them what the national referral mechanism is, what support is available if they are referred using the process, and what the possible outcomes are for an individual who is being referred.

You have a clear responsibility to stipulate the information generated as part of the referral may be shared by the relevant authority with other public authorities like the police in order to gain further evidence to move the referral forward.

The important thing to remember about an online referral process is that it should only be completed for adults when a member of staff who is part of a designated first responder organisation has reason to suspect that somebody is the victim of modern slavery, and in a situation where the adult involved has understood the implications of the referral and consented to them.

This item is not to be used as an interview record, but is instead for the first responder organisation to be able to provide as much information as possible to the relevant authority to help them reach a decision about the situation at hand. It's also important to know that this process does not prevent a first responder from approaching the potential modern slavery

victim in order to get further information with them, so long as this process does not place them under any additional stress or trauma unnecessarily.

In the event that an adult does not consent to the process, a duty to notify referral should be completed using the same online system.

From 2015, public authorities are required to notify the Home Office if they have any potential [victims of modern slavery](#) within their local areas in England and Wales. This is called the duty to notify. The online system will provide mandatory fields that will have to be filled out in order to submit the referral. Any adult who does not provide consent to be referred into the national referral mechanism process automatically becomes a duty to notify referral within the online system.

If you have reason to suspect that you have encountered a person who has been a victim of modern slavery, you have a responsibility to complete a referral via the online portal. The portal has been designed to allow a first responder to submit an national referral mechanism referral through a single online form that they can fill out regardless of where they are in the UK, or whether the victim is a child or adult. Please be aware that the form has been designed to be a responsive entity, and depending on the options that are selected, will change to suit the situation. This includes things like identifying whether the case is a national referral mechanism process or a duty to notify referral

The online form can identify whether or not somebody is a first responder by verifying the work email address used. First responders need to complete this verification process in order to complete the form.

Once the form has been submitted, it will be automatically sent to the relevant authority. Once this has happened, the first responder will be sent a link to download a copy of the form.

Modern Slavery Statement Registry

The modern slavery statement registry is a database which is compiled based on the statements submitted by various organisations across the UK. These statements detail a modern slavery policy.

The policy will outline what a company is doing to prevent modern slavery from taking place within their organisation, whether this is the workers or supply chains. By submitting the statement to the registry, a modern company helps to remain compliant with all legislation.

Forms of Modern Slavery

There are many different types of modern slavery.

Human trafficking is moving someone by force, coercion or deception. This can be done for forced labour purposes, or for arranged marriages or criminal acts.

Forced labour is forcing someone to work or commit to a service under the threat of penalties - usually in the form of violence or deportation.

Debt bondage is a form of forced labour where a person is forced to work to pay off a debt. They are often tricked into working with low pay and zero control over their debt.

Child exploitation is all about exploiting a child for the gain of someone else.

Forced or early marriage is marrying someone against their will. Most child marriages are a form of slavery.

Criminal exploitation is forcing someone into crime against their will.

Domestic servitude is forcing someone to work in a domestic setting with little to no freedom or pay.

Transparency in Supply Chains

Transparency within the supply chain seeks to make sure that anyone working as part of a supply chain is bound to the same standards as companies based in and working in the UK. This means that companies need to be careful about working only with providers and suppliers who are prepared to conform to transparency.

How to Comply With the UK Modern Slavery Act

To comply with the modern slavery act, a company is required, as an absolute minimum, to do two things. First of all, they have a responsibility to take action to identify, prevent and mitigate the risk of modern slavery within their supply chains and operations. Second of all, they need to produce an annual statement which reports on these actions.

Finding Help

Any company who is struggling to report an instance of modern slavery or a concern should seek out the support of a local authority or official civil servant for information on what to do. It is important to act quickly and to be thorough in documenting all concerns.

Learn Q can provide training for handling issues surrounding modern slavery. We have the tools and resources required to help guarantee that any business can take the steps necessary to teach staff about modern slavery, as well as how to report concerns, show support for victims and to make the right decisions for the welfare of those affected by this most disturbing crime.