

Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet offers help and advice for victims of human trafficking in the UK.

What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a serious crime.

A person is trafficked if they are brought to (or moved around) a country by others who threaten, frighten, hurt and force them to do work or other things they don't want to do.

You have rights

You may feel scared, powerless and alone, however help is available and you have rights and choices. This leaflet explains how you can be helped.

What are my rights?

- The right to independent emotional and practical help.
- The right to protection: human trafficking is a crime. If you report it to the police they must respond.
- The right to independent legal advice for immigration purposes.

If you are identified as a victim of trafficking, then you will be entitled to:

- Help and protection from the UK Government and other organisations (this is called the National Referral Mechanism): this may include time to consider your options without fear of being removed from the country, finding you a safe place to live, someone to talk to, helping you find a doctor, lawyer and other people who can help you.
- Help and protection once you report your experience to the police: to be kept informed about what is happening in your case and be supported throughout by those involved in the criminal justice process, like the police and the courts.

Some of the signs below could indicate that you should seek help:

- Were you told you were coming to the UK to work in a job that did not exist, and then were forced to work in a different or illegal trade under harsh conditions?
- Were you subjected to violence or sexual abuse, or were you, your friends or family threatened?
- Did you have your passport or immigration documents taken from you by those who brought you to the country or who you were working for?
- Were you forced to pay back large debts to those who brought you into the country, and were you still not free to leave the situation once these debts had been paid?
- Do your employers keep all or nearly all of your wages?

The Poppy Project

Tel: 020 7735 2062

Migrant Helpline

Tel: 07766 668781

The TARA Project
(Scotland)

Tel: 0141 276 7724
/7729

Crimestoppers

Tel: 0800 555 111

Can give you support.

Help for victims of human trafficking

Your rights if you've been trafficked into exploitation in the UK.

What are my choices?

- 1) You can contact voluntary organisations that can offer you emotional and practical help.
- 2) You can tell the police about your experience.
- 3) You can get specialist help from the UK Government by being referred to the National Referral Mechanism.

You can pick more than one of these choices, there is no “wrong” choice.

THE NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM (NRM)

What is the National Referral Mechanism?

The National Referral Mechanism has been put in place to find, help and protect people who have been trafficked.

How does it work?

Step 1: To get more information on the NRM and to be identified as a victim of trafficking, you should contact one of the following: The Poppy Project, Migrant Helpline, The TARA Project (Scotland), the police, immigration services and/or health professionals.

Step 2: The organisations listed above will fully explain the process to you, and if you agree, they will refer your case to decision makers. The decision makers will then make an initial decision on whether you are a victim of trafficking.

Step 3: As soon as you are identified as a victim of trafficking, you will be referred on to relevant support services and will be allowed to stay in the UK for 45 days to recover from your experience. This initial decision process can take around five working days; however it may take longer in some cases.

Step 4: During the 45 day period a second, and more formal, decision will be made as to whether you have been trafficked and then you will be considered for a one year temporary residence permit. The decision to grant a residence permit will depend on your case.

What help is available?

Support could include:

- finding you temporary safe accommodation
- helping you in court
- helping you with medical treatment
- having someone to help you cope with your experience
- providing an interpreter/translator to help you communicate in English
- help with finding independent legal advice.

Is the process confidential?

Your personal details and whereabouts will **not** be available to the public. If you return home, information on your experience of being a victim of human trafficking will **not** appear anywhere on the paperwork when you re-enter your country.

If I decide to start the National Referral Mechanism process, will I be able to stay in the UK if I am not British or an European Economic Area National?

If you are identified as a trafficked person by the decision makers, you will be allowed to stay in the UK for **45 days** to recover from your experience. During the 45 days, the immigration authorities will **not** remove you from the UK.

The National Referral Mechanism process will run alongside any other immigration or asylum claim you may have. Immigration staff may need to speak to you to gain further information, and this may happen during the 45 days in which your trafficking case is being considered.

Following the second, and more formal, decision on whether you have been trafficked, you will be considered for a one year temporary residence permit.

What happens if the decision makers do not find that there is enough evidence/information to believe I have been trafficked?

- Even if you are not identified as being trafficked, you may still be able to access some emotional and practical help.
- If you are not British or from the European Economic Area then normal immigration procedures will resume. This could include

removal action to send you back to your home country if it is safe to do so, and if you do not have a right to remain in the UK.

- You may be able to get help in returning to your home country if you want to do this by contacting the International Organisation for Migration (0800 783 2332).

REPORTING MY EXPERIENCE TO THE POLICE

What happens if I decide to tell the police about my experience?

The police can help you if you have been the victim of a crime. The police will keep you informed about your case, and can offer you protection from the person who hurt you.

If your case goes to court, you will be offered help by the independent Witness Service. You may be entitled to ‘special measures’ to help you give evidence in court, for example by giving evidence outside of the court room via a video link.

Will I receive compensation?

You may be entitled to compensation either directly from the offender or via the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. Further information is available from the Authority on 0800 358 3601 or by visiting www.cica.gov.uk

Contact a voluntary organisation or other victim support service directly

If you do not wish to contact the police, immigration or start the National Referral Mechanism process, you can still go to voluntary organisations for help.

Victims of trafficking are encouraged to engage in the National Referral Mechanism and to report their crime to the police, in order to bring traffickers to justice and to stop trafficking from occurring in the future.

UK Victim Supportline – 0845 303 0900

The Poppy Project – 020 7735 2062

Migrant Helpline – 07766 668781

The TARA Project (Scotland) – 0141 276 7724/7729