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## The Passage

Tackling modern slavery, human trafficking and exploitation in the homelessness sector.

This handbook explains what slavery looks like in the homeless community, what to watch out for and what you can do about it.

We hope that this will help you to provide better support to your service users by preventing the crime and by supporting victims in your workplace.

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## About this handbook

### Who is this handbook for?

**We believe that everyone should read this handbook** – and we have kept it small so that you can keep it in your work bag or desk drawer.

**This handbook was, however, specifically created for staff who work in the homelessness sector**, particularly frontline workers, managers and volunteers. People who are engaged in support services for homeless people can be vital eyes and ears in detecting this crime.

**Use this handbook to understand the types of exploitation that homeless people are exposed to. By knowing what to look for, and how to get support, frontline workers can save lives.**

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## What is modern slavery?

**Modern slavery is one of the greatest evils in our world** – and it is happening here in the UK: it targets the most vulnerable in our society and seeks to use them as commodities from which to make profit.

Modern slavery encompasses sexual exploitation, forced labour, child slavery, forced criminality, domestic servitude, forced marriage, organ harvesting and human trafficking. It can affect men, women and children, from abroad or from the UK. Victims are forced to work against their will on farms and building sites, in factories, restaurants, nail bars, car washes, brothels, massage parlours and private homes. Traffickers and exploiters use coercion and deception to keep control over their victims.

Human trafficking is a specific crime, under which people are moved for the purpose of exploitation. In addition to moving people between regions of a country, it can involve international organised crime, where victims are recruited and trafficked between countries.

**Exploitation, which is illegal under UK and international law, is a multi-billion dollar industry.**

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## Modern slavery and homelessness

The Passage report *Understanding and Responding to Modern Slavery in the Homelessness Sector* (2017) highlights the similarity in vulnerabilities of people who are homeless and those who are victims of modern slavery.

- Homeless people and rough sleepers are particularly vulnerable to grooming, psychological manipulation, physical abuse and exploitation as a result of substance addictions, mental health issues, trauma, loneliness and instability.
- Victims who have fled from their traffickers may be destitute, without ID documents, and become rough sleepers who have no recourse to public funds.
- After leaving the support services provided by the government, through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), gaps in services and the availability of longer-term support can lead to adult victims of modern slavery becoming vulnerable and homeless.
- Perpetrators and traffickers have been seen trying to recruit homeless people in day centres, night shelters and at soup runs.

Following The Passage report, modern slavery was included in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (chapter 25), and the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 (section 107).

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## Sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation is any abuse of vulnerability for sexual purposes.

Grooming is often used to gain a vulnerable person's trust. Exploiters become their victims' "best friend", "best lover", "best manager", "best drug dealer". The victim believes the love is genuine.

A person can be physically and/or psychologically forced into sexual activity, but they can also be sex workers who are exploited and forced to pay high sums to landlords and "managers".

### Anja's story

**Anja is from Latvia. She was thrilled when her cousin's friend offered her a job as a nanny in Ireland, and she accepted immediately.**

She travelled with the friend to Dublin, but when she arrived she was immediately taken to a private house where he seized her passport and told her she owed him the money for the flight.

Anja was found and rescued only after being forced to work as a prostitute to clear her debt.



*Courtesy: Turn off the Red Light (TORL)*

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## Indicators

- A migrant with poor English, but an array of sexual words.
- Someone carrying sexual belongings and nothing else.
- People moving between brothels or working in alternate locations.
- A person forced, intimidated or coerced into providing sexual services..
- A person subjected to abduction, assault or rape.
- Someone other than the person receiving money from the clients.
- A sex worker who sees too many clients a day.
- A person who is passed around groups and clients under the influence of GHB (rape drug).

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## Forced labour

**Forced labour refers to situations in which a person is coerced to work** through the use of violence and/or psychological intimidation, such as accumulated debt, retention of ID, or threats of denunciation to the immigration authorities.

Forced labour occurs throughout the UK, often in low-skilled, low-wage jobs where labour standards and workers are unregulated, unlicensed or unenforced.

**Typical sectors:** agriculture, food processing and packaging, construction, warehousing and logistics, hotels, cleaning services, manufacturing (sweatshops).

### Jurgis's story

**Jurgis, from Lithuania, was looking forward to starting a new job in the UK.** When he arrived, his employer told him that the job was not yet available, but that he could work on a farm in the meantime. He was taken to a caravan where he lived with eight other men.



*Courtesy: Northern Irish Law Centre*

He worked 12 hours a day on a filthy egg farm and was paid only £20 a week. Things looked bleak. He wanted to escape, but his passport had been taken away and he did not have enough English to explain his situation to anyone.

Eventually, one of the farm's customers noticed his dishevelled state and contacted the police, who set him free.



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## Indicators

- A large numbers of workers living in a small house.
- Inappropriate clothing for the job.
- Dependence on an employer for a number of services (such as accommodation, transport, and banking).
- No contract.
- Working excessive hours over long periods.
- No days off.
- Receiving little or no payment.
- Living in imposed substandard accommodation.

If you are a worker or employer who needs advice, visit The Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) at [www.glaa.org.uk](http://www.glaa.org.uk) or call 0800 4325 0804.

## Child slavery

**Child slavery involves a person under the age of 18 being exploited.** Children are particularly vulnerable to exploitation because they can be easily controlled by adults. They can be boys or girls, British, or foreign nationals.

In the UK, children have been found to be victims of all forms of slavery, including sexual exploitation, forced labour and criminality, domestic servitude and organ harvesting.

All children working in the sex trade are victims of child abuse and sexual exploitation – there is no such thing as legal child prostitution.

### Jess's story

**Jess was only 14 when she started dating Chris**, who was 30. He told her that if she truly loved him she would sleep with him, so she did.

Then he forced her to sleep with his friends.

Soon he was driving her across the country to sleep with unknown men. He would threaten and abuse her and she felt trapped. It wasn't until she was 18 that she managed to run away and find help.

*Courtesy: NWW Network*



### Nicu's story

**Nicu was just nine when he was trafficked to the UK** from Romania by a gang who had approached his family with the promise of work.

Nicu was forced to pickpocket, and steal money from people at cashpoints, and was beaten if he didn't bring enough home. He was constantly scared and anxious.

*Courtesy: ECPAT UK*

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## Indicators

- Children who are fearful of adults (particularly law-enforcement agents).
- Children who are begging, pickpocketing or dealing drugs.
- Children who are isolated and have no real friendships or family.
- Children who seem to be neglected, vulnerable, tired or withdrawn.
- Children doing inappropriate work or wearing the wrong clothes for the conditions.
- Children who regularly go missing from care, school or home.
- Children who are using drugs or alcohol – this is often part of the sexual exploitation/grooming process.
- Children who have an unclear relationship with an accompanying adult.
- Children who display inappropriate sexual behaviour.

If you are a minor and think that you, or your friends, need help, call the **Childline, 0800 1111**.  
If you are concerned about a minor, call the **NSPCC, 0808 800 5000**.

**[www.passage.org.uk](http://www.passage.org.uk)   [info@passage.org.uk](mailto:info@passage.org.uk)   telephone 020 7592 1850**

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## Forced criminality

**Forced criminality is where a person is forced into criminal activity for another's gain.**

Common forms in the UK are cannabis cultivation, drug dealing, benefit fraud, theft, begging, and the selling of counterfeit goods.

People forced into criminality are often afraid to go to the authorities for fear that they will end up in trouble or even in prison.

### Hung's story

**Hung was smuggled into the UK from Vietnam for \$25,000,** which his family was told he could repay when he started a job. When he arrived, however, he was immediately put to work growing cannabis in a house with covered windows.



He was locked in the house for three months and, when he eventually asked about his wages, he was beaten and threatened.

Then the police raided the house and Hung was arrested – he was scared and didn't understand the interview process. It was not until he had spent a year in juvenile detention that the Home Office confirmed that he was a victim of human trafficking and he was released.

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## Indicators

- **On your high street**
  - A large group of adult/child beggars moving daily to different locations, perhaps returning to the same home every night.
  - Unexplained acquisitions of money, jewellery, clothes or mobile phones.
  - A strong, controlling, relationship with older individuals.
  - Unexplained injuries.
  - A child carrying weapons (for example, kitchen knives).
  - Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.
- **County-lines exploitation** – the police term for urban gangs that supply drugs to suburban and coastal areas.
  - Gangs using children and vulnerable young adults (“runners”) to move money and drugs.
  - Gangs establishing a base by “cuckooing” (taking over homes by force or coercion).
  - Homes that seem to be unusually busy at night – a lot of coming and going.
  - Young people who seem to be controlled by older or adult “friends”.
- **Cannabis farms**
  - Plastic bags over the windows of private properties.
  - High levels of heat, condensation, or a strong, sickly-sweet smell.
  - A constant buzz of ventilation.
  - Visitors at unsociable hours.

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## Domestic servitude

### Domestic servitude is a form of modern slavery

where domestic workers – often maids, housekeepers, cleaners, nannies, or those caring for the elderly, ill and infirm – are forced to work for little or no pay, with restricted freedom and often with an element of sexual abuse.

Three-quarters of domestic servitude victims are children.

Because domestic servitude occurs in private houses, it is one of the most invisible forms of modern slavery.

### Georgina's story

**Georgina is from a country in West Africa.** At the age of 11, already working as a nanny for a couple, she was told she would be coming to the UK with them.

When they arrived, she was verbally and physically abused and was not allowed to leave the house for two years, after which she was allowed to take the children to and from school.

When Georgina began to get sick she felt she had to escape. She went to the local park and asked someone for help.

The couple who forced her into servitude were each sentenced to 18 months in prison.



*Courtesy: ECPAT UK*

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## Indicators

- A foreign national who lives with a family (possibly as a domestic worker or nanny).
- A person who is rarely allowed out of the house, unless accompanied.
- Poor sleeping arrangements, for example sleeping on the floor, no privacy.
- Poor diet, or living on leftovers.
- A person not interacting much with their host family.
- Working excessively long hours over long periods, with no days off.
- Receiving little or no payment.
- No access to their passport.
- No knowledge of their rights in the UK.

If you are a migrant domestic worker who needs advice on employment and your immigration status, visit Kalayaan at [www.kalayaan.org.uk](http://www.kalayaan.org.uk), or call 020 7243 2942.

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## Forced marriage

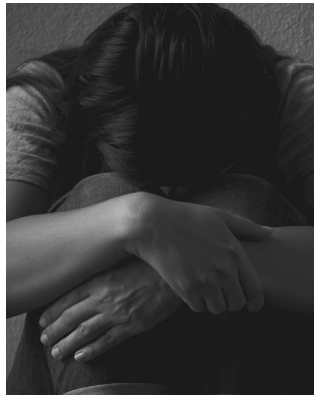
Forced marriage is where one or both people do not consent to a marriage, and when pressure and/or abuse is used.

The pressure put on victims can be physical (including threats, physical violence and sexual violence), emotional or psychological (for example, bringing shame to the family), and financial (taking away wages or allowances).

### Tara's story

**When Tara was 16 she was told by her family that she was to marry a man of 40, from India.** At first she refused, then family pressure increased until she finally accepted. She got married by phone, but when her family told her she had to go to live in India, she told her school teacher, who reported it to the police.

She was placed in a refuge for her own safety, but her family kept up the pressure until she went back home. She was locked in her room and abused until she had a nervous breakdown and was taken to hospital. There, she told the doctors to contact the police and was taken from her family to a place of safety.



*Courtesy: Forced Marriage Unit*



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## Indicators

- Someone who is distressed or emotionally withdrawn.
- Persistent absence from school or work.
- Victims of female genital mutilation (FGM).
- Someone who suddenly announces their engagement to a stranger.
- Domestic abuse.
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins.
- A minor who is engaged to be married.

The Home Office has a Forced Marriage Unit (FMU), which supports victims as well as supporting frontline workers who are dealing with cases. Overseas, consular assistance is provided to British nationals, including dual nationals.

If you need help or advice, in confidence, call the FMU Helpline, 020 7008 0151.

[www.passage.org.uk](http://www.passage.org.uk)   [info@passage.org.uk](mailto:info@passage.org.uk)   telephone 020 7592 1850

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## Organ harvesting

**Organ harvesting is a form of modern slavery that is on the increase** across the world, with some cases being reported in the UK. It involves the illegal removal of internal organs for transplant with or without the donor's consent.

Victims may be manipulated or coerced into giving up an organ, such as a kidney or an eye; may be lured to sell an organ without full medical information or may be persuaded that they need an operation and the organ is removed without their knowledge.

**The victim/donor may initially be trafficked or smuggled to another country under the false pretence of a job, which commonly fails to materialise.** The recruiter will then suggest the sale of an organ as the only means for the victim to repay travel and accommodation costs.

The victim may be coerced or forced to go through with the transplant quickly, in case they change their mind. Their "handler" will make sure the victim has the surgery by driving them to the clinic, by making up cover stories for medics, and by providing fraudulent signed consents and declarations. The victim is generally put on a flight home within days of the surgery.

Payment is often not made until the surgery has been completed and, even then, the promised amount is not paid. In addition, there is the likelihood of medical complications as a result of proper transplant procedures not being followed.

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## Indicators

- Deceptive advertisements that call for organ donations and promise unlikely rewards.
- Appealing recruiters who approach vulnerable people with promises of a better life.
- People using coercive techniques, such as emphasising the desperation of the dying recipient.

### If you are a health worker

- Patients who return from overseas after having a transplant.
- Transplant patients who don't have appropriate medical records or donor consent forms.
- Post-operative complications, such as infections or internal bleeding.
- Acute and chronic rejection of transplanted organs.
- Someone with a fresh (48 hours or less) nephrectomy (kidney removal) going on an airplane.

**Contact your safeguarding manager if you have any concerns about your patients.**

**[www.passage.org.uk](http://www.passage.org.uk) [info@passage.org.uk](mailto:info@passage.org.uk) telephone 020 7592 1850**

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## About victims

### Victims of modern slavery

are likely to suffer from mental health problems, depression and anxiety, to have physical injuries, to be addicted to alcohol or drugs, and have a higher risk of HIV/AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases.

The trafficking experience destroys a person's belief that they can have control over their own actions or decisions.

### Victims

- Have often been promised a better life, easy cash, or a better job.
- Think their life is better than it was before.
- Are too scared to talk (immigration status, criminal activities).
- Might have been given a prepared story by their exploiters.
- Have difficulties in recalling their experiences.
- Feel loyalty and gratitude to their exploiters/traffickers.
- Don't see themselves as victims, but think their situation is the result of a poor decision.
- Believe their situation is temporary (to pay a debt, support their families).

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## Indicators of potential trafficking

### Mental health

- PTSD
- Numbing
- Depression, anxiety
- Self-harm
- Suicidal thoughts
- Flashbacks
- Panic attacks
- Stockholm syndrome
- Insomnia, fatigue
- Shock, claustrophobia
- Hyper-vigilance
- Low self-esteem, self-blame
- Paranoia, psychosis

### Physical health

- Scars, bruises
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pelvic pain
- Pregnancy from rape
- Infertility from STI
- Mutilations
- Hearing problems
- Insomnia, fatigue
- Shock, claustrophobia
- Hyper-vigilance
- Respiratory issues

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## About perpetrators

It is vital to be vigilant in and around day centres, night shelters and soup runs.

Traffickers are clever and use a range of tactics to get what they want. They may frequently change their approach to targeting victims.

It is important for front-line agencies to be alert and, by identifying and reacting to these changes quickly, make it as difficult as possible for traffickers to continue to operate.

### Indicators

- People who have not been seen using your services before and who are reluctant to speak to staff.
- They may be well dressed, seem to be very friendly with other clients, and speak their languages.
- They have smartphones.
- They may recruit people on that day – and show them to a van.
- They may arrange an alternative time and place (for example, a bus stop) to be collected.

### What to do

- ***Never engage with these individuals.*** Speak to your manager.
- Ask the clients for information: what was said to them, what was offered, what arrangements were made.
- Inform your colleagues and encourage vigilance. Call the police if there is imminent danger.

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## Modern Slavery Act 2015

**In 2015, the Modern Slavery Act – a ground-breaking piece of legislation in the fight against trafficking and modern slavery – received Royal Assent in England and Wales.**

- The Modern Slavery Act puts the onus on statutory bodies to act on slavery wherever they find it – if you work for the police, a local authority or the NHS, you must report slavery if you suspect it.
- The Act requires businesses to ensure that there is no slavery in their supply chains, even those that extend outside the UK. All businesses with a turnover of more than £36 million must produce an annual Modern Slavery Statement and display it on their websites.
- The Act clarifies offences for those who engage in trafficking and exploitation.
- It also created an Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner to oversee anti-slavery work in the UK and beyond.
- The Modern Slavery Act introduced special measures for the protection of victims, including civil legal aid in relation to: immigration and employment; independent child advocates; the obligation to refer minors, even without their consent; and, in order to receive immediate assistance, the obligation to consider a minor of uncertain age to be a child.

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## The National Referral Mechanism

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK's official system under which potential victims of modern slavery are identified, assessed and supported.

**A first responder** refers a potential victim to the Competent Authorities (CAs) by filling out the relevant NRM form found at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms).

**There are CAs in the NRM:** the National Crime Agency Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU), which is responsible for British and EEA nationals; and UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).

**When a referral is received**, the CAs have five days to decide if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the person is a victim of modern slavery.

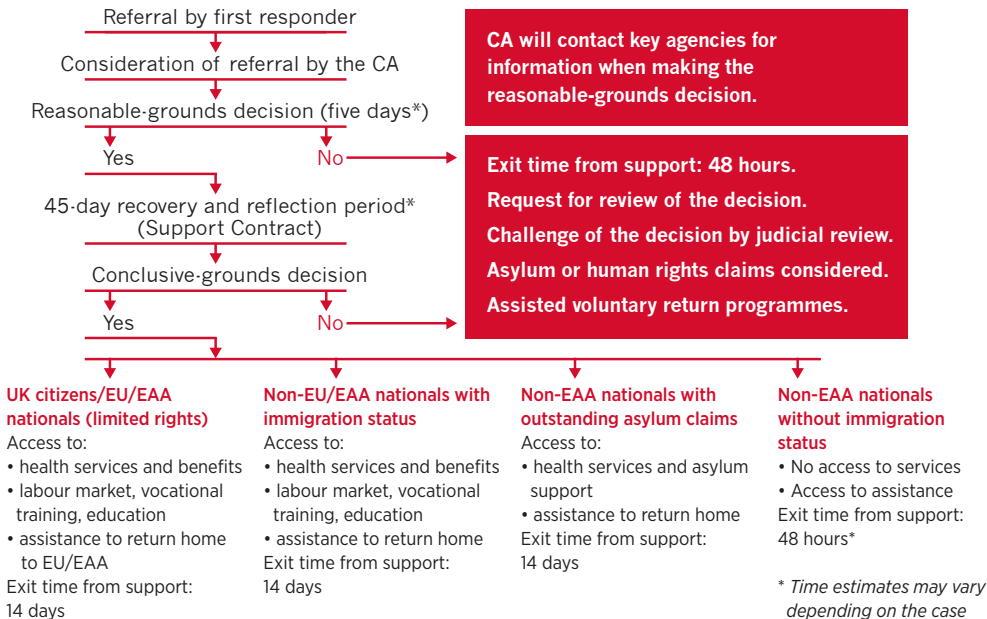
**If a positive decision is reached**, the person is entitled to a 45-day reflection and recovery period while a final, conclusive, decision is reached. Adults are free to decide whether to collaborate with police investigations. Many victims are, however, subject to unseen pressures from their controllers.

**A negative decision** means that the person has to leave support within 48 hours, although they can appeal against the decision or make a claim for asylum.

*Note: the NRM is currently being reviewed.*



## The referral process



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## About The Passage

**Given the wrong circumstances, we all have the potential to become homeless.**

The Passage, which provides services that prevent and end homelessness, operates in London and Brighton, and also works on a national and international level in the areas of modern slavery and street homelessness.

We run the UK's largest Resource Centre for homeless people. In addition to food, showers and clothing, we give access to housing advice, health care, training and employment services. We also provide outreach services, homelessness preventions schemes and accommodation projects.

Since it was established, The Passage has helped more than 120,000 people end their homelessness.

## How to support The Passage

### Donate

It costs more than £5 million a year to run The Passage, less than 30% of which is funded by statutory grants. To meet the remaining 70% we depend on voluntary contributions. Every gift, no matter how small, helps us to enable homeless people to regain their self-respect and to have hope for the future.

- Visit our donate page at [www.passage.org.uk/donate](http://www.passage.org.uk/donate).
- Call the fundraising team on 020 7592 1856.
- Your generosity makes our work possible. We focus resources where they are most needed; for every £1 spent, 95 pence goes directly to frontline services.

### Volunteer

Volunteers help in every part of our organisation. To find out about volunteering, please contact us at [volunteering@passage.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@passage.org.uk)

Supported by



## Helplines

**If you have suspicions about modern slavery in your community, call one of the numbers below.**

Your information could be the vital piece of the jigsaw that results in a victim being freed or a perpetrator being prosecuted.

**Silence is how slavery thrives;** speaking out will help to end it. If you're in a situation you can't get out of and you need help, these helplines can support you.

**Emergency 999**

**Police 101**

**Modern Slavery Helpline 08000 121 700**

**The Salvation Army 0800 808 3733**

**Crimestoppers 0800 555 111**

**GLAA 0800 432 0804**

**NSPCC 0808 800 5000**

## First responders

National Crime Agency (NCA)

Police forces

UK Border Force

Home Office

Immigration and Visas (UKVI)

Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA)

Local Authorities

Health and Social Care Trusts (Northern Ireland)

The Salvation Army

Migrant Help

Medaille Trust

Kalayaan

Barnardo's

Unseen

TARA Project (Scotland)

NSPCC (CTAC)

BAWSO

New Pathways

Refugee Council