

APS BRIEFING

Modern Slavery

APS BRIEFING: Modern Slavery

This note explains the basics about modern slavery, sets out the rules & helps identify signs to look for.

Key Points

Do	Don't
Call the police	Challenge or make a fuss in public – this increases the risk of harm to victims
Inform the relevant authorities	
Seek help from anti-slavery organisations	
Check identity and work papers	
Examine supply chains to ensure slavery isn't happening out of sight	

Background

We often think slavery is a historical shame – something consigned to the past. But many millions of people are still being trafficked and forced to work – sometimes in return for their passage from the country of their birth. Construction is one of the sectors where modern slavery is particularly prevalent. Slavery is often hidden in plain sight so employers need to be sure their sub-contractors are also behaving properly and that people are not being exploited further on down the supply chain.

Modern Slavery

There are 8 major types of modern slavery: Forced Labour; Bonded Labour; Child Slavery; Child and Forced Marriage; Descent-based Slavery; Domestic Slavery; Slavery in Supply Chains; and Human Trafficking.

Forced Labour	Forced labour principally exploits the poor, desperate and excluded. It is often more common in industries that employ a lot of – often unskilled – people and where regulation can be difficult or weak. Migrant workers are at risk because they may not speak the local language, have a limited support network and may feel their right to be in the country depends on their employer. Victims are not always subject to physical violence but may be facing more psychological threats.
Bonded Labour	Bonded labour involves victims – and sometimes whole families – being forced to work for little or no wages to pay off a debt. They will have no control of the amount they owe and, over time, are likely to pay back much more than they borrowed. The debt may also be passed on from one generation to the next. Bonded Labour and is still prevalent in agriculture, brick kilns, mills, mines and factories which is why employers need to be careful about their supply chains. Bonded Labour is also known as debt bondage or debt slavery.
Child Slavery	Child Slavery commonly sees children forced into physically demanding work in mines, brick kilns, sweatshops and private homes. Many are forced into the sex trade, begging or selling drugs. Child Slavery affects an estimated 10 million children worldwide some of them in the UK.
Child and Forced Marriage	Child Marriage remains common in many societies. It is unacceptable in the UK, but that doesn't always make it modern slavery particularly when the children – most commonly girls – are aged between 16 and 18. Child Marriage may be thought of as slavery when the child: has not consented freely or with a true understanding of what marriage means; and/ or is controlled and has been 'traded' or 'owned' and then coerced to do domestic tasks, work outside the home or have non-consensual sex; and/ or cannot realistically leave or end the marriage. Girls who leave often fall prey to other forms of slavery and exploitation. UNICEF estimates around 11% of women worldwide marry before they are 15. Child Marriage may affect boys but this is less common.

Descent-based Slavery	Descent-based Slavery is where people are born into slavery because their ancestors were also slaves of the slave owning family. Descent-based slaves work without pay often in subsistence agriculture or domestic labour. Slaves may be inherited, sold or given away as gifts or wedding presents. Descent-based slavery is passed on through the maternal line and so children born to a slave-mother become slaves themselves. They are taken from their mothers at an early age and put to work when very young.
Domestic Slavery	Domestic Slavery is often difficult to detect as it happens behind closed doors. It involves victims having to carry out a wide range of tasks including: cooking; cleaning; laundry; childcare; looking after the sick; frail and elderly; and running errands. Domestic slaves often live in their employers' homes and are always on call. Pay – where there is any - is low and often sporadic. Domestic slaves often work for food or accommodation. Domestic workers may be considered victims of domestic slavery if they cannot come and go as they like or leave their jobs, don't get paid, are subject to violence or threats and have contact with other people limited and controlled. Domestic slaves often have their identity documents withheld.
Slavery in Supply Chains	Supply-chain Slavery happens when workers are trapped in low-paid, often low-skilled, work that feeds into the manufacture and sale of consumer and other goods. It generally affects people in economies where pay and conditions are very low attracting businesses that want to drive down the cost of the things they sell. Slavery exists at every point of the supply chain from labouring in the fields, working in sweat shops and factories and in the logistics of getting goods to consumers. Around 25 million people worldwide are thought to be trapped in forced Labour linked to the supply chains of international businesses supplying goods and services.
Human Trafficking	Human Trafficking uses violence, deception or coercion to exploit people for financial or personal gain. It does not always mean people are brought to the UK illegally – trafficking can happen within a country or community. Trafficking includes people being forced to work - often in the sex trade - or made to take part in begging or crime. Victims may also end up as domestic servants, forced into marriage or even have their organs removed and sold off by the trafficker.

Modern Slavery in the UK

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 gives law enforcement agencies the powers they need to: fight modern slavery; punish the criminals involved; and support and protect victims. The Act created an independent anti-slavery commissioner whose duty it is to co-ordinate and improve the UK's slavery response. It simplified and brought together previous offences, introducing stronger penalties for people found guilty of modern slavery offenses while giving law enforcement agencies powers to stop boats where slaves are thought to be held or trafficked. Businesses over a certain size must now make an annual statement about the actions taken to ensure they have no modern slavery in their business or supply chains. The Act also provided greater support for victims including the provision for child trafficking advocates and reparation orders so the courts could compensate victims from any assets confiscated from perpetrators.



Roughly parallel legislation – the Human Trafficking and Exploitation [Scotland] Act 2015 covers modern slavery in Scotland.

Spotting the Signs of Slavery

Look out for people who:

Identification	Never have personal identification on them.
Belongings	Has very few possessions – this could be someone who always wears the same clothes and shoes, doesn't have ordinary things like a day-sack or sunglasses or cash to buy a newspaper, drinks or sandwiches and comes to work in the wrong sort of clothes for the job.
Fear	Is afraid of people generally and of the authorities in particular. Victims of modern slavery are often withdrawn and reluctant to talk to, and interact with, other people.
Abuse	Shows signs of physical or psychological abuse.

Restrictions	Seems to be being controlled - perhaps they always defer to someone else or seem unable to make decisions for themselves. Maybe they don't seem free to come and go when they want - they could always be dropped off at work and collected later, often very early in the morning or late at night.
Check the signs	https://www.antislavery.org/signs-of-slavery-test/

What to do

If you think someone is a victim of modern slavery your inclination will be to help. You can best do this by calling the police, relevant authorities or one of the reputable charities working in the sector. You ought not to challenge the person, or make a fuss in public, as this may put the victim at risk.

Who to call

Modern Slavery Helpline



08000 121 700



Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority

0800 432 0804

intelligence@gla.gov.uk

Crimestoppers

0800 555 111

Resources & Support

Anti-Slavery International

<https://www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/modern-slavery/>

Human Trafficking and Exploitation [Scotland] Act 2015

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/12/contents/enacted>

Migration Scotland: first responder toolkit

<https://www.migrationscotland.org.uk/anti-human-trafficking-and-exploitation-resources>

Modern Slavery: checking for signs

<https://www.antislavery.org/signs-of-slavery-test/>

Modern Slavery Act: documents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-bill-overarching-documents>

Modern Slavery Act 2015: guidance

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted>

Modern Slavery Act 2015: maritime enforcement powers [England and Wales]

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-act-2015-maritime-enforcement-powers-england-and-wales-code-of-practice>

Modern Slavery Act 2015: supply chain regulations

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/1833/contents/made>

Northern Ireland Modern Slavery Strategy

<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/news/northern-ireland-modern-slavery-strategy-2021-2022-published>

Safer Communities Wales

<https://safercommunities.wales/modern-slavery-exploitation/human-trafficking/>

Scotland Against Modern Slavery

<https://www.scotlandagainstmmodernslavery.co.uk>

Slavery and human trafficking regulations [Scotland]

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/slavery-human-trafficking-guidance-businesses-scotland/pages/3/>

Slavery and Human trafficking: guidance for businesses [Scotland]

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/slavery-human-trafficking-guidance-businesses-scotland/pages/3/>

Slavery and trafficking prevention orders

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slavery-and-trafficking-prevention-and-risk-orders>
Stopping modern slavery in business

Stopping modern slavery in business

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stopping-modern-slavery-in-business-video>