

Modern Slavery: What to do if you are a First Responder

Spotting the signs of Modern Slavery

- **Isolation** – Not interacting with other people or appearing fearful of talking to outsiders. They might have someone who talks on their behalf.
- **Restricted freedom of movement** – Not having their own documents or I.D. They may be unfamiliar with their surroundings. They might own very few possessions and wear the same clothes week-in-week-out.
- **Reluctance to seek help** – They might be fearful of the authorities or unsure of who to trust. They might not speak to strangers or have somebody who speaks on their behalf. They may look frightened when in the company of their manager.
- **Physical Appearance** – Appearing tired, anxious, withdrawn. They may have unexplained injuries or show signs of neglect such as malnourishment or poor hygiene. They may wear clothes that are unsuitable or unsafe for work.
- **Poor living conditions** – Living in overcrowded and dirty conditions. They may live where they work. They may be forced to pay for this accommodation.
- **Unusual travel arrangements** – Travelling very early or late at night. Some may be dropped off/collected from work in person. Children may be dropped off/collected from unusual places by taxis.

For more specific indicators of different exploitation types, visit [Unseen](#)

What is the National Referral Mechanism (NRM)?

The NRM is the **government system for identifying and supporting potential victims of modern slavery**. First Responders complete the referral to the Home Office. Individuals can receive either a **positive or negative** decision.

Charity “Unseen” have made a handy [NRM Process Guide](#).

- Once a referral is made, Home Office decision makers at the Single Competent Authority (SCA) have **5 days** to assess whether there are **reasonable grounds (RG)** to believe that someone is a victim of modern slavery.
- If a positive RG decision is granted, further assessment takes place over a **minimum of 30 days** to ascertain whether there are **conclusive grounds (CG)** to believe that someone is a victim of modern slavery.
- During this time, **survivors are entitled to care and support from the Salvation Army** including accommodation; financial; medical; legal; education and employment while the CG decision is made.

What are my responsibilities?

I have concerns but I'm not sure.

Share your intel – Complete an “Op Liberty” form, which can be found at the bottom of the [Safer Derbyshire](#) page. Send this to SOCEX@derbyshire.police.uk

I think a modern slavery offence has occurred.

- Report to Police via 101 or [online](#), or **999 if someone is at immediate risk of harm**, and make either a [Child Safeguarding](#) or [Adult Safeguarding](#) referral.
- As first responder, you may have to complete an **NRM referral or Duty to Notify**. If you are the first agency to identify the potential victim, **you** should complete the NRM referral in a timely manner.



Children under 18 **MUST** be referred into the NRM.



Adults over 18 **MUST** consent to be referred into the NRM.

If no consent, then a Duty to Notify must be completed. These are both completed via the same online MS1 form, but you will need to specify whether consent was given.

How to obtain consent – explaining the NRM

Consent is required for an adult to be referred to the NRM.

For an adult to provide their informed consent, **you must explain**:

- what the NRM is.
- what support is available through the NRM.
- what the possible outcomes are for an individual being referred.

You could use an [NRM Explanatory Booklet](#) (available in different languages) to help with the explanation.

Do not worry if the victim does not want to make their mind up now, this is not uncommon. [Rebuild](#) are commissioned to work with unsure potential victims and help them to navigate their options. Their contact details are [overleaf](#).



To make an NRM Referral or complete a Duty to Notify, visit www.modernslavery.gov.uk/start

Tips on how to complete a good NRM referral.

If you are completing an NRM referral as First Responder, you will need to “interview” the potential victim so that you understand their story well enough to answer the questions on the NRM referral form. Their future depends on your ability to describe their exploitation, so attention to detail is required.

- 1) Download a list of NRM questions beforehand from the [Safer Derbyshire website](#). This will help you to prepare for the interview with the potential victim.
- 2) Work your way through these questions when speaking with the potential victim.
- 3) You should ensure that your account meets the definition of Modern Slavery: Include details of the **Act** (what has happened), the **Means** (how did this happen) and the **Purpose** (why did this happen).
- 4) Where you have documentary, photographic or other evidence, you should outline this in your referral form. You can't upload documents to an NRM referral. Once you have submitted your referral, you will receive a confirmation email with an NRM reference. You can now submit these documents by email to be considered alongside your referral.
- 5) You should update the SCA (decision makers) via email with any new developments such as new evidence or change in circumstances such as the person moving on or going missing.

Home Office Feedback – What does a “Good Referral” include?

- As much detail as possible (and any reasons for a lack of detail).
- Try to provide a clear chronology of events.
- Professional insight/opinion – e.g. *“I am a social worker with five years’ experience of supporting vulnerable young people. I have submitted many NRM referrals for children who are victim of County Lines exploitation. It is my professional opinion that the potential victim is being honest about their account, and I have identified several Modern Slavery indicators during my interactions with the potential victim”.*
- Details of any observed Modern Slavery indicators. There are extensive lists of indicators on the [ATLEU](#) or [Unseen](#) websites to check for.
- A consistent account, or any reasons why the account may appear inconsistent.
- A timely referral, or any reasons why the referral was delayed.

You should read “What makes a good referral” on pages 16-24 of the [LGA Guidance on the NRM](#). This contains some **example answers** and **best practice** for securing a positive Reasonable Grounds decision.

Trauma-Informed Practice

Potential victims may have traumatic experiences which are difficult to recount for the purpose of an NRM referral. Some tips from victims with lived experiences include:



- **Use a private/confidential space.**
- **Be approachable and calm.**
- **Build a rapport** – find commonalities or talk over food.
- **Avoid jargon and use clear language.**
- **Ask questions softly. Think about your body language.**
- **Do not over-promise.**
- **Understand that you don't know all the answers.**
- **Have patience.**
- **Be present and attentive** – the potential victim's NRM decision rests largely on your ability to put their case across.
- **Don't feel the need to recap the details of the story.**

Rebuild 

Living free from modern slavery

Rebuild are commissioned by Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council to provide outreach support to identified potential victims of modern slavery, helping them to understand and navigate their options. Rebuild can also be contacted as a source of professional support and advice:

Email: initialsupport@rebuildeastmidlands.org

Referrals Line: 01332 913001

Rebuild Referral Form: [click here](#)

Comprehensive, detailed practice guidance is available to download from bottom of [Safer Derbyshire website](#).