



# National Referral Mechanism & Devolved Decision-Making Pilot

## What is the National Referral Mechanism?

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK's framework for identifying and supporting victims of Modern Slavery. Modern slavery is a complex crime that includes the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, for the purpose of exploitation (Trafficking), and holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

## What is expected in Panel meetings?

Panel decision-makers will make a Reasonable Grounds decision based on a threshold of reasonable belief and a Conclusive Grounds decision based on the balance of probabilities. Both decisions can be made together at the first meeting if the thresholds are met, however if further information is required before making the Conclusive Grounds decision this will be deferred to a second meeting and further information sought. All decisions are reported to the Home Office and quality assured before notified to first responders.

## When should a NRM Referral be made?

If you think that you have encountered a victim of Modern Slavery, then you must notify the Home Office. You do not need evidence of this, reasonable belief alone will suffice. Modern Slavery is a serious crime and victims are likely to suffer or have suffered significant harm. The information in the notification to the Home Office should therefore reflect the gravity of these concerns.

## Who are the NRM panel?

The local NRM Panel is multi-agency, supported by a NRM Coordinator, will meet on a monthly basis. It is made up of managers from Warwickshire County Council Children's Social Care, Youth Justice, Education Services, Warwickshire Police, Health, and the Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship (ICTG) Service. The first responder will be invited to present the circumstances to Panel leading to the referral but will not be involved in the decision regarding the NRM.

## How is a Referral made?

NRM referrals are made to the Home Office using the NRM online referral form by First Responder agencies (here) or otherwise via the helpline 0800 0121 700 or online at [modernslaveryhelpline.org](https://modernslaveryhelpline.org). All referrals for Warwickshire children will then be forwarded to the NRM Panel for decision making – except for any child who is within 100 days of their 18th birthday.

## Devolved Decision-Making Pilot

Warwickshire County Council and safeguarding partners are taking part in a national pilot, to develop approaches on decision-making concerning children who have been identified as victims via NRM in Warwickshire. Referrals will be assessed by a local NRM Panel, set up to facilitate multi-agency decision-making that is effective, timely and ensures that children known to the panel are connected to local support and safeguarded.

## What should be included in a Referral?

When making a referral, the following should be noted:

- Events which have occurred and source of information
- Indicators that are suspected and confirmed
- All professionals in the child's network
- Any vulnerabilities identified with the child