



# ONE MINUTE GUIDE: Submitting a referral to the National Referral Mechanism

## What is the National Referral Mechanism (NRM)?

The [National Referral Mechanism](#) is the national framework for identifying and referring victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. The Single Competent Authority (SCA) administers it, which is part of the Home Office.

## What is a 'First Responder'?

The people who can make a referral to the NRM are known as 'first responders'. Some statutory and non-statutory organisations are designated as 'first responders'.

You can still report modern slavery if you are not a first responder via the helpline on 0800 0121 700 or [report it online](#) via [modernslaveryhelpline.org](https://modernslaveryhelpline.org)

## When do I notify the Home Office?

If you have 'a reasonable cause to believe that you may have encountered a victim of Modern Slavery' then you must notify the Home Office.

There are two elements to consider:

1. The fact that you may have encountered a victim of Modern Slavery is a LOW threshold. You do not need to know, believe or have any evidence, suspicion alone will suffice.
2. 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.

## How do I notify the Home Office?

North Yorkshire and City of York are currently taking part in a pilot of devolved decision making, which means that making the decision about whether a child has been subjected to modern slavery or human trafficking sits with the local decision making multi-agency NRM panel.

## How do I refer a child into the NRM Panel?

If you are a first responder and you suspect you have a child who may have been victim of modern slavery you should speak to your manager and then contact the NRM Coordinator via email at [NRM@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:NRM@northyorks.gov.uk)

The NRM Coordinator will then guide you through the process of taking you through the NRM Panel. They will also support you in whether a referral needs to be made to the [Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service \(ICTG\)](#) offered through Barnardos.

## What is the North Yorkshire and City of York NRM Panel?

The NRM Panel is a weekly virtual panel made up of senior managers from a number of key agencies including North Yorkshire Police, Children Social Care, Youth Justice Services, Health, and the Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship (ICTG) Service.

The aim of the panel is to ensure there is consistent multi-agency decision-making and robust planning in respect of children who may be subjected to Modern Slavery. The panel will take place twice a week on a Monday (City of York) and a Friday (North Yorkshire).

The panel may hear the information surrounding what has happened to a child at three points:

1. Pre – Screen – A referral can be made into the panel should a first responder be concerned that a child may be subject to modern slavery. The panel will consider the details and make a decision as to whether a referral should be submitted to the SCA. The referrer will then be supported by the NRM Panel Coordinator to submit the referral to the SCA online.
2. Reasonable Grounds Once the SCA have received the referral, they will send it back to the NRM panel for decision making. As well as decision making about whether an individual is a victim of trafficking, an NRM referral is the starting point of an investigation of a serious criminal offence by the Police.
3. Conclusive Grounds (CG) is the second decision the panel is required to make. A Conclusive Grounds decision is made when, on the balance of probabilities, a child is a victim of modern slavery. If sufficient information is known at the Reasonable Grounds Decision meeting, both decisions can be made at the same time. If there is not and further information is needed, a further meeting will be scheduled to make the final CG decision. Both decisions have to be made no later than 45 days from the date the panel received the referral from the SCA\*.

\*Decisions made by the panel will be subject to Quality Assurance checks by the SCA

## What should I include in the NRM Referral?

An NRM referral is the starting point of an investigation of a serious criminal offence by the Police. Time and care should be taken when completing it or the referral. The NRM Coordinator will help you create the referral. However you should consider:

1. The definition of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking is as per the ‘Palermo Protocol’ below. This is the definition the panel will use to decide if a child is a victim of modern slavery or not.
2. Remember a child cannot consent to their own exploitation, so we do not need to show that a child has been forced, threatened or coerced etc.

Human Trafficking		
The Action	The Means	The Purpose
Recruitment Transportation Transfer Harbouring Receipt	Fraud Coercion Abduction Abuse of power Threat or use of force Abuse of a position of vulnerability Deception etc.	Sexual exploitation Forced labour Forced criminality Removal of organs Servitude Slavery

3. Introduce the child, provide the background of any local context e.g. the child is in care, known to smoke cannabis, previous arrests for shoplifting, regular truant etc. Setting the scene may highlight vulnerabilities and key indicators of exploitation.
4. Clearly articulate your concerns. Remember the NRM is about identifying victims of exploitation. If there are gaps in your knowledge, consider whether you need more information before submitting.
5. Provide rationale to support your concerns. What information do you think that makes you consider the individual is being exploited? Consider: indicators of exploitation, Police / partnership information, disclosures from the child or 3rd parties; circumstances of any arrests.
6. The NRM should be a bespoke referral and should only contain cut and paste information when it is in context and referenced appropriately as to the source of that information.
7. Use full names of other individuals linked to the child. All NRM referrals are passed to the Police for investigation so full names, addresses etc. are required.

## What does the outcome of the NRM mean for a child/young person?

### Stage 1 – The Reasonable Grounds decision:

If the NRM Panel reaches a 'Reasonable Grounds' decision this means that the panel:

*“Suspect but cannot prove that the child is a victim of Human Trafficking, Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour”*

If a 'Reasonable Grounds' decision is reached, there is enough information to investigate.

Once a decision has been made, the police force in the area where the crime has been committed will be contacted by the SCA and a crime will be recorded and investigated by the police to establish, whether or not the child is the victim of modern slavery.

*(Remember: the NRM runs alongside established safeguarding processes, it does not replace them)*

The investigating officer will be provided with the contact details of the person who submitted the notification and is expected to liaise with them around how to best engage the young person and obtain any updates that might be helpful for the investigation.

### Stage 2 – Conclusive Grounds Decision

If the panel make a Conclusive Grounds decision, it is decided that 'on the balance of probabilities', there is sufficient information to decide that the individual is a victim of modern slavery.

A Conclusive Grounds decision provides official recognition (based on the civil burden of proof), that a child is/was a victim of exploitation at that 'moment of time'. It does not confer any other automatic rights or benefits.

If the panel decide within the first meeting that it is possible to make both a Reasonable Grounds and Conclusive Grounds decision, then the Police Force will be contacted by the SCA and a crime will be recorded and investigated by the Police to establish, whether or not the child is a victim of modern slavery.

For further information please visit the [CYSCP Website](#).

## Where do I go for further information?

Please visit the [CYSCP website](#) for up to date information and latest news.

Please also sign up to the [CYSCP Newsletter](#) and follow us on Twitter [@YorkSCP](#)

