



Home Office

# Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA)

Version 4.0

This document provides background and guidance on the use of the RNA for confirmed victims of modern slavery.

# Contents

Contents.....	2
About this guidance.....	4
Contacts .....	4
Publication .....	4
Changes from last version of this guidance .....	4
Introduction .....	6
Purpose of instruction .....	6
Background to modern slavery .....	6
Recovery Needs Assessment Process .....	7
Background to the Recovery Needs Assessment.....	7
Assessing Recovery Needs.....	7
The NRM Process .....	8
Recovery Needs Assessment – process overview .....	8
Timescales and review .....	10
Figure 1 - RNA process map .....	11
Roles and responsibilities .....	11
The support worker .....	12
The Prime Contractor.....	12
The SCA .....	13
Conducting the Recovery Needs Assessment .....	14
How to use the RNA form .....	14
1. Victim information .....	14
2. Details of current support provision .....	14
3. Personal circumstances .....	14
4. Summary of recommendations.....	15
5. Assessment of ongoing recovery needs .....	15
Questions.....	15
Recommendation sections.....	16
6. Declaration section .....	18
7. Voluntary Exit Declaration section .....	18
8. Prime Contractor declaration section.....	18
How to assess recovery need arising from a victim’s modern slavery experiences .....	18
Accommodation .....	18

Financial support.....	20
Support worker contact .....	21
Access to health and mental health care services.....	22
Social care services.....	23
Legal advice and support .....	24
Access to translation and interpretation services.....	24
Community and social recovery needs.....	25
Decision Making.....	26
Role of the Single Competent Authority.....	26
Target End and Exit Dates.....	27
Reconsiderations.....	27
Figure 2 RNA reconsideration process map.....	28
Voluntary Returns Service.....	29
Glossary .....	30

# About this guidance

This guidance is for staff at the Single Competent Authority (SCA), relevant employees of the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract Prime Contractor and support workers for confirmed victims of modern slavery who need to understand how to carry out the Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) for those who have received a positive conclusive grounds (CG) decision through the [National Referral Mechanism \(NRM\)](#). It provides guidance on how to complete the RNA form, guidance on when victims' recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences may require continued support through the Home Office's Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC) and guidance on where they should be met through alternative services.

This guidance applies to adult victim support in England and Wales.

## Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors then email [NRM Reform](#).

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can [email the Guidance Rules and Forms team](#).

## Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was published:

- version **4.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **8 November 2021**

## Changes from last version of this guidance

Updates to version 2 of this guidance include:

Version	Date	Change
4.0	08 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amendments following the creation of the Immigration Enforcement Competent Authority (IECA)</li></ul>
3.0	18 January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• updated terminology in reference to the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC)</li></ul>
2.0	21 August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• clarification on how the RNA decision will be communicated to the victim, including the provision of the relevant documentation</li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explanation of the process to be followed if a confirmed victim does not wish to participate in the RNA process, including the introduction of a 'Voluntary Exit Declaration' section on the RNA form and how this process should work</li> <li>• updates to the support worker role section to include what happens if a confirmed victim changes their support worker during the RNA process</li> <li>• changes to reflect the revised structure and question numbering of version 2 of the RNA form (including the introduction of the 'Voluntary Exit Declaration')</li> <li>• clarifications to the types of evidence the SCA will accept alongside the RNA form and the reasons for which ongoing support worker contact can be granted</li> <li>• removal of the 'Local Authority Pilots' section, as these pilot projects have now ended</li> <li>• changes to the 'Decision Making' section to clarify when the SCA may return forms on quality assurance grounds or request more information</li> <li>• updates to the section on how the Target End and Exit Date sections of the form should be used - clarification on our expectations for victims exiting support where no ongoing recovery needs have been identified or where the SCA does not agree with the support worker's recommendations for ongoing support</li> </ul>
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This guidance will be updated on a regular basis as required.

**Related content**

[Contents](#)

# Introduction

## Purpose of instruction

This guidance explains the policy, process and procedure which must be followed when completing an RNA for a confirmed victim of modern slavery. It explains the issues for consideration for support workers in developing recommendations for ongoing support for victims with recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences, whether through the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC) or alternative services. It also details those issues for the consideration of Single Competent Authority (SCA) decision makers when deciding on those recommendations. It applies to all staff dealing with the RNA and covers:

- the process for conducting the RNA
- how to complete the RNA form
- how to consider whether the victim has ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences
- how to consider whether ongoing MSVCC support is required or whether alternative services can meet any such recovery needs

## Background to modern slavery

Modern slavery is a serious crime in which people are treated as commodities and exploited for criminal gain. The true extent of modern slavery in the UK, and indeed globally, is unknown. Modern slavery is an international problem and victims (who may be European Economic Area (EEA) or non-EEA nationals) may have entered the UK legally, on forged documentation or clandestinely, or they may be British citizens living in the UK.

Modern slavery includes human trafficking and/or slavery, servitude or forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation takes a number of forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude, and victims come from all walks of life.

Victims may be unwilling to come forward to law enforcement or public protection agencies, not seeing themselves as victims, or fearing further reprisals from their abusers. Victims may also not always be recognised as such by those who come into contact with them.

### Related content

[Contents](#)

# Recovery Needs Assessment Process

## Background to the Recovery Needs Assessment

This section provides information on the wider context in which the RNA operates.

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK's system for identifying and providing access to support for potential victims of modern slavery. The aim of the NRM is to lift victims out of a situation of exploitation, provide them with a period of intensive support to assist with their recovery, and get them to a position where they can begin to re-build their life. If required, the NRM can provide for adult victims (through the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC) in England and Wales): safe and secure accommodation, financial support and an allocated support worker who advocates for the victim as necessary.

Potential victims have their individual support needs assessed on entry to the NRM and through contact with their support worker while they remain in the system awaiting a conclusive grounds (CG) decision. The RNA, which is conducted after a positive CG, will allow support workers to work with victims in developing recommendations for support where they have ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences, whether through the MSVCC or other services. Elements of MSVCC support will be assessed separately to ensure that the overall package of support is specific to the individual's ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences.

All RNA recommendation decisions will be made by the Single Competent Authority<sup>1</sup> (SCA), including where the RG and CG decisions are made by the Immigration Enforcement Competent Authority (IECA).

## Assessing Recovery Needs

The RNA enables support workers to consider whether a victim has any ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences following the Recovery period and positive CG decision and if so, whether continued MSVCC support is required to meet these recovery needs. If the support worker proposes the continuation of elements of MSVCC support, they should also detail their recommendation(s) for its duration on the RNA form. The SCA will then decide the outcome of these recommendations. MSVCC support is only available for recovery needs arising from a victim's modern slavery experiences.

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<sup>1</sup> The name 'Single Competent Authority' is being reviewed and will be updated in due course.

## The NRM Process

This section should be read in conjunction with section 5 ('Referring potential victims of Modern Slavery into the National Referral Mechanism') in the [Modern Slavery Act 2015 statutory guidance for England and Wales](#).

**Following a positive RG decision, a victim will receive a minimum 45-day Recovery and Reflection period (Recovery Period) in England and Wales unless grounds of public order prevent it, or it is found that victim status was claimed improperly.**

At the beginning of the Recovery period, Support Providers are required to carry out a detailed needs-based assessment to identify what support the potential victim will require during the Recovery period, as well as any potential safeguarding issues that may affect that support.

Support during this period relates to the immediate and ongoing needs of the potential victim while the relevant Competent Authority makes a substantive CG decision. This support is offered until the potential victim receives a CG decision.

If a victim receives a negative RG decision they will not enter MSVCC support and will exit emergency support within 9 days if this has been provided.

**Following a positive RG decision, the relevant Competent Authority will make a CG decision.**

The relevant Competent Authority determines whether, 'on the balance of probabilities', there are sufficient grounds to decide that the individual being considered is a victim of human trafficking or slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour.

The expectation is that the CG decision will be made as soon as possible after the 45 calendar days Recovery period.

See the 'Making a conclusive grounds decision' section of the [Modern Slavery Act 2015 statutory guidance for England and Wales](#) for more information.

## Recovery Needs Assessment – process overview

The Recovery Needs Assessment is to be conducted for all confirmed victims receiving MSVCC support, as soon as possible following receipt by the victim of a positive CG decision ([Figure 1](#)). A minimum of **45 calendar days** of MSVCC 'move-on' support will be maintained for confirmed victims following their receipt of a positive CG decision in order to facilitate, where possible, their transition into alternative services. This 45-day period starts on the date of receipt of a positive Conclusive Grounds (CG) decision.

The RNA includes a tailored transition plan for each confirmed victim, with the aim of ensuring that MSVCC services continue, in part or in full, until other services are able



to meet any ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences or until the victim has no such ongoing recovery needs.

All RNAs and transition plans will be completed by the support workers who are working with the victim. All RNAs and transition plans will be received by the Prime Contractor of the MSVCC, which will carry out a quality assurance function before passing the assessment on to the SCA, which will check that the transition plan has been developed in line with this guidance. The SCA will make the decision on the support worker's recommendations, as to whether the victim has ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences which can only be met through the MSVCC and for how long.

The support worker should complete the RNA and transition plan and submit it with supporting evidence to the MSVCC Prime Contractor, following the victim's receipt of a positive CG decision ([Figure 1](#)).

The MSVCC Prime Contractor should quality assure the RNA and transition plan and submit to the SCA for a decision. The SCA will make a decision on the ongoing support provision based on the recommendations provided by the support worker in light of the information provided through the RNA and the supporting evidence.

Confirmed victims will continue to receive a **guaranteed minimum period of 45 calendar days MSVCC support from their receipt of a positive CG decision.**

Where the SCA has not made and communicated a decision on any recommendations for ongoing MSVCC support within this 45-day period, confirmed victims will remain in MSVCC support, at least until this decision has been made and communicated, and any necessary transition arrangements are in place.

If the victim is assessed as having no ongoing recovery needs requiring support, or the SCA decides to **not** agree with the support recommendations the victim must exit the service no later than 9 working days after receipt of the RNA decision or at the end of their minimum post-CG 45 calendar day move-on period, whichever is later.

The Recovery Needs Assessment process will apply to all confirmed victims who are already receiving MSVCC support following a CG decision, but who have not yet had a RNA and transition plan completed. **The victim has a choice in whether or not they wish to engage with the RNA process and remain in MSVCC support, but the victim must agree to engage with the RNA if they are to continue receiving support beyond the 45-calendar day move-on period.** The victim should be provided with all the information available to enable them to make an informed decision. For example, when notified of their positive CG decision, confirmed victims will be made aware that an RNA will be conducted soon after. The support worker should explain the RNA process, in line with this guidance, to the victim ahead of completing a RNA to ensure the victim understands what the RNA is and what it means for them.

Section 3 of the RNA form (version 2) asks whether the victim has chosen to exit support prior to an RNA taking place. If this is the case, the support worker will not need to complete any further questions in the assessment and recommendation sections, but will go directly to Section 7 for the Voluntary Exit Declaration. Here the

support worker will confirm that the RNA process has been explained to the victim and that they understand that without an RNA they will be unable to receive any further support through the MSVCC, beyond their guaranteed minimum 45 calendar day period post-CG. The support worker will also provide a client exit date in section 7, whether this is imminent or has already taken place. The support worker should submit this RNA form according to the standard process, but the SCA will not return a decision on ongoing support unless this relates to a proposed exit date. Where the victim opts out of the RNA process, and has already received their guaranteed minimum period of 45 calendar days support post-CG, the victim must exit within 9 working days.

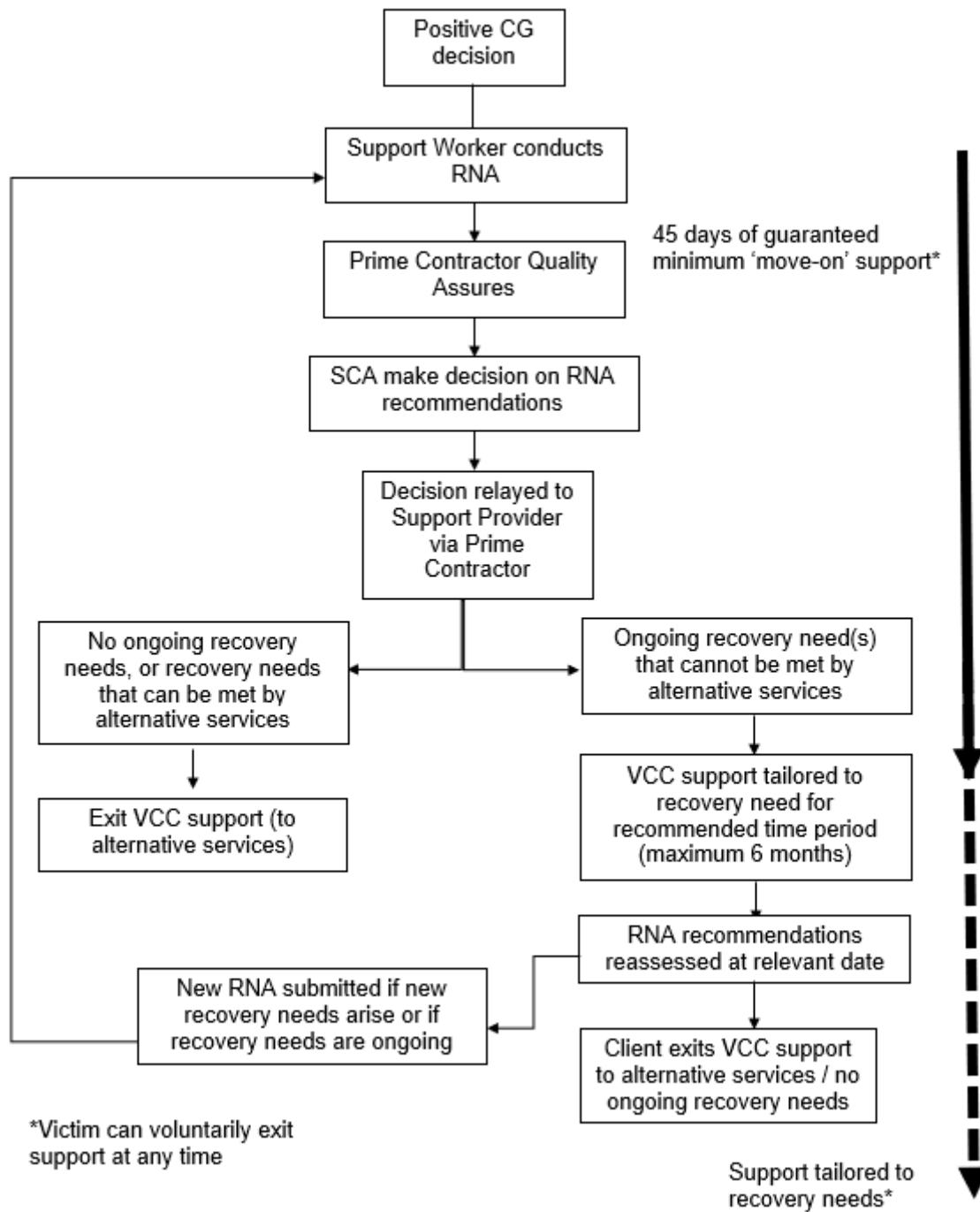
Unless the victim chooses to exit MSVCC support without a RNA being conducted, the support worker will work with the victim to identify their ongoing recovery needs and to develop appropriate recommendations for their transition plan to assist their recovery, taking into account the victim's views and preferences where possible.

## Timescales and review

All recommendations for ongoing MSVCC support **must** be accompanied by an estimated minimum timescale required to either assist with the identified recovery needs or to put other support in place, where necessary, to allow the victim to exit the MSVCC. This timescale will not always represent an end date for the provision of MSVCC support, but a further RNA will need to be submitted if it is deemed that the victim will require support beyond this date. It is the responsibility of the support worker to ensure that a further RNA is undertaken in accordance with this guidance and submitted with revised estimated minimum timescales for MSVCC support, together with the supporting evidence, in advance of the previous end date. Should a change in the victim's recovery needs or circumstances (such as an immigration decision providing recourse to public funds) necessitate a change to their support provision or move-on plan part way through the agreed support provision, it is the responsibility of the support worker to ensure that a further RNA is undertaken and submitted in accordance with this guidance.

Support workers can make recommendations seeking up to a maximum of six months continued MSVCC support at a time. If the victim has further recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences, or their recovery needs cannot be met outside of the MSVCC at the end of the agreed time period, the support worker must undertake a further RNA in accordance with this guidance and submit it with revised estimated minimum timescales for MSVCC support, together with the supporting evidence, before the end of the previous six-month period.

**Figure 1 - RNA process map**



## Roles and responsibilities

This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of those involved with completing and signing off the RNA. This includes:

- the support worker
- the MSVCC Prime Contractor

- the Single Competent Authority (SCA)

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of **first responders and first responder organisations; public authorities that are first responders and other public authorities** [can be found on GOV.UK](#).

## The support worker

The role of the support worker is to carry out the RNA following the victim's receipt of a positive conclusive grounds (CG) decision. The support worker should work with the victim to identify any ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences; identify the appropriate support service to meet these needs; and make recommendations as to whether the victim requires Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC) support beyond the 45 day post-positive CG minimum provision or whether alternative services can meet these needs (and within what anticipated timeframe).

The objective of the support worker should be integrating or reintegrating victims into a community and establishing longer-term stability in a timely manner by helping victims to transition into alternative services outside of the MSVCC, where possible. The support worker should take into account the victim's views and preferences where possible, but the final recommendations for ongoing MSVCC support are made at the discretion of the victim's support worker.

The support worker who is working most closely with the victim should complete the RNA. The victim's assigned support worker may change over time, for example if the victim changes support provider or location, or at the discretion of the support provider. The RNA is specific to the victim, not support worker, and so in these instances the approved recommendations will move across support workers and providers. If a victim has been transferred between support providers ahead of the RNA taking place, the relevant organisations should work together to decide who is best placed to complete the RNA and hand over any relevant information that is needed for the support worker to complete the assessment.

## The Prime Contractor

The role of the MSVCC Prime Contractor is to quality assure the RNA carried out by support workers, and to then pass this on to the SCA for a decision.

For quality assurance, the MSVCC Prime Contractor should ensure that:

- all relevant sections of the RNA form have been filled out
- the RNA contains clear recommendations for ongoing support, based upon the victim's recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences, for each relevant section of the RNA (see Section 3 of this guidance for further details on what should be included)
- the recommendations for ongoing support are consistent with this guidance
- the support worker has provided [supporting evidence](#), dated within the last 3 calendar months

Where RNA forms have not been filled in to the required standard or relevant supporting evidence has not been provided as set out above, the MSVCC Prime Contractor should return the form to the support worker for revision, explaining why it is being returned on the basis of the quality assurance grounds listed above (for example sections not filled in correctly). The support worker should make the necessary amendments and return it to the MSVCC Prime Contractor for quality assurance.

## The Single Competent Authority SCA

The role of the SCA is:

- to act as the decision maker in each case.
- to determine whether or not the support worker's recommendations for any continuation of MSVCC support are appropriate and reasonable, based upon all the available evidence and in line with this guidance document, and should be implemented

### **Related content**

[Contents](#)

# Conducting the Recovery Needs Assessment

## How to use the RNA form

The support worker will engage with the victim to conduct the RNA and use it to identify any ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences and whether Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC) support should continue to assist with these recovery needs or whether arrangements can be made for the victim to access alternative services which are considered sufficient to meet these needs. Where alternative support services are available, the support worker should identify how long access to these services is projected to take.

The support worker must complete and return the form and transition plan to the MSVCC Prime Contractor, which will quality assure the documentation before submitting to the Single Competent Authority (SCA) for the decision on ongoing support provision to meet the victim's recovery needs.

**The support worker must fill in all sections of the RNA form, based on the victim's ongoing recovery needs, at the time of assessment.** Any ongoing MSVCC support must be requested and the support worker should not assume that any branch of support will automatically continue by virtue of past provision.

The RNA form consists of eight sections:

### 1. Victim information

This section collects basic information to identify the victim (such as name, nationality, and immigration status) and key monitoring data (such as RNA date and RNA Version Number).

### 2. Details of current support provision

This section collects background information on provision of support to date, including details of the support provider, key worker and date of entry to the MSVCC.

### 3. Personal circumstances

This section establishes key information about the victim's circumstances, which may impact on their access to alternative services and the level of support that they may require.

This includes questions about immigration status, recourse to public funds, asylum claims, voluntary returns to country of origin, pregnancy and/or dependents and ongoing criminal proceedings.

Answers within this section should inform the recommendations made by the support worker regarding the victim's transition from the MSVCC. The decision maker must take these circumstances into account when assessing ongoing recovery need for MSVCC support.

## 4. Summary of recommendations

This section summarises the recommendations of ongoing MSVCC support tailored to the victim's identified recovery needs.

Recommendations in the summary section must include:

- details of any ongoing MSVCC support required for identified recovery needs
- the target end dates for elements of support and [estimated service exit date](#) based on the transition plan timescales
- the estimated reassessment date, if applicable
- whether any ongoing requirement for MSVCC support is caused by delays to the victim's move-on planning and link up with other services

Recommendations for ongoing MSVCC support **must** be accompanied by an estimated service exit date required to put other support in place, where necessary, which allows the victim to exit the MSVCC. This timescale will not always represent an end date for the provision of MSVCC support, but a further RNA will need to be submitted if it is deemed that the victim will require support beyond this date (see [Figure 1](#) above and '[Decision Making](#)' section below).

Where the victim is assessed as having no ongoing recovery needs requiring MSVCC support, they must exit the service no later than 9 working days after receipt of the RNA decision or at the end of their minimum post-CG 45 day move-on period, whichever is later.

## 5. Assessment of ongoing recovery needs

This section asks the victim's support worker to assess whether or not the victim has an ongoing recovery need arising from their modern slavery experiences, for each element of support offered by the MSVCC for:

- [accommodation](#)
- [financial support](#)
- [support worker contact](#)

## Questions

The questions within this section of the RNA seek to establish:

**Is there an ongoing recovery need arising from their modern slavery experiences for this type of support?**

The aim of the RNA is to identify if there are ongoing needs arising from the victim's modern slavery experiences and provide tailored support to victims to assist in meeting these recovery needs. Each element of support will therefore be assessed separately, to ensure that the overall package of support is specific to the individual.

### **Can the identified recovery need arising from their modern slavery experiences be adequately addressed by services other than the MSVCC?**

These questions seek to establish whether other types of suitable support can be accessed by the victim, for example local authority housing; mainstream benefits; asylum support and social services under the Care Act 2014. The MSVCC is designed to provide intensive short-term support; this should only be maintained after the 45-day minimum period of support, post-positive CG, while arrangements are made for the victim to access alternative services where possible, or where the victim has recovery needs which cannot yet be adequately supported by other services. The victim should exit MSVCC support as soon as other sufficient services are in place. Where there is ongoing recovery need for support, there should be no gap in the provision of services.

All questions of the RNA form should be completed by the support worker, unless the form directs otherwise.

## **Recommendation sections**

The RNA form asks support workers to summarise all recommendations at the beginning of the form, alongside the victim's target end date for each element of support requested (accommodation, financial support and support worker contact) and estimated service exit date.

Following each set of questions, the RNA asks support workers to provide recommendations for any ongoing MSVCC support and/or move-on planning, based upon any recovery needs arising from the victim's modern slavery experiences identified in that section of the form.

The support worker will be responsible for putting in place a detailed transition plan to ensure that the victim can continue to access support for any ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences while they transition out of the MSVCC (where transition is possible). Where there is a need for continued MSVCC support, the support worker will use their assessment of the victim's individual circumstances and timescales in the locality for applications to access other services, to make recommendations on the projected timescales for continuation of that support.

Given that the victim's ability to transition to alternative services may be contingent on third party action (e.g. immigration decisions by the Home Office or local authority housing allocation), the support worker will estimate the service exit date based on their knowledge of the victim's individual circumstances and their experience of the timeliness of external processes. Approximate timescales and evidence for any move-on applications should be sought by the support worker at the start of the



application process. Support workers should estimate the earliest exit date possible on this basis.

If the SCA decides to agree this exit date and if the victim's recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences cannot be met outside the MSVCC before the agreed exit date, the support worker should undertake a further RNA in accordance with this guidance and submit it with revised estimated minimum timescales for MSVCC support, together with the supporting evidence, before the agreed exit date. Victims will remain in MSVCC support at least until a decision on these recommendations has been made by the SCA and communicated to them.

Support workers can make recommendations seeking up to a maximum of six months continued MSVCC support at a time. If the victim's recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences cannot be met outside the MSVCC at the end of that six-month period, the support worker should undertake a further RNA in accordance with this guidance and submit it with revised estimated minimum timescales for MSVCC support, together with the supporting evidence, before the end of the previous six-month period. Re-assessment dates should be scheduled by the support worker to allow for sufficient time to complete and submit a new RNA if necessary.

Recommendations for each set of questions must include:

- details of any ongoing MSVCC support required and the reasons for it
- [supporting evidence](#) (see below)
- a transition plan detailing next steps for meeting recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences and facilitating move-on – for example, 'support worker to contact local authority for update on housing application by a certain date'

The support worker should submit any relevant documentation and supporting evidence alongside the RNA and transition plan. This will help the SCA to decide whether any recommendation of continued MSVCC support is necessary to assist with the victim's recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences and is consistent with this guidance. Supporting evidence may include, for example:

- medical evidence, such as an NHS referral letter for medical services, a signed doctor's note or proof of prescription
- correspondence from local authority on housing applications
- correspondence about DWP benefits applications
- information from local authorities about waiting times for social housing
- employment contract or written statement of employment particulars
- correspondence from the Home Office regarding an immigration application

The supporting evidence must be dated within the last 3 calendar months preceding the RNA. This can include clear and legible photocopies of original documents, screenshots or emails. Where evidence direct from the source is not available to the support worker within a reasonable timeframe, support workers should provide a clear explanation of the reasons for this. In these instances, the support worker's

testimony may instead be accepted, where they were present at the relevant appointments (e.g. meetings with a local authority or medical appointments) and where there is no written evidence available direct from the source. Testimonies, however, should not be relied upon, and evidence direct from the source should be sought in the first instance.

## 6. Declaration section

For the support worker this section will include:

- confirmation from the support worker that they have undertaken the RNA in line with this guidance
- confirmation from the support worker that the victim has had the RNA process explained to them in an accessible way, for example in a language they understand

The support worker should not complete this section if the client chooses to exit without a RNA, they should instead complete section 7.

## 7. Voluntary Exit Declaration section

For the support worker this section will include:

- confirmation from the support worker that the victim has chosen to opt out of the RNA process and has exited, or would like to exit MSVCC support, without having an RNA conducted
- confirmation from the support worker that the victim had the RNA process and the implications of them choosing not to take part in the assessment explained to them in an accessible way, for example in a language they understand
- confirmation from the support worker that the victim understands that without a RNA they will be unable to receive continued support from the MSVCC
- a client exit date, whether this is imminent or has already taken place - all confirmed victims are entitled to a minimum of 45 calendar days of post-CG move on support

## 8. Prime Contractor declaration section

This section includes confirmation from the MSVCC Prime Contractor that it has reviewed and quality assured the RNA.

## How to assess recovery need arising from a victim's modern slavery experiences

### Accommodation

The MSVCC provides accommodation for those victims who require a high level of security and access to support workers. The provision of such accommodation may be necessary for a victim's recovery where the purpose is, for example:

- an ongoing need to safeguard victims from exploitation reoccurring
- to provide a secure base from which victims can start to rebuild their lives and become more self-sufficient following exploitation
- as a stepping stone to longer term stability
- to facilitate access to other services to assist with recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences

The support worker must consider all accommodation options which could be accessed by the victim outside of the MSVCC and its suitability for that individual in light of any ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences. Victims should only continue to be supported in MSVCC accommodation while arrangements are made for them to transition to other suitable accommodation where possible.

Questions 5(a)(i-iv) of the RNA seek to establish what accommodation options are **available and accessible** to the victim. The following accommodation pathways outside of the MSVCC may be sufficient and should be assessed on a case-by-case basis:

- Asylum Support standard accommodation for victims who are also claiming asylum
- local authority housing options (including temporary housing while awaiting permanent placement) for victims with recourse to public funds
- housing with friends or family, where there is no known risk to the individual's safety or security
- private rented accommodation, where there is no known risk to the individual's safety or security

A victim's recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences may lead to particular accommodation requirements, for example: a necessity for disability adaptations or single sex accommodation. Question 5(a)(v) establishes whether the support worker has ensured that the victim's recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences are reflected in any applications for accommodation made to a third party. The support worker should advocate for the victim's individual requirements to be taken into account through the internal processes of the relevant housing provider, such as Asylum Support or the local authority.

It will only be appropriate for a victim to remain in MSVCC accommodation where this is necessary to meet a recovery need arising from their modern slavery experiences which cannot be adequately addressed through other accommodation options, for example if a secure MSVCC safehouse is necessary to keep the victim safe from re-exploitation.

If the support worker makes a recommendation for ongoing MSVCC accommodation, the recommendation must include:

- full details of the MSVCC accommodation need, including why the victim is not able to live in alternative accommodation

- full details of steps taken to secure alternative housing
- if alternative housing is available but not considered secure and/or suitable, full details of the rationale behind the consideration
- full details of minimum time that MSVCC accommodation is needed for, including estimated time for completing applications, such as applications for immigration status
- local authority or Asylum Support applications

A victim with ongoing recovery needs should not be exited from MSVCC accommodation until appropriate alternative accommodation has been secured to avoid any gaps in support. However, in cases where a victim refuses to sign paperwork which would facilitate a move out of MSVCC support, the Support Provider would not be obliged to continue to accommodate them.

## Financial support

A victim of modern slavery may need financial support:

- to ensure they are able to meet their essential living costs to assist recovery
- to facilitate access to services that will assist with those recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences

For financial support the RNA assesses:

- whether the victim has financial recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences
- whether other sources of financial assistance outside of the MSVCC are available to the victim and able to assist with those financial recovery needs

The support worker must consider the victim's ability to access other sources of financial support, for example benefits or income through legitimate employment. Where the victim has an alternative source of income that is sufficient to meet their financial recovery needs, ongoing financial support payments through the MSVCC will not be granted. Each case will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Questions 5(b)(ii) asks whether the victim is eligible for Asylum Support payments and question 5(b)(iii) asks whether the victim is currently receiving any Asylum Support payments. Victims of modern slavery may also be seeking asylum in the UK. If the victim has an asylum claim, full details should be provided, including:

- date the application was submitted
- current stage in the process
- date and type of leave granted if applicable – for example, asylum granted on DD/MM/YYYY
- whether the victim is currently in receipt of Asylum Support
- any other relevant information

Question 5(b)(iv) asks whether the victim is eligible for any benefits through recourse to public funds. Question 5(b)(v) asks whether the victim is receiving any benefits

through recourse to public funds. If the victim has recourse to public funds, they may be eligible to apply for benefits. Further information on [benefits can be found on GOV.UK](#).

Support workers should ensure that where an ongoing recovery need has been identified, there is no gap in the provision of financial support to victims whilst they await the outcome of benefits applications.

Question 5(b)(vi) asks whether the victim has access to any other sources of income. Details of the source, frequency and level of the income should be provided.

If the support worker makes a recommendation for ongoing MSVCC financial support, the recommendation must include:

- full details of why the victim is not able to obtain alternative financial support
- full details of any steps taken to secure alternative financial assistance to meet the victim's ongoing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences
- full details of the minimum time that MSVCC financial support is needed for, including estimated time for concluding benefit applications
- a summary of how financial support payments will be used to assist with the ongoing recovery of the victim - as an example, this might include transport costs to access key appointments or services

Examples of items for which it would not be appropriate for MSVCC financial support to be provided include, but are not limited to:

- recreational drugs and alcohol
- gambling

Where ongoing MSVCC financial support is granted, the rate provided will align with the current rates of financial support payable by the Home Office to potential victims or victims of modern slavery receiving NRM financial support. Please refer to Annex F of the [Modern Slavery Act 2015: Statutory Guidance for England and Wales](#) for the current financial support rates.

Confirmed victims who have child dependents and are in receipt of financial support from the MSVCC will continue to receive financial support for child dependants, in line with the current rates payable by Home Office to those receiving MSVCC financial support. Confirmed victims who are also asylum seekers receiving financial support for child dependents through the asylum support system will not receive any financial support from the MSVCC in respect of child dependents.

## Support worker contact

The support worker should help the victim to access support services which can assist in meeting their individual recovery needs, arising from their modern slavery experiences, through services outside the MSVCC, where this is possible. Where the victim has continuing recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences

which cannot be met elsewhere, temporary support from a support worker to assist with these needs can be maintained through the MSVCC.

## Access to health and mental health care services

All confirmed and suspected victims of modern slavery will have access to free emergency medical treatment regardless of their immigration status. The NHS Charging Regulations exempts victims and suspected victims of modern slavery from charges for specified NHS hospital treatment.

Questions 5(c)(i) of the RNA asks the support worker to establish whether or not the victim has any ongoing health needs arising from their modern slavery experiences. This includes both physical health needs (e.g. temporary conditions such as broken bones, or chronic conditions such as diabetes or heart conditions) and mental health needs (for example depression; anxiety; personality disorders). The support worker will defer to the advice of trained medical professionals for both diagnosis and recommended treatment.

The existence of a physical or mental health condition will not alone necessitate continued support through the MSVCC. The support worker must also consider, as part of the RNA, whether or not the victim has access to NHS medical services to facilitate the ongoing treatment of any ongoing physical or mental health needs in the community.

Health needs arising from a victim's modern slavery experiences will generally be considered to have been met outside of the MSVCC where the support worker has:

- ensured that the victim has been referred to the appropriate medical services for any treatment required
- ensured that the victim has been made aware of their ongoing entitlements to NHS treatments and how to access services

As part of this, the support worker should ensure that the victim:

- is registered with a GP (including temporary registration) and understands the appointment scheduling process to access treatment
- has been referred or signposted to other relevant NHS services and how to access them - this may include, for example, dentists, sexual health services, mental health services or substance abuse services
- where eligible, has applied for a HC2 certificate to provide ongoing support for health-related costs, such as prescription fees or travel to and from appointments

It will generally be sufficient for the victim to be placed on a waiting list for NHS treatment, through GP/medical referral, to meet ongoing health needs that do not require emergency treatment.

For example, a victim may be placed on a waiting list for counselling or cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to treat ongoing mental health conditions and assist with

longer term recovery outside of the MSVCC. Placement on a waiting list will not generally necessitate ongoing MSVCC support.

In certain circumstances, there may be grounds for ongoing MSVCC support on the basis of acute physical or mental health needs. This is generally limited to cases where there is high safeguarding risk to the life or health of the victim, if they were to exit support before accessing or completing their medical treatment.

Any change in a victim's health condition must first be referred to a trained medical practitioner for advice on appropriate emergency support services, such as crisis mental health support.

## Social care services

The role of the MSVCC support worker is distinct to that of a social worker. The support worker's role is to advocate on behalf of the victim to meet their *recovery* needs arising from their modern slavery experiences (see Glossary definition). This may include access to social services for support under the Care Act 2014, which provides support for those unable to meet their basic living needs (for example managing own nutrition; washing; dressing).

Question 5(c)(iii) of the RNA asks whether or not the victim is able to meet their basic living needs themselves, or whether they require further support from a carer.

Where the support worker considers the victim to have difficulty with day-to-day functioning or to have high interpersonal needs (for example unable to meet their basic living needs such as feeding themselves or managing their toilet needs) the support worker should request a local authority assessment under the Care Act 2014 for eligible victims.

The victim's ability to meet basic living needs, as defined by the Care Act 2014, must be assessed and met by the local authority.

Continued support worker contact must be linked to the progression of the victim's recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences (as defined in the Glossary) or transition plan. Reasons that may constitute ongoing need for support worker contact include, but are not limited to:

- support completing and progressing applications for Local Authority housing or for benefit payments
- progressing applications for immigration status, including signposting to a legal representative or services that can help to advise on the process and complete applications
- support completing and progressing victim compensation claims
- support accessing health care
- support worker contact to facilitate the victim's attendance at key appointments necessary to progress their recovery (for example, ongoing medical or legal appointments) - this will only be granted on an exceptional and short-term basis where it can be evidenced that the support worker's continued attendance at

appointments, following the initial link up with the relevant service, is still necessary to progress the victim's recovery or transition plan

## Legal advice and support

The support worker must signpost the victim to information regarding their legal rights, entitlements and services available to them in relation to their recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences. Where necessary, the support worker should facilitate access to a legal representative for support relating to ongoing criminal proceedings, compensation claims and immigration advice. Generally, the victim will have been provided with this information by the support worker at the earlier stages of the NRM process.

Question 5(c)(vi) seeks to establish whether the victim has an ongoing need for legal advocacy or advice. If an ongoing need for professional legal advice or support is identified, the victim should be referred to the appropriate service by the support worker.

Once the victim has been provided with information on their rights and entitlements, and has been provided a relevant legal adviser or signposted to the appropriate legal advice/support service, continued support worker contact for these purposes will **not** generally be required, unless the provision of [interpretation/ translation services](#) is required for the victim to understand this advice.

Where the victim is assisting a criminal investigation or proceedings, the support worker should facilitate the provision of an appropriate adult where required (under terms of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 for vulnerable adults and those under 18) to assist the victim during interview. Where a trained appropriate adult is assigned to a victim, continued support worker contact for this purpose will no longer be required.

## Access to translation and interpretation services

Where the victim does not have sufficient proficiency in either the English or Welsh languages, the support worker must ensure that the victim has access to interpretation or translation services in a language they can understand, to access all services provided through the MSVCC and other services where appropriate interpretation and translation assistance is not offered. The context of the service or appointment should be taken into account. For example, a victim with conversational English may not have sufficient proficiency to understand complex medical or legal terms. In these cases, the support worker should assess whether the victim requires and has access to interpretation or translation services.

Question 5(c)(vii) of the RNA establishes whether there is an ongoing recovery need for interpretation or translation services provided through the MSVCC. To be eligible for continued interpretation and translation services through the MSVCC the support worker will consider the following:

### **The purpose of the interpretation or translation service requested**



The service must be for the purpose of meeting the victim's recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences or progressing their move-on plan. For example, this may include interpretation for key meetings with a GP, legal representative, Local Authority housing officer.

### **Other interpretation or translation services available through other support services.**

Where translation of information or interpreters are provided by other services, such as the NHS, police, or Local Authorities, interpretation or translation services will generally **not** be provided through the MSVCC.

## **Community and social recovery needs**

Question 5(c)(viii) of the RNA seeks to establish whether the victim has any ongoing social recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences which require continued contact with a MSVCC support worker.

Social recovery needs may include, but are not limited to:

- making use of facilities and services in the local community
- developing and maintaining personal relationships

To facilitate social recovery, it is expected that the support worker will have signposted the victim to local groups such as:

- community groups
- religious and faith groups
- sports and recreational activities
- libraries
- charities and NGOs offering social activities

The victim may still require some access to a support worker, despite engagement with these organisations.

### **Related content**

[Contents](#)

# Decision Making

## Role of the Single Competent Authority

SCA decision makers will make the decision on whether the recommendations in the RNA and transition plan are made in accordance with this guidance and are appropriate and reasonable in light of the evidence provided through the RNA form, transition plan and the supporting documentation (see page 21 for a list of approved supporting evidence). At their discretion, the SCA may return forms which omit essential information and/or evidence, or where there are significant errors in the form.

The decision by the SCA will be made following receipt of the RNA, transition plan and evidence.

In order to reach the decision, an SCA decision maker will assess a range of relevant information including the support worker's recommendation, any evidence supporting the recommendation, the status of the individual victim, appropriate Home Office checks, and knowledge of the available support provision.

The decision maker will record their decision as either:

- Recommendation fully agreed
- Recommendation not agreed
- Recommendation partially agreed:
  - the SCA may return a decision which differs from the recommendation provided - for example, a decision maker may agree to the type of support recommended but disagree with the duration recommended

Where the SCA decides to **not** agree with the support recommendations the victim must exit the service no later than 9 working days after receipt of the RNA decision, or at the end of their minimum post-CG 45 calendar day move-on period, whichever is later.

If further information and/or specific evidence is required in order to reach a decision, the decision maker will return a request for this information to the MSVCC Prime Contractor before proceeding. For instance, where evidence is out of date or omitted, or where there are inconsistencies within the submitted form (for example if in the 'summary of recommendations' section of the form the support worker has requested no ongoing MSVCC accommodation, but throughout the form has identified ongoing MSVCC accommodation needs).

Non-compliance with requests for further necessary information and/or evidence may result in the SCA delivering a "Recommendation NOT agreed" decision.

The SCA will then pass its decision, including rationale, back to the MSVCC Prime Contractor for implementation. The RNA decision will be communicated to the victim as soon as possible through their support worker, who will be able to explain the implications of this decision for the victim's support provision. When informing the

victim of the decision, the support worker will make a copy of the relevant decision letter and RNA form available to the victim.

## Target End and Exit Dates

On the RNA form, the support worker will provide target end dates for each element of recommended MSVCC support and an overall estimated client exit date from the service. As part of its decision-making function, the SCA will decide whether or not to approve the target end dates for each element of support and the target exit date.

The SCA will not provide a target exit date for a recommendation they do **not** agree with. In these cases, the victim will be expected to exit the service within 9 working days, or at the end of their minimum post-CG 45 calendar day move-on period, whichever is later.

## Reconsiderations

The SCA decision is final; the only ground for reconsideration is when material new evidence/information comes to light, which was not available at the time of the original recommendation.

Reconsideration requests should be channelled through the MSVCC Prime Contractor, who will look to ensure as part of their quality assurance function that the reconsideration request contains material new evidence/information for the SCA to make a decision on. Only the MSVCC Prime Contractor can submit a reconsideration request relating to the SCA RNA decision. This request can be submitted on the behalf of the support worker and/or the victim.

A reconsideration request must be received by the SCA within 28 calendar days of the original SCA RNA decision notification to the MSVCC Prime Contractor.

Upon receiving a request for reconsideration, the SCA will first decide whether material new information has indeed been presented to trigger a reconsideration of the original decision. The SCA will only consider new information received via the MSVCC Prime Contractor, and will consider whether the offered information is:

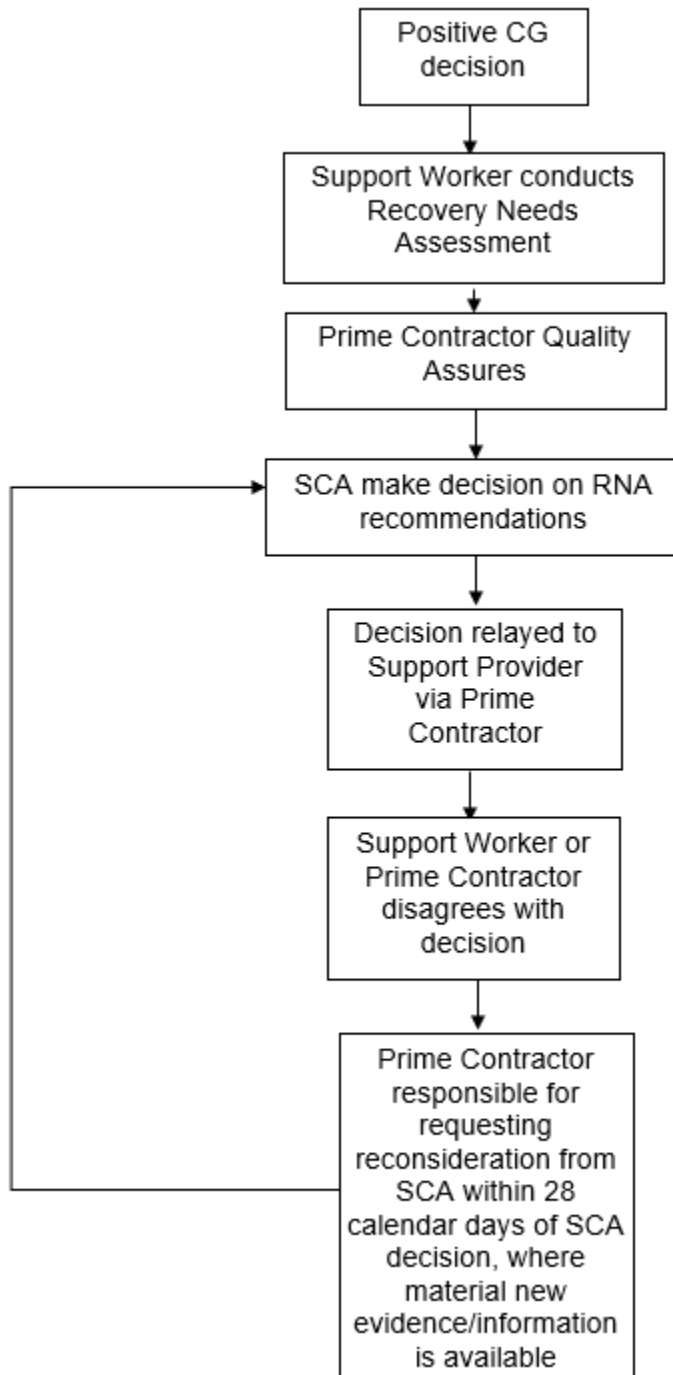
- new (not existing at the time of the original decision)
- specifically relating to the individual's recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences

If it is decided that material new information has been presented by the MSVCC Prime Contractor the SCA will then follow the decision-making process outlined above, including any new information available, and return a new decision to the MSVCC Prime Contractor. Where the SCA has accepted and is considering the reconsideration request, the victim will remain in support until the reconsideration decision is issued.

Where the reconsideration request is not accepted by the SCA, the victim will be expected to exit the service within 9 working days, or at the end of their minimum post-CG 45 calendar day move-on period, whichever is later.

Where the reconsideration decision remains unchanged, the victim will be expected to exit the service within 9 working days, or at the end of their minimum post-CG 45 calendar day move-on period, whichever is later.

## Figure 2 RNA reconsideration process map



### Related content

[Contents](#)

# Voluntary Returns Service

Victims may wish to return to their country of origin and this should be reflected in the recommendations and transition plans developed by the support worker and submitted to the SCA.

Voluntary and assisted returns may be either at public expense or at the expense of the individual.

Available: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Telephone: 0300 004 0202

Website (GOV.UK): [Get help to return home if you're a migrant in the UK](#)

For further information, [see guidance on voluntary and assisted returns](#).

## **Related content**

[Contents](#)

# Glossary

These definitions apply to adult support provision in England and Wales. Different definitions may apply in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

In this guidance:

“**Adult**” is any person aged 18 or over where there are no reasonable grounds to believe that person may be under 18;

“**Alternative services**” refers to services that are available outside of the MSVCC including NHS services;

“**Competent Authorities**” is one of the relevant competent authorities making decisions regarding modern slavery cases; in the UK this is SCA and the IECA

“**Conclusive Grounds decision (CG)**” is a decision taken by a competent authority as to whether, on the balance of probabilities, there are sufficient grounds to decide that the individual being considered is a victim of modern slavery (human trafficking or slavery, servitude, or forced or compulsory labour);

“**Confirmed victim**” is an individual who has received a conclusive grounds decision from the Competent Authorities;

[“Immigration Enforcement Competent Authority \(‘IECA’\) is one of the competent authorities that is responsible for making Reasonable Grounds decisions and Conclusive Grounds decisions regarding individuals in a particular group.](#)

“**Mainstream benefits**” refers to benefits, tax credits or housing that are usually available through recourse to public funds;

“**Modern Slavery**” unless otherwise specified, refers to both human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour;

“**Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC)**” refers to the Home Office contract to provide care to adult victims of modern slavery in England and Wales;

“**Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract Prime Contractor (‘MSVCC Prime Contractor’)**” refers to the prime supplier of the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (see above). In some cases, the MSVCC Prime Contractor may subcontract other service providers to discharge specific parts of the contract.

“**Move-on support**” refers to the support provided after a conclusive grounds decision. This period lasts for at least 45 calendar days from the date of a positive decision or 9 working days from the date of a negative decision;

“**National Referral Mechanism (‘NRM’)**” refers to the UK’s framework for identifying and supporting victims of modern slavery. It is one means of ensuring that

adult victims receive the necessary support and assistance in the period immediately after their identification as a potential victim;

**“Potential victim”** is an individual who is suspected of being a victim of modern slavery. They may have received a positive reasonable grounds decision but will not yet have received a conclusive grounds decision from the Competent Authorities;

**“Reasonable Grounds decision” (RG)** is a decision taken by the Competent Authorities as to whether the decision maker suspects but cannot prove that the individual being considered is a victim of modern slavery (human trafficking or slavery, servitude, or forced or compulsory labour);

**“Recourse to public funds”** refers to a condition that enables individuals to claim most benefits, tax credits or housing assistance that are paid by the state;

**“Recovery and Reflection Period (‘Recovery Period’)**” refers to the period from the date of a positive Reasonable Grounds decision until a Conclusive Grounds decision is made which will be at least 45 days;

**“Recovery need”** refers to a specific need that a confirmed victim may have as a result of their modern slavery experiences and is essential to their recovery;

**“Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA)”** refers to the process for assessing and making recommendations for ongoing support to be provided to confirmed victims, whether through the MSVCC or other services;

**“Single Competent Authority (‘SCA’)**” refers to one of the UK’s decision-making bodies that is responsible for making Reasonable Grounds decisions and Conclusive Grounds decisions regarding individuals referred as potential victims of modern slavery.

**“Support Provider”** refers to a body which is employed or engaged pursuant to the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract to provide care and coordination services for victims, including by way of a sub-contract;

**“Support worker”** refers to Support Provider personnel who provide support to victims of modern slavery;

**“Transition plan”** refers to the completed RNA form detailing a recommended package of support which facilitates a confirmed victim’s transition from the MSVCC, where possible, as decided by the SCA;

**“Voluntary Returns Service (VRS)”** refers to a Home Office service that supports those who have no legal basis to remain in the UK, asylum seekers and victims of trafficking. Who want to return to their country of origin voluntarily. The VRS provides guidance and practical support to returnees, including reintegration funds where applicable.

## **Related content**

[Contents](#)

