

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is the fastest growing form of slavery today and is prohibited under international law, as well as under the criminal laws of the United Kingdom and other countries. It is a global crime against the person rather than the state. It is the only crime where human beings are the commodity and extremely lucrative because victims can be used and sold over and over again.

Human trafficking can include movement of a person from one place to another with deception or coercion, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability into conditions of exploitation.

Exploitation types include:

- Sexual exploitation
- Labour exploitation
- Domestic servitude / slavery
- Exploitation of human tissue (organ harvesting)
- Benefit fraud (national insurance details and ID cards are taken from victims and used to claim benefits)
- Homeless people are particularly vulnerable and at risk of exploitation.

Victims often do not recognise or realise that they are victims, which can make it very difficult to identify them. Indicators for victims of human trafficking or slavery include:

Employed for no or minimal wages

Residing in communal accommodation

Identity documents held by their landlord or employer

Applications for NINOs or benefits facilitated by a third party

Always accompanied by a third party who answers questions on behalf of the claimant

Groups of people of the same nationality whose entry to the UK, and/or employment seems to be controlled by a third party

Common mobile numbers or addresses from apparently unrelated individuals

There is no specific guidance for DWP staff but if you suspect that a claimant may be a victim of trafficking, refer the case to the Fraud and Error Service via the Desktop Fraud Referral icon.