

Covid-19: Exploitation and Modern Slavery

Vulnerable people being exploited are at greater risk since the Covid-19 crisis heightened in the UK.

Exploited people are being forced to work in locations such as warehouses, food supply chains, and agriculture where social distancing may not be in place posing a greater risk to health. Potential victims living in isolation with their exploiters are at increased risk of abuse with less access to outside support.



Signs of Exploitation

A person who is being exploited may exhibit the following signs

Physical appearance

- May show signs of physical and / or psychological abuse
- Have injuries that could seem to be from a physical assault
- May appear to be malnourished and unkempt
- Seem to be wary or frightened
- Appear to be withdrawn and confused

Few or no personal effects

- May not have any money or personal items such as a purse/ wallet or jewellery
- May not carry any personal identification
- Could be wearing the same clothing items, or not wear suitable clothing such as what is appropriate in the work place
- Have little or no food

Isolation and control

Exploited workers are rarely left alone, so they may seem to present as being under the control and influence of others:

- Another person may produce identification documents for them, and speak for them
- Victims/ potential victims of exploitation are likely to go to another person to get support and permission
- They are driven to and from work or locations

Reluctance to seek help

Exploited people don't know who they can trust, and have a fear of retribution, so they are reluctant to seek help:

- They may avoid eye contact and appear frightened
- They may be afraid to talk
- They may reject any offer of help

Who can you tell?

If you need help, or you think someone may be a victim of slavery or exploitation, call the UK Modern Slavery helpline on **08000 121 700** for free confidential help and advice, 24 hours a day, 356 days a year. Or call Crime Stoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111**.

In an emergency call **999**

For non emergencies call **101**



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