



One minute briefing

The importance of National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Referrals being captured within Hillingdon

*****This briefing applies to children under 18 and is guidance for professionals working with children in Hillingdon*****

What is a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral?

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern-day slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support.

Modern slavery is a complex crime and may involve multiple forms of exploitation. It encompasses:

- *human trafficking*
- *slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour*

A NRM referral can be completed for a child, as well as an adult, however the process of completion will vary from a child to an adult.

The main difference being that a child does not need to give consent, in order for a referral to be sent, whereas an adult does. By completing a NRM referral, there is indication of potential contextual safeguarding concern in relation to modern day slavery towards the child/adult.

By understanding the number of identifications of modern-day slavery within Hillingdon, a better context of creating sufficient support and prevention intervention packages offered from various partnerships within the borough.

Who can make a NRM referral?

NRM referrals can only be made by selected agencies known as '*first responders*'. The Local Authority is one of the agencies that can make a referral to the Home Office to report concerns of modern-day slavery.

The NRM referral form is completed online at [Report modern slavery – GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/report-modern-slavery) .

It is vital that as much information on the concerns of modern-day slavery is placed within the required areas of the referral. The information presented needs to be factual, rather than opinion based to be assessed fairly.

During the Referral Process

A caseworker at the Home Office will look at the potential victim's case within 5 working days, whenever possible, and decide if there are positive reasonable grounds to believe they are a victim.

If there are reasonable grounds, the case will be investigated in more detail for up to 45 working days, before a final decision is made.



To help make a formal decision, the potential victims' personal information is shared with organisations such as the Police and Home Office to consider a positive or negative decision. There are two stages of the referral process:

- **Stage 1 - Reasonable Grounds (RG) decision**
- **Stage 2 - Conclusive Grounds (CG) decision**

Sometimes the outcomes professionals are expecting, are not always recognised for various reasons e.g. lack of information, information shared not detailed enough, other agencies not in agreement with referral. **If the conclusive grounds decision is negative – the referrer can ask for reconsideration with further updated information and evidence.**

Professionals should continue to work with a child and offer support pertaining to their needs; ensuring that the concerns related to modern day slavery/exploitation are considered in future planning.

Whether the outcome of the referral has been positive, negative or remains in limbo, the Local Authority continues to have a duty of care for **ANY CHILD** where there are concerns for modern day slavery or exploitation and assessing their needs.

For any victim under the age of 18 years old, the support is mostly expected to be provided by the Local Authority the child resides within. This differs when accessing support for victims over 18 years old, where there is a range of resources to gain support such as housing, protection orders, finance, emotional wellbeing, advice, and guidance from advocates etc.

If the child is in an area where Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTGs) are available, you will also need to refer them to the ICTG service.

The AXIS Service are focused on understanding the level of modern day-slavery issues amongst children and young people within Hillingdon. Currently AXIS are unable to capture and understand whether this is being strongly recognised within the Home Office, due to lack of notifications from professionals within Hillingdon.

AXIS are committed to working with all referrers within Hillingdon to capture the journey of our children through this process.

In order to successfully capture the NRMs being recognised, AXIS need professionals to add axis@hillington.gov.uk to the additional email via the referral process.

Key Learning Points:

- Where there are concerns for a potential victim under 18 years of age, the Local Authority should be completing an NRM referral.
- You do not need consent to send a referral for any potential victim under 18 years of age.
- If you are working with a young person over the age of 18 years old, and believe them to be a potential victim, you will need their consent to send a referral.
- Consideration to the information that is being shared within the referral and ensuring that it is factual, and specific in highlighting areas of potential exploitation.



What can you do:

- Have you identified areas where you believe a child you are working with has been exploited? Consider completing an NRM referral with the information you currently have.
- Whilst completing a referral consider, adding AXIS - axis@hillington.gov.uk , as an additional point of contact after referrer. This will help follow the journey of the referral for the child.
- Does AXIS know you have completed a referral for a child in Hillingdon, so they can capture their journey?
- If your referral for child is rejected, have you thought about discussion with AXIS to consider the information being shared to ensure it is clearly detailed?

Further Reading:

The Guidance around completing an NRM referral is available here:

[National referral mechanism guidance: adult \(England and Wales\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/national-referral-mechanism-guidance-adult-england-and-wales)

A Review from ECAPT UK in Multi-Agency decision making for a child victims of trafficking :
[A review of what works in multi-agency decision making and the implications for child victims of trafficking | ECPAT UK](#)