



Home Office

# Information Pack for Young People in the NRM Turning 18

A guide with your options  
and next steps

January 2026



## Common terms you will see in this leaflet:

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<b>Conclusive Grounds Decision</b>	This is the final decision the Home Office makes on whether it is more likely than not that you have been a victim of exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking.
<b>First Responder</b>	This is a professional within an organisation who is concerned that you have been taken advantage of and referred you into the NRM as a child. This might be a social worker, a youth worker, a professional in a charity, or the police.
<b>Home Office</b>	This is part of the government that ensures you have access to the right support and is involved in making your NRM decisions.
<b>Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTG)</b>	ICTGs provide advice for children who have been, or are suspected to have been trafficked.
<b>Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC)</b>	This is the support system in place for adults in England and Wales who have been victims of exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking at any point in their lives.
<b>National Referral Mechanism (NRM)</b>	The NRM is a way to identify potential victims of exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking, and ensure proper support is in place for you.
<b>Reasonable Grounds Decision</b>	This is the first decision the Home Office makes on whether it is reasonable to think you have been a victim of exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking.

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# Information Pack for Young People in the NRM Turning 18

A trusted professional may have given you this leaflet because you are approaching the age of 18 and are currently in the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). When you turn 18 you will need to make some choices about your care and support. Don't worry if you aren't sure what this means, this leaflet will help you make the decisions that are right for you.

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

The NRM exists to help you and to make sure that proper support is in place for you when a professional is concerned you may be, or have previously been, a victim of exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking.

Part of being in the NRM means the Home Office will look at whether you are a victim of exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking.



## What is exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking?

It sounds complicated. Here are some questions to help.

1



Has anyone ever asked or pressured you to commit a crime, like theft?

2



Have you ever worked for someone and were poorly paid or not paid at all?

3



Has anyone ever pressured, tricked or forced you into doing something sexual, or has made you feel uncomfortable and as if you weren't in control? Has anyone ever pressured or made you do something sexual in exchange for something?

4



Have you ever lived with someone, and were made to do their housework or look after their children? If yes, were you treated badly, or have exhausting working hours, or forced to live and work under bad conditions with little or no pay?

5



Has anyone ever asked you to look after, carry, or sell things like drugs, stolen items, packages, or anything illegal for them?

**If you answered yes to any of the above or have had any other similar experiences where you felt pressured or forced to do something you didn't want to, you might be a victim of exploitation, modern slavery, and human trafficking.**

**There are people who care and want to help you. If you think you, or someone you know (child or adult), might be a victim of exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking, you should tell a trusted professional, such as a social worker or the police, who can help you get access to the right support.**

## **Why am I in the NRM?**

A trusted professional (such as your social worker, a police officer, or a charity worker) was concerned about you and was required to make an NRM referral. You did not have to agree to being referred into the NRM because you were under 18. This does not mean you are in trouble – they submitted an NRM referral to make sure you were safe and to get you support.

The police may have been looking into what happened to you, so that they can investigate, where possible, and stop it from happening again to make sure you and other young people can be kept safe.

## **How does the NRM work?**

Part of being in the NRM means the Home Office will look at whether you are a victim of exploitation, modern slavery, and human trafficking. Making this NRM decision can take a long time because it is complicated, and they need to be sure they are making the right decision. Whilst the Home Office are making these decisions, other professionals have the responsibility to ensure you have access to the right support, such as accommodation and legal support.

## There are two parts to the NRM decision:

### 1. You will get a 'reasonable grounds' decision first.

- ◆ This decision should be made within 5 days and will either be 'negative' or 'positive'.
- ◆ If the decision is positive, the Home Office think that you may be a victim of modern slavery. You will then progress to getting a conclusive grounds decision.
- ◆ If the decision is negative, you might be able to ask for this decision to be reconsidered. A trusted professional can help you, such as your social worker or the police, otherwise your case will be closed.

### 2. A 'conclusive grounds' decision comes next (if you get a positive reasonable grounds).

- ◆ If the decision is positive, the Home Office think that you are more likely than not a victim of modern slavery. Later in this leaflet, you can see what this means for you.
- ◆ If the decision is negative, you might be able to ask for this decision to be reconsidered. A trusted professional can help you, such as your social worker or the police, otherwise your case will be closed.

## What does a negative NRM decision mean?

- A negative decision does not always mean that you are not a victim.
- It may be that the Home Office did not have enough information to make this decision.
- You might be able to ask the Home Office to reconsider the decision by emailing [nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk](mailto:nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk).
- You can talk to a trusted professional about what other support might be available to you.

## **What do I need to do now that I am an adult?**

You did not need to consent (agree) to enter the NRM because you were under 18 and professionals were required to make the referral. But when you turn 18, if you don't have a conclusive grounds decision yet, you will need to make a decision about remaining in the NRM and tell the Home Office what you choose. **You can either:**

- **Choose to stay in the NRM, receive a conclusive grounds decision and have access to support should you want and need it.**
- **Or choose to exit the NRM and not have access to adult support.**

**The Home Office need to know your decision, regardless of what your decision is.**

You will also need to tell the Home Office if you want to receive support as an adult (this might be financial, emotional or legal support, or support finding accommodation – more information on this can be found later in this leaflet).

If you're in England and Wales, the MSVCC, which supports adults in the NRM, may get in touch a few weeks before you turn 18 and explain what the MSVCC is, how it can help you when you turn 18, and what steps you'll need to take to get support.

The MSVCC will only call you if you've agreed that a professional, like your social worker, can share your contact details. If you would like your social worker or ICTG to be present for the call, please make them aware when you agree to share your contact details. The conversation may take place via the professional's contact number, as long as you are present. The MSVCC might ring you from an 'unknown number'. This is to keep things private and make sure you're safe.

**Don't worry if you don't know what to do – you can talk to a trusted professional and use the information in this leaflet to help you make these decisions.**

## **Once you turn 18, you can give your decision one of two ways:**

1. Sign the NRM Written Transition Consent/ Withdrawal Form yourself to tell the Home Office if you want to stay in the NRM (and if you want support). Then send it to [\*\*nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk\*\*](mailto:nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk).
2. Or talk through your options with a professional, like a social worker, and once you have made your decision, they can tell the Home Office for you.

## Should I provide my consent to stay in the NRM as an adult?

It is your choice to stay in or exit the NRM. You should talk with a trusted professional and read this leaflet to ensure you have all the information you need to make that choice. Your choices:

Stay in the NRM	Exit the NRM
<p>The Home Office will continue looking at your case and will make a conclusive grounds decision.</p> <p>If you stay in the NRM, you can decide if you would like to receive government funded exploitation and modern slavery support as an adult.</p>	<p>Your case will be closed.</p> <p>You won't be able to receive a conclusive grounds decision.</p> <p>You won't be able to receive government funded exploitation and modern slavery support as an adult.</p> <p>If you want to re-open your case in the future, you or a trusted professional supporting you, will need to contact the Home Office by e-mail at <a href="mailto:nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk">nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk</a>.</p>

If you don't tell the Home Office your decision when you turn 18, your case will be suspended. This means you will not get a decision, and you will not get access to government-funded exploitation and modern slavery support. Please do let us know your choice about staying in or exiting the NRM when you turn 18.



## What benefits are there of staying in the NRM?

You will receive a conclusive grounds decision from the Home Office, and if positive, will be recognised as a victim. Some people find this helps in their recovery journey and could help professionals supporting you better understand what has happened to you and how best to help you.

You may be able to access specialist support. More information on this can be found below.

If you receive a positive conclusive grounds decision, you may be able to get temporary permission to stay in the UK (which means you can remain in the UK temporarily if you don't already have status in the UK), as a confirmed victim of modern slavery.

If you are in England and Wales, you may be eligible for the statutory defense against prosecution (under section 45 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015) if you committed certain offences as a direct result of your exploitation. A positive NRM decision may help when the defense is being considered by the police and prosecution services. You may want to share this with your legal representative if you have been arrested or face prosecution for criminality linked to your exploitation.

## What support is available if I stay in the NRM?

If you consent to stay in the NRM and consent to receive support as an adult, you may be able to access financial and legal support, emotional support from a dedicated support worker, and accommodation where necessary. You can receive free support to talk about and process your feelings – this might be through charities, the NHS or through support workers.

In England and Wales, the MSVCC exists to support adult victims of exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking. As explained earlier, the MSVCC can call you before you turn 18 to talk through the support available to adults in the NRM.

There is also support available in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The contact details of these organisations can be found towards the end of this leaflet.

If you do not want to enter support now but want to in the future, you can contact the Home Office by email to request this at [nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk](mailto:nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk).

## Common Myths:

<p><b>Asylum and the NRM are the same thing.</b></p>	<p>FALSE</p>	<p>Claiming asylum and being referred into the NRM are different processes. Some people might be in both processes.</p> <p><b>What is asylum?</b></p> <p>You should only ask for asylum (also called international protection) if you're not from the UK and you're scared to go back to your home country. This fear must be because of something serious and personal, like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your race</li> <li>• Your religion</li> <li>• Where you're from (nationality)</li> <li>• What you believe (political opinion)</li> <li>• Being part of a group that's treated unfairly</li> </ul> <p>If you're given asylum, you become a refugee. This means the UK agrees you need protection and can stay here safely. Details of how to claim asylum can be found here – <b><u><a href="#">Information booklet for asylum applications - GOV.UK.</a></u></b></p> <p><b>What is the NRM?</b></p> <p>The NRM identifies people who are a potential victim of exploitation, modern slavery and human trafficking. You cannot apply for the NRM. A First Responder must refer you if they suspect you are a victim.</p>
<p><b>The NRM is not for me, because I am from the UK.</b></p>	<p>FALSE</p>	<p>Anyone can be a victim of exploitation and modern slavery, so the NRM exists to support British victims, as well as those not from Britain.</p>
<p><b>I wasn't trafficked because I didn't leave the UK.</b></p>	<p>FALSE</p>	<p>Trafficking does not have to occur across borders. It can, and often does, happen within one country, including within a local area, and it can happen online.</p>

## Common Myths:

<b>I won't receive any benefits from remaining in the NRM</b>	FALSE	If you receive a positive decision as an adult, professionals will work out the best way to support you. You may be able to access financial and legal support, emotional support from a dedicated support worker, and accommodation where necessary. Look at the 'what benefits are there of staying in the NRM' section in this pack.
<b>Remaining in the NRM will delay my asylum claim.</b>	FALSE	Asylum decisions can go ahead if there's enough evidence because it is usually in your best interest to have an asylum decision made, even if an NRM decision has not been taken yet.  However, in some cases, the asylum decision might wait for the NRM decision first. Where this does happen, the decision is made based on your individual circumstances, and the decision will be kept under review to ensure it is always in your best interest.

## If I stay in the NRM, who will tell me the outcome of my NRM decision after I turn 18?

It is important that the professionals supporting you, send your up-to-date safe contact details to the Home Office, during the time they are supporting you.

When a decision is made after you turn 18, the decision will be sent to you direct as long as safe contact details have been provided and there are no active safeguarding concerns.

Some professionals involved in your care will be notified that a decision has been made.

If no safe contact details for you have been provided, the Home Office cannot contact you directly. The decision will be saved on file, which you can request in the future at [nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk](mailto:nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk).

## Top Actions for you to do

 <p>1</p>	<p>Read the information in this pack (and talk to a trusted professional) about your options before you turn 18.</p>
 <p>2</p>	<p>When you turn 18, decide if you want to stay in the NRM and decide if you want support as an adult.</p>
 <p>3</p>	<p>Sign the NRM Written Transition Consent/ Withdrawal Form and return it to <a href="mailto:nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk">nrm@modernslavery.gov.uk</a> once you turn 18. If this is difficult to do, you can talk through your options with a professional, like a social worker, and once you have made your decision, they can tell the Home Office for you.</p>



## Stuart's story

**I'm Stuart and I recently turned 18 – I live in Bristol with my family.**

When I was 17, a few older adults made me feel like they were my friends – it made me feel cool.

They asked me to deliver some packages for them. When the police caught me delivering these packages, I was arrested for dealing drugs.

I was really worried but the police officer who came to visit me was really nice and made me feel I could trust them with some details. When I told them what happened, they did something called an NRM referral.

I had a positive reasonable grounds decision before I turned 18, but the last decision (the conclusive grounds decision) had not been made before I became an adult.

The police officer came to speak with me to ask whether I wanted to stay in the NRM process and helped me understand what this meant.

I agreed to stay in the NRM process by providing my written consent to the Home Office. I said my preference was to not be part of any police investigation though. The police officer seemed happy with the decisions I made.

Sometime after turning 18, I got a positive conclusive grounds decision. The police officer told me this would help other police and lawyers understand what happened.

They were right because I was not charged for delivering the drugs packages and instead I got a support worker who helped me to understand healthy relationships.



## Maria's Story

**My name is Maria and I am from Romania.**

I was told that I would be brought to the UK for good work and a good life, but when I got here, I had no freedom and I was only allowed out of my room to work. People in my community exploited me to work for them without pay and treated me badly.

One day, police and a social worker came to my house and they saw how I was being treated. They took me somewhere safe and introduced me to an ICTG, who was there to help me.

This meant that I was protected and supported in the UK before I turned 18. My ICTG submitted something called a NRM referral for me so that it was recognised what I had been through.

When I turned 18, the NRM hadn't finished so I needed to agree to remain in the process if I wanted to. My ICTG explained all my choices with the help of an interpreter, both before and after I turned 18.

I agreed to stay in the NRM process so that my experiences were recognised. It helped me to feel better that people believed me.

Staying in the NRM process meant I could get support from a support worker through adult modern slavery support services. They helped me with somewhere to live, how to manage my money and just be someone to talk to. I'm happy that I was able to be in the NRM process.

## Who are the support providers for adult victims (both potential and confirmed)?

### England and Wales support providers:

**The Salvation Army** (who provide the MSVCC)

Tel: 0800 808 3733 (24/7)

Email: [mstreferrals@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:mstreferrals@salvationarmy.org.uk)

### Northern Ireland support providers:

**Migrant Help Northern Ireland** (Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking support for male victims of exploitation and their families (this can include female family members who are victims of exploitation if it is deemed safe by the Police Service of Northern Ireland))

Tel: 028 92448449

Email: [northernireland@migranhelpuk.org](mailto:northernireland@migranhelpuk.org)

**Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid** (Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking support for female victims of exploitation and their children)

Tel: 028 90666049

Email: [modernslavery@belfastwomensaid.org.uk](mailto:modernslavery@belfastwomensaid.org.uk) and [heather.woods@belfastwomensaid.org.uk](mailto:heather.woods@belfastwomensaid.org.uk)

## Scotland support providers

**The TARA Service** (Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery support for adult women trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation)

Tel: 0141 276 7724 (open 24/7)

**Migrant Help** (Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery Support)

Tel: 0141 884 7900

Tel: 0141 212 8553 (out of hours for urgent needs and emergencies only)

E-mail: [traffickingscotland@migranhelpuk.org](mailto:traffickingscotland@migranhelpuk.org)

**The Scottish Anti-Trafficking and Exploitation Centre** within JustRight Scotland provides legal advice and supports survivors of trafficking and labour exploitation.

Legal helpline: 08088 010 789 (Tuesdays 1pm – 4pm and Wednesdays 10am – 1pm)

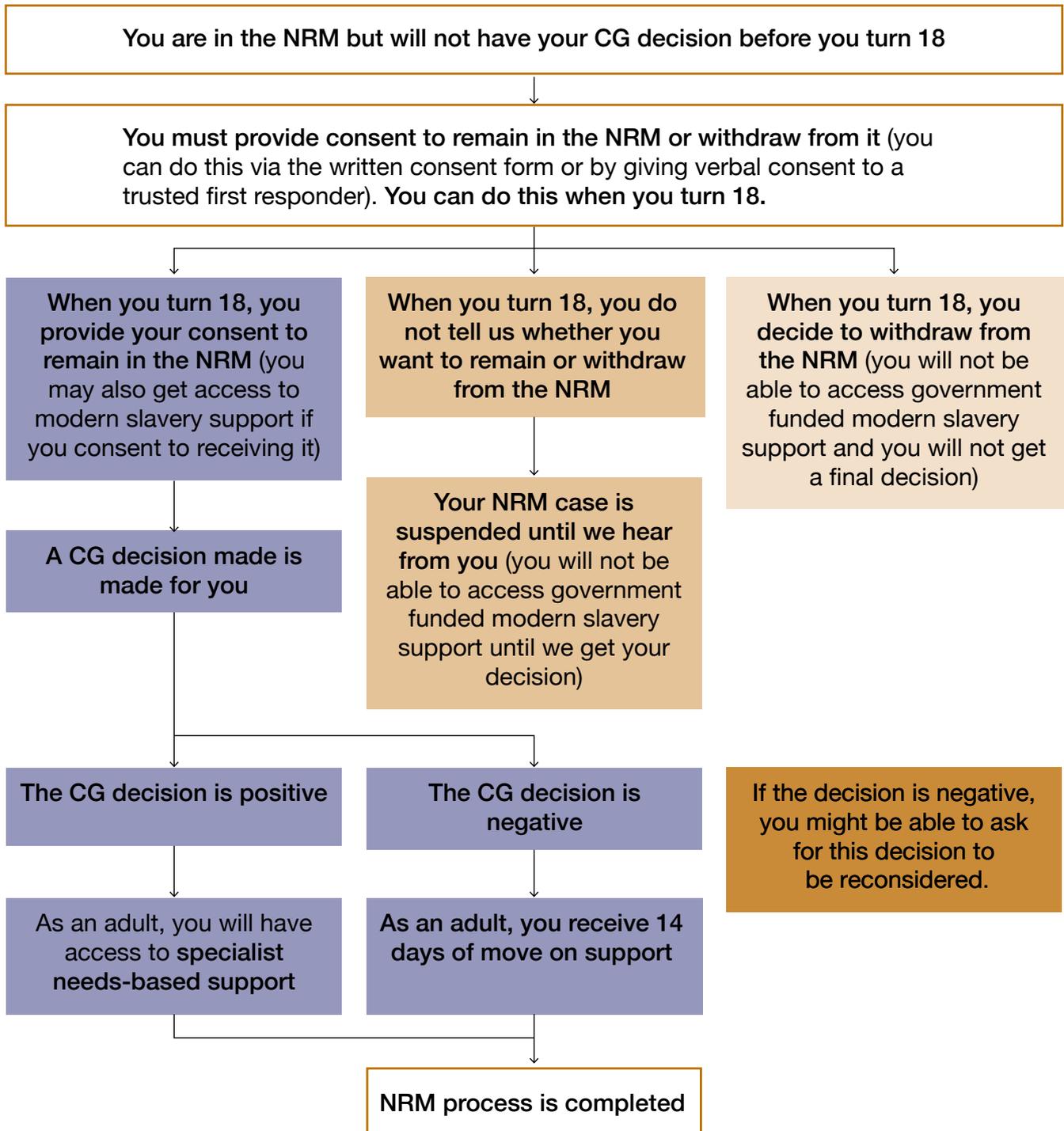
**Guardianship Scotland** (While Guardianship Scotland is not a designated trafficking support provider, they continue to offer NRM support to unaccompanied young people who remain in the NRM after turning 18)

Tel: 0141 445 8659

E-mail: [guardianship@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:guardianship@aberlour.org.uk)

## Diagram to show how the consent process works for young people in the NRM turning 18.

This may vary for individuals in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Please do talk to a trusted professional to help you understand the transition process.



In some cases, you may turn 18 without an RG decision or a CG decision. If this is the case, you will need to consent for both the RG and the CG decision to be made



