

What is modern slavery?

Modern slavery is when one person treats another as if they owned them. It is a term that covers a range of different legal offences.

In New South Wales (NSW), there are various criminal offences that are considered 'modern slavery offences', including: forced marriage, forced labour, servitude, sexual servitude, trafficking in persons, debt bondage, deceptive recruiting, organ and tissue trafficking and online sexual exploitation of children.

Modern slavery exists in NSW. There are an estimated 16,400 people in the state who are living in modern slavery. It could be happening right now on farms in regional NSW, in shops and constructions sites in our city, or in a house in your area.

Who is the NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner?

The NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner is Dr James Cockayne and his five-year term commenced on 1 August 2022. *The Modern Slavery Act 2018 (NSW)* enables the Commissioner to exercise a range of functions to combat modern slavery such as:

- Promoting actions to combat modern slavery.
- Providing assistance to victims of modern slavery.
- Monitoring government actions to combat modern slavery, including public procurement.
- Encouraging better identification, detection, investigation and prosecution.
- Raising community awareness of modern slavery.



What are some of the examples of modern slavery in NSW?

The Office of the NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner has received reliable reports of many different kinds of modern slavery in NSW, including:

- Workers trapped in forced labour and subjected to poor working conditions on farms in regional NSW.
- Workers forced into domestic servitude in urban households.
- Women and children, groomed, coerced and trafficked into sexual exploitation, in person and through social media platforms.
- Cleaners and security guards working in office blocks, caught in debt bondage.
- Young men, women and girls forced to marry in Australia or overseas.
- People living with disability who are being exploited in segregated workplaces or in institutional care.
- Forced labour and forced child labour of First Nations peoples.
- Debt bondage where people are forced to work for an employer to pay off their debts and may also experience wage theft and underpayment.

Modern slavery is hidden in plain sight

Modern slavery can often be hidden in plain sight due to various factors. Modern slavery can be blended into everyday situations, making it difficult to identify. Additionally, victims may fear retaliation from their exploiters, coupled with a lack of information about available supports, making them reluctant to report or seek help. Furthermore, some industries may have practices that normalise or overlook exploitation, making it harder to identify.

Modern slavery often preys on vulnerability, whether due to age, gender, migrant status, language skills, disability, poverty, or homelessness. It may intersect with other forms of exploitation like domestic violence, child abuse, gender-based violence, online abuse, and workplace offences. Perpetrators of modern slavery offences often use coercion, manipulation, threats, violence and deception to exercise control and power over a victim's life, creating situations of dependence or a sense of ownership.

Are you or is someone you know at risk? To report modern slavery

- In an emergency: call Triple Zero (000). If you have immediate concerns for your safety or the safety of another person.
- New South Wales police: call 131 444.
- Australian Federal Police (AFP): call 131 237 or go to the AFP website at afp.gov.au
- Crimestoppers: call 1800 333 000 or report online at crimestoppers.com.au

Help and support

For advice, support or assistance relating to a possible case of modern slavery, you can contact:

- **The NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner** on 0455 255 453 or email our public mailbox antislavery@dcj.nsw.gov.au The Anti-slavery Commissioner's team can provide you with confidential advice and support and refer you to other agencies for assistance.
- **Fair Work Ombudsman:** Free advice to visa holders and migrant workers about employment concerns and rights. Call 13 13 94. Visit fairwork.gov.au
- **Australian Human Rights Commission:** Investigates and conciliates complaints about discrimination and breaches in human rights, including sexual harassment. Call 1300 656 419 or (02) 92849600. Visit humanrights.gov.au
- **Anti-Slavery Australia:** Free, confidential, independent legal and migration services for people who have experienced or at risk of modern slavery, including human trafficking, forced labour and forced marriage. Visit antislavery.org.au Call (02) 9514 8115. Email ASALegal@uts.edu.au
- **Australian Red Cross - Support for Trafficked People Program (STPP):** Assistance to victims of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices, including forced marriage and forced labour (who meet the eligibility criteria). Call (03) 9345 1800. Email national_stpp@redcross.org.au
- **The Salvation Army:** Accommodation support. Call 1300 473 560. Email endslavery@salvationarmy.org.au

- **My Blue Sky:** free forced marriage service – providing confidential and independent legal advice and representation to those affected and information for frontline workers. Visit mybluesky.org.au Call (02) 9514 8115. SMS text to 0481 070 844. Email help@mybluesky.org.au
- **Freedom Hub Survivor support:** Call 1800 373 348. Email info@thefreedomhub.org
- **Domus 8.7:** Advisory service on remedy pathways for individuals and organisations affected by modern slavery. Email antislavery@sydneycatholic.org
- **Ask Izzy:** Is an online support service finder in your area for housing, food, health, counselling, legal employment and everyday needs. Visit askizzy.org.au
- **1800 RESPECT 1800 737 732:** National domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service 1800respect.org.au
- **Lifeline Australia:** Is a national service providing support to people experiencing emotional distress. Call 13 11 14. Visit lifeline.org.au
- **Kids Helpline:** A free national phone counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25. Call 1800 55 1800. Visit kidshelpline.com.au
- **Headspace:** A free national youth service for young people aged 12 to 25 with 154 centres, online and phone counselling, health and sexual health services, work and study support. Visit headspace.org.au/register
- **Mental Health Line NSW (1800 011 511):** Free, 24/7 mental health support
- **13 YARN:** Free 24/7 crisis support helpline Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Call 13 92 76. Visit 13yarn.org.au

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Do you need an interpreter?

Free, confidential interpretation is available on the Translating & Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450. An interpreter from TIS can help you to communicate with other services, however TIS does not provide counselling. All calls are free and confidential.