

Support for modern slavery victims affected by coronavirus

Individuals supported through the modern slavery victim care contract will be allowed to stay in government-funded safe accommodation for the next three months, as the government steps up [measures to protect the vulnerable from coronavirus](#).

Through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) individuals are able to access support including accommodation for at least 45 days if found to be potential victims.

Where they would ordinarily be assisted to move on from their accommodation, this temporary change will ensure that these individuals remain safely in accommodation.

These changes will take immediate effect.

The Home Office has announced this suspension to ensure the safety of vulnerable victims in line with official advice.

Safeguarding Minister Victoria Atkins said:

The safety of modern slavery victims and the frontline staff supporting them remains a top priority.

By taking this decisive action we will ensure that vulnerable people continue to have access to safe accommodation.

The advice is clear that we all need to stay at home to save lives and protect the NHS.

The NRM will continue to take referrals of potential modern slavery victims and those referred will be provided with the support they require, including accommodation.

The government is working with partners so victims can get the support they need. Support workers continue to provide essential support services remotely where possible, to comply with social distancing measures.

The government also continues to work with The Salvation Army, the primary provider of support, on reviewing processes and policy to maintain the services they provide to modern slavery victims during this time.

Director of Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery for The Salvation Army, Kathy Betteridge, said:

The Salvation Army is working closely with our partners and the

Home Office to quickly adapt our existing operations so that victims of modern slavery continue to have the best care possible, to keep them safe and help them continue their recovery despite the challenges we face in the light of coronavirus.

We are already making available new safe houses on a regular basis. We have plans to ensure we continue to have the capacity to accommodate new victims needing support, which will contribute to the additional capacity now required following the government's decision to restrict clients moving on from our network of safe houses.