

catch
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FORCED MARRIAGE

Self-help booklet



What is Forced Marriage?:

If you're being pressured or made to marry when you don't want to, that is considered a forced marriage. People can be forced into marriage by others, including parents, relatives, or religious figures. This might happen through threats, violence, emotional manipulation, or even coercion.

In the UK forced marriage is illegal, this includes taking someone abroad to force them to marry. Forcing someone to marry can result in a sentence of up to 7 years in prison.

Forced marriage can happen to both males and females and happens across many countries, cultures and communities. There are various reasons why forced marriages occur, and why people may be pressured into marrying someone they don't want to. Some examples include:

- **Family members feel pressure from others or their community.**
- **Beliefs that forced marriage is part of cultural or religious practices.**
- **Financial reasons may also be a factor in forcing a marriage.**

What can you do?

It is important to be aware of warning signs a forced marriage may occur, this can include:

Increased control of movement and restrictions

Being taken out of education

History of forced marriages for elder siblings

Upcoming family holiday you may be feeling worried about

Feeling worried about potential forced marriage.

If you are worried about being taken abroad for a forced marriage, you can conceal a small metal object like a spoon in a discreet place such as in your underwear. If travelling through an airport this will be picked up by metal detectors and security should take you to another room by yourself if you are over 17. This gives you the opportunity to speak to them and ask for help.

You can also apply for a forced marriage protection order (FMPO), a legal document which is designed to protect you and your circumstances. It can include legal requirements such as instructing certain people not to take you overseas, if you are already abroad it can instruct them to bring you back safely to the UK. To find out more and apply for one visit - [Apply for a forced marriage protection order: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

If you are worried but unsure that an upcoming holiday may lead to a forced marriage, you can tell a trusted adult about your concerns and create a code word that will alert them that you are in danger. If possible, give them your details, including passport number and where you are going, so they know where you are when they alert the relevant people.

The Forced Marriage Unit have created a [Forced marriage: a survivors guidebook](#), check it out for more information.

What can Catch22 Victim Services do?

Through our victim services, we are here to support anyone who has been affected by forced marriage. Our person-centred approach aims to empower and build resilience; we provide the necessary tools to navigate your recovery journey and move forward from the impact of crime. Support offered by our victims' services is free, independent and confidential, and available to victims and witnesses regardless of whether the crime has been reported or not.

We can help in the following ways:

Emotional support

Practical Support including crime prevention and safety advice

Advocacy

Support through criminal justice processing

Signposting and onward referrals

Access to Restorative Justice

Useful organisations

[Forced Marriage Unit \(FMU\)](#) – provides help and support if you're concerned about being or have been forced into marriage: 020 7008 0151.

[British Embassy](#) – addresses and contact details for British Embassies in different countries, who can help you if you have been forced into marriage out of the UK.

[Against Forced Marriage](#) – supports and gives advice to those in or at risk of being forced into marriage: 0800 141 2994.

[Karma Nirvana](#) – provides support and advice on protecting yourself if you're experiencing forced marriage or honour-based violence: 0800 599 9247.

[Freedom Charity](#) – the charity provides advice on rights and how to stay safe if you're experiencing a forced marriage: 0845 607 0133.

Reporting

You can also report to the police:

- In an emergency always call 999.
- In a non-emergency call 101
- Report online - [Contact us | Police.uk](#)
- Visit a local police station
- To report a crime anonymously, contact Crimestoppers at 0800 555 111, or visit [Independent UK charity taking crime information anonymously | Crimestoppers](#)

You can also report to the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151.

If you have been taken abroad, you can report to the British Embassy. To find the relevant details visit - <https://www.gov.uk/world/embassies>

How to contact our victim services:

Catch22 Victim Services

To find out more about the victim services that we deliver and to access support visit:

[Victim services | Catch22](#)

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