



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The Law in England and Wales

FGM is child abuse and illegal in England and Wales under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Under section 1(1) of the 2003 Act, a person is guilty of an offence if they excise, infibulate or otherwise mutilate the whole or any part of a girl's labia majora, labia minora or clitoris. Section 6(1) of the 2003 Act provides that the term "girl" includes "woman" so the offences in section 1 to 3 apply to victims of any age.

Other than in the excepted circumstances set out in section 1(2) and (3), it is an offence for any person (regardless of their nationality or residence status) to:

- Perform FGM in England or Wales (section 1 of the 2003 Act);
- Assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself in England or Wales (section 2 of the 2003 Act); and
- Assist (from England or Wales) a non-UK national or UK resident to carry out FGM outside the UK on a UK national or UK resident (section 3 of the 2003 Act.)

Any person found guilty of an offence under section 1, 2 or 3 of the 2003 Act is liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years' imprisonment or a fine (or both).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) the basics;

FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for victims and can cause harm in many ways the practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including mental health problems, difficulties in child birth, causing danger to the child and mother and/or death. The age at which FGM is carried out varies enormously according to the community. The procedure may be carried out shortly after birth, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy.

FGM is a deeply embedded social norm, practised by families for a variety of complex reasons. It is often thought to be essential for a girl to become a proper woman and to be marriageable. The practice is not required by any religion.

Terms used for FGM in other languages can be found in the multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation

[Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on FGM page 71](#)

How to respond to concerns; please follow the referral pathway at the bottom of this document, Child Protection Leads and other professionals can find out more comprehensive information at our website:

http://www.harrowscb.co.uk/Workers/FGM_and_Forced_Marriage.aspx and also

[Safeguarding children at risk of abuse through FGM](#)

Helplines NSPCC FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550 [NSPCC Preventing abuse FGM](#)

Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

[Education: Norbury School](#)

[Barnado's: National FGM centre](#)

For a list of other organisations who can provide and support on FGM see the 'contact, helplines and clinics' section of the FGM resource pack. [government fgm resource pack](#)

Enter a postcode to find local organisations

[Female Genital mutilation help & advice](#)

Home office, e-learning module FGM: How to recognise and prevent it [fgmelearning](#)

Home Office (2015), FGM resource pack (including case studies and links to organisations and resources to support local work to tackle FGM)

[Government Resource Pack Female Genital Mutilation](#)

E-learning for healthcare, e-learning modules for healthcare professionals in England

[elearning healthcare fgm](#)

Other useful local contacts	
FORWARD (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development) is an African Diaspora women led UK-registered campaign and support charity dedicated to advancing and safeguarding the sexual and reproductive health and rights of African girls and women. www.forwarduk.org.uk/	Southall Black Sisters, 21 Avenue Road, Southall, UB1 3BL – website: www.southalblacksisters.org.uk Email: info@southalblacksisters.co.uk Phone: Helpline: 020 8571 0800 Enquires: 020 8571 9595
Metropolitan Police Service; Project Azure 020 7230 8324	

Pathway Plan

