

Welfare Awareness Topic: Forced Marriage

Overview – *Forced marriage is when you face physical pressure to marry (for example, threats, physical violence or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressure (e.g., if you're made to feel like you're bringing shame on your family).*

You have the right to choose who you marry, when you marry or if you marry at all. No one should force you or coerce you in to doing anything that you do not want to do. Forced marriage is illegal in England and Wales, and forcing someone to marry can result in a sentence of up to 7 years in prison.

This includes:

- taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether the forced marriage takes place)
- marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured to or not)

To protect yourself you can apply for a Forced Marriage Protection Order, a forced marriage protection order can help if you are **being forced into marriage**, or **already in a forced marriage**.

A forced marriage protection order is unique to each case and contains legally binding conditions and directions that change the behaviour of a person or persons trying to force someone into marriage. The aim of the order is to protect the person who has been, or is being, forced into marriage. The court can make an order in an emergency so that protection is in place straightaway. The court can make a forced marriage protection order to protect a person facing forced marriage or who has been forced into marriage.

Applications for forced marriage protection orders can be made at the same time as a police investigation or other criminal proceedings. Someone who disobeys a court order can be sent to prison for up to 2 years for contempt of court - but breach of a forced marriage protection order is also a criminal offence with a maximum sentence of 5 years' imprisonment.

Article/Source

More information and information on how to apply for a forced marriage protection order is on the government website [here](#).

If you are trying to stop a forced marriage or need help leaving a marriage you have been forced into, then contact the Forced Marriage unit on +44 (0)20 7008 0151 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm, or email on fm@fcdof.gov.uk . If you are in an emergency situation dial 999. There is also a comprehensive [Government leaflet](#) with lots of information on other agencies as well as advice should you or someone else be in this situation.

[Karma Nirvana](#) can also help if you are facing a forced marriage, or concerned you will be forced into marriage when abroad. they have safe, confidential and free services, and if you are at risk, or concerned for someone who is, you can call them Monday-Friday 9-5 on 0800 5999 247.

[The Halo Project](#) is a national charity that aims to respond to cases of Forced Marriage across the UK. Halo provides specialist support to victims of forced marriages and those suffering domestic abuse in the name of honour. If you need to speak to someone for some advice then call: **01642 683045 or 08081 788 424 (free phone)**

Support

If you would like to talk to the safeguarding team about anything you have just read, we will listen without judgement and signpost you to support. If you would like to talk to a member of the Safeguarding Team then please get in touch: safeguarding@bpp.com