

# 'Honour'-based abuse - Guidance overview

This page is from APP, the official source of professional practice for policing.

First published 12 August 2025

4 mins read

The following section sets out the national policing strategy for:

- 'honour'-based abuse
- forced marriage
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

'Honour'-based abuse is defined as 'an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour'.

- [\*\*'Honour'-based Abuse, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation: a Policing Strategy\*\*](#)

## Forced marriage

[\*\*Part 10 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014\*\*](#) makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry. This includes:

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

Forcing someone to marry can result in a sentence of up to seven years in prison.

The civil remedy of obtaining a Forced Marriage Protection Order through the family courts will continue to exist alongside the new criminal offence, so victims can choose how they wish to be assisted. Breaching a Forced Marriage Protection Order is also a criminal offence and can result in a sentence of up to five years in prison.

The following links provide current advice from the Home Office until further notice:

- [\*\*GOV.UK guidance on forced marriage\*\*](#)
- [\*\*HM Government \(2023\) The Right to Choose: Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage\*\*](#)
- [\*\*HM Government \(2023\) Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling Cases of Forced Marriage\*\*](#)

## Further resources

### College e-learning on 'honour'-based abuse, forced marriage and FGM

You'll need to log in to College Learn to access the following e-learning.

- [\*\*Public protection: family disturbance\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Vulnerability: Saima – a case study\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Public protection support services for victims \(and professionals\)\*\*](#)

## Useful links

- [\*\*CPS \(2019\) Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage: Guidance on Identifying and Flagging cases\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Female genital mutilation APP\*\*](#)

## Tags

Forced marriage and honour based abuse    Victim care