

Strengthening police response to modern slavery and human trafficking

Published on 11 February 2026

Updated APP provides the tools to recognise exploitation, support victims, and disrupt criminal networks

News 2 mins read

The College of Policing has published updated authorised professional practice (APP) on modern slavery and human trafficking, providing officers and staff across England and Wales with the knowledge and confidence to recognise exploitation, respond effectively and safeguard victims.

Effective policing relies on officers being able to spot the signs and take early action to protect victims and pursue offenders.

What the updated APP covers

The College has worked closely with the [NPCC Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime Unit \(MSOICU\)](#), and with forces across England and Wales to include examples of effective practice that will help all forces to better tackle modern slavery offences. The APP provides guidance across six core areas:

- legislative framework
- identifying and engaging with victims
- actions to keep victims safe
- effective investigation and supervision
- governance, training and partnership working
- workforce considerations

It is designed to help forces understand their responsibilities, build consistent practice and strengthen their operational response.

Recognising and responding to victims

Frontline officers and staff are often the first to encounter victims, many of whom may not realise they are being exploited. The APP supports officers to use professional curiosity to understand victims' circumstances, identify indicators of coercion or control, and meet immediate welfare needs to build trust and encourage disclosure.

Multi-agency working

Tackling modern slavery requires close collaboration between police, local authorities, the Home Office, health services, communities and victim support organisations.

The APP promotes coordinated working to safeguard victims and disrupt criminal networks. It has been developed with partners including the NPCC's MSOICU, which leads national policing efforts and works with charities and non-government organisations (NGOs) to raise public awareness.

The APP forms part of wider College of Policing and NPCC work supported by the national centre for violence against women and girls and public protection, which provides specialist expertise, training and a coordinated multi-agency approach to tackle these crimes and keep the public safe.

[Go to modern slavery and human trafficking APP](#)

Tags

APP Modern slavery