



Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en
Werkgelegenheid

Prostitution and exploitation

Are you being exploited or working as a prostitute against your will? Or do you know someone who is involved in this?

Ask for help!

If you are working as a prostitute, it may be that you are being forced to do so, or that you are being exploited. The Dutch government and help organisations want to prevent this, and can offer you help. If any of the following situations applies to you, it is possible that you are being exploited:

- You have to do work that is different to what you were promised;
- You are aged under 18 and are working as a prostitute;
- You are being forced to work as a prostitute, for example by someone who has arranged the work for you, or by a so-called lover boy;
- The person you are working for is threatening to report you because you are in the Netherlands illegally;
- You do not have your own passport or travel documents in your possession;
- You have to hand over the money you earn (some or all of it) to someone else;
- You have to work even when you are ill;
- You have to pay off a large debt to the person you are working for;
- You have no say about where you work or live;
- You have to work in different places and often do not know where you are;
- You are not allowed to go back and forth by yourself between where you live and where you work;
- You are not allowed to go shopping or buy new clothes by yourself;
- You or your family are being mistreated, blackmailed or threatened;
- You work in unpleasant or poor conditions;
- You are forced to have unsafe sex;
- You are forced to perform specific sexual acts;
- You are not free to refuse customers;
- You have to work long hours;
- You are only allowed to finish work when you have earned a certain amount of money, or after you have had a minimum number of clients.

Do any of these situations apply to you, or to someone you know? Then it is possible that you (or he or she) are the victim of exploitation. Do not allow this to happen - ask for help!

Where can you get help?

You are working as a prostitute and you have questions or need help.

The social workers in the place where you live can put you in touch with the Human Trafficking Coordination Centre (CoMensha). This is an independent foundation that provides shelter for victims of exploitation. Everything you say is in complete confidence - it will not be passed on to anyone else. E-mail: info@comensha.nl or telephone: 033 448 11 86 (Mondays - Fridays between 09.00 and 17.00 hours). Information is available in Dutch and in English.

You can also contact the police for help (phone 0900-8844). The police in the Netherlands can be trusted. Applications for residence permits are handled by the police. If you prefer not to go the police, ask helpers from the organisations mentioned above to inform the police about your situation.

What are your rights as a victim?

If you are the victim of exploitation or human trafficking then you have rights. If you are in the Netherlands illegally, obtaining legal residence status will give you access to these rights. As a victim of exploitation or human trafficking you are entitled to:

- Three months in which to decide whether you wish to make an official complaint to the police or otherwise help in finding and bringing criminal charges against suspects. You will not be deported during this three-month period;
- A temporary residence permit if you make an official complaint to the police or help the authorities find and bring criminal charges against suspects. The permit will be valid for the amount of time it takes to find, prosecute and sentence the suspects;
- During your legal residence in the Netherlands you are entitled to stay in a reception facility, as well as receive benefits and medical help;
- You are also entitled to work in the Netherlands while you hold this residence permit.

More information

More information is available at www.prostitutiegoedgeregeld.nl. For more information about working conditions, contact the Inspectie SZW at www.inspectorateszw.nl or call 0800 - 5151 (free of charge).

Reporting a complaint

If you have information about exploitation or human trafficking but are afraid to make an official complaint to the police then make an anonymous phone call to Meld Misdaad Anoniem: 0800 - 7000.

Do you have any questions about this brochure, or would you like to order more copies? Call 1400 (Mondays - Fridays between 08:00 and 20:00 hours), or go to www.rijksoverheid.nl. Download copies via www.rijksoverheid.nl -documents and publications- key word prostitutie.

This brochure is also available in other languages. There are also people who can help you in the town or city where you live.

This brochure is an official publication of:
Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid
Postbus 90801
2509 LV Den Haag

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