



Right to be free from  
slavery or forced labour  
**(Article 4)**

## The right to be free from slavery and forced labour

Article 4 of the Human Rights Act

The right to be free from slavery and forced labour is one of the 16 human rights (also called Articles) in the Human Rights Act.

## When could the Right to be free from Slavery and Forced Labour matter to me?

If you are being forced to work for little or no money.



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If you are forced to work because you are frightened or being threatened.



If you are being forced to work because you can't leave or don't have your passport.



Slavery is often called modern slavery, examples of this could include:



Forced work on construction sites,  
farms, car washes and  
manufacturing



Sexual exploitation



Domestic slavery. This is being  
forced to do tasks like cleaning,  
cooking, washing in a private home.



Drug trafficking. This can often include children being forced to sell drugs.



The right to be free from slavery and forced labour is an absolute right. This means staff working in public services cannot deliberately take away this right.

## What do staff workers have do about my right to be from slavery and forced labour

They have to **RESPECT** your right.

This means not deliberately taking  
away your right to be free from  
slavery and forced labour.



They have to **PROTECT** your right.

This means that staff have to do  
things that protect your right to be  
free from slavery and forced labour  
and make sure you are involved in



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conversations about actions they take.

To **FULFIL** your right.

This means that if something goes wrong, staff need to find out why and try to stop this from happening again.



## Patience's Story

When Patience was brought to the UK as a domestic worker and nanny, there were no anti-slavery laws in the UK.



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Patience was forced to work for little or no money, and was mentally and physically abused.



When Patience managed to escape and reported her experiences to the police, the police force did not take her seriously. The police closed the case.



On Patience's behalf, a human rights organisation, Liberty, argued that the Police had failed in its duties to protect and fulfil Patience's human rights

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The police did an investigation and Patience's employer was taken to court for criminal abuse. There were no anti slavery rules at the time.



Now we have the Modern Slavery Act 2015. This means that is an offense to have a slave or to force another person to work for you or someone else.