

# Worried about forced marriage?

## We can help you

- if you have been forced into marriage
- if you are at risk of being forced into marriage
- if you are worried about friends or relatives at risk.

Next Link is the lead provider of the Next Link Plus partnership which includes the following organisations:



### What is a forced marriage?

A forced marriage takes place without the full consent of both bride and groom.

Pressure or abuse is used to force them to marry. This pressure can be physical (threats of violence or actual violence), financial, sexual or emotional (for example, making you feel like you're bringing shame on your family).

It can affect women and men as well as girls and boys from any community and background.

### Is an arranged marriage the same as a forced marriage?

No, in an arranged marriage, the families take a lead role in choosing the marriage partner, but both bride and groom are left to choose whether or not to enter the marriage.

In a forced marriage there is no freedom of choice.

**If you or someone you know is being forced into marriage, the most important thing to remember is that we can help you.**

### How can you contact us?

A Next Link Plus worker will offer you immediate help with your situation.

**Phone: 0800 4700 280**

**Text: 07407 895620**

**email: enquiries@nextlinkhousing.co.uk**

### Does your religion mean you have to marry against your will?

No. All major religions believe you have the right to choose. Your family might use religion to try to pressurise you into getting married, but no religion will turn you away for refusing a forced marriage.

In the UK, forced marriage amounts to a form of domestic violence and/or child abuse.

### If you're being taken abroad and are scared you'll be forced to marry when you're there: Decide if you really have to go.

Things become much more difficult once you are away – you might be isolated, be unable to escape the emotional pressure, be watched all the time, have no money, have

no access to your passport, ticket or even a telephone.

**Call us for advice on what you may be able to do: 0800 4700 280 or text us on: 07407 895620**

### If you do go:

1. Make a copy of your passport
2. Find out your flight details. If you can, make a copy of the tickets
3. Find out where you will be staying and contact details if possible
4. Find out the number of the British Embassy or High Commission where you are going and keep it with you. You can find these on the internet or you can call us and we will find them for you. If you are in trouble when you are away, contact them. They will alert the Forced Marriage Unit in Britain and will try to help get you back safely.

## We can help you

**If you or someone you know is being forced into marriage, the most important thing to remember is that we can help you.**

Call now to protect yourself or anyone you know.

How to contact us

**Phone: 0800 4700 280**

**Text: 07407 895620**

**email: enquiries@nextlinkhousing.co.uk**

Or **CHAT LIVE ONLINE** to one of our support workers at [www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk](http://www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk) click on "live chat NOW" (Mon to Fri 10am - 4pm)

[www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk](http://www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk)

Twitter: @NextLinkHousing

[www.facebook.com/nextlinkhousing](http://www.facebook.com/nextlinkhousing)

**If you need help immediately** – contact the police. They will help you.

Agree a plan with a friend or someone you can trust to alert them that you need assistance if you are unable to contact the British Embassy or High Commission whilst abroad. Give them the details of 1, 2 and 3 before you go, and the numbers of the Forced Marriage Unit:

**0207 008 0151** (9-5 Mon - Fri)

**0207 008 5000** (24 hours)

If anything does happen while you are away, these details could help get you back safely.