



National Referral Mechanism for Trafficking in Persons Crimes in Saudi Arabia

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Since combatting trafficking in persons requires cooperation and coordination between various agencies (Ministry of Labor and Social Development, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Ministry of Media, public prosecution, law enforcement, civil society organizations, scholarly institutions, care centers. etc.), it was imperative that a comprehensive interagency approach be created.

This comprehensive interagency approach came to be known as the "National Trafficking in Persons Referral Mechanism" (NTPRM). The NTPRM was designed as a national guide and reference document to help establish the foundations of handling trafficking in persons cases and define the roles and responsibilities of different state agencies to ensure trafficking-in persons victims are offered services in a holistic and comprehensive manner that guarantees their return to their natural place in society.

NTPRM has an important role in defining how criminal justice institutions, health care agencies, and social support entities address trafficking cases and implement protocols for cooperation with civil society organizations (philanthropic and private charities), international organizations, and relevant government agencies.

The NTPRM offers an opportunity to enable relevant agencies to provide services to victims at the following six stages:



Details of the Various Stages of the National Referral Mechanism

STAGE 1

Identifying trafficking victims

This initial stage serves to identify whether a person is a potential victim of human trafficking. Identification occurs when the first responder detects the initial indicators.

After a potential victim is identified, he/she is transferred to the Ministry of Labor and Social Development shelter, which in turn, provides specialized assistance by referring (potential) victims to the relevant authorities for support and assistance as the situation requires.

STAGE 2

Saving, referring, documenting, and sheltering trafficking victims

This stage follows the identification of a potential victim and the identification of the concerned authorities.

It includes evacuation from the place of exploitation or violation to a safe place (shelter) where the necessary protection and assistance is provided depending the potential victim's case.

Factors including the physical, psychological, and health status of the victim are taken into account to provide the necessary assistance. Following are the most important procedures in this process:

First procedure:

Potential Saving and referring the victim; notifying the shelter of the potential case Victim Indicators

Second procedure:

Intake and evaluation:

- Receiving the case at the shelter
- Providing assistance when necessary
- Assessing the general status of the case by looking for the initial prominent indicators of the signs of exploitation
- Evaluating the case by shelter workers



Third procedure:

Following the initial assessment

- Initial acceptance of the case and documentation of the reasons for the decision to accept it
- Referring the case to the pertinent authorities, depending on case factors
- Providing urgent medical care when necessary
- Notifying the pertinent security authorities if criminal activity is suspected
- Securing the victim's consent to move forward with procedures linked to further steps

Fourth procedure:

Basic needs and temporary shelter:

- Securing essential basic needs, including temporary shelter, if necessary
- Notifying the security authorities (the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit in Ministry of Interior)
- Notifying the concerned embassy that one of its citizens has been admitted to the shelter
- Conducting complete medical screening and documenting the case: this includes documenting the physical and mental state of the victim in an official medical examination and ensuring the victim has no contagious or communicable diseases.

Fifth procedure:

Initial interview

- Conduct the initial interview. This includes explaining to victim his/her rights and obligations and next steps in the referral process.
- Ensure interpretation is available when necessary.
- Preparing the case file (case management file) by the shelter's social worker.

Sixth procedure:

Adopting evaluation results and taking measures related to the case:

In the case of a potential victim:

Conduct the initial interview. This includes explaining to victim his/her rights and obligations and next steps in the referral process.

In labor cases and cases of victimization:

The relevant authority is identified. Authority addresses the cause of victimization and offers assistance to the potential victim (prevention).



Saving, referring, documenting, and sheltering trafficking victims

First procedure:

Role of (the Public Prosecution, the legal officer's assistants –the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit)

- Case is reviewed by the (Public Prosecution, the legal officer's assistants –the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit) to ascertain whether or not the victim is a victim of trafficking.
- Victim is informed of the results of the investigation and the Public Prosecution's decision.

Second procedure: investigation results:

In the event of a trafficking in persons case:

- Public Prosecution issues an official order to shelter the victim.
- Public Prosecution takes steps to process the case as a trafficking case.

In the event the investigation reveals the victim is not a trafficking victim:

- The national referral team (case management file) follows up with the Public Prosecution to determine the steps taken in the case.
- The reasons for victimization are addressed and steps are taken to protect the victim against becoming a potential trafficking victim.

Protection and assistance

Main objective: To create an environment conducive to the victim by offering the necessary assistance until the victim can be reintegrated into society or voluntarily returns to his/her country.

First procedure:

Assistance, investigation, and litigation

- Ensuring the victim is aware and sharing with him/her the legal, judicial, and administrative procedures to be taken in the case in compliance with national legal standards. Victim is also advised of his/her right to seek compensation for damages and avail of the legal measures applicable to the case.
- Providing the necessary psychological, medical, social, and legal services as well as transla-



tion and rehabilitation/training.

- Rehabilitation and recovery.
- Removing obstacles that prevent the victim from seeking employment during this period and assisting the victim in finding work, should he/she desires to do so.
- Facilitating the victim's access to travel and identification documents.

Second procedure:

Following up on the investigation.

This includes updating the file on the progress of the case and keeping the victim informed of the latest developments.

Third procedure:

Legal judgement:

Final judgement. In the event of victimization, cases not classified as potential trafficking in persons cases are processed accordingly. The causes of victimization are addressed to protect the victim against becoming a potential trafficking in persons victim.

STAGE 5

Voluntary repatriation of trafficking in persons victims:

Helping the victim and enabling him/her to return voluntarily to his/her home country.

First procedure:

Arranging a consultation session to include representatives of the National Referral Team, the victim's embassy, and relevant international organizations to set a plan to repatriate the victim after assessing the risks.

Second procedure:

In case the victim wishes to be repatriated to his/her home country

- Ensure the victim has a travel document
- Coordinate with the victim's embassy to make travel arrangements for the victim's repatriation
- Coordinate with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to make arrangements for the victim's travel



- Assessing the risks involved in the case
- Providing an air ticket for the victim's journey home
- Make arrangements to release the victim from the shelter
- Coordinate with the Ministry of Health or health workers to accompany the victim on the journey home if the victim's health condition does not allow for independent travel
- Work with the victim's embassy to make arrangements for his/her to be received in his/her home country
- Coordinate with civil society organizations in the victim's home country to ensure the victim continues to be engaged in rehabilitation programs, if needed

Third procedure:

If the victim wishes to travel to a third country

- Ensure the victim has a travel document
- Work with UNHCR to search for a country willing to receive the victim
- Work with the victim's embassy to make arrangements for his/her travel
- Work with IOM to make arrangements for the victim's travel
- Assess the risks that may be involved in the case
- Provide an air ticket for the victim's journey
- Coordinate with the Ministry of Health or health workers to accompany the victim on the journey if the victim's health condition does not allow for independent travel
- Work with the victim's embassy to make arrangements for him/her to be received in the third country
- Coordinate with civil society organizations in the third country to ensure the victim continues to be engaged in rehabilitation programs, if needed

Third procedure:

If the victim wishes to stay and work in country

- Coordinate with the Ministry of Labor and Social Development to arrange for the victim to work in country, if possible.
- Allow the victim the chance to seek employment



STAGE 6

- Facilitate the procedures of applying for a work permit with the Ministry of Labor
- Make arrangements for the victim's release from the shelter.

Reintegration

The reintegration stage is a long-term multifaceted stage aimed at enabling the person to resume their life as an active member engaged in the social, economic, civil, political, and cultural aspects of society. Successful reintegration should reduce the vulnerability of victims so that they do not fall victims to trafficking once again.

First procedure:

Victim of trafficking in persons:

Successful reintegration is achieved through reinforcement methodology that provides trafficked persons with the support they need to develop their personal skills and resources. It further allows them to make decisions about their lives at every stage of this process. The key to a successful reintegration is assisting victims (giving the victim the chance to participate in normal life). Reintegration assistance includes the following:

- Health care and medical services
- Financial assistance
- Legal aid
- Education assistance
- Vocational training
- Small enterprises and income generation activities
- Appointment to positions, subsidies, and extended programs
- Accommodation and housing arrangements.

Second procedure:

Remaining and working in country for expatriate victims

- Remove barriers to the victim's work in the country, if possible
- Allowing the victim the opportunity to look for work
- Facilitating work permit application procedures with the Ministry of Labor and Social Development
- Making arrangements for the victim to be released from the shelter



