

Modern Slavery Statement

Compliance with Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 for Financial Year ending 31st March 2022

Introduction

The UK Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires certain organisations to make a public statement on the steps they are taking to identify and prevent modern slavery and human trafficking in their operations and supply chains. County Durham And Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) support this legislation, and this statement outlines the steps taken within the Service's own practices and supply chains to mitigate the possibility of modern slavery.

In compliance with Section 54 of The Modern Slavery Act 2015, this statement sets out The Service's commitment to ensure it does not actively encourage nor support slavery or human trafficking within the organisation, our business activities and within our supply chains. There are many types of slavery which include, but are not limited to:

- Labour exploitation
- Sexual exploitation
- Domestic exploitation
- Criminal exploitation
- Financial exploitation

The Service recognises its responsibility to promote understanding of modern slavery both within its workforce, its suppliers and within the wider community. It also has a responsibility to mitigate the risk of modern slavery through its everyday operations and through scrutiny within its supply chain. To deliver this, The Service has implemented on-line training for all members of staff to help staff to recognise any concerning areas.

Organisation Structure, Business and Supply Chains

The Service seeks to create "Safest People, Safest Places" within County Durham and Darlington. County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue serves around 650,000 residents across County Durham and Darlington and provides a diverse range of services including Emergency Response, Prevention including Home Fire Safety Visits, Protection and national capabilities such as High-Volume Pumping.

For full information on our organisational structure please see our website: [Who We Are | County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service \(ddfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/who-we-are)

Procurement and Supply Chain Management

CDDFRS is committed to ethical procurement practices which aim to encourage fair pay and working conditions in our supply chain and to assist in the identification and elimination of modern slavery and human trafficking.

CDDFRS expects all its partners, contractors and suppliers that are subject to Section 54 of the Act to understand and comply with the requirements set out in the legislation.

Given the CDDFRS's mission is to create safer communities and its many suppliers, it has a duty to take action to mitigate any risk of modern slavery. This is achieved using its spending power and scrutiny of its supply chain. In addition, creating awareness through its social media channels and communication with its suppliers. In all tender processes, modern slavery is an important consideration and appropriate actions are taken to ensure any risks of modern slavery are addressed. CDDFRS will continue to assess any other actions it can take such as collaboration opportunities with its partners to further promote the Act and minimise the possibility of Modern Slavery in its business or in its supply chain.

While it is impractical for CDDFRS to audit and monitor every supplier in its entire supply chain, the Service takes a proportionate risk management approach. In above threshold procurement processes, suppliers are asked to self-certify their compliance with the Modern Slavery Act and specific questions may be built into the scoring criteria.

Training - Procurement Team

Specific ethical procurement training will be delivered to the procurement team to develop their skills and knowledge of modern slavery and how risks throughout pre-market engagement, the procurement process and contract management phases can be identified and mitigated.

Training - All staff

Mandatory online safeguarding training is provided for all staff, which includes a section on modern slavery.

Records of who has completed the training are held in the Combined Fire Authority's learning management system.

Staff Recruitment

All staff that work for CDDFRS are in receipt of at least the UK Living Wage Foundation's living wage and as part of the recruitment process will undergo robust immigration and pre-employment checks in line with the Governments Right to Work in the UK guidance.

CDDFRS Policies

The Service has specific policies in the following areas to support our commitment to eradicate Modern Slavery:

- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Whole Life Cycle Policy
- Code of Conduct Procedure
- Whistle Blowing Procedure
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaint Procedure

Governance

The Service's annual Statement of Assurance shall be developed by the Deputy Chief Executive and dated with the financial year it refers to. The statement must be approved by the Combined Fire Authority prior to publication each year.

Publication

The Modern Slavery statement is to be made public on the Service's website. Publication of the statement must be no later than six months after the end of the financial year.

Compliance with this Statement

The prevention, detection, and reporting of modern slavery in any part of our business or supply chains is the responsibility of everyone within CDDFRS.

Individuals are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this Statement.

The Authority encourages openness and will support anyone who raises genuine concerns, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Individuals are encouraged to raise concerns about any issue or suspicion of modern slavery in any parts of our business or supply chains of any supplier tier at the earliest possible stage.

If it is suspected that a breach of this statement has occurred or that it may occur, the individual must report to either their Line Manager or their People and Organisational Development Business Partner or report it in accordance with the Whistle Blowing Policy.

Reporting Suspected Slavery or Human Trafficking

If an individual is unsure about whether a particular act, the treatment of workers more generally, or their working conditions within any tier of our supply chains constitutes any of the various forms of modern slavery, they must raise it with the Finance and Procurement Manager or in their absence the Head of Finance or, report to Durham Constabulary via the below channels:

To report a suspicion or seek advice you can contact the Modern Slavery Helpline confidentially on 08000 121 700. This is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

You can report modern slavery to Durham Constabulary on 101 at any time to report an incident. If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use their textphone service on 18001 101.

Should you wish to remain anonymous you can contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Always call 999 if there is a crime in action or immediate threat to life. If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service 18000 or text Durham Constabulary on 999 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service [Contact 999 using Relay UK](#).