

# A Statement Opposing Female Genital Mutilation

October 2012



HM Government

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is an extremely harmful practice with devastating health consequences for girls and women. Some girls die from blood loss or infection as a direct result of the procedure. Women who have undergone FGM are also likely to experience difficulty in childbirth.

**What this statement is for:** You should take this statement with you when you go abroad. You can show it to your family. This makes it clear that FGM is a serious **criminal offence** in the UK with a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison for anyone found guilty of the offence.

Keep this statement in your passport, purse or wallet which you carry with you **all the time** - especially when you go abroad.

**What is FGM:** FGM is the mutilation of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also sometimes known as female circumcision or 'sunna'.

**UK legislation:** FGM is a crime in the UK<sup>1</sup>. **Even if someone is taken overseas for the mutilation, it is still a crime in the UK if the mutilation is done by a UK national or permanent UK resident.** It is also a crime if a UK national or permanent resident assists or gets a non-UK national or permanent resident to carry out the acts overseas on a UK national or permanent resident.

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<sup>1</sup> In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. In Scotland it is illegal under the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (Scotland) Act 2005.

**Criminal Penalties:** Anyone found guilty of an FGM offence - or of aiding and abetting such an offence - faces a penalty of up to 14 years in prison, a fine, or both.

**Help and support:** If you are in the UK and have concerns that this may happen to you or someone you know, you can speak to a teacher, doctor, school nurse, social worker, police officer or any health, educational or social care professional in confidence. They will be able to help and support you.

If you are in the UK and are concerned that you may be taken overseas for the purpose of FGM please **call the police by dialling 999**.

If you are abroad and require help or advice please call the **Foreign and Commonwealth Office** on **+44 (0) 20 7008 1500**

You can also access help and support from:

**NSPCC FGM Helpline:**

0800 028 3550

Email: [fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk)

**Childline**

Tel: 0800 1111

[www.childline.org](http://www.childline.org)

**Equality Now**

(in Nairobi, Kenya and London, UK)

Tel (London): +44(0) 20-79731292

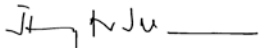
Tel (Nairobi): + 254 20-271-832

[www.equalitynow.org](http://www.equalitynow.org)

**Ministerial Signatures:** This statement is supported by:

**Jeremy Browne MP**

Minister of State for Crime Prevention, Home Office

Handwritten signature of Jeremy Browne in black ink, consisting of stylized initials and a horizontal line.

**Helen Grant MP**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Victims and the Courts, Ministry of Justice

Handwritten signature of Helen Grant in black ink, featuring a large, flowing initial 'H' followed by the name 'Grant'.



## **Anna Soubry MP**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of  
State, Department of Health

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anna', with a horizontal line underneath.

## **Edward Timpson MP**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of  
State (Children and Families)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Edward', with a horizontal line underneath.

This statement is also supported by the Crown Prosecution Service:

**Keir Starmer QC**

Director of Public Prosecutions  
(DPP), Crown Prosecution  
Service (CPS)



Keir Starmer

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