

# FGM – A Statement Opposing Female Genital Mutilation

## What is FGM?

**FGM means any procedure that involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.**

FGM is also known as 'cutting' or 'female circumcision' and is sometimes referred to as 'sunna', although FGM is not approved by any religion.

FGM is a harmful traditional practice. Some girls die from blood loss or infection as a direct result of FGM. Women can experience health problems throughout their lives and FGM can cause difficulties with childbirth. There are no health benefits to FGM.

## Scottish & UK Legislation

**FGM is a crime in Scotland and throughout the UK (1). A UK national or permanent UK resident is guilty of a crime if they carry out FGM outside Scotland. It is also a crime for a person to assist or arrange the FGM of another person, even if the actual mutilation occurs outside Scotland.**

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

## 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 & 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. They will be able to help and support you.

You can also call the **NSPCC** on **0800 028 3550**. This is a 24-hour helpline for anyone concerned about girls or women at risk of FGM.

If you are in the UK and are at immediate risk, or are concerned that you may be taken overseas for the purpose of FGM, **please contact 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** or the British High Commission or Embassy in the country you are visiting.



**The Scottish Government**  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

## Contacts

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO  
[www.fgmaware.org](http://www.fgmaware.org)

Or contact these organisations:

### DIGNITY ALERT RESEARCH FORUM (DARF)

Campaigning and education work to end FGM  
[dignityalert@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dignityalert@hotmail.co.uk)  
[www.darf.org.uk](http://www.darf.org.uk)

### WOMEN'S SUPPORT PROJECT

Website has information and resources on FGM,  
and details of organisations to help  
**0141 418 0748**  
[wsproject@btconnect.com](mailto:wsproject@btconnect.com)  
<http://www.womenssupportproject.co.uk/vawtraining/content/resources/234/>

### SHAKTI WOMENS AID

Support for women and children who are  
experiencing domestic abuse or forced marriage  
**0131 475 2399**  
[info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](mailto:info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk)  
[www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk](http://www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk)

### AMINA: MUSLIM WOMEN'S HELPLINE

Support and information for women on any issue  
**0808 801 0301**  
[info@mwrc.org.uk](mailto:info@mwrc.org.uk)  
[www.mwrc.org.uk](http://www.mwrc.org.uk)

This statement aims to help protect girls from  
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Keep it in your passport or in a purse or wallet  
that you carry with you all the time – especially  
when you go abroad.

You can show it to your family, friends and  
relatives. This statement makes it clear that  
FGM is a serious criminal offence in Scotland  
and throughout the UK, with a maximum penalty  
of 14 years in prison for anyone found guilty of  
the offence.

## Signatures



Mr Alex Neil  
Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice Communities  
and Pensioners Rights



Mr Michael Matheson  
Cabinet Secretary for Justice



Ms Shona Robison  
Cabinet Secretary for Health



Ms Angela Constance  
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning



Ms Fiona McLeod  
Minister for Children and Young People



Mr Frank Mulholland QC  
Lord Advocate



Sir Stephen House QPM  
Chief Constable, Police Scotland.

This statement is supported by  
Scottish Ministers, the Lord Advocate  
and Police Scotland

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