

Hft – Our Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2024

Introduction

At Hft we are committed to eradicating modern slavery and human trafficking in all aspects of our operations and supply chains. As leading organisations in the health and social care sectors, specialising in the excellent care to people with a learning disability, our commitment to ethical business practices underpins everything we do, from the supporting of our individuals to ensuring that our suppliers and partners share our dedication to combating modern slavery and best practice.

Our Organisation

We are a national, charitable organisation that operates across England and Wales, providing essential support to thousands of people with learning disabilities. Collectively, our organisations employ over 2500 staff and support more than 2,700 individuals, making us one of the largest not-for-profit learning disability social care providers in the UK.

We are driven by our mission to change the lives of learning disabled people for the better so that they and their families can live the best life possible.

We do this by providing personalised support, creating solutions for living independently and coming together to campaign for positive change, alongside fundraising for new opportunities and a bigger impact.

Our Policies and Procedures

Our approach to preventing modern slavery is guided by a robust framework of policies and procedures designed to mitigate risks and ensure ethical practices across all our operations. These include:

- **Whistleblowing Policy:** Encouraging employees, partners, volunteers and those we support to report any concerns related to potential slavery or trafficking risks within our operations or supply chains. We offer a confidential helpline and online reporting forms to facilitate this process without fear of repercussion.
- **Safeguarding Policy:** Setting out clear responsibilities and procedures for reporting any behaviour that could raise safeguarding concerns, including modern slavery.

- **Recruitment and Selection Policy:** Implementing stringent recruitment processes, including eligibility to work checks, to prevent human trafficking and ensure that all employees are legally entitled to work in the UK.
- **Procurement Processes:** Requiring all suppliers to adhere to the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Suppliers must demonstrate their commitment to ethical practices, and those who fail to meet these standards may have their contracts terminated.
- **Code of Conduct:** Mandating the highest standards of behaviour and ethical conduct from our employees, particularly in their interactions with suppliers and partners.

Our Supply Chains

We work with a diverse range of suppliers, from temporary and permanent labour providers to contractors for building maintenance and IT equipment, to name a few examples. To ensure that our supply chains are free from modern slavery, we implement rigorous due diligence processes, including:

- Vetting the suitability and credentials of suppliers before entering contracts.
- Conducting regular reviews and audits, particularly focusing on high-risk areas such as agency staffing and any cleaning services.
- Engaging with suppliers to ensure ongoing compliance with our ethical standards and the Modern Slavery Act.

Due Diligence and Risk Management

We are committed to identifying and addressing potential risks of modern slavery in our supply chains and operations. Our due diligence processes include:

- Regular audits of suppliers and contractors
- Monitoring compliance through our HR and payroll systems to detect and report any potential breaches
- Engaging with suppliers to foster long-term relationships built on shared values of ethical conduct and respect for human rights.

Training and Awareness

We recognise the importance of training in the fight against modern slavery. All employees are required to complete mandatory safeguarding training, which includes modern slavery, and those involved in recruitment receive additional training.

Continuous Improvement and Future Steps

We are dedicated to continuously improving our practices to combat modern slavery. In the coming year, we are enhancing our procurement systems with external support, that will allow us to streamline supplier management and ensure greater control over our supply chains. We will also intensify our training efforts and conduct further benchmarking to ensure that our practices remain at the forefront of the sector.

Governance and Accountability

This statement has been approved by the Boards of our organisations. It will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect our ongoing commitment to preventing modern slavery and human trafficking.

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our collective statement for the financial year ending 31 March 2025.