

SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING STATEMENT

Royal Voluntary Service (“the Charity”) believes that exploitation is wrong. It is committed to ensuring that acts of slavery and human trafficking do not occur in the Charity’s activities and its supply chains.

THIS STATEMENT SETS OUT:

- Royal Voluntary Service’s Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for the financial year ending 31 March 2023 in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (“the Act”)
- The ways in which the Charity seeks to ensure that its activities and supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking
- The actions the Charity plans to take in the financial year 2023/24 to continue its support of the Act.

THE CHARITY, ITS ACTIVITIES AND SUPPLIERS

Royal Voluntary Service is one of Britain’s largest volunteering charities. It exists to inspire and enable people to give the gift of voluntary service to meet the needs of the day in their communities. With around 32,000 volunteers, the Charity provides much needed support in NHS hospitals, at home and in the community.

Royal Voluntary Service is a registered charitable company (registered charity number 1015988 (England and Wales) and SC038924 (Scotland)) with three wholly owned subsidiary companies, Royal Voluntary Service (Trading Company) Limited, WRVS Services Welfare Limited and Royal Voluntary Service Meals on Wheels Limited (now dormant). It is governed by its Board of Trustees and operated by its CEO and Leadership Team.

In 2022/23, the Charity’s turnover was £40m supported by relationships with a variety of suppliers and the work of approximately 668 nationwide staff including over 140 support staff. The Charity’s supply chains for goods and services encompasses suppliers operating mainly within the UK and Europe, the majority of whom provide goods and services, including those not for resale, to support the Charity’s activities in NHS hospitals and Courts of Law.

THE CHARITY'S POLICIES

The Charity requires high standards of responsible behaviour within the Charity and from its suppliers. Its Code of Conduct explains the Charity's core values and the expected behaviours within the Charity.

The following policies ensure that the Charity acts properly in its business relationships, implements and enforces effective systems and controls and conducts its activities in an ethical and transparent manner:

- **Ethical Policy:** This sets out the basis on which the Charity is prepared to engage with its suppliers. All new suppliers are required to sign a copy before they can contract with the Charity.
- **Procurement Policy:** This sets out required due process when entering a relationship with a potential supplier.
- **HR Policies:** Our HR Policies include "right to work in the UK checks" and payment for all employees of at least the National Living Wage to safeguard against human trafficking and being forced to work against will.
- **Safeguarding Policy:** This helps everyone to be alert for, to identify and report any potential safeguarding issues including those relating to slavery and human trafficking.
- **Whistleblowing Policy:** This emphasises that all employees and volunteers know that they can, without fear of reprisal, raise concerns about the treatment of individuals connected with the Charity or practices within the Charity's activities and/or supply chains.
- **Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy:** This emphasises the Charity's commitment to lawful and ethical behaviour in all areas of activity.

THE CHARITY'S DUE DILIGENCE PROCESSES

Royal Voluntary Service has a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery and is committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships. We also ensure there is transparency in our own business and in our approach to tackling modern slavery throughout our supply chains which is consistent with our disclosure obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

The Charity's approach to managing modern slavery and human trafficking risk within its supply chain is embedded in its supplier tendering and selection processes. These include consideration of certain factors before a supplier is awarded a contract, for example consideration of a potential supplier's reputation, integrity, financial strength, compliance with legislation and best practice and its ethical stance. Once selected as a supplier, new suppliers are required to sign the Charity's Ethical Policy which will be reviewed and renewed during the coming financial year. We expect the same high standards from all our contractors, suppliers and other business partners. As part of our contracting processes, we require suppliers agree to our Ethical Policy and to comply with national and other applicable law and, where the provisions of law and this policy address the same subject, to apply that provision which affords the greater protection.

As part of Royal Voluntary Service due diligence, the approval process for new suppliers will incorporate a review of the controls undertaken by the supplier. The Charity will not support or deal with any business knowingly involved in slavery or human trafficking.

The Charity's standard terms and conditions of supply require suppliers to comply with the law and include the responsibilities of its suppliers in relation to modern slavery and human trafficking. These extend to any subcontractors used by a supplier.

TRAINING

To maintain awareness and ensure a high level of understanding of the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking, specific departments have received training within a Compliance Training Matrix that ensures everyone who needs to be aware has access to the training.

THE CHARITY'S PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Charity monitors the effectiveness of the steps that it takes to ensure that slavery and/or human trafficking is not taking place within its activities or supply chain by following up on any reports that it receives, which might indicate that modern slavery practices have been identified in an organisation the Charity is associated with. During the financial year 2022/23 the Charity's Audit & Risk Committee did not receive any such reports.

PROGRESS OVER LAST TWELVE MONTHS

We continue to stratify suppliers in order to identify those who we feel pose the greatest of risk and we have ensured we record annually the necessary accreditations and insurances in place to minimise the risk of slavery and human trafficking in their business. Questions regarding anti-slavery and human trafficking have been built into the new supplier application process and these will continue to be used when it is appropriate to do so. A new Slavery and Human trafficking policy is in place and has been approved by the trustees. This policy is now part of the Training Plan that is set out for all staff in relevant roles.

PLANNED ACTIONS

The Charity will continue to build on the work already done to monitor its supply chains and due diligence processes to ensure that it is as informed as possible about its suppliers and any associated risk.

This Statement was approved at a meeting of the Charity's Audit & Risk and Investment & Finance Committees on behalf of the Charity's Trustees and Directors on 20 July 2023 and is signed on their behalf by Richard Williams.



Richard Williams | Chair of Investment and Finance Committee