

FORCED LABOUR

ARE YOU A VICTIM OF FORCED LABOUR?

Difficult financial situation, personal problems, taking up a job abroad and many other random events may lead to people accepting a job where working conditions are poor. However, there is a difference between hard work and labour exploitation or abuse of workers. Forced labour is an extreme form of workers' rights violation.

REMEMBER!

**EVERYONE WHO WORKS HAS RIGHTS.
DON'T LET ANYONE BREAK YOURS.
SEEK INFORMATION AND HELP!**

If your job is not as it was presented to you, you don't feel safe, you experience pressure or coercion, and you do not have a contract – react! Contact the organisation listed at the end of the leaflet, the Chief Labour Inspectorate, the Police or your country's consulate.

Forced labour or services is the performance of labour or services under conditions of exploitation or coercion resulting from violence, threats, deprivation of liberty, demand to work off a debt, retention of an identity document, travel document or a document authorising a foreigner to stay on the territory of the Republic of Poland, non-payment of outstanding remuneration, as well as any other gross violation of workers' rights.

Indications of forced labour may include:

- a) restriction of liberty, e.g. by restricting freedom of movement and contact with relatives,
- b) the fact that you cannot or are afraid to leave your job (e.g. for fear for your safety or safety of your relatives),
- c) the use of violence, blackmail or threats in connection with work,
- d) debt bondage, i.e. paying off or working off a debt or arbitrary penalties related to your work,
- e) the fact that documents which you need, e.g. identity card, passport, documentary proof of professional qualifications, have been taken away from you and you do not have access to them,
- f) the fact that you cannot decide where to live, how to travel and what to eat,
- g) fraud,
- h) the fact that you are not paid for your work,
- i) lack or refusal of access to medical assistance,
- j) other gross violations of your rights, such as the fact that:
 - you are forced to work in conditions which pose a risk to your life and health,
 - you are forced to work longer and harder than agreed,
 - you are forced to work so long that you do not have time to rest,
 - your employer forces you to work 7 days a week, without a day off,
 - your employer forces you to break the law.

REMEMBER!

A victim of forced labour and human trafficking is not liable for prosecution!

EXAMPLE 1

Coming to Warsaw, Vasyl from Ukraine had just the phone number of an agent. He ended up in a hostel – 8 people in one room, one shower per floor. He was working illegally, 12–16 hours a day washing dishes. He was happy because he wanted to earn money quickly. He handed over his passport right away so that Mr Władek, the owner of the company, could obtain a residence card for him. Mr Władek claimed that restaurants – he dealt with many, including some high-end ones – pay irregularly and that Vasyl would get paid when he got home. To make sure he came back, he was made to leave his residence card. He got his passport in return. He was paid only half the money he was owed – and he was lucky. Of the 30 people living there, no one received the full amount. Some preferred to find a different job, leaving their documents behind, rather than wait for the money. Penalties were given for everything – smoking, not making the bed. Vulgar language, being woken up at night. When the police came, Vasyl testified that he did not understand how he could have agreed to that.

EXAMPLE 2

Maria from the Philippines spent USD 2,000 to get to Poland. She borrowed USD 1,000 of this amount from a bank specified by a Filipino agency. She was going to be earning USD 1,000. On arrival, she had to sign a new contract which she did not understand. She was working in a factory for 12 hours a day. When she fell ill and went to the doctor, she had to pay for the appointment. She received PLN 800 in her bank account while the agency took the remaining money. She wanted to leave, but the penalty for leaving was PLN 8,000. Her passport was taken away from her to deal with the formalities, and to get it back she had to pay PLN 500.

**Our company does not tolerate forced labour and takes steps to help its victims.
If you suspect that you are a victim of forced labour, please report it to us.
If you see that someone in our company may be a victim of forced labour, please report it to us.
Reporting fully protects you from retaliation.**

YOU CAN ALSO TURN FOR HELP TO:

■ La Strada Foundation against Trafficking in Persons and Slavery::
+48 22 628 99 99

■ National Consulting and Intervention Centre for the Victims of Trafficking
tel. no. (22) 628 01 20, +48 605 687 750,
e-mail: kcik@strada.org.pl

■ Police **997** or **112**

■ The consulate of the country of which you are a national

■ Chief Labour Inspectorate

http://www.bip.pip.gov.pl/pl/bip/porady_wszystkie

for people calling from landline phones: 801 002 006

for people calling from mobile phones: 459 599 000

Helpline in Ukrainian (run by the Chief Labour Inspectorate):

22 391 83 60, 89 333 17 41, 22 111 35 29

■ A trade union, if one operates in the enterprise which employs you