

Female genital mutilation

All forms of female genital mutilation are prohibited in Sweden under Swedish law (1982:316). Anyone who breaks the law may be sentenced to up to 10 years in prison. Attempting and preparation to commit female genital mutilation is also illegal.

It is also illegal to decide, in consultation with another person, to commit female genital mutilation or to attempt to persuade someone else to commit the offence. Agreeing to commit female genital mutilation or offering to commit female genital mutilation also constitutes an offence.

A person may be prosecuted for an offence in Sweden even if the female genital mutilation was committed in a country where it is not a criminal offence. It is also not possible to give consent to female genital mutilation. Since 1 May 2020, the statute of limitations for female genital mutilation committed against children has been abolished. Everyone has a responsibility to prevent female genital mutilation, including parents. Not disclosing the offence is a criminal offence.

Act (1982:316) prohibiting female genital mutilation

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Consequences

Female genital mutilation is an assault aimed at altering or damaging the external genitalia of a girl or woman. In some contexts, the term female circumcision is used instead of female genital mutilation. Female genital mutilation is harmful in several ways and may, for example, cause the following problems immediately and later in life:

- Severe bleeding during the procedure
- Infections
- Pain in the genital area
- Difficulty urinating
- Difficulties with menstruation
- Pain during intercourse, for both the woman and the man
- Injuries that may render conception impossible
- Complications in childbirth
- Mental health problems
- Death

Types of female genital mutilation

According to the World Health Organization, there are four types of female genital mutilation:

Type 1 Removal of the clitoris and/or the prepuce/clitoral hood.

Type 2 The clitoris, the labia minora and sometimes the labia majora are cut off.

Type 3 Pharaonic circumcision. The clitoris, labia minora and labia majora are cut and sewn together to cover the vaginal opening.

Type 4 All other interventions such as pricking the clitoris and surrounding tissue with a sharp object that damages the genitals.

Medicalised female genital mutilation: Female genital mutilation performed by health professionals. Even if this happens abroad, it is an offence under Swedish law.

Sunna: Sometimes the word 'Sunna' is mentioned when talking about different types of female genital mutilation. 'Sunna' is also illegal.

Are you or someone you know looking for help?

If you are worried that you or someone close to you is at risk of being subjected to female genital mutilation in Sweden or abroad, you can contact the social services, emergency social services or police where you live and tell them about your concerns.

Your municipality

You can find the contact details for social services and emergency social services on your municipality's website. You can also reach the emergency social services via SOS Alarm 112 if you are unable to find the telephone number. **You can always call the social services and emergency social services anonymously.**

Police

In an emergency, call the police on 112. In other cases, call 114 14, and +46 77 114 14 00 from abroad.

Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

If you are abroad and are worried about female genital mutilation, you should contact the Swedish embassy or consulate in the country you are in. The embassy and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs can investigate whether anything can be done to help you return to Sweden. You can find a list of Sweden's embassies on the website swedenabroad.se. **You can also call the Ministry for Foreign Affairs emergency service on +46 (0) 8-405 50 05. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs emergency service is open 24 hours a day, every day.**

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According to Swedish law (SFS 1982:316)

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