



# Female genital mutilation and cutting protection document

Female genital mutilation and cutting is a criminal offence.

*Always take this document with you when you travel abroad. You can show it to your family abroad to inform them that female genital mutilation is a criminal offence in the Netherlands and that parents can be sent to prison if they subject their daughter to it.*

**Kingdom of the Netherlands**

**Female genital mutilation is a serious form of physical abuse, making it a criminal offence. Female genital mutilation violates the rights of the child and women's rights.**



**Female genital mutilation is a criminal offence in the Netherlands. The sentence is up to 16 years in prison.**

## **Female genital mutilation is a criminal offence**

All forms of female genital mutilation are prohibited in the Netherlands. It is a criminal offence to perform female genital mutilation on a girl who normally lives in the Netherlands or to have someone else perform it. This applies even if it is done abroad.

Anyone who performs female genital mutilation in the Netherlands, or helps someone else perform it, is committing a criminal offence. This applies to everyone, including people who do not have a residence permit for the Netherlands. Parents can be prosecuted in the Netherlands if female genital mutilation is performed on their daughter in another country. Other family members, or anyone else who performs or has someone perform female genital mutilation on a girl from the Netherlands, can be punished under Dutch criminal law, even if they do not live in the Netherlands.

## Prison sentences for female genital mutilation

The Netherlands classifies female genital mutilation as a form of child abuse. It is therefore a criminal offence. Punishments range from a fine to a maximum of 16 years in prison. The punishment is decided by a court (see articles 300 to 304 of the Criminal Code).

Parents who perform female genital mutilation on their daughter may receive a heavier sentence (see article 304, paragraph 1.1 of the Criminal Code).

Parents can also be prosecuted for any of the following:

- making preparations for female genital mutilation;
- having someone else carry out female genital mutilation;
- helping with female genital mutilation.

Parents who are not Dutch nationals and who are found guilty of performing female genital mutilation on their daughter, or of having someone else do so, may be barred from the Netherlands.

**Girls and women who undergo female genital mutilation are **not at fault** in any way and **will not be prosecuted or punished**.**

## **Female genital mutilation is dangerous**

Girls can lose a lot of blood during the procedure. Wounds can also become infected, causing serious illness and even death. Female genital mutilation can cause serious ongoing health issues including pain when urinating, menstrual problems, urinary infections, sexual difficulties, infertility and problems during childbirth. It can also lead to depression and anxiety or negatively impact their experience of sex. Many girls and women who undergo female genital mutilation continue to experience pain and other problems for the rest of their lives.

## **The purpose of this document**

Girls and their parents can show this document to family members or other people to show that female genital mutilation is a crime. This document explains that it is a criminal offence under Dutch law, even if it takes place outside the Netherlands. Both performing and enabling female genital mutilation are criminal offences in the Netherlands.

## **What is female genital mutilation?**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure carried out on the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

## What can I do to prevent or report female genital mutilation?

You can contact Veilig Thuis ('Safe at Home') for help (calls can also be made anonymously)

By phone



**0800 2000**

(lines are open 24/7 and calls are free)



Via the website

**veiligthuis.nl**

## Where can I get help?

If you have a question about female genital mutilation or about this document, talk to your doctor or make an appointment at a Veilig Thuis ('Safe at Home') domestic violence advice and reporting centre or the child health services department of your local municipal health service (GGD).

You can find contact details for your local child health service or municipal health service (GGD) at **vzinfo.nl/gebiedsindelingen/preventie**.

More information about female genital mutilation is available at: **meisjesbesnijdenis.nl** or **fsan.nl/vgv**.

If you prefer, you can describe your situation or your concerns about someone else's situation without giving any names. Staff will listen to you, provide advice and tell you where you can get the help you need.

If you are outside the Netherlands and need help or advice, you can contact NetherlandsWorldwide at any time of the day or night



**By phone**  
(standard call charges apply)

**+31 247 247 247**



**via Whatsapp**

**+31 68 23 87 796**

The aim of this document is to protect girls and ensure that they grow up in good physical and mental health.



Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport

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Ministry of Justice and Security

Minister for Legal Protection



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## **Tip**

Keep this document with your other travel documents so that you will have it with you every time you travel abroad.

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