WITHOUT CONSENT: Strategies for Identifying and Managing Risk in Cases of Forced Marriage
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A Forced Marriage Risk Assessment Framework  

March 2016
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Project Information

This risk assessment framework was written as part of the *Enhancing Community Capacity to Respond to and Prevent Forced Marriage* project, funded by the [Department of Justice Canada](https://www.canada.ca/en/justice-canada.html). The framework is the result of findings from our literature review, online survey, focus groups, key informant interviews and feedback from pilots of the framework at MOSAIC and Burnaby Family Life. The project’s objective is to increase awareness of the issue of forced marriage in the community and enhance the capacity of service providers to support individuals impacted by forced marriage.

**Multilingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities (MOSAIC)** is a non-profit organization assisting newcomers’ integration into Canadian society with over 40 programs and 30 sites across Metro Vancouver. For over 20 years MOSAIC has built expertise, skills and experience in the area of violence against women through providing counselling services and advocating for immigrant women who have been victims of domestic violence. In addition to being the largest immigrant-serving provider of employment services in British Columbia, MOSAIC delivers a myriad of settlement, language and specialized programs and services for immigrant families, youth, seniors, vulnerable newcomers and temporary foreign workers. MOSAIC also operates online services for pre-arrivals destined for Canada.

**The Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC)** is a non-profit provincial organization that has existed in BC for over 20 years to serve as a resource for over 240 community-based anti-violence programs supporting survivors of sexual assault, relationship violence, child abuse and criminal harassment. EVA BC’s goals are to: provide support and training to the staff and volunteers of community-based victim support services in BC; undertake relevant research; develop and distribute resources and tools to community programs serving victims in BC; educate the public on the needs of victims of violence; develop and maintain standards for the provision of service to those who have been victimized; foster the development of relevant cross-sectoral initiatives across BC and support communities to maintain them; provide related education and training to criminal justice, health and social service system personnel; work in partnership with other provincial organizations, educational institutions and other key organizations in related fields to ensure cross-sectoral collaboration and information exchange at the provincial level; engage in projects and programs that work toward the prevention of violence.
Acknowledgements

MOSAIC and EVA BC are grateful for the support provided by those working across sectors who gave their expert advice to better serve individuals impacted by forced marriage. A special thank you to our focus group participants, key informants and online survey participants, their knowledge was integral in the guidance of our work. We have had the privilege to work in collaboration with diverse community, justice related, and anti-violence services. These collective efforts aid substantive improvements towards the goal of ending forced marriage and ensuring that everyone has the right to live free from violence and coercion.

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MOSAIC and EVA BC thanks Carly Fitchett for the artwork used on the cover and throughout this Risk Assessment Framework.

We would also like to acknowledge the Department of Justice, Canada for financial support, without which our research and this Risk Assessment Framework would not have been possible.
Introduction

Intended audience

This framework is designed for use primarily by settlement and anti-violence workers. It can also be adapted for use by other social service and justice related agencies such as police, child protection and health practitioners who are dealing with clients who are already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage. We have attempted to be as inclusive as possible. We encourage other agencies to adapt portions of this framework to suit the needs of their sectors. While this document was written with a BC audience in mind, the underlying principles and practices can be applied in other jurisdictions.

Purpose

This risk assessment framework is a guide to help service providers identify and respond to cases of forced marriage, including situations where someone is attempting to leave a forced marriage or where someone is at risk of a forced marriage. This framework is also meant to increase awareness about the dynamics and dangers associated with forced marriage.

Disclaimer

All information provided in this guide is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended to be a substitute for legal or professional advice. Because the details of each person’s case are different, legal counsel should be sought for specific cases. Please note that laws and legal practice change frequently and it is the obligation of the reader to ensure that the information in the guide is accurate. If you want to ensure the information is accurate, seek legal advice. MOSAIC/EVA BC will not be responsible for any loss or damage caused by reliance on any statement made in this document. The information in this booklet is up to date as of March 31, 2016.

Source Material

Many of the materials in this framework were adapted from resources produced by the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) of the United Kingdom Government and the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO). Permission was obtained directly from SALCO to adapt their forced marriage toolkit, and the FMU has also agreed to their material being used.

Further Information

For further information about our project, please visit www.endforcedmarriages.ca
1. What is Forced Marriage?

Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights in which a marriage occurs without the free and full consent of the individuals getting married. It is a form of violence, which can manifest emotionally, physically, sexually, and mentally. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 16(2), “Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.”

Forced marriages often occur without consent, or with consent that is obtained through coercion or duress, which does not constitute free and full consent. Coercion and duress can take many different forms, including fraudulent inducement, physical or sexual violence or threats thereof, and psychological or emotional manipulation. Specific actions can include, but are not limited to: abduction, confinement, mental and social pressure using religious and cultural justifications, restrictions on movement, financial control, and isolation from family and community.

Forced marriage can happen to anyone of any gender, age, race, culture, or religion. While girls and women are the predominant victims of forced marriage, boys and men may also be forced to marry. South Asian and Muslim communities are often perceived as being largely responsible for forced marriages; however, research in Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States indicates that forced marriage is a social practice that occurs across cultures, religions, geographic areas, and citizens and immigrants.

1.1 Forced Marriage vs. Arranged Marriage

It is important to understand the differences between forced marriages and arranged marriages. In arranged marriages, the parties involved have the freedom to accept a marriage arrangement, and freely consent to the marriage. However, in forced marriages, consent is not freely given and the parties are – or one party is – forced to marry against their will.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arranged Marriage</th>
<th>Forced Marriage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The topic of marriage is freely discussed between the persons who want to marry and everyone else involved.</td>
<td>The marriage is discussed, but one or both persons to be married are not included in these discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The persons who want to marry have the freedom of choice. The families are involved with the process, but the persons involved ultimately make the final decision.</td>
<td>The person who is to be married does not have any freedom of choice in the situation. They are forced to marry with violence and/or pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The persons agree to marry – an arranged marriage occurs.</td>
<td>One or both persons do not agree to marry and are forced to marry against their will – a forced marriage occurs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Adapted from SALCO’s ‘It’s a Choice: Forced/non-consensual marriages: A toolkit for service providers’
1.2 Forced Marriage and Family Violence

A forced marriage is a marriage that takes place without the consent of both parties; in forced marriage situations, violence and coercion are used, most often by the victim’s family, to initiate the marriage and may continue during the marriage. Coercion through emotional pressure is the most common way a marriage is forced. For example, the victim may be shamed to believe their refusal to marry will damage their family’s reputation. Coercion may also involve a family member threatening to harm him or herself, or someone else known to the victim. Along with emotional or social pressures, actual or threatened violence is also known to be used to force a marriage. Violence can be physical or sexual, can include imprisonment, abduction, kidnapping of the victim’s children, or threats to hurt the victim or their family members. Coercion and violence can be used not only to force a marriage, but also to maintain it. Coercion may persist throughout the marriage to exert control over the victim through means such as social pressure, including restrictions on lifestyle or financial control. Threats related to immigration status are also often used to exert control over the victim. Because women with insecure immigration status’ may face destitution or may fear deportation if they leave the marriage, threats concerning their immigration status can be extremely coercive.

Canadian laws that come into play in situations of forced marriage are outlined in the next section. These laws include but are not limited to:

- **Criminal Code**, RSC 1985, c C-46
- **Civil Marriage Act**, S.C. 2005, c.33
  - Provisions addressing the minimum age of consent
- **Immigration and Refugee Protection Act**, S.C. 2001, c.27
  - Provisions addressing legal status and removals procedure
- Provincial Child Protection laws

The long-term consequences of forced marriage can include isolation and estrangement or strained relationships with family, which can lead to depression and many other psychological and physical problems for the victim. If the spouses have children, the violence (or threats of violence) and the repercussions of this violence (or threats thereof) and abuse may also be extended to them. Note that if the victim of a forced marriage is a minor, it is a form of child abuse and must be reported to the child protection authorities. A child in this situation is put at risk of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. If you have safety concerns about a young person under 19 who is already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage, contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) to discuss the situation. Best practice is to review the case with an interagency team1 and develop an appropriate intervention plan that addresses real and

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1 An example of interagency teams in BC are Interagency Case Assessment Teams (ICATs) which are partnerships of local agencies, such as law enforcement, child welfare, health, social services, victim services, and anti-violence agencies, that review and develop risk management plans for highest risk cases of domestic violence. A referral may be made for high-risk forced marriage cases in communities where there is a local ICAT, in order to increase victim safety. Best practice would be to have the consent and cooperation of the victim. For further information about ICATs, please visit [www.endingviolence.org/ccws](http://www.endingviolence.org/ccws).
potential risks associated with notifying the victim’s parents or extended family. Extreme caution is required in these situations as it is often family members involved in forcing the marriage (refer to section 2.2).

1.3 Forced Marriage and Human Trafficking

There are important intersections between forced marriage and human trafficking. Human trafficking refers to the illegal movement of persons for the purposes of exploitation, and includes three elements:

(1) Act (e.g., recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt);
(2) Means (e.g., threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, or deception); and
(3) Purpose (e.g., forced labour or service, forced prostitution, or sexual exploitation)

Although the common definition of forced marriage does not include human trafficking, forced marriage can be a method of human trafficking to transport women and children locally, nationally, or internationally. Women and girls are especially vulnerable to being trafficked through forced marriage.

Cases of forced marriage constitute human trafficking when they reflect the three elements above: the act (marriage, movement – transport and transfer); the means (force – to achieve what appears to be consent, to settle debt/financial benefit, to obtain residency and citizenship); and the purpose (exploitation – control over the individual, sexual, emotional, servitude/labour). Lack of consent and the presence of coercion are central to the definitions of both human trafficking and forced marriage, and are particularly evident where these situations intersect. Where a person is a victim of forced marriage and human trafficking, a unique set of laws come into play, as outlined throughout the next section.

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2. Canadian Laws Which Come into Play in Situations of Forced Marriage

2.1 Criminal Laws

A number of Criminal Code offences might apply, depending on the circumstances, including:

- Sexual assault, threats of sexual assault
- Threats to harm or kill
- Kidnapping/abduction of a young person
- Intimidation
- Imprisonment
- Removal of a child from Canada with intent to commit an act outside Canada that would be one of a set of listed offences if committed in Canada
- Human trafficking
- Murder

Also, Criminal Code amendments proclaimed in force on July 17, 2015, make it an offence to celebrate, aid or participate in a forced marriage ceremony or a ceremony where one of the partners is under 16. It is also an offence to remove a child (in this case, a person under 18) from Canada with the intent of celebrating, aiding or participating in a forced marriage. The impact of these legislative changes on the safety needs of forced marriage victims is not yet known.

The Code amendments give a judge the power to issue a peace bond to prevent someone from:

- celebrating, aiding or participating in a forced marriage ceremony
- celebrating, aiding or participating in a marriage ceremony where one of the partners is under 16 or
- removing an under-age person from Canada with the intent of celebrating, aiding or participating in a forced marriage.

Breaching a peace bond is a criminal offence.

As an anti-violence or settlement worker, you can play an important bridging role by referring your client to appropriate legal services (refer to section 8.5). In this way you can help them get the protection they need. It is critical to support victims of forced marriage, whatever they decide.

2.2 Child Protection

If your client is under 19 years of age, child protection law also comes into play under BC’s Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA). Any time you have reason to believe that a child (anyone under 19) is, or may be, at risk for physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse, or
neglect, and the parent is unwilling or unable to protect the child, you must report your concerns to a child welfare worker at the MCFD. Reason to believe simply means that, based on what you have seen or the information you have received, you believe a child may be at risk of harm. Section 13 of the CFCSA sets out the circumstances under which you must report to a child welfare worker. (For further details refer to section 13 of the Child, Family and Community Service Act and the BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect – http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse).

If a child is found to be in need of protection, the court can make one of the following orders:

**Supervision order:** Child returns to parent with supervision by child protection services.
**Temporary guardianship order:** Child placed in care of child protection services for a set time.
**Permanent guardianship order:** Child permanently placed in care of child protection services.
**Placement with another person:** Child placed with a person having an interest in the child.

If you have safety concerns about a person under 19 years of age who is already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage, contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) to discuss the situation. Best practice is to review the case with an interagency team and develop an appropriate intervention plan, which addresses potential risks associated with notifying the victim’s parents or extended family. Extreme caution is required in these situations as family members are often involved in forced marriage situations. It is important to alert the child welfare worker to the potential risk that family members may bring to the situation. The child welfare worker will work with you and others involved with the person under 19, to create a safety plan if they are at risk of harm.

2.3 Immigration Law/Concerns About Deportation or Legal Status

Victims of forced marriage who are immigrants or refugees may have concerns about how leaving the marriage might affect their immigration status. The following points are important to note here:

- If your client is on temporary status and their spousal sponsorship application is pending and they leave the relationship because of being forced into it or abuse, their spouse could withdraw the application making them potentially subject to removal if they are unable to continue to maintain their temporary status. Your client can then apply under humanitarian and compassionate grounds for permanent residence and should seek legal advice about this option.

- If your client is without status during a spousal sponsorship application, the same scenario applies as in the first point above, namely that if they leave the relationship because it was forced or because of abuse, their sponsor may withdraw the application. Your client could then make a humanitarian and compassionate application for permanent residence and again should seek legal advice.
• If your client has already been granted permanent residence status after a spousal sponsorship, they would likely be on a conditional permanent resident designation, unless they were in a relationship for more than two years or had a child in common with their sponsor at the time they submitted their sponsorship application. In situations where your client is living under conditional permanent resident status, they can leave the relationship and claim an exception to having to stay in the relationship. CIC clearly states that abuse is an exception to the usual requirement to remain in the relationship for two years. The person applying for the exception must provide evidence to satisfy the exception. It is recommended that they seek legal advice to assist with this claim.

• Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has announced that it will be revoking the conditional permanent resident category. This means that these victims of forced marriage will not lose their status upon leaving the marriage. Still, those on temporary status or without status remain more vulnerable in terms of their status and the steps they need to take to try to prevent removal from Canada.

In some cases, victims of suspected human trafficking without immigration or refugee status may apply to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to be issued a short-term Temporary Resident Permit (TRP) for up to 180 days. Individuals with a TRP are eligible for healthcare benefits and trauma counselling, and may also apply for a work permit. In BC, an individual with a TRP may also be eligible for income assistance. In cases where the individual is deemed to be a trafficked person, a CIC officer may issue a longer-term TRP that is valid up to three years.

Victims are not required to participate in a criminal investigation or legal process involving their trafficker in order to be eligible for a TRP, and are not required to pay a fee to apply for a short-term 180-day TRP. However, as part of the application process for a short-term TRP, a CIC officer must interview the victim. This interview may last several hours, and is intended to gather information that will be used to make a determination as to whether or not the person may have been trafficked. The victim may have a lawyer present for the interview, and must bring identification and passport photos. It is important to note that if the individual is not granted a TRP, there is a possibility that they may be required to leave Canada; as such, the individual should consult with a lawyer about the consequences (refer to section 8.5).

To apply for a TRP, an individual can self-identify to IRCC or be referred by a law enforcement agency or non-governmental organization, such as an anti-violence or immigrant settlement agency. If a person self-identifies, IRCC may consult with local law enforcement agencies.

2.4 Immigration Law/Concerns About Refugee Status

Victims who are refugee claimants, affected by forced marriage, need to consult with legal counsel regarding how the circumstances of their forced marriage may impact their refugee claim. For instance, if they have fled a forced marriage situation in their home country, then this can frame how their claim for persecution is presented. If they remain in the forced
marriage upon arrival in Canada, then legal and professional advice needs to be obtained about severing their application and keeping them safe. Refugee claims are complex in and of themselves; therefore, any indication of circumstances of forced marriage needs to be carefully addressed and legal and professional advice must be obtained.

2.5 Family and Marriage Law

For a marriage to be legally valid both partners must give their free and enlightened consent. This requirement has now been codified by amendments to the Civil Marriage Act. These amendments also establish 16 as the minimum age of consent for marriage in Canada. For those aged 16-18, parental consent is required to make sure the child fully understands the legal consequences of marriage. This may not prevent situations of forced marriage where the parents are attempting to use their authority to pressure a young person into an unwanted union.

Even if the marriage is not consensual, it is legally valid until it is annulled. The person wishing the annulment must apply for a court order and the onus is on them to show that they were forced into the marriage.
3. Risk Indicators

Forced marriage is under-identified and under-reported around the world, so it is difficult to determine how prevalent this phenomenon is in Canada, and British Columbia specifically. Forced marriage is predominantly experienced by girls and women, but a small percentage of boys and men are forced to marry, often in response to sexual orientation or criminality (Samad, 2010). Some individuals or groups may be particularly vulnerable to forced marriage. These groups include minors, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans* and queer (LGBTQ) individuals, and persons with a physical or mental disability (Hester et. al., 2007; SALCO, 2010). These individuals may not only be at greater risk of a forced marriage, but also face significant barriers with accessing support and leaving home.

3.1 Reasons for Forced Marriage

- Controlling sexuality (e.g., perceived promiscuity, sexual orientation)
- Belief in marriage as a cure for mental health issues
- Preventing relationships (e.g., those outside ethnic, cultural, religious, caste groups)
- Protecting family honour and attempting to strengthen family links
- Obligations to kin and need to maintain links with home communities
- Achieving financial gain by ensuring land, property, wealth remain within the family
- Obtaining immigration advantages
- Avoiding the stigma of a previous divorce
- Marriage seen by family as a rite of passage for young women

A person who is already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage may not disclose this immediately or ever. Rather, they may seek support for other concerns, such as depression or anxiety. You should be aware of the signs and risk indicators so that you are better prepared to ask questions about forced marriage and offer support, assist with safety planning, and provide information about rights and referrals. It is important to be aware that your client may be at increased risk of harm and/or violence if their family learns they have sought assistance.

You may have difficulty identifying cases of forced marriage, but if the risk factors below are present, you should consider whether forced marriage is an issue your client may be facing. You should try to avoid making assumptions based on the presence of risk indicators, or warning signs, as these could be indicative of other concerns, such as domestic violence, which should prompt a different response.

It is important to work with the person who is already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage, and ensure that the person plays a key role in decisions related to their safety.
3.2 Warning Signs of Possible Forced Marriage

Justice

- Victim/siblings reported missing by family (possibly after running away from home)
- Family has reported individual to police for substance abuse or offences (e.g., shoplifting); falsely accused the victim of criminal activity
- Family has attempted or threatened to harm or kill the victim
- Family has threatened deportation
- History of domestic violence/sexual abuse; history of forced confinement/kidnapping of the victim
- Withholding food/basic necessities or poisoning/drugging the victim
- Injuries inconsistent with explanation
- Forged marriage certificate

Health

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Emotional withdrawal
- Social isolation
- Self-harm (e.g., anorexia, cutting, substance use)
- Attempted suicide
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Virginity tests
- Unwanted or concealed pregnancy; forced abortion
- Withholding of medical care
- Self-harm or suicide attempts by siblings

Family

- Siblings forced to marry or early marriages
- Death of a parent
- Bereavement within the family
- Family disputes or conflict
- Social ostracism by family/community
- Cut or shaved hair as a form of punishment for disobeying or ‘dishonouring’ family
- Emotional blackmail by family members
- Sudden engagement to a stranger
- Deception from family regarding travel
- Fear of upcoming holidays or travel
- Unable to make important decisions
- Economic abuse; family controls victim’s finances and identity documentation

Education/Employment

- Surveillance by family/siblings at school
- Withdrawal from school by family
- Absence from, or failure to return to, school or work; missed appointments
- Decline in behaviour, academic or work performance, attendance or punctuality
- Accompaniment by family members to work, school, or appointments (e.g., healthcare)
- Unreasonable restrictions (e.g., house arrest, not allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities or obtain employment)
4. Best Practices for Responding to Forced Marriage

4.1 What To Do

What to do when supporting a client who is already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage:

Working with Your Client & Interpreters

- Meet with your client alone in a secure and private location where they will feel comfortable and safe. Be aware that your client may be being followed, so meeting at a more general service centre rather than an anti-violence agency would be a good practice. Have your client come up with a cover story to communicate where they have been, if asked by anyone that may be involved in forcing the marriage.
- Communicate with your client in a gender-responsive and culturally sensitive manner.
- If possible, allow your client to choose the gender and ethnicity of the person who meets with them.
- The most important thing is to create a safe space where clients can become active participants in decisions regarding their own future.
- Work with well-trained interpreters of the client’s preferred gender who understand the dynamics of forced marriage, domestic and sexual violence, human trafficking, and the intersection of gender/race/class and other factors that produce inequality.
- Ensure the interpreter does not know or have any community connections to your client.

Confidentiality & Information-Sharing

- Attempt to gather as much risk related information as possible as you may not be able to meet again.
- Inform your client that their information is confidential and protected and that subject to certain limited exceptions, such as potential risk of severe violence, lethality or children needing protection, disclosure is generally based on client consent.
- Ensure your client understands that you will not give any information to their friends, family, or community without their permission except in certain circumstances (e.g., where there is a legal requirement to report) and be clear about what those circumstances may be.
- Obtain written consent to release your client’s information, specifying what can be shared, with whom, and inform your client when the information is shared.
- Develop an information-sharing protocol with those agencies you are sharing the information with. The protocol should outline safety measures and restrictions on the use that will be made of the disclosed information so its release does not put your client at greater risk.

Risk Assessment & Safety Planning

- Establish whether anyone else is at risk (e.g., other siblings, friends, pets, etc.).
- Clearly explain all possible options to your client and recognize and respect their wishes.
- Inform clients that they have legal options and refer them to the appropriate legal resources when necessary (refer to section 8.5).
Establish if your client requires any medical treatment or mental and emotional support, and direct them to appropriate resources if necessary (refer to section 8).
Recommend your client move into safe accommodation if they are in danger (refer to section 8.3).

4.2 What Not To Do
What not to do when supporting a client who is already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage:

Working with Your Client & Interpreters
- Do not send the individual away thinking that it is not your responsibility or that you cannot help.
- Do not disregard or ignore any information provided by your client.
- Do not make judgements.
- Do not make assumptions about your client; instead, ask questions that may clarify your understanding.
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep.
- Do not force your client to make any decisions immediately. Allow them to assess all available options and make informed decisions.
- Do not give advice you are not qualified to provide (e.g., legal or immigration advice).

Family & Community
- Do not try to mediate the situation with your client and their family or community members.
- Do not contact the family or community members without your client’s permission.
- Do not send your client back to their family without their permission.
- Do not speak to or approach the individual if they are in the company of people you do not know and trust.
- Do not allow family members to be present at meetings.
- Do not use anyone from the community (e.g., friends, neighbours, community leaders) as an interpreter.

Confidentiality & Information-Sharing
- Do not breach confidentiality, except in exceptional circumstances as previously outlined.
- Do not disclose someone’s immigration status to police or immigration authorities.

Risk Assessment & Safety Planning
- Do not re-house your client locally unless specifically requested after all the risks of harm have been explained.
- Do not allow your client to be accompanied by their children when returning to the family home to collect possessions.
- Do not allow your client to return to their home unless a risk assessment has been carried out.
4.3 Meeting with Your Client

When arranging appointments with clients, try to ensure that the time and location will allow them to attend discretely. Client meetings should be held in a safe, secure, and private setting. It is strongly recommended that you meet with your client alone, even if they are accompanied – inform others that your organization has a policy to speak with individuals alone, and prepare an alternative reason for the visit in case your client is asked for details later. If your client insists on having a support person accompany them, ensure that the support person understands the importance of confidentiality, especially with respect to your client’s family. If an interpreter is required, avoid using family, friends, or community leaders. Instead, seek an accredited interpreter who speaks your client’s language and dialect (refer to section 8).

4.4 Interviewing Your Client

Confidentiality is essential when meeting with clients who are already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage. Reassure your client that the information they provide will be treated confidentially, and inform them of any limits on confidentiality (i.e., when information may need to be shared with the authorities – Refer to section 7, Sharing Client Information in Cases of Forced Marriage).

Interview your client using a survivor-centered and culturally sensitive approach. Listen to your client, believe your client, and provide non-judgmental and empathic support. Cases of forced marriage must be taken seriously, and should not be dismissed as ‘private family matters’. Be cautious about involving any of your client’s family when providing support and assistance, unless your client has assured you that a family member is a trusted third party.

Questions to help determine if the marriage is arranged or forced:
- What is the primary purpose of the spousal relationship (e.g., love, debt, immigration)?
- Has the person had any input into the choice of potential partner?
- Do the parties have the option to withdraw from – or delay – the process?
- Can the individual choose to remain unmarried?
- Have emotional pressures or threats of any kind, such as suicide, threats of violence or forcible confinement, been used to secure the marriage?

Recording Information Obtained from Your Client

It is important to document all risk related information obtained from your client, as well as any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions. This information should be kept in a secure location with access restricted to named staff from your organization.

➢ See What Information to Gather from the Victim (section 5.5) for further details.
4.5 Informing Your Client of their Rights and Options

Persons already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage should be informed of their legal rights, their right to safety and legal advice, and the options available to them. Clients have the right to seek independent legal advice and to arrange to have a medical examination if they have injuries. Respect the rights of clients to make their own decisions and choices but also be aware that every case requires a unique response. Inform your client that their immigration status may limit their options, especially if they were forced to marry abroad. Options available to persons already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Already In</th>
<th>At Risk Of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leave their family and start a new life, possibly in hiding and isolated from family and possibly their community.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave their family, start a new life, and prosecute their family.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return to their family and hope the situation improves, but possibly be at risk of serious harm.</td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain in the marriage, and possibly be at risk of serious harm.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek legal protection.</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Younger siblings or children may complicate the situation and constrain their choices.

It is important to explain to your client the risks associated with each option available to them. For example, leaving their family and starting a new life may increase their risk, as family members may try to track them down through official records (e.g., employment, health, housing). Inform clients about the possible finality of a decision to leave their family and start a new life.

It is offence to celebrate, aid or participate in a forced marriage. There is the possibility that police involvement may lead to charges on complicit family and community members. The impact of this recent change in legislation is not known.

If Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) involvement is required, alert the child protection worker of the unique dynamics of forced marriage. It is important that ALL law enforcement and service providers who are involved in the case be aware that your client may be at increased risk of harm and/or violence if their family learns they have sought assistance.

Advise the victim not to travel abroad if they are concerned that they will be forced to marry while they are travelling. Victims may be concerned about their legal status in Canada, and the threat of deportation, especially if returning to their country of origin may increase their risk of violence or death.

Provide information and materials about forced marriage, domestic violence, and sexual assault – in your client’s own language, if possible. Before referring clients to other services, it is important to obtain consent and ensure that the services have the capacity to support them.
**Best practice:** When meeting with clients in, or at risk of, a forced marriage, develop a safety plan. The proceeding section – *Developing a Safety Plan with Your Client* – provides general guidelines to follow.
5. Developing a Safety Plan with Your Client

Help your client to determine the risk of harm to themselves, and their need for safety, protection, or relocation to a safe place (e.g., transition house – refer to section 8.3). Establish the best way to contact your client in confidence, via trusted third parties, which may be the only option if your client is living in a forced marriage or out of the country. Select a code word to use with your client for future contact, to ensure it is safe to speak with them. Assess your own safety as a service provider.

Persons already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage may be at risk of violence or harm if it is discovered that they have sought assistance from anti-violence workers, settlement workers, or other service providers. It is important to develop a safety plan and/or exit strategy for each client so they can better manage unsafe situations, or prepare to leave their family safely.

5.1 Communicating Safely with Clients

It may not be safe to contact clients on their home or cell phones. Encourage clients to use the phone of a trusted third party, or a pay phone, and only call you when they are alone or with someone they trust. Select a code word with your client that you can use to confirm their identity and that it is safe to talk when you do connect by phone. This word should not be shared with anyone else. Clients should store your contact information under a different name.

Clients should only contact you by email if they are able to access a trusted computer, use a private email address, and delete their web browsing history to ensure members of their families or communities do not have access to this information.

5.2 The Code Word System

A code word should be developed to indicate that it is safe to speak by phone or in person. Another code word should be selected to indicate that it is not safe to speak by phone or in person because the victim is being monitored or followed. Clients can use this code word to signal distress, violence, or imminent risk of harm. This code word should only be shared with trusted persons (including service providers) who can contact police or emergency services when the code word is used. Your client should know that if the code word is given via telephone, text, or email, that the authorities will be contacted immediately. This system may be life-saving for the victim. Clients should take steps to cover their tracks by erasing texts and Internet browser history. Ask if they want anyone (specify who) to be told they are safe.

5.3 Exit Strategy

It is important to develop a safety plan and exit strategy with your client, even if they are not ready to leave their family, as they may need to leave on short notice. However, you should respect their wishes if they do not wish to undertake some or all components of the safety
5. Developing a Safety Plan with Your Client

Exit strategies must be tailored to the individual’s situation, needs, and level of freedom. Suggested strategies include:

- Opening a personal bank account at a different bank or branch than their family
- Opening a personal email account and changing the password
- Leaving copies of important documents (e.g., identification, passport, immigration papers, child guardianship/custody papers) with a trusted third party or the police
- Leaving spare clothes, keys, cash and a telephone card with a trusted third party
- Keeping a list of resources and referrals to contact in an emergency
- Arranging accommodation and/or a safe place to go in case of an emergency exit
- Identifying trusted persons who could provide support and/or money in an emergency

5.4 What to Take When Leaving

Help your client to create an “escape box” that can be easily accessed in an emergency but that is kept in a safe location where it will remain hidden from the victim’s family. It should contain:

- Documents or copies of documents (e.g., passport, birth certificate, immigration documents, marriage/divorce papers, Social Insurance Number, health care card, driver’s license, student ID card, children’s documents, and photographs)
- Medication, birth control and medical documentation
- Cell phone and/or laptop
- Cash and extra house key
- Address book and service provider contact information
- Items of sentimental value (photos, jewellery, etc.)

Your client’s safety is paramount. If their safety is at risk, they should leave immediately without material possessions. If they wish to return to their home to collect their possessions, they should be accompanied by police officers or should arrange for a trusted third party to collect these possessions for them, if it is safe to do so. All those involved should avoid putting themselves and others at risk.

5.5 What Information to Gather from the Victim

Ideally, when a forced marriage is pending, information would be collected by a service provider who has received training on the dynamics and risks associated with forced marriage. But as a front-line service provider you may be faced with a situation where your client believes a forced marriage is imminent. With this scenario you need to be aware of the “one chance rule.” You may have only one chance to speak with the potential victim. It is important to obtain as much risk related information as possible from the person at risk. If your client leaves your office without receiving support, your one chance to save a life may be lost.
Collect key information about the person at risk using the *Forced Marriage Client Information Form* (see Appendix A). If the person is at risk of travelling overseas imminently, request a copy of their passport photo page, birth certificate, travel itinerary and contact information abroad. Encourage them to keep copies of this information as well. You will need to gather as much information about the family as you can but it must be gathered discreetly.

### 5.6 Victims of Forced Marriage Abroad

Persons who suspect they will be forced to marry abroad should try to avoid travelling abroad. However, it is recognized that refusing to travel abroad may also compromise the individual’s safety. If your client is unable to avoid travelling abroad, they should take the address and phone number of the nearest Canadian embassy, consulate or high commission in the country they will be visiting. Canadian citizens and permanent residents who are at risk of a forced marriage abroad may seek assistance from Canadian embassies, consulates and high commissions in other countries, including obtaining emergency passports, providing safe accommodation and transportation, assistance in making contact with legal representation, and returning to Canada.

Before leaving the country, Canadian citizens at risk of a forced marriage abroad should consider registering with the Government of Canada’s free ‘Registration of Canadians Abroad’ service, as well as setting up a new/separate email account for communicating with Canadian authorities or other trusted third parties. They may also contact local police and airport authorities.

If your client is destined to travel out of the country and is at risk of forced marriage, there are several airport authorities and corporate representatives who may be able to assist them in the path they would take between the time they arrive at the terminal and the time they are seated in the aircraft. These authorities include:

- Airline representatives at the check-in process, who could report the situation to police or to the Airport Authority, who would in turn report to the police
- Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) representatives at any security check point, from the public side of the terminal to the restricted area (gates), who would then report this through their chain of command for a police response
- Gate agents for the airline who check boarding cards and identification prior to entering the aircraft
- Flight attendants, once on board the aircraft
- Secondary contact persons working at an airport (e.g., retail/food employees)
Clients should be advised that police will attend a call for service. However, due to limited training among airport authorities and corporate representatives on the dynamics and risks of forced marriage, employees’ interpretation of the responsibilities of their position and/or potential language/cultural barriers, it is essential for a victim, after expressing their concerns, to ask the authority they are speaking with to call the police.

Advise clients to take a cell phone or mobile device (and know how to use it where they are travelling) emergency cash (Canadian & foreign); 2 extra passport-sized photos; and a map and list of emergency contacts for their destination (all hidden if possible). In addition, it is a good idea to take (and hide) copies of their passport details (including passport number, place and date of issue, expiry, visa pages); identification documents (e.g., social insurance number, birth certificate); airline tickets and travel itinerary. Alternatively, they could consider using a mobile device to take photos of these documents and send them to themselves and trusted individuals in Canada. It is advisable to refuse any food or drink offered to them prior to flight in case it is drugged.

It is important to recognize the potential for increased isolation and risk of violence among persons who are forced to marry abroad. In the case of LGBTQ individuals, risk of violence may be a particular concern in countries where homosexuality and diversity along the gender spectrum are not tolerated (and, in some cases, may be criminalized), where homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are pervasive, and where LGBTQ persons do not have equal rights. This reality may create additional barriers and imminent safety concerns to accessing assistance while abroad.

Anyone who is at risk of a forced marriage abroad should maintain contact with a trusted person in Canada, use code words to signal distress, violence, or risk of harm, and seek assistance (e.g. shelter, support, advocacy) from local non-governmental organizations.
6. Case Response Flowchart

This case response flowchart is intended to guide the work of anti-violence and settlement workers when identifying and managing risk in cases of forced marriage. It should be used only as a guide, and you should seek legal or professional advice as required. While the flowchart focuses on responding to situations where the person is already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage, clients should also be referred to other relevant services (e.g., housing, LGBTQ supports) as needed. Settlement workers trained to respond to forced marriage and to utilize this flowchart, should have knowledge and/or previous training on domestic violence response; if this is not the case, a more intensive training on domestic violence response and safety planning should be incorporated into forced marriage training.
DO YOU SUSPECT YOUR CLIENT IS IN, OR AT RISK OF, A FORCED MARRIAGE?

1. **Remember the one chance rule**: You may only have one chance to meet with a client who is already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage. It is important to gather and document as much risk related information as possible and provide your client with as much information as possible.

   Assure your client of confidentiality and invite them to speak with you privately. If needed, seek an accredited interpreter who speaks their language/dialect. If possible, move to a safe, secure, and private setting to discuss further. (Refer to section 4) Continue to box 2.

2. **Is your client under the age of 19?**
   - **YES**: If yes, AND you have concerns about their safety, contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) to discuss the situation.* (Refer to section 2.3) Continue to box 3.
   - **NO**: Support your client in considering police involvement.* Continue to box 4.

3. **Is your client in immediate danger?**
   - **YES**: Support your client in considering police involvement.* Continue to box 4.
   - **NO**: Begin collecting client information using the Forced Marriage Client Information Form as a guide.

4. **Begin collecting client information using the Forced Marriage Client Information Form as a guide.
   
   If your client is at risk of travelling overseas imminently complete the "Overseas travel section of the Forced Marriage Client Information Form (Refer to Appendix A) Continue to box 5.

5. **Is your client connected to an anti-violence agency?**
   - **YES**: Inform your client of their rights, options and risks to allow them to make informed decisions. Do not give advice you are not qualified to provide (e.g., legal or immigration advice). Continue to support them in your role and refer them to other supports if necessary. (Refer to section 8) Continue to box 6.
   - **NO**: Refer them to an anti-violence agency (Refer to section 8.2) Continue to box 6.

6. **Continue to develop a safety plan and exit strategy. Complete the "Safety planning" section of the Forced Marriage Client Information Form to keep a record of the safest way to contact your client. (Refer to Appendix A)

*Alert police and MCFD of the unique dynamics of forced marriage. The client may be at increased risk of harm and/or violence if their family learns they have sought assistance.
7. Sharing Client Information in Cases of Forced Marriage

Information sharing in forced marriage cases presents a dilemma: someone who is trying to escape a forced marriage or who is facing the prospect of an imminent forced marriage may disclose to you but may not want the information shared any further. They may be afraid that they will be in more danger if anyone in their family finds out they are trying to get help. This is a serious concern. On the other hand, your client may already be in serious danger and effective intervention, including protective measures, will generally require collaboration between yourself and other agencies. Your client will need access to counselling, safety planning, housing, social assistance, life skills, social supports, and advocacy. Engaging these services will require some sharing of personal information.

Another complication is the age of the person under threat of forced marriage. They may be under 19 years of age, in which case the question arises as to what their legal rights are to make decisions about the release of their personal information. Also, there is the question of whether a report to child welfare may be required, as this minor may be in need of protection.

Generally, our privacy laws and ethical practice require consent before personal information can be shared with other agencies. However, exceptions apply in high-risk situations.

Under BC’s privacy laws, client personal information may be shared if there are reasonable grounds to believe that compelling circumstances exist that affect the health or safety of any individual. Compelling circumstances exist where there is a necessity to act to avert imminent danger to someone’s health or safety or to protect someone’s health or safety. Information may also be shared to assist in an investigation or in making a decision to start an investigation.

Steps to take before disclosing client information:

- When you meet, advise your client of the limits to confidentiality.
- Any decisions to disclose should be made on a case-by-case basis after a preliminary assessment of the risks your client faces.
- Make every effort to get your client’s consent before disclosing information to other agencies.
- Designate someone in your agency who makes the decision.
- Have the person who authorizes disclosure keep a confidential file containing a brief record of the disclosure decision.
- Develop a protocol with those agencies you share the information with. The protocol should outline safety measures and restrictions on the use that will be made of the disclosed information so its release does not put your client at greater risk.
- When sharing the information, refer to the conditions of disclosure contained in the information-sharing protocol.
• Make appropriate referrals, for example, refer your client to a specialized anti-violence (refer to section 8.2) and/or immigrant serving agency (refer to section 8).
• Find a safe way to keep your client informed.
• Document all information obtained from your client, decisions made, and reasons for those decisions. Keep this information in a secure location with access limited to named staff from your organization.

If Your Client is Under 19 Years of Age

If your client is under 19 years of age, but considered to be a “mature minor,” they will have the right to make independent decisions about how their information is used. If there is evidence of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, a report to child welfare may be required. If you report to child welfare, make sure to inform the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) that the situation involves forced marriage and that informing the parents could be extremely dangerous. Document this in your client file.

If you have safety concerns about a young person who is already in, or at risk of, a forced marriage, contact MCFD to discuss the situation. Best practice is to review the case with an interagency team and develop an appropriate intervention plan, which addresses potential risks associated with notifying the victim’s parents or extended family.

If You Believe Your Client May Be in Imminent Danger

If you have reason to believe that your client is in imminent danger, or if your client is likely to cause serious physical harm to themselves or someone else, contact the police.

Medical Examinations

This may be needed to treat injuries or to collect evidence of abuse. It is not advisable to contact a doctor or health practitioner from the local community as this may put the victim at risk. Encourage the health practitioner to document the injuries. This record may provide important evidence in the case.

Making Enquiries

Any outside enquiries should be made discreetly with no indication that they have anything to do with forced marriage. Ideally, enquiries should be made by police working in collaboration with specialized anti-violence workers.
8. Referral Resources

The following services and resources may be able to assist you or your client who is involved in, or at risk of, a forced marriage. It is important, when referring clients to other agencies or services, to ensure that they have the knowledge and expertise to respond to forced marriages, and understand that the victim’s entire family may be involved (e.g., if a female client accesses a transition house, staff should be mindful that a female relative may also be able to gain access). To our knowledge, local services, including those below, are not specifically trained to respond to forced marriage. You may need to relay any forced marriage associated risks that you are aware of.

Burnaby Family Life and MOSAIC staff have participated in a pilot training on responding to forced marriages. The training was guided by this risk assessment framework and delivered by MOSAIC’s forced marriage project staff.

**MOSAIC**
*Services include: Settlement services, Multicultural Victim Services, Stopping the Violence (STV) Counselling, interpretation (for a fee)*
Phone: 604-254-9626
Website: www.mosaicbc.com

**Burnaby Family Life**
Phone: 604-659-2200
Website: www.burnabyfamilylife.org

**Other forced marriage project websites and resources, including case studies:**

**South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO)**
Website: [http://salc.on.ca/forced-marriage/](http://salc.on.ca/forced-marriage/)
*Case Studies: Who/If/When to Marry – It’s a Choice* (toolkit for service providers)

**Tahirih Justice Center (United States)**
Website: [http://preventforcedmarriage.org/](http://preventforcedmarriage.org/)

**Forced Marriage Unit (United Kingdom)**
Website: [www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage)
If there is an emergency situation, and you or someone you know is in immediate danger or medical distress, DIAL 911 for immediate assistance (police, ambulance).

VictimLink BC
Phone: 1-800-563-0808 (BC/Yukon, 24/7, 110 different languages)
TTY Phone: 604-875-0885
Website: www.victimlinkbc.ca

Crisis Centre BC
Phone: 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)
Website: www.crisiscentre.bc.ca

Kids Help Phone
Phone: 1-800-668-6868
Website: www.KidsHelpPhone.ca

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) After Hours Services
Phone: 604-660-4927 (Vancouver)
604-660-8180 (Lower Mainland)
Website: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca

Ending Violence Association of BC
Directory of community-based anti-violence services in BC, including Community-Based Victim Services, Stopping the Violence Counselling programs, Stopping the Violence / Multicultural Outreach programs, and sexual assault / woman assault centres.
Website: www.endingviolence.org

Community Coordination for Women’s Safety (CCWS)
Interagency Case Assessment Teams (ICATs).
Website: www.endingviolence.org/prevention- programs/ccws-program/
Email: ccws@endingsviolence.org

Ending Violence Association of Canada (EVA CAN)
Directory of anti-violence resources across Canada.
Website: www.endingviolencecanada.org

BC Housing
Current directory of transition houses and safe homes in BC.
Website: www.bchousing.org/Options/Emergency_Housing/WTHSP/Access

BC Society of Transition Houses
Website: www.bcsth.ca
8.4 Victim Services

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Government of British Columbia
Complete list of community-based and police-based victim services in BC.
Website: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime

Police Victim Services of BC
Directory of police-based victim services in BC.
Website: www.policevictimeservices.bc.ca

8.5 Legal Resources

Lawyer Referral Services
Phone: 604-687-3221
Website: www.cbabc.org/For-the-Public/Lawyer-Referral-Service

Legal Services Society (LSS) Call Centre
LSS can support service providers with LSS community resources, LSS services for clients, free publications about the law and reports on public legal education.
Website: http://www.lss.bc.ca/community_workers
Directory of Legal Aid offices in BC.
Phone: 1-866-577-2525

8.6 Resources While Abroad

Global Affairs Canada offers Canadian citizens travelling or living abroad a range of consular services through its embassies, consulates, high commissions and other Canadian government offices abroad [www.travel.gc.ca].

If you are overseas and require assistance, you can contact the nearest Canadian embassy, consulate or high commission. A list of Canadian government offices is available at http://travel.gc.ca/assistance/embassies-consulates

The Emergency Watch and Response Centre in Ottawa can also assist you 24 hours a day, seven days a week [http://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-assistance].

Email: sos@international.gc.ca
Phone: From outside Canada, call +1 613 996 8885 (call collect where available)
From inside Canada, call 613-996-8885 or 1-800-387-3124 (toll-free from U.S. and Canada only).

Registration of Canadians Abroad, a free service for Canadians travelling or living abroad: visit http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration

8. Referral Resources
9. Recommended Readings

KEY SOURCE MATERIALS

Forced marriage project websites and resources:

South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO)
Website: http://salc.on.ca/forced-marriage/

Case Studies: Who/If/When to Marry – It’s a Choice (toolkit for service providers)

Tahirih Justice Center (United States)
Website: http://preventforcedmarriage.org/

Forced Marriage Unit (United Kingdom)
Website: www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage


Appendix A: Forced Marriage Client Information Form


Appendix A: Forced Marriage Client Information Form

Considerations

Record any information your client is comfortable sharing with you. If possible, obtain a recent photograph.

Recording Information Obtained from Your Client:

- It is important to document all information obtained from your client, as well as any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.
- This information should be kept in a secure location with access restricted to named staff from your organization.
- Questions and documentation practices contemplated in this form are meant to be used in conjunction with existing, more generic, intake and documentation processes already in place at your agency.

General Information

Name of client: _______________________________ Date: _______________________________

Date of birth: _______________________________ Place of birth: __________________________

Nationality: _________________________________ Age: _____ Gender: ______________________

☐ Photocopy of birth certificate attached

Children's names, and birth dates:

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

☐ Recent photograph attached

Distinguishing features (e.g., birthmarks, tattoos):

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

Passport details (e.g., passport number, issuing country, expiry date):

☐ Photocopy of passport attached

___________________________________________________________________________________

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Appendix A: Forced Marriage Client Information Form

**Background Information**

**Involvement with other service providers** (police, doctors, health services, school staff):
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**School details** (e.g., school name & address, and contact information of trusted person at school):
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**Employment details** (e.g., employer name and contact information of trusted person at work):
______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________

**Family details** (e.g., names and addresses of parents/caregivers/siblings):
______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________

**Full Details of Current Situation**
______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________
Appendix A: Forced Marriage Client Information Form

Level of Risk

Details about threats, abuse, hostile actions against victim:

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
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Nature and level of risk to the safety of the victim:

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________________________________

Are there any other family members at risk of forced marriage? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________

Is there a family history of forced marriage or abuse? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

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____________________________________________________________________________________________
## Overseas Travel

If your client is at risk of travelling overseas imminently, collect (if known):

- **Date of proposed travel:**

- **Names of people likely to accompany them:**

- **Date of proposed wedding:**

- **Name of potential spouse:**

- **Name of potential spouse’s father:**

- **Estimated return date**: 

- **Address where they may be staying overseas:**

- **Addresses of extended family in Canada and overseas:**

- **Details of third party in order to maintain contact in case your client contacts them while overseas or upon their return:**

**Information only your client would be aware of** (this may assist any subsequent interview at a Canadian Embassy in case another person of the same age/gender is pretending to be your client):

- **Client has registered with the Government of Canada’s free ‘Registration of Canadians Abroad’ service**

*Ask that your client contact you without fail upon their return. If desired, obtain a written statement from your client explaining who they want (the police, children’s welfare, Canadian consular officers, or a third party) to act on their behalf if they do not return by a certain date.*

- **I would like** to act on my behalf as a third party to if I do not return by:
Overseas Travel (cont’d)

Third party information:

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

Name (printed): ____________________    Signature: ______________________     Date: _____________________

Safety Planning

Safe means by which to contact victim (e.g., mobile phone) and an alternate private email and plan for contacting the victim discreetly in the future so as not to put them at risk:

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

CODE WORDS:   □ ____________________ (Safe to speak by phone or in person)

(see page 5)   □ ____________________ (NOT safe – client at imminent risk of harm)

Names and contact details of other trusted persons (e.g., friends):

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

Confidentiality and Information-sharing

□ Client confidentiality agreement completed and attached

□ Agency consent for release of information form completed and attached
Actions Taken

Document actions taken and decisions made (e.g., information/options provided, agreements made, authorities contacted in response to immediate safety concerns). Please also document the victim’s response to any actions taken and decisions made.

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