



Statement opposing female circumcision

Female circumcision is a criminal offence

Female circumcision is a criminal offence because it is a serious form of abuse. Female circumcision is a violation of children's rights and of women's rights. In the Netherlands, all forms of female circumcision are prohibited by law. This applies to everyone who is living in the Netherlands, even people who do not have a residence permit.

In the Netherlands, female circumcision is punishable as a form of child abuse. It carries a maximum prison sentence of 12 years. An even higher sentence can be applied if the female circumcision is carried out by the parent of the child in question (Articles 300 to 304 of the Dutch Criminal Code).

Parents are also liable to punishment if they *arrange* for someone else to carry out the circumcision.

Parents who carry out circumcision of their child in *another country* (or who arrange for this to be carried out by someone else) are liable to punishment in the Netherlands.

Any family members, or other persons, who perform, or have others perform, circumcision on a girl from the Netherlands are in violation of the law, even if they do not reside in the Netherlands themselves.

Parents who are sentenced for carrying out female circumcision on their daughter (or for arranging for someone else to do so) and who do not hold a Dutch passport may lose their right to residence in the Netherlands.

Female circumcision is extremely damaging

Female circumcision can have serious health consequences. As a result of this practice, girls can lose large amounts of blood or develop an infection, which can lead to serious illness and even death.

Even after the female circumcision, girls often continue to suffer health problems. For example: pain during urination, menstruation problems, urinary infections, infertility and problems during childbirth. They can also develop depression.

Many women continue to suffer pain and health problems throughout their lives as a result of female circumcision.

This Statement is intended to provide protection against female circumcision, so that girls can grow up in good physical and mental health.

Yours sincerely,

Hugo de Jonge, Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport

Sander Dekker, Minister for Legal Protection

Any questions?

Do you have any questions about female circumcision or about this statement? In that case, you can always make an appointment with the doctor or a nurse at the clinic (Consultatiebureau) or the Municipal Health Service (GGD).

For more information, please visit the English pages of www.meisjesbesnijdenis.nl or www.tegenvrouwenbesnijdenis.nl.

What is this statement for?

You can take this statement with you when you go abroad. You can show it to your family. This will make it clear that female circumcision is a punishable offence in the Netherlands and that you could be sent to prison if you have your daughter circumcised.

Keep this statement with your travel documents so that you take it with you every time you go abroad.

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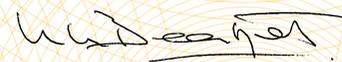
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Space for parents' signature