



Stop Loan Sharks (The England Illegal Money Lending Team)

An estimated 1.7 million people in England are in debt to loan sharks. Many do not realise they have been targeted and think they have simply borrowed from a friend, until they find themselves trapped in a cycle of debt, struggling to find a way out.

Stop Loan Sharks, the England Illegal Money Lending Team, provides free, confidential support to anyone affected by illegal money lending. A loan shark is someone who lends money without authorisation from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). They often add excessive charges and may use intimidation, harassment or threats to collect repayments.

Care providers and frontline staff are often well placed to spot the signs that someone may be affected. Warning signs can include:

- Being constantly short of money despite having a regular income
- Appearing withdrawn, anxious or fearful
- Avoiding social situations
- Receiving threatening calls or messages
- Not having access to personal documents, bank cards or identification
- Mentioning money borrowed from a friend or family member who is demanding repayments

If you are concerned about someone who may have been targeted by a loan shark, you can contact Stop Loan Sharks on their behalf or encourage them to get in touch directly.

Contact Stop Loan Sharks:

- 24-hour confidential helpline: 0300 555 2222
- WhatsApp: 07700 102773 (Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm)
- Email: reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk
- Website: <https://www.stoploansharks.co.uk/>

Stop Loan Sharks also offers free awareness training for organisations, helping staff identify illegal lending and understand how to support victims. Free posters, leaflets and other resources are also available.

To find out more about training, resources and becoming a partner agency, go to <https://www.stoploansharks.co.uk/for-partner-agencies/>

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For more information, contact IMLT press officer Sally-Anne Youll on 07840 712850 or sally-anne.youll@birmingham.gov.uk