

## Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

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<b>Created</b>	December 2019
<b>Reviewed</b>	August 2025
<b>Status</b>	Approved
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***We are committed to safeguarding adults by protecting their health, wellbeing and human rights, enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.***

### Aim

The purpose of our Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy is to prevent harm and reduce the risk of adults with care and support needs suffering from abuse or neglect, and to provide clear procedures for responding to concerns.

This policy is based on the fundamental principle that all adults - regardless of age, disability, gender, gender identity, ethnic, cultural, racial, national origins, religious belief or sexual orientation - have the right to live safely, free from abuse and neglect, and to be treated with dignity and respect.

### 1. Introduction

Under the Care Act 2014, a person 18 or older could potentially be at risk of abuse or neglect if they:

- Have needs for care and support (regardless of whether the council is meeting any of those needs)
- Are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- As a result of those needs, are unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

For domestic abuse the age limit is 16 years of age. To be considered as a safeguarding concern the adult must meet the criteria set out in the Care Act 2014.

### 2. Definitions

‘Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by another person or persons.’

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, an act of neglect or omission, or may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not, or cannot, consent.

### Types of Abuse

- Physical abuse - including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions
- Sexual abuse - including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting
- Psychological abuse - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services
- Financial or material abuse - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- Neglect and acts of omission - including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, withholding the necessities of life
- Discriminatory abuse - including abuse based on race, sex, culture, religion, politics, disability, age or sexuality, and other forms of harassment, slurs or hate crime
- Institutional abuse - where care standards and practices in any care setting fall below an acceptable level

### Domestic Abuse

Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. We also recognise other risks such as hate crime, honour-based violence, forced marriage, and female genital mutilation (FGM).

### 3. Procedure in the Event of a Disclosure

All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been abused.

- Promises of confidentiality must not be given
- A full record must be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information, including date, time, location, parties involved, and any witnesses
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed immediately
- Do not investigate the matter yourself or contact the alleged perpetrator

Referrals should be made to Norfolk Adults Safeguarding: 0344 800 8020. In an emergency, call 999.

### 4. Responding to an Allegation

All staff and volunteers should:

- Report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately
- Record what was said or seen as soon as possible, signed and dated
- Not investigate the matter themselves
- Follow the instructions of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

### 5. Confidentiality

Information about safeguarding concerns will only be shared on a strict need-to-know basis and in line with data protection legislation. Promises of confidentiality must never be made as this may conflict with the duty to safeguard the individual.

## 6. Single-Sex Provision and Gender Inclusion

New Routes Integration provides services and support that are open to all adults regardless of gender identity. Where we offer women-only or single-sex spaces or services, these will be delivered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Supreme Court Judgement 2025, which allows for lawful single-sex services in certain circumstances.

We are committed to being inclusive, and wherever possible we will work with trans and non-binary participants to find appropriate, respectful alternatives if needed.

## 7. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

- The DSL will coordinate safeguarding responses and liaise with external agencies
- The Deputy DSL will act in their absence
- A named trustee will provide oversight

All staff, volunteers and trustees are required to complete safeguarding training, be familiar with this policy, and report concerns promptly.

## 8. Safer Staff and Volunteers

We adhere to the principles of safer recruitment, including:

- Carefully considering the job description and person specification
- Circulating all vacancies widely
- Asking for a written application form and declaration regarding criminal convictions
- Conducting interviews with at least two people present
- Asking for at least two references including the last employer
- Gaining enhanced DBS checks where Government guidance requires
- Providing a comprehensive induction including familiarisation with safeguarding policies and training through the Safer Programme

## 9. Safeguarding Training

We will ensure that our safeguarding training includes:

- A module on Equality Act compliance, including protected characteristics
- Understanding of lawful single-sex services
- Support for trans and non-binary participants, in a way that is trauma-informed, safe, and lawful
- Managing sensitive disclosures in line with this understanding

## 10. Other Relevant Policies

- Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety Policy

- Complaints and Compliments Policy
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

## 11. Useful Contacts

Service	Contact
Norfolk Adults Safeguarding / Children's Services 24 hours	0344 800 8020
Norfolk Police	101
Emergency	999
LADO Team	01603 223473
Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB)	<a href="http://www.norfolkscb.org">www.norfolkscb.org</a>
Safer Programme	01603 228966

## 12. Raising and Escalating Concerns

All staff, volunteers and trustees have a responsibility to raise any concerns about service user safety and care, and to take appropriate action. All allegations against any staff member, volunteer or trustee are taken seriously and investigated.

## 13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to legislative or procedural changes. Any allegations involving staff or volunteers will be managed in line with our Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures. We will always make any changes immediately to our procedures in line with Norfolk Safeguarding Board's guidance on [www.norfolkscb.org](http://www.norfolkscb.org).

## Appendix 1: Raising and Escalating Concerns Form

<p><b>Name and designation of person raising concern</b></p>	
<p><b>Name of person at risk of harm</b></p>	
<p><b>Date of Incident / Concern (if appropriate)</b></p>	
<p><b>Location of Incident / Concern</b></p>	
<p><b>Summary of Incident / Concern</b></p>	
<p><b>Action Taken (including reporting as per local protocols, seeking medical treatment, discussion in supervision, etc)</b></p>	

## Action Log by Delegated Safeguarding Officer

DATE	ACTION

### Conclusion / Sign Off

- Board notified
- Client notified
- Logged on to Lamplight
- No further action