



HONEYCOMB
GROUP

Safeguarding Policy – Adults at Risk

Policy owner/author:	Director of Support & Wellbeing
Team:	All
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Approved by:	Board of Management/Trustees
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Policy Statement

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, the Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Honeycomb Group Ltd (HG) and its subsidiaries.

1. HG believes that adults must always be protected from harm and abuse.
2. We believe every adult should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that adults we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
3. We want adults who use or have contact with this organisation to enjoy what we have to offer in safety.
4. We support individuals in maintaining control over their lives and in making informed choices without coercion.
5. We give individuals relevant information about recognising abuse and the choices available to them to ensure their safety. We give them clear information about how to report abuse and crime and any necessary support in doing so. We consult them before we take any action. Where someone lacks capacity to make a decision, we always act in his or her best interests
6. We have effective local information-sharing and multi-agency partnership arrangements in place and staff understand these. We foster a “one” team approach that places the welfare of individuals above organisational boundaries.
7. If we discover or suspect an adult is suffering harm, we will follow our procedures in order that they can be protected. If necessary, in an emergency calling 999.

8. This Safeguarding policy and our safeguarding procedures apply to all staff, volunteers and users of HG services and anyone carrying out any work for us or using our premises.
9. We will review our Safeguarding Policy and procedures every year to make sure they are still relevant and effective.

The purpose of this policy:

- To promote wellbeing and independence.
- Ensure that safeguarding is a priority for all paid and voluntary staff, and partners.
- To ensure that all adults using our services are protected and enabled to live as independently as possible in a safe environment.
- We respond promptly to situations which indicate that someone may be being mistreated or neglected. We will respond sensitively to the needs and rights of the individual including their ethnic and cultural heritage, gender, age, religious beliefs, physical and mental abilities, and sexual orientation, and ensure this will not adversely affect the services a customer receives.

Intended outcomes of this policy

- Customers understand what abuse is and can report incidents with confidence that HG will respond
- We all understand what abuse is and can respond to any incidents with confidence
- We respond promptly and effectively to all reports of abuse
- We understand and work within professional boundaries
- We have effective procedures which comply with legislation and best practice
- We have a clear process for staff consultation with the Leads for Safeguarding and a system for escalating concerns when the appropriate response from the LAs is not achieved.
- We participate in a multi-agency approach to safeguarding adults at risk
- Our Board receives assurance that customers are effectively safeguarded

Legislation and guidance

Our policy has been developed so that it complies with the legal framework and is compatible with the work of the Safeguarding Boards in every Local Authority that we operate.

We will comply with all relevant legislation and take account of guidance and good practice.

Relevant legislation, guidance and good practice includes but not exclusive to:

- Care Act 2014
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Domestic Violence, Crime & Victims Act
- Equalities Act
- Human Rights Act
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Modern Day Slavery Act

- Counter Terrorism and Security Act
- Local Safeguarding Adult Boards Policy and Procedures
- Cheshire East Safeguarding Adults Board - <http://www.stopadultabuse.org.uk/home.aspx>
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Board (SSB) - <https://www.ssaspb.org.uk/About-us/Introduction-to-SSASPB.aspx>
- Stoke Safeguarding Partnership Executive - - <https://www.ssaspb.org.uk/About-us/Introduction-to-SSASPB.aspx>
- Derbyshire Safeguarding Adult Board – <https://www.derbyshiresab.org.uk/what-is-abuse/how-to-report-abuse.aspx>
- Derby Safeguarding Adult Boards - <https://www.derbysab.org.uk/>

Linked HG policies and procedures

This Safeguarding policy will be supported by detailed procedures on:

- Adults at Risk procedures
- The Role of Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Safeguarding Recording Procedure

Our policy will be used along side other policies, strategies and procedures including:

- Anti-harassment and anti-bullying policy
- Anti-social behaviour policy (Inc. Respect)
- Child Protection policy and supporting procedures
- Domestic Abuse policy and procedures
- Safeguarding and Risk Escalation Procedure
- Code of Conduct/ Staff Handbook
- Professional Boundaries
- Complaint's policy
- Data Protection and Retention policy and procedures
- Equality and Diversity policy
- Recruitment & Selection strategy & policy
- Managing Risk
- Whistle Blowing policy

All these documents can be found on The Hive [Adults at Risk policy and associated links](#)

Key Principles

We adopt the six key principles set out in the Care Act (Statutory Guidance 2014) that underpin adult safeguarding:

- Empowerment – people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent
- Prevention – it is better to act before harm occurs
- Proportionality – least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection – support and representation for those in greatest need
- Partnership – local solutions through services working with communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting, and reporting abuse.

- Accountability – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

We accept our duty to co-operate with local authorities and other partners in implementing the statutory duties around safeguarding. This may include:

- Making referrals to local adult safeguarding services when required.
- Carrying out 'enquiries' into incidents as requested by Safeguarding Boards
- Information sharing with Safeguarding Boards including participating in 'serious case reviews'
- Participating in local Safeguarding Boards.
- Participating in MARAC

We will ensure that staff are familiar with the principles of safeguarding, are trained to be vigilant, recognise signs of abuse and know what action to take.

In addition, HG will:

- Ensure that adults at risk and children are safeguarded by effectively integrating policies, strategies, and procedures relevant to risks of abuse and harm
- Safeguard the right to independence of adults at risk by ensuring that risk assessments and appropriate support arrangements are provided
- Consider safeguarding risks in the design and delivery of services
- Ensure all staff working with adults at risk will be Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked and receive training on safeguarding
- Ensure staff are aware of and are trained to use the Safeguarding Recording Tool (Log) to note down any concerns they have about the care and protection of a vulnerable adult.

Mental Capacity – Safeguarding Adults

We recognise that capacity and consent are central themes in safeguarding adult work and that every adult has the right to make their own decisions, a person is assumed to have capacity to do so unless there is evidence that they do not.

A referral will be made to the local social care team where there are concerns that a person being abused lacks mental capacity so a Mental Capacity Assessment can be made, and that person will be informed of this referral.

Best Interests

Everything that is done for or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be in that person's best interests. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a checklist of factors that decision-makers must work through in deciding what is in a person's best interests.

Further information can be found on Hive in the document 'Mental Capacity Act – Guidance for staff'. [Mental Capacity Act - Guidance for staff](#)

Reported or suspected abuse

The range of circumstances in which abuse, or neglect may occur, together with the variety of our customers who may be at risk, means that all staff need to consider safeguarding whenever they have concerns.

There are local interagency procedures in place through the safeguarding boards which set out the local procedures to follow, the most up to date procedures can be found on the local safeguarding board websites.

Stoke - <https://www.ssaspb.org.uk/Home.aspx>

Staffordshire - <https://www.ssaspb.org.uk/Home.aspx>

Cheshire East - <http://www.stopadultabuse.org.uk/home.aspx>

Derby - <https://www.derbysab.org.uk/>

Derbyshire - <https://www.derbyshiresab.org.uk/home.aspx>

Referrals will be made to the relevant safeguarding teams following the actions outlined in the 'Adults at Risk' procedure. [Adults at Risk procedure](#)

Where there is an instance of intimate partner or familial abuse and the alleged perpetrator is not neuro-typical, for example they have a diagnosis such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) (including Asperger's Syndrome) or Dementia, or they have an acquired brain injury, it may be unclear if this is categorised as domestic abuse, or another form of abuse.

Whatever the category or cause, it is important to maintain is that abuse *is* occurring and so this should result in support being offered to the victim.

Where the perpetrator has not always been neuro-diverse (e.g. in cases of Dementia or brain injury), questions can be asked about the relationship history to help form a judgement if controlling or violent behaviours existed before or if the victim has ever previously felt frightened or threatened due to the perpetrator's behaviour. If not, it may be that the abuse would fall under the physical or emotional categories, for example. If these behaviours did exist previously, then it may be that domestic abuse is the main category and then the type of abuse being suffered (e.g. physical / emotional / sexual) is subsequently identified.

When it comes to considering a local authority safeguarding referral it could be that the person eligible for assistance is the perpetrator and this may in turn provide the victim with respite and / or opportunity to manage their own safety. The subject of the referral itself may therefore be the perpetrator, recognising this is in the best interests of the victim. This can and should be alongside the offer of referrals and / or signposting to relevant support services for the victim themselves.

Situations such as these are not clear-cut and if there is any doubt then staff should seek support from their manager or Safeguarding Lead.

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive - retains the overall corporate responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The Director of Support and Wellbeing is the designated executive team lead.

Safeguarding Leads - There will be two designated safeguarding leads, one for 'Adult' services and one for 'Children's and Young People's' services who will be the main point of contacts with local Safeguarding Boards. The Leads will have the appropriate knowledge, training experience and skills to provide help and advice to staff and to act as a lead on safeguarding issues.

Service Managers - At an operational level, responsibility for implementing safeguarding will be delegated to service managers.

All staff - are responsible for understanding, reporting, and sharing information relating to safeguarding and will be briefed and/or trained accordingly.

Board/ Champion – The Board will appoint a safeguarding champion.

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

- Always remember that while you are supporting customers you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them, and the organisation must always be uppermost in your mind
- Always be aware of and comply with the HG 'Professional Boundaries – Policy Guide for Staff' - [Professional Boundaries policy](#)
- Always listen to and respect customers. Treat them fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- Never use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- Do not undertake work with customers whilst under the influence of any substance which could impair your behaviour as a role model to them, whether legal, prescribed, or illegal.
- Never behave in a way that frightens or demeans any customers.
- Do not use any racist, sexist, patronising, threatening or offensive language.
- Generally, you should not give customers presents or personal items.
- Similarly, do not accept gifts yourself.
- You should not invite a customer to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times.
- You should not engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a customer you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust.
- Exercise caution about being alone with a customer. In situations where this may be needed (for example where a customer wants to speak in private) think about ways of making this seem less secret for example by telling another worker or volunteer what you are doing and where you are, leaving a door ajar, being in earshot of others and lastly **always** note the conversation in the log.
- Physical contact should be open and initiated by the customer's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset. Always prompt customers to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage to do this always ask if they would like help.
- Do talk explicitly to customers about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- Do listen to customers and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
- Do work as a team with your co-workers/volunteers. Agree with them what behaviour you expect from customers and be consistent in enforcing it.
- If you must speak to a customer about their behaviour, remember you are challenging 'what they did' not 'who they are'.
- Do make sure you have read the Adults at Risk Policy and any related procedures and that you feel confident you know how to recognise when a customer may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.
- Do seek advice and support from your colleagues, activity leaders, line managers and the adult safeguarding lead.
- Do seek opportunities for training such as that available through local safeguarding boards
- Tell your line manager if you feel you need more training or aren't confident in your role around safeguarding issues.

- Any concerns about a member of staff / volunteer should be reported
- Do not give your personal contact details / personal website details to customers.
- Do not use internet or web-based communication channels to send exclusive personal messages to/ befriend customers.
- Do not use mobile telephones or any other devices to take images of customers without their knowledge and permission.

Training

HG will ensure that all staff and volunteers receive relevant training and development. HG will arrange/ provide information, advice, and training in the form of:

- New staff induction
- On-line training
- Access to specialist safeguarding training courses at all levels
- The policy, procedures and guides available to all on Hive

Staff will be required to follow good practice and participate in local inter-agency partnerships and training.

A training matrix will be used to identify which training is required across the Group. The matrix will be reviewed quarterly by the Safeguarding Leads team to ensure the most appropriate training is given.

Monitoring

Incidents of abuse or suspected abuse will be recorded in the case files and the 'Safeguarding log'. Safeguarding leads will review all reported cases each quarter and report any concerns to the Executive Team Safeguarding Lead.

Annually there will be a summary report to Board on safeguarding activity including staff training, number of safeguarding incidents (recorded and referred to safeguarding boards) and lessons learned.

The Executive Team and the Safeguarding Group will lead on safeguarding monitoring and improvement. The Customer Services Committee will review progress on behalf of the Board.

All monitoring and reporting will comply with HG's Data Protection policy.

Partnership working

HG has management agreements and partnership working arrangements with a range of specialist agencies.

Where it has agreements with care and support providers, they will be required to have in place suitable safeguarding policies, procedures and staff training to ensure that HG's customers wellbeing and welfare is protected.

This requirement will be monitored by HG staff responsible for management agreements with other agencies.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and presented to the Customer Services Committee and the Trustees of Honeycomb Charitable Services Ltd annually or earlier where there are significant changes to legislation or regulation; or improvements are required as a result of complaints or findings from independent case reviews.

A report on Safeguarding within HG will accompany the policy to the Customer Services Committee.