

Safeguarding Policy

About this policy

Purpose

Safeguarding refers to the process we use to make sure that our customers are not harmed whilst accessing our services. It is the duty of all staff and volunteers, regardless of seniority or permanency, to prevent, recognise and respond to poor practice, abuse and neglect.

Having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of children and adults who may be at risk of harm but also enhances the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public.

Scope

This policy covers RNIB and any third party providing a service on our behalf.

It applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors.

Review

This policy is due for review every 12 months or following any legislative changes, whichever comes first. This means it expires on 5 October 2018.

The policy will be reviewed by the Safeguarding and Compliance Manager. The final draft of the policy will then go to the Executive Board, then the Board of Trustees, for approval.

1. Policy

Our aim is to ensure that people accessing our services are not harmed in any way through our actions. Some people accessing our services may be less able to protect themselves than others and may have some difficulty making their wishes and feelings known. In this instance there is a legal requirement to ensure that safeguarding duties are understood and applied in all instances.

Any behaviour that is deemed to put people at risk of harm will not be tolerated and action will be taken immediately with referral if necessary to the appropriate statutory agencies. If the incident involves an employee or volunteer, internal action as outlined in the Disciplinary Policy and the Volunteer Problem Solving Procedures may be taken.

All employees, volunteers and governors will receive induction training to provide them with information to ensure that they are able to safeguard and promote the welfare of people who access our services. More in-depth training will be provided to all those who work directly with adults at risk or children to ensure that specific risks and regulatory requirements are understood, applied and managed appropriately.

Safe recruitment practices play a critical role in our aim to ensure that people are suitable to work with vulnerable people. Therefore any person involved in the recruitment process must attend training specified by RNIB and refer to the RNIB Recruitment Policy and volunteer recruitment and selection guides.

2. Definitions

Child

In England, Northern Ireland and Wales a child is defined as any person under the age of 18.

In Scotland a child is defined as any person under the age of 18. However, there may be circumstances where people over the age of 16 are classed as adults and advice should be taken on a case by case basis on which laws apply.

Adult at risk

In England and Wales an adult at risk is defined as a person over the age of 18 whom:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and

- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

In Scotland an adult at risk is defined as a person over the age of 16 whom:

- Are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights and or other interest
- Are at risk of harm; and
- Because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

In Northern Ireland an adult at risk is defined as a person over the age of 18:

- Whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their personal circumstances and/or life circumstances.

Safeguarding

The term safeguarding refers to the process of protecting and ensuring the well-being, safety and safety of people who may be at risk of abuse, neglect, maltreatment of health and development through the provision of safe and effective services.

3. Prevention

Our intention is to prevent harm wherever possible and the following prevention standards, which provide guidance and signposting to other relevant procedures, must be followed at all times to support this aim.

- Safeguarding prevention standards

4. Recognising and responding to poor practice, abuse and neglect

It is important to recognise that despite our best intentions people may be harmed or put at risk of harm therefore the following procedures have been developed to support staff and volunteers to understand how to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns.

- Recognising and responding to low level safeguarding concerns
- Safeguarding child protection procedure
- Safeguarding adult protection procedure

5. Roles and responsibilities

All staff

All employees and volunteers are required to comply with this policy and associated procedures in order to protect our customers from harm.

All staff and volunteers are required to report any suspected or actual instance of abuse in line with the procedures specified in section 4 of this policy. In addition staff and volunteers should familiarise themselves with the RNIB Whistleblowing policy.

Managers

Managers are responsible for implementing this policy and associated procedures and for ensuring that their people comply with the policy and associated procedures.

Heads of services/Nominated Individuals

Heads of services / Nominated Individuals are responsible for ensuring there are appropriate systems in place to regularly and routinely monitor compliance at service level with this policy and associated procedures and ensure appropriate action is taken in response to any area of non-compliance.

RNIB Safeguarding and Compliance Manager

The RNIB Safeguarding and Compliance Manager is responsible for monitoring the implementation and compliance with this policy and associated procedures during routine internal safeguarding audits.

Executive Board safeguarding representative

The Director of Care is responsible for overseeing all safeguarding matters across RNIB, with the Director of Services as an alternate.

They are responsible for assessing organisational risk and reporting significant findings arising out of incident trend analysis and safeguarding audits to trustees and Executive Board as a minimum twice per year.

6. Further information

For further information contact the RNIB Safeguarding and Compliance Manager at safeguarding@rnib.org.uk

7. Version control

The table below shows the history of the document and the changes that were made at each version:

Version Number	Date	Author & Job Title	Status & Level of Approval	Changes made
V 1.0	March 2015	Safeguarding and Compliance Manager, Debbie Lynch.	Managing Director of RNIB Places, Sally Harvey	Policy first written.
V 2.0	August 2015	Safeguarding and Compliance Manager, Debbie Lynch.	Managing Director of RNIB Places, Sally Harvey	Policy updated.
V 3.0	December 2016	Safeguarding and Compliance Manager, Debbie Lynch.		Transferred to new format. Amalgamated country definitions to enable one policy across Group.
V4.0	June 2017	Safeguarding and Compliance Manager, Debbie Lynch.		Updated to reflect structural changes
V5.0	October 2017	Safeguarding and Compliance Manager, Debbie Lynch		Updated to reflect title change for procedures
V6.0	April 2018	Head of Business Support and Compliance, Jayne Frampton		Updated to reflect responsibility change
V7.0	19 April 2018	Head of Business Support and Compliance, Jayne Frampton		Updated to reflect responsibility change

