



# Safeguarding

is everyone's responsibility!

Call the Safeguarding team directly on  
**0345 143 0199**

You need to know what to do if someone tells you something or you have any concerns about a person in vulnerable circumstances, this could be a service user, a volunteer, a staff member, a supporter or a member of the public.

## Safeguarding has a wide remit which requires us to:

- Promote the welfare of vulnerable groups.
- Prevent harm from occurring to all, including staff, volunteers, service users and the public.
- Protect those that have been or are likely to be exposed to the risk of harm.

## Who is a vulnerable group?

Vulnerable groups are those who are unable to protect themselves and others from harm.

This includes all children and adults who may be at risk of harm due to a disability, a mental health problem, a sensory impairment, are older, frail or have some other illness.



## What is abuse or harm?

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human or civil rights. Abuse can take place in any situation and anyone can be an abuser. It is often someone who is known and trusted by the victim, be situation specific and time limited.

Harm may not always be intentional and may be the result of self-neglect or a decline in mental health. Abuse can also be as a result of exploitation such as hate crime, domestic abuse, radicalisation and modern slavery.

## How can you be alert to signs of abuse?

- You may hear or see something.
- Someone may tell you something that worries you.
- You may notice signs of injury or distress.
- You may see behaviour that worries you.
- You may have a gut instinct that something is wrong.

## What can prevent people from telling?

There are many reasons why a victim won't tell you they are being harmed. Some of the reasons might be:

- Fear they won't be believed.
- Fear that they may be harmed further if they tell.
- Stigma and shame.
- Love for the person who is harming them.
- Dependency on the person harming them for care or finance.
- Not knowing who to tell.

If someone can overcome their barriers to telling you about abuse, you have a duty to pass on that information in order to help protect or support that person.

## Guide Dogs' Safeguarding Team

The team can help signpost people to other appropriate services and works with vulnerable people to bring about positive change.

## Further information

For more information on Guide Dogs Safeguarding policies and procedures visit the staff intranet or the Guide Dogs' volunteering information point.

If you are a volunteer or a member of staff working directly with our service users, you are required to attend Safeguarding training.

## What to do if you think someone is at risk or you believe they are being abused.

The first step to stopping abuse is to speak out. We know it may be difficult to speak out, but Guide Dogs' Safeguarding Team will listen and take every report seriously. All information is treated sensitively.

## If someone does tell you something:

- Listen carefully.
- Reassure them that you are taking what they say seriously.
- When you can, make a note of what they say.
- Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Talk to your line manager as soon as possible.
- All safeguarding concerns must be reported to Safeguarding.

### **If you have a Safeguarding concern for someone:**

Speak to your line manager

If someone is in immediate danger or hurt, call emergency services on 999.

If YOU need advice or support, or are at risk of harm yourself, the safeguarding team are here to support you.

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to safeguarding on **0345 143 0199** or email **[safeguarding@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@guidedogs.org.uk)**