

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Statement of Intent

Monitor Group want to safeguard children, especially young people and adults at risk of abuse and difficulties. We know that abuse against individuals occurs in society and individuals from all communities are at risk of abuse. Abuse can take many different forms. It may occur via neglect of an individual by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. This can happen in a family, institution or community setting. We recognise there are children, young people and adults at risk living in some of the properties we attend. Doing nothing is not an option. All our staff and contractors have responsibility for safeguarding. Our Managers and Supervisors have a responsibility to promote the awareness of safeguarding.

Policy objectives

1. Our aims of this policy are to make sure we safeguard the children, young people and adults at risk living or attending properties or offices we service.
2. Raise awareness of the forms and signs of abuse.
3. Raise awareness of the action we will take on suspecting, witnessing or discovering abuse or inappropriate conduct.
4. Have a zero-tolerance approach towards abuse and take immediate action.
5. Make sure there is a lead on safeguarding at a senior level.
6. Improve partnership working around safeguarding.
7. Make sure we comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements and best practice.
8. Make sure we are working in line with our safeguarding partner's policies and procedures.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

All staff have a responsibility to understand the different types of abuse. The main types are:

Physical abuse

- **Definition:** hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocation or otherwise causing physical harm to an individual.
- **Signs:** bruising, marks and /or injuries

Psychological/Emotional abuse

- **Definition:** telling or making an individual feel worthless, unloved or inadequate.
- **Signs:** anxiety, paranoia, fear, racist graffiti.

Sexual abuse

- **Definition:** through forcing or enticing an individual to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the individual is aware of what is happening.
- **Signs:** sexualised behaviour particularly from children.

Neglect

- **Definition:** the failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect an individual from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision; and ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- **Signs:** unsanitary living conditions, lack of privacy around sleeping and bathroom areas, children not at school, young children left alone.

Financial or Material Abuse

- **Definition:** theft, fraud, exploitation.
- **Signs:** sudden inability to pay rent, rent or food money missing.

Institutional Abuse

- **Definition:** the mistreatment or abuse by a regime or the individuals within an institution.

- **Signs:** Poor care standards, rigid routines, inadequate staffing, insufficient knowledge base within service.

Discriminatory Abuse

- **Definition:** abuse due to an individual's characteristics.
- **Signs:** Low self-esteem, withdrawal, depression, fear, anger.

Domestic Abuse

- **Definition:** any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behavior, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 further defines “domestic abuse” as behavior of a person towards another person that is abusive, such as physical, sexual, violent, controlling, economic or psychological.
- **Signs:** Physical signs: unexplained bruises, cuts, or injuries, especially if they appear to be in the same place repeatedly Emotional signs: anxiety, depression, low self-esteem Behavioural signs: becoming isolated and unreliable Financial signs: limited access to money Technological signs: hesitant to share information electronically.

Any of these types of abuse may take place as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Multiple forms of abuse can occur simultaneously.

Abuse cannot be excused for any cultural or religious reason and should always be reported.

Reporting abuse

We take any concerns raised about our staff or contractors very seriously. Any allegation into abuse will be fully investigated following our Disciplinary procedure. Any reports that are found to be malicious will be fully investigated.

Our primary role is as 'alerters'. We are responsible for reporting safeguarding concerns to the relevant Local Authority or Client. Each Local Authority or Client will have its own safeguarding procedure. We will report all concerns in line with the client's procedure and be supportive in partnership working.

The Office Administrator is the Strategic Lead on safeguarding at Monitor Group and is the owner of the central database where all reports and alerts made by staff are recorded. The senior lead will make sure the appropriate action is taken to improve safeguarding procedures and to ensure that all policies are in line with current Government legislation.

If staff want to report another staff member, regardless of their position in Monitor Group, they can refer to the Confidential Reporting (Whistle Blowing) Policy and Procedure. This allows staff members to make confidential reports.

What are we doing to safeguard adults and children at risk?

We will achieve our aims by:

- Protecting the rights of vulnerable individuals and treating them with respect and dignity at all times;
- Ensuring all staff and contractors work within Monitor Group are properly vetted, trained on safeguarding and supported in their roles;
- Working within and keeping up to date with Government legislation, guidance and regulation;
- Ensuring that when in contact with vulnerable people all necessary health & safety risk assessments are carried out by the appropriately trained staff;

- Ensuring partners we employ on our behalf to deliver services to vulnerable people are fully checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS - formally CRB) as required by the client. DBS checks are recorded on the employees Training Records and renewed every 3 years. The employees line manager is responsible for ensuring that renewals are undertaken on time.

We will require that Contractors providing frontline services on our behalf confirm

- Their staff are suitable to provide frontline services
- Their staff comply with the Contractors Code of Conduct
- Their staff are aware of who to contact with any safeguarding concerns whilst working on a client site
- They will notify us of any reported concerns they receive
- They will fully co-operate with any investigation into received allegations
- They will have adequate systems in place to take appropriate disciplinary action

Staff and Contractors are not allowed to knowingly enter a client property where sole occupants are or appear to be under 18 years of age. If this is the case contractors should withdraw from the premises and advise Monitor Group immediately. Appointments must be re-arranged to a time where an appropriate adult is present.

Information sharing

Sharing information is essential. When sharing information about children, young people and adults at risk, all staff must follow the Monitor Group Data Protection Policy.

Where a child, young person or adult at risk is in significant or immediate harm reports should be made to the police. Where abuse is suspected staff should report it direct to their line manager or the Office Administrator who will be able to advise staff on the best course of action.

Monitoring and review

The strategic lead, will report to the Senior Management Team on any significant abuse reported.

The Senior Management Team will discuss lessons learnt from safeguarding cases. The Strategic lead will also advise Managers of any changes to legislation and /or guidance at these meetings.

It will be the responsibility of the Strategic Lead to make sure lessons learnt are communicated to all relevant staff. Where necessary, supporting policies, procedures and guidance will be amended.

We will annually monitor and audit this policy and relevant procedures.

This policy will be reviewed at least every five years in consultation with the Senior Management Team. The review can be earlier in order to include legislative, regulatory, best practice development or to address operational issues.

Related policies and procedures

This Policy is Monitor Group' overarching policy statement on Safeguarding. All employment and training policies and procedures are developed to be consistent with the statements in this Policy. As such, all employment policies and procedures are related to this policy.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS PROCEDURES SUMMARY

Responsibilities

The overall lead on safeguarding children & vulnerable adults is provided by the Directors and the Senior Management Team.

The Administration Manager has overall responsibility for the effective delivery and monitoring of this Policy.

All managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this Policy are implemented in full, e.g. in recruitment, pay, promotion and training opportunities, and that reviews of the practice within their departments and teams are carried out in relation to safeguarding children & vulnerable adults. Managers and Supervisors are required to carry out the monitoring process of job applicants on the form provided by the Recruitment Officer.

All employees have a responsibility to adhere to this Policy, and may be disciplined if found to have acted in breach of it.

Vacancies

The Recruitment Officer will ensure that all vacancies are advertised to encourage a broad spectrum of the local community to apply and to ensure that all applicants are aware that we operate a Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy.

Training

All employees will undertake training in this Policy where required and will be expected to comply with this Policy. Training will be online and recorded as part of the employees Training Records. Training will be refreshed every 3 years or as recommended policy changes occur.

This Policy will be communicated to all employees and associated third parties, e.g. sub-contractors, and will be referred to in relevant documents and the Company's website so that it will be available to our current and potential customers and all applicants for job vacancies.

Complaints

Every employee has a duty to report instances regarding the safeguarding of children & vulnerable adults. This can be done informally by speaking with or writing to any manager, director or member of the Head Office team. If, having raised a complaint, you feel that it has not been adequately resolved, a complaint can be formally raised through the Grievance Procedure set out in the Company Rules.

Monitoring

The Policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Office Administrator.

Review

The Managing Director and Senior Management Team will review the findings of the Strategic Lead on an annual basis and make any adjustments to the Policy as required.

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