



Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Last update: May 2024

Next update: May 2025

Charity name: URBOND

Responsible person: **Martina Elgue, Ousmane Drame, Smangele Gwengwe & Aidan Law**

Introduction

This policy sets out how URBOND responds to a safeguarding concern about an adult at risk.

Policy Statement

The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

We have a Duty of Care to our, volunteers and any other service users. We are committed to keeping adults at risk safe from harm. URBOND understand safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and will ensure we are alert to and recognise welfare issues, raise concerns, share information with others when necessary, make referrals when appropriate, contribute towards plans and decision if necessary and challenge any poor practice in the workplace.

Aim and purpose of the Policy

This policy applies to all staff, trustees, and volunteers, as it is the responsibility of all of us to act if we have concerns. The Board of Trustees, staff, and volunteers are all required to adhere to this policy.

Adults at risk are defined as individuals aged over 18 who:

Registered in England and Wales No. 1184273

Registered Address Unit 15 Challenge Enterprise Centre, Sharps Close, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO3 5RJ, United Kingdom



- Have 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.

- *The Care Act 2014*

The **purpose** of this policy is to:

- Provide clear guidance on how to report concerns about the safety of an adult at risk – be that a member of a non-constituted group or collective that sits under our safeguarding policies, or the adults they may support through a youth-led funded project.
- Identify key contact details for reporting both concerns within URBOND, and to relevant external organisations.
- Support staff, volunteers, and individual grantees at URBOND to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse.

URBOND recognises that:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- It is not the staff, volunteers, or trustees' role nor responsibility to determine if something is abuse, and they should avoid any form of investigation. The responsibility requires only to recognise, respond, record, and report any concerns of abuse to the relevant safeguarding team named within this procedure.
- All adults regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse.
- Some adults and groups are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, disability, communication, and language needs e.g., English as a second language, and other vulnerabilities.
- Working in partnership with other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.



- URBOND will seek to keep adults at risk by having a Designated Safeguarding Lead and other responsible persons who have received appropriate training and support.
- URBOND Responsible person:

Ousmane Drame

CEO

Martina Elgue

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Aidan Law

Safeguarding and Welfare Officer

Smangele Gwengwe

Safeguarding Trustee

What to do when you have concerns

Recognise Signs and Types of Maltreatment.

The following definitions are taken from the Department of Health Publication No Secrets 2000 (Care Act 2014) and Designated Safeguarding Lead course (2023).

- Abuse and Neglect: Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. (*No Secrets 2000*).
- Physical abuse: including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional



development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- Sexual abuse: including rape or sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting;
- Child Sexual Exploitation: Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
- 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 or supportive networks;
- Financial or material abuse: including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, 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, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating; and

- Discriminatory abuse: including racist, sexist, that is based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment.
- Child Criminal Exploitation: Child criminal exploitation is increasingly used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved, and is defined as: "Child criminal exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology." Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines, and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.
- Domestic Abuse: Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse. Exposure to domestic abuse is child abuse. Children can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. Children in homes where there is domestic abuse are also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect
- Bullying and cyberbullying: Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable. Bullying includes; verbal abuse, such as name calling, non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or glaring, emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone, exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone, undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours, controlling or manipulating someone, racial, sexual or homophobic bullying, physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing, making silent, hoax or abusive calls. Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. When bullying happens online it can involve social networks, games and mobile devices. Online bullying can also be known as cyberbullying.



- Cyberbullying includes, sending threatening or abusive text messages, creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos, 'trolling' – sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chatrooms or online games, excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups, setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child, encouraging young people to self-harm, voting for or against someone in an abusive poll, creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.
- Child Trafficking: Child trafficking is child abuse. It involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another. Children may be trafficked for, child sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, forced marriage, domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare and cooking, forced labour in factories or agriculture, criminal exploitation such as cannabis cultivation, pickpocketing, begging, transporting, drugs, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft. Children who are trafficked experience many forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse is often used to control them and they're also likely to suffer physical and emotional neglect. Child trafficking can require a network of organised criminals who recruit, transport and exploit children and young people. Some people in the network might not be directly involved in trafficking a child but play a part in other ways, such as falsifying documents, bribery, owning or renting premises or money laundering (Europol, 2011). Child trafficking can also be organised by individuals and the children's own families. Traffickers trick, force or persuade children to leave their homes. They use grooming techniques to gain the trust of a child, family or community.
- Grooming: Grooming is when somebody builds an emotional connection with a child either online or face to face – gaining their trust for the purpose of sexual abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, or trafficking.
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour – HSB: is when children display developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age. It is seen as a continuum, from behaviour which is deemed to be inappropriate to that which is abusive and violent. It can happen in person or online (or both).
- Forced Marriage/Underage marriage – It is illegal to force a child to get married in the UK, volunteers and staff must be alert to this when working with clients.



- FGM – Female Genital Mutilation – FGM is practised predominantly amongst communities from Sub-Saharan Africa. If it comes to your attention that a young girl is about to undergo FGM here or in another country, a child referral must be made to children's services and soon as possible. If you become aware that a young girl has recently undergone the procedure, a referral must be made to social services.
- Breast ironing – Breast ironing or flattening is when a girl's breasts are flattened over time to prevent them from growing. This can involve using heated or heavy objects, as well as elastic belts or binders
- Radicalisation – Terrorist groups which pose a threat seek to radicalise and recruit young people, if you have concerns, please raise this with your line manager or the designated safeguarding officer.
- Modern slavery is a type of abuse that is more likely to be associated with adults, but children can also be victims of modern slavery. It encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. It can also be linked to exploitation, such as CSE and CCE

Any or all these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, or ignorance.

All staff, volunteers and anyone representing URBOND will stay vigilant for sudden shifts in behaviour or appearance in our service users or any signs of abuse or maltreatment.

It is important to remember that these signs may not always signal abuse, they warrant further inquiry and assistance.

Responding to a Safeguarding concern:

All staff and volunteers at URBOND have a duty to ensure that all concerns and disclosures are followed up. This will include:

- If an adult describes abuse, being suffered by themselves or another individual (disclosure);
- If you see or hear something that concerns you about the possibility of abuse;



- If a third party tells you something about suspected abuse.

In the case of disclosure do:

- Take it seriously
- Listen and reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Report what they have said as soon as possible using the safeguarding reporting form (within 24 hours), and use their exact words – do not try and correct anything
- Ask only open questions, e.g. “When did this happen?”
- Ask the person what they would like to happen next.
- Let the adult know you will have to tell a DSO/DSL at URBOND, the DSO/DSL will then discuss with them their wishes and how or if this information is shared externally. In most cases, the adult will be able to decide what happens with the information.
- Call the DSO/DSL directly if you feel the concern is urgent.
- Get support for yourself following the disclosure.

Positive things to say:

- *“I am glad you told me”*
- *“I am sorry this has happened”*
- *“It is not your fault”*
- *“We can do something about this together, what would you like to happen next?”*

Things not to do:

- Assume someone else will act or already knows
- Promise to keep it a secret as the disclosure must be shared with a DSO/DSL
- Interrupt or ask leading questions, e.g. “did your partner do that to you?”
- Express disbelief in what you are being told
- Seem to judge or shame the adult, e.g. “why didn't you mention this before?”
- Discuss the incident with other staff or volunteers not directly involved in the incident, except the DSO/DSL



There is a remote possibility that an individual 18 or over may announce that they do not want to go home because they are frightened of abuse. We cannot legally prevent an adult from going home. However, you can insist on calling the police (with the adult's consent) and staying with them. If you suspect that an offence may be about to be committed (e.g. their partner has arrived drunk and aggressive) you do not need the adult's consent here to call 999. Equally, you may choose to call for an ambulance if the adult is at immediate risk of harm to themselves (e.g. suicide). A DSO/DSL in both instances should be informed as soon as possible.

Reporting a safeguarding Concern:

In a situation where a member of staff suspects that an adult at risk may have been subject to abuse, they must immediately notify in person or by phone, their URBOND Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or/ and the Safeguarding and Welfare Officer or/and the CEO of the organisation or/and the Safeguarding Trustee:

Safeguarding Team:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Martina Elgue - 07496 426314 - Martina.elgue@urbond.org
- **Safeguarding and Welfare Officer:** Aidan Law - 02392 293765 - Aidan.law@urbond.org
- **Chief Executive Officer:** Ousmane Drame - // 07792429366 - Ousmane.drame@urbond.org
- **Safeguarding Trustee:** Smangele Gwengwe - 07456 565366

A verbal report must be followed up with a written report using the [Safeguarding Recording Form](#) and sent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer, no later than within 24 hours (either in person or electronically). The DSL will support and advise on the next steps.

The DSL (person who dealt with the initial concerns) will **confirm receipt** and update the Local Safeguarding Log.



Capacity, consent and Referral:

The DSL will assess if the adult at risk can provide consent or not. If they have the capacity, the DSL will ask for consent to follow up the concerns to an external agency. If there is no consent, this needs to be logged.

If a person refuses intervention to support them with a safeguarding concern, or requests that information about them is not shared with other safeguarding partners, their wishes should be respected. However, there are several circumstances where the practitioner can reasonably override such a decision, including:

- the person lacks the mental capacity to make that decision – this must be properly explored and recorded in line with the Mental Capacity Act
- other people are, or maybe, at risk, including children
- sharing the information could prevent a crime
- the alleged abuser has care and support needs and may also be at risk
- a serious crime has been committed
- staff are implicated
- the person has the mental capacity to make that decision but they may be under duress or being coerced
- the risk is unreasonably high and meets the criteria for a multi-agency risk assessment conference referral
- a court order or other legal authority has requested the information.

If they don't have the capacity, the DSL will make a Mental Health Act Referral. The reasons for this decision need to be fully documented.

Where appropriate ensure that verbal information or referral is provided to the Police or other Agencies and is followed up in writing within 48 hours.

Follow-up and Closure

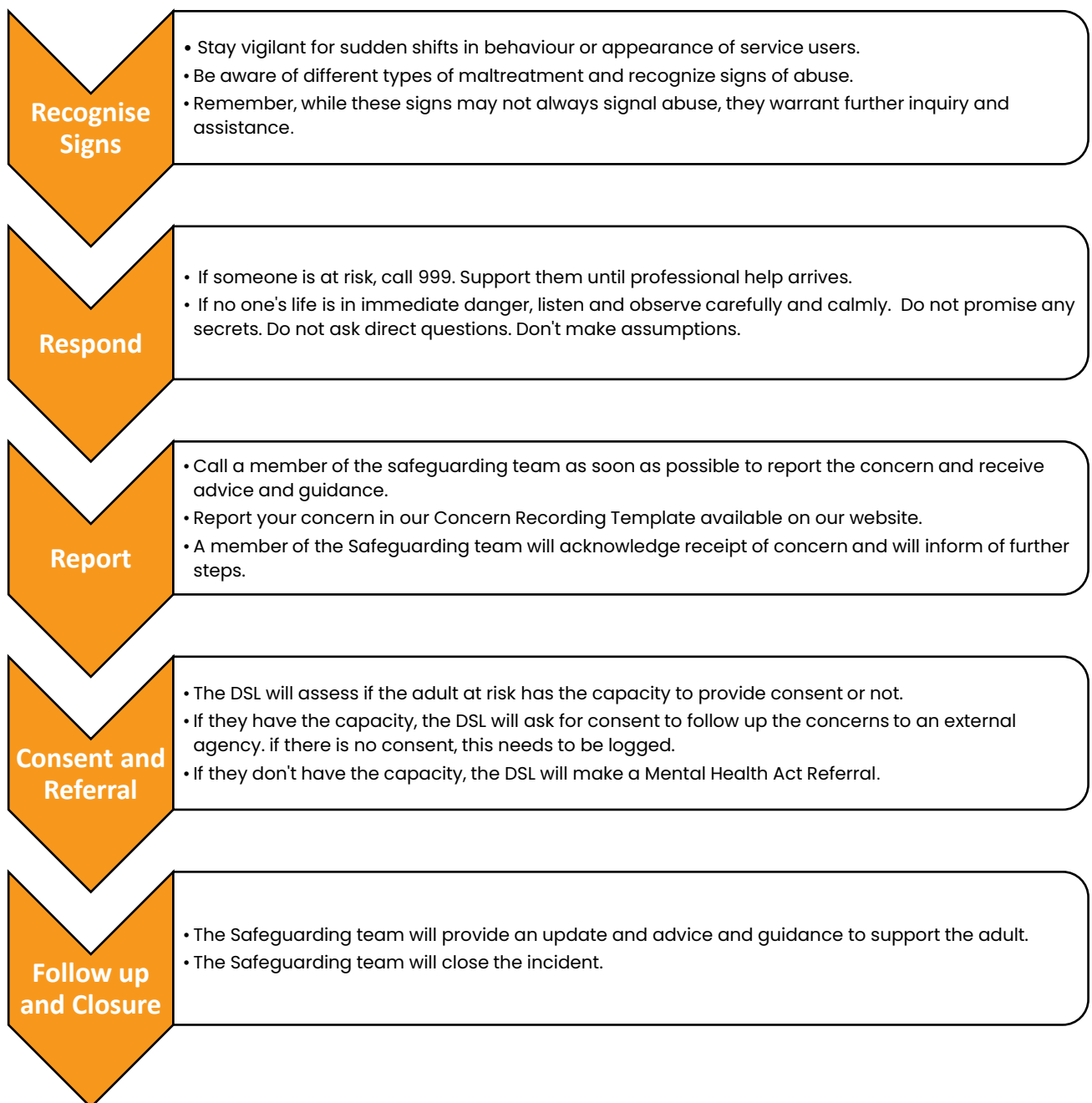
DSL reviews incidents or disclosures within 3 working days and will ensure the incident is reviewed regularly until there has been a suitable resolution with updates recorded on the Safeguarding log.

The Safeguarding team will provide an update to the person reporting the concern and will close the concern when appropriate.



All Safeguarding Incidents will be reviewed monthly by the Designated Senior Lead – Martina Elgue, Safeguarding Officer – Aidan Law, and the CEO – Ousmane Drame.

In the event any delay might cause additional significant harm to an adult, or child, the police should be called immediately on 999. Where an adult may not be deemed at risk but has experienced some form of abuse (e.g. physical assault) then this may be treated as a criminal act and a report made by the adult to the police Emergencies 999.





Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

If the concern is regarding the conduct towards an adult by a member of staff, volunteer, or member of a non-constituted group or collective that sit under URBOND's safeguarding policies, you should refer to URBOND's 'Whistleblowing Policy' which will give you a clear understanding of what to do next. In brief, the below outlines examples of conduct and roles held by individuals that may result in a whistleblowing allegation. This list, however, is not exhaustive.

Circumstances in which staff may 'Whistle blow':

- Behaviour or conduct in their personal life that might indicate unsuitability to work with adults at risk (e.g., domestic abuse or assault against another adult).
- Behaviour that has harmed or may have harmed a child or adult at risk.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or adult at risk.

These whistleblowing concerns may relate to colleagues who:

- Work directly with adults at risk
- Work in a setting where adults at risk regard them as safe and trustworthy.
- Have access to sensitive information regarding adults at risk.
- Are senior managers or trustees who have responsibility for appointing people to work with children or adults at risk.

If you were involved in an incident that could give rise to a concern, including the potential for misinterpretation by others, you are strongly advised to self-report the incident directly to the DSL. The DSL will then handle the matter in a fair, neutral, and timely manner. Concerns related to the conduct towards adults at risk by staff members of delivery partner organisations should be raised directly with the delivery partner according to their policies.

Supporting Staff following a Safeguarding incident

We recognise how personally distressing it can be following an observation or



disclosure of potential abuse. We encourage you, where you may feel comfortable and able to do so, to speak with your line manager who will be best placed to explore with you what emotional support may be available, for example, via the Employee Assistance Programme.

Staff awareness

All staff will be made aware of this policy as part of their initial induction process and there will be regular briefings and updates for all staff.

All staff members must complete a Safeguarding course at least every three years. However, we encourage and recommend having yearly refreshments.

Reviewing the Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year, this will include checking telephone numbers, accuracy of personnel details, and any updates required by a change in local or national policy.

This policy was last reviewed on: May 2024

Signed:

Martina Elgue

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martina Elgue", written over a horizontal line.

Ousmane Drame

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ousmane Drame", written over a horizontal line.

Date: 13/05/2024

