

Policy Control	
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Appendix 1 – Safeguarding proceedure

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Reliance Housing (Reliance) are committed protecting the rights of adults to live in safety and free from abuse or neglect. In England and Wales, safeguarding adults is defined in the 'Care Act, Care and Support Statutory Guidance' as "protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect." Reliance housed a range of adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect and so it is essential that we have mechanisms in place to minimise the risks of harm and abuse occurring and, where concerns exist, to ensure that appropriate action is taken to address them. Legislation such as the Care Act 2014 (and associated guidance) and Human Rights Act 1998 inform our approach to safeguarding adults across the business.

1.2 The purpose of this Policy is to set out Reliance's approach to safeguarding adults, preventing abuse and neglect and responding to concerns or allegations where these arise.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all colleagues working within Reliance. This includes those working in both a paid and voluntary capacity, members of the governance community and those working for Reliance as a contractor or sub-contractor. This policy also applies to all tenants and service users of Reliance and members of the public who may have concerns which fall under the remit of this policy.

2.2 This policy covers the safeguarding of adults (aged 18 years and above). All instances of suspected or actual abuse or neglect of adult tenants/service users will be managed in accordance with this policy and associated procedure(s). There is a separate policy and associated procedure which relate to safeguarding children.

3.0 Principles

3.1 Adult at Risk of Abuse

An adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over, and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and or support. The Care Act places a statutory duty on all Local Authorities to safeguard any adult who:

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

3.2 Care and support is the mixture of practical, financial and emotional support for adults who need extra help to manage their lives and be independent – including older people, people with a disability or long-term illness, people with mental health problems, and carers.

3.3 Reliance recognises that not everyone within the identified groups above will be at risk of abuse or neglect, similarly, there will be other people who do not fall into these groups who could be at risk of abuse or neglect.

3.4 In cases where the adult at risk of abuse is pregnant, consideration needs to be given to the risk of harm to the unborn child. Please refer to the Safeguarding Children Policy.

3.5 Defining abuse or neglect is complex and rests on many factors. The term "abuse" can be subject to wide interpretation. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or occur where a person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not or cannot consent. Patterns of abuse vary and include:

Serial abusing in which the perpetrator seeks out and 'grooms' individuals inclusive of online grooming. With access at our fingertips, it can be even more challenging to keep vulnerable adults safe online, especially when they own computers, smartphones, tablets and games consoles. Sexual abuse and cuckooing sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse.

Long-term abuse in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations or persistent psychological abuse; or

Opportunistic abuse such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around.

3.6 Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm. Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of serious problems and of what we now describe as organisational abuse. In order to see these patterns it is important that information is recorded and appropriately shared.

3.7 Abuse or neglect may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Exploitation can be a common theme in the experience of abuse or neglect. Whilst it is acknowledged that abuse or neglect can take different forms, the Care Act guidance identifies the following types of abuse or neglect:

- Physical abuse;
- Domestic violence;
- Sexual abuse;
- Psychological abuse;
- Financial or material abuse;
- Modern slavery;
- Discriminatory abuse;
- Organisational abuse;
- Neglect and acts of omission;
- Self-neglect.

4.0 Making Safeguarding Personal – The Six Safeguarding Principles

4.1 Reliance ensures that the six safeguarding principles, which are enshrined within The Care Act, underpin our approach to safeguarding across the organisation. These are:

- Empowerment – Personalisation and the presumption of person led decisions and informed consent. Tenants/Service Users will be supported and encouraged to make decisions regarding what outcomes they want from safeguarding interventions and to give informed consent.

- Prevention - It is better to act before harm occurs. Tenants/Service Users will receive clear and accessible information to help them to understand what abuse is, recognise signs of abuse and know how to seek help.

- Proportionality - Proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented. Colleagues will work in the best interests of Tenants/Service Users and any safeguarding interventions will be the least intrusive response possible based on the Tenants/Service Users wishes and identified risk.

- Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need. Tenants/Service Users will receive help and support to report abuse and to allow them to take part in safeguarding processes to the extent that they want and are able to.

- Partnership - Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse. Colleagues will treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. We will work together to get the best results possible for our customers.

- Accountability - Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding. Tenants/Service Users will be involved in and fully informed about safeguarding processes and will be supported to understand the roles of everyone involved.

4.2 Reliance actively promotes the empowerment and well-being of adults by ensuring, where appropriate, that they are given information about their rights, the options available to them that could protect them from abuse, and how to report abuse.

4.3 Reliance recognises that, in some circumstances, people who have protected characteristics may be at greater risk of abuse or neglect, or of experiencing barriers to being able to access the right support. We ensure that these risks are acknowledged, and that support provided reflects each Tenants/Service Users specific goals, risks and needs in relation to safeguarding.

4.4 Reliance respect and support the right of the individual to lead an independent life based on self-determination and personal choice even where this may involve an element of risk. We ensure that such risk is acknowledged and understood by all concerned and minimised wherever possible. Reliance take a positive approach to risk management, recognising the benefits of autonomy

and choice and being able to make decisions which may sometimes involve risk and then supporting Tenants/Service Users to manage this risk.

5.0 Raising Awareness and Training

5.1 Raising awareness is a key part of our approach to preventing abuse and neglect from occurring. Reliance utilise a range of approaches to raise awareness, amongst colleagues, contractors and Tenants/Service Users, with regards to safeguarding issues and action they should take if they have concerns. This includes awareness campaigns such as My Duty, Your Duty, Safeguarding is Everyone's Duty See it Say it, Record and Report" and training and cascading good practice.

5.2 Reliance has a clear and ongoing commitment to the training and development of its employees. All employees receive a generic safeguarding awareness course in adults and children which is completed annually. Additional safeguarding training is provided to employees within Tenant/Service User Services enabling them to

- Recognise the signs of abuse and behaviours which should give cause for concern.
- Respond to abuse in accordance with this policy and the relevant Safeguarding Adults Procedure
- Where appropriate, assess the risk of abuse to Tenants/Service Users and ensure measures are in place to minimise this.
- Refer cases of abuse to the local authority Adult Safeguarding Team and relevant Statutory Services.
- To keep clear, factual and accurate records. Exactly what happened or what you were told, in the person's own words and not interpreting what you saw or were told.

5.3 Training is provided through a mixture of e-Learning and face to face workshops and is based around the competencies required for each role and is reviewed annually. Our Local Authority Safeguarding Boards run Safeguarding Adults training which is delivered locally and can be accessed by our frontline employee's on key topics which cover areas of concern or priority.

Latest news and events news | Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board (bsab.org)

6.0 Safe Recruitment and Selection

6.1 Reliance is committed to safe recruitment and employment practice. We have comprehensive recruitment and selection procedures in place which reduce the risk that adults who may be vulnerable to abuse encounter people who are unsuitable to work with them. These procedures cover employees, contractors, sub-contractors and volunteers who work directly with customers and include requirements around relevant qualifications and experience, receiving satisfactory references and Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks.

7.0 Safe Working

7.1 Reliance expects all colleagues to:

- Avoid situations where their actions could be mistakenly interpreted and perhaps lead to allegations of abuse.
- Ensure their actions are sensitive to customer needs.
- Avoid placing themselves in positions that may cause Tenants/Service Users to feel uncomfortable or which could lead to questions and/or false accusations of abuse.

8.0 Whistleblowing

8.1 Reliance promote an open culture in which colleagues are encouraged to raise concerns relating to the safety of Tenants/Service Users. We have a robust Whistleblowing Policy in place for colleagues to use if they suspect that a Tenants/Service Users is being abused by a Reliance colleague, where there is a failure to respond appropriately to allegations of abuse, or where staff have concerns that a colleague or superior is responsible for the abuse. There are clear lines of reporting for whistleblowing concerns, including routes to use if colleagues feel unable to report directly to their line manager or if they are concerned that appropriate action has not been taken in relation to a concern already raised.

9.0 Recording, Reporting and Performance

9.1 Reliance ensure that there are robust processes in place in relation to the recording and reporting of allegations of or concerns about abuse across the business. This includes concerns relating to individuals who may not be a Tenants/Service Users of Reliance, but where colleagues come into contact with them whilst carrying out their role e.g. visitors. These processes are set out in the Safeguarding Adults Procedure.

9.2 We ensure that allegations regarding inappropriate conduct of colleagues, in or outside the workplace, are investigated thoroughly and with urgency, through the Disciplinary and Grievance policies and the policies of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board. Cases such as this are also reported to the Reliance Safeguarding Lead the Groups Chief Operating Officer.

9.3 Reliance takes concerns relating to self-harm and suicide seriously and understand the need to ensure that protective and supportive action is taken, and incidents are reported appropriately:

- Where a Tenants/Service Users has harmed themselves and this has resulted in medical intervention being needed, this will be reported as a safeguarding concern.
- Where a Tenants/Service Users discloses that they have had thoughts of suicide or made attempts to end their life, this will also be reported as a safeguarding concern.

9.4 Teams understand and work in line with Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) procedures, ensuring that safeguarding concerns are reported in line with local arrangements. For Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered services, allegations or incidents of abuse or neglect will also be reported to the CQC

9.5 To ensure that all safeguarding concerns are managed effectively and transparently, Reliance has robust governance and monitoring arrangements in place which provide oversight at all levels of the business. This includes regular reporting to the Executive Team, organisational governance committees and the Board quarterly. Good practice and lessons learned from safeguarding incidents will be shared regularly across the business.

10. Mental Capacity Act 2005

10.1 The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) places emphasis on supporting and empowering people to make decisions for themselves wherever this is possible and provides a legal framework for acting and making decisions on behalf of people who lack mental capacity to make decisions for themselves. The MCA therefore acts as an important safeguard to people who may experience difficulties in making decisions for themselves. Reliance is committed to working in line with the 5 statutory principles of the MCA. These are:

- A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity.
- Individuals should be supported to make their own decisions where possible – a person should not be treated as unable to make their own decision unless all practicable steps have been taken to support them to make the decision for themselves.
- A person should not be treated as unable to make a decision just because others regard the decision made as being 'unwise'.
- A person making decisions on behalf of someone lacking capacity must do so in their best interests.
- Decisions made on behalf of someone lacking capacity should always be the option which is least restrictive on their basic rights and freedoms.

11 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

11.1 Reliance is committed to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. We strive to be fair in our dealings with all people, communities and organisations, taking into account the diverse nature of their culture and background and actively promoting inclusion. This policy aligns with Reliance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

12.0 Legislation and Regulations

The following acts and guidance documents are relevant in developing safeguarding policy and procedure:

- The Family Law Act 1996
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Police Act 1997
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Freedom of information Act 2000
- The Care Standards Act 2000
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021

- The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Code of Practice
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Code of Practice
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Mental Health Act 1983 (amended 2007)
- The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Care Quality Commission (Registration) Regulations 2009
- CQC Fundamental Standards
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2014
- Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2015
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- The Serious Crime Act 2015
- General Data Protection Regulation
- The Care Act 2014
- Adult safeguarding for housing staff guidance (SCIE 2014)
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance, DoH

Types of Abuse

Types of Abuse – ten different types of abuse are referenced in the Care and Support Statutory Guidance. This is not a definitive list, and our teams will always consider the individual circumstances of cases that arise when deciding if an act or incident may be abuse. All types of abuse can take place in different settings and in different ways not all abuse is face to face and with the increase of digital technology it has created a more accessible platform where distance and time is no longer a barrier.	
Discriminatory Abuse	This includes forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
Domestic Violence	Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over, who are (or have been) intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.
Financial or Material Abuse	This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
Modern Slavery	This encompasses slavery, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
Neglect or Acts of Omission	This can include ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating and self-neglect.

Organisational or Institutional Abuse	This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation
Physical Abuse	This includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication or inappropriate physical sanctions. Unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint or physical interventions may fall under this category.
Psychological or Emotional Abuse	This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks
Sexual Abuse	This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
Self-Neglect	This covers a wide range of behaviour including (but not limited to) neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings. It can include hoarding or other behaviours which may cause harm to the individual such as not eating or alcohol or substance misuse.

Other sources of harm which colleagues need to be aware of and will fall into one of the above categories of abuse.

Sexual Exploitation	This involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where adults at risk (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affections, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. People who are sexually exploited do not always perceive they are being exploited
Cuckooing	This is where a criminal befriends an individual who lives on their own. The criminal then moves in and uses the property to operate unlawful activity.
Hate Crime	This is defined as 'any incident that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be racist, homophobic, transphobic, or due to a person's religion, belief, gender identity or disability.
Disability Hate Crime	This is any criminal offence, which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability or perceived disability
Human Trafficking	Traffickers exploit the social, cultural or financial vulnerability of the victim and place huge financial and ethical obligations on them. They control almost every aspect of the victim's life, with little regard for the victim's welfare and health.

Radicalisation	Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals. This can, in extreme cases, result in condonation or support of terrorism. Extremism covers vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Every case is different, but the following are possible indicators that someone might be at risk: • Desire for status, • Victim of or experience of discrimination or racism, • Going through a transitional time of life, • Being influenced or controlled, • Feelings of grievance or injustice, • Experiencing a traumatic event, • A desire for political or moral change, • Struggling with a sense of identity, meaning, and belonging or questioning their place in society.
Mate Crime	This is when vulnerable people are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act but still has a negative effect on the individual.
Self-harm	Self-harm is when a person hurts themselves intentionally. This is often a way of coping with difficult feelings or situations, painful memories or trauma. Self-harm can present in many forms including cutting, pinching, burning, hitting or punching oneself and hair pulling (not an exhaustive list). Excessive use of alcohol and/or drugs and people putting themselves into harmful situations, where they may be subjected to physical or sexual abuse, can also be considered as self-harm.
Suicide	Suicide involves a person intentionally ending their own life. Suicidal feelings can range from a person having fleeting or general thoughts of ending their own life, right through thinking of or planning ways to end their own life.
Forced Marriage	This describes a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties' consent to the assistance of a third party in identifying a spouse.
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	This involves procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 makes it illegal to practice FGM in the UK, or to take girls who are British Nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM, whether or not it is lawful in another country. UK communities at risk of FGM include Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians and Eritreans. Those from non-African communities that are at risk of FGM include Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani women.
Honour Based Violence	This is an umbrella term for a collection of practices which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is important to flag any Honour Based Violence at the first instance, so it is managed properly. Honour Based Abuse is more prevalent within communities

	from South Asia, the Middle East, and North and East Africa. Reports come from Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Orthodox Jewish and occasionally traveller communities. It is not determined by gender – both perpetrators and victims can be male or female. However, cultural tradition does not mean Honour Based Abuse is acceptable.

13. Related Policies

- Safeguarding Children
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Equality and Diversity
- Data Protection
- Disciplinary
- Whistleblowing
- Lone Working
- Recruitment

14. Useful Contacts and Links Birmingham

- **Email:** CSAdultSocialCare@birmingham.gov.uk
- **Telephone:** 0121 303 1234
- **Text Relay:** Dial 18001, followed by the full national phone number
- **Out of Hours team on** 0121 464 9001 or email AMHPoutofhours@birmingham.gov.uk.

The BSAB website Homepage
Latest news | Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board (bsab.org) WM Adult Docs (safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk)

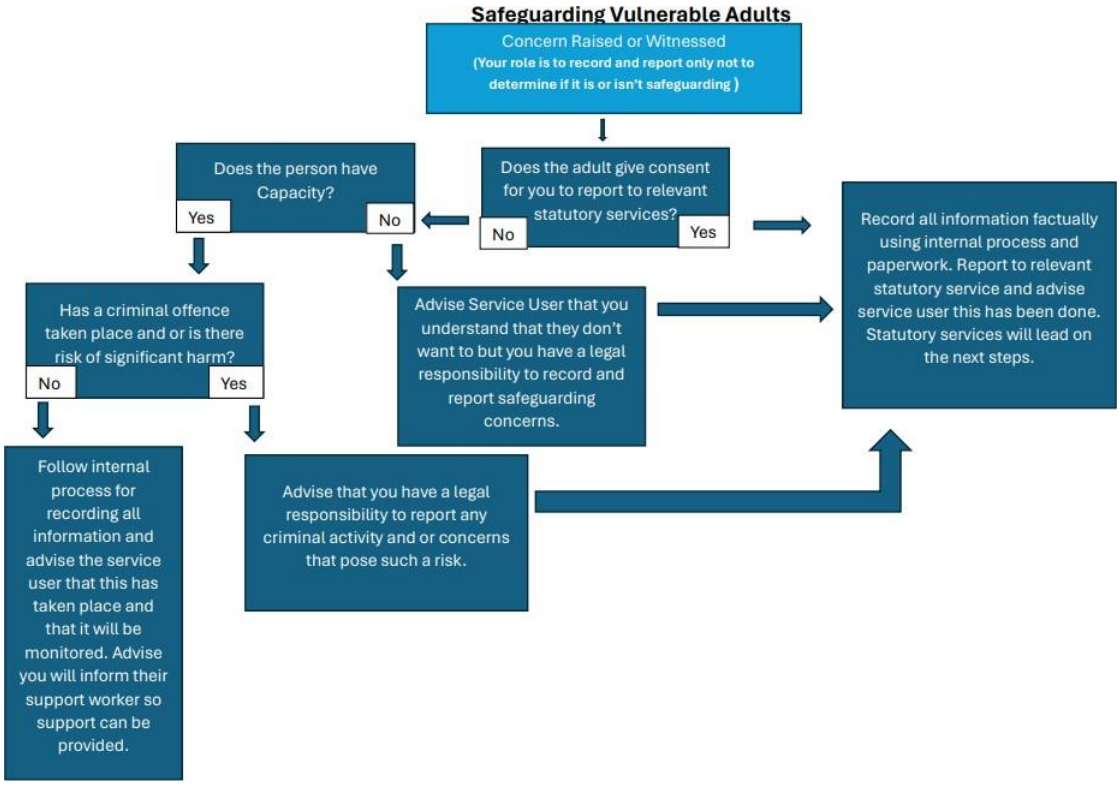
15. Policy Review

15.1 This policy will subject to review every two years by the Tenant Support department unless changes in legislation require immediate action to be taken. Any changes to the policy will be subject to approval by the Board.

Version No.	Changes	Made by	Date
1	None – policy created	n/a	April 2024
1a	Format only	Company Secretary	August 2026

Safeguarding Adults Procedure

This procedure is intended to ensure all Reliance employees know how to record and report all adult safeguarding concerns. All employees have a duty to act upon any concerns following the below action. The responsibility is to record and report concerns not to determine if it is or isn't safeguarding.



All employees are expected to discuss any concerns with a manager on the same day as a concern being raised or witnessed. They will also be expected to start the internal recording paperwork within 1 working day and keep a log of all communication with internal and external partners. Where it is determined a statutory referral is required this should be made on the same day and all records off this added to the internal record inclusive of emails. Where telephone calls are required when in the office the landline should be used as all calls are recorded.

West Midlands Adult Safeguarding Procedure for Decision Making

