



Safeguarding Adults at risk with Care and Support Needs Policy October 2023

Named Safeguarding Lead	Yvonne Kachikoti
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Signed off by	CEO and Board of Trustees

This document sets out what employees and volunteers must do when there are concerns that an adult is at risk or has been abused. Refugee Action is required to act to safeguard and protect adults at risk of abuse, in line with the legal framework set out in the Care Act 2014 and all associated guidance.

1. Introduction

Refugee Action believes that everyone has the right to live a life free from abuse, harassment and exploitation and we are committed to upholding that right whenever it is within our power to do so. We also recognise our specific responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk with whom we come into contact, whatever their circumstances or legal status.

We play an important role in supporting children, families and single adults through what can be a difficult and complex asylum journey, working with those who have been rejected and those who are given leave to remain in the UK. This is challenging and sensitive work and it is vital that our staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know what to do if they are worried that an adult is at risk of abuse or being harmed by someone responsible for their care.

Refugee Action support resettled refugees and people seeking asylum in an increasingly hostile environment. This creates risks for people that can often be outside of the Local Authority criteria. Our threshold for safeguarding adults sits at a wider level that tries to ensure lower-level needs are met through signposting and non-statutory referrals (where appropriate).

Refugee Action will not tolerate the abuse of adults in any of its forms and is committed to safeguarding adults at risk from harm. This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Refugee Action in working together with other professionals and agencies to promote the welfare of adults and safeguard from abuse and neglect.

Refugee Action will ensure that any decisions made will be in conjunction with the adult and allow the adult to make their own choices unless there is a risk of significant harm to the individual or public. Refugee Action will also ensure that safe and effective working practices are in place.

Refugee Action will live our values through our safeguarding work in the following ways:

1. We are with refugees and people seeking asylum Our adult safeguarding work aims to be proportionate, empowering and led by the person at the centre wherever safe to do so. We work with some of the most resilient people and we aim to acknowledge this resilience by working through a strengths-based, trauma-informed lens.

2. We are courageous We know that many of the systems around the people that we support create risks. We aim to not only use our safeguarding work to protect individuals from abuse and harm, but also to use safeguarding more broadly to create systemic change by using safeguarding as a tool of advocacy. Our training, data collection and professional expertise will allow us the confidence to challenge where appropriate and to ensure we keep the person that we are supporting, front and centre of our safeguarding approach.

3. We are collaborative We recognise our duty to recognise, respond, record and report safeguarding concerns and to ensure we create safety as an organisation. We know that we cannot do this in isolation and that multi-agency working is a key part of our safeguarding approach.

All staff and volunteers must follow this policy. The key objectives of this policy are for all employees and volunteers of Refugee Action to:

- have an overview of adult safeguarding.
- be clear about their responsibility to safeguard adults
- ensure the necessary actions are taken where an adult with care and support needs is deemed to be at risk

Copies of this policy are available on SharePoint under Central Resources-Safeguarding-Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and on our website.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- The Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support statutory guidance
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021

‘Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.’ (Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health)

All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse. An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities. This could be an adult who is usually able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction, or illness.

Refugee Action adheres to following the six key principles that underpin safeguarding work:

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

Refugee Action will not tolerate the abuse of adults. Staff and volunteers should ensure that their work reflects the principles above and ensure that an adult with care and support needs is involved in their decisions and informed consent is obtained. Refugee Action should ensure safeguarding action agreed is the least intrusive response to the risk. Refugee Action should be transparent and accountable in delivering safeguarding actions.

*Care Act 2014
Human Rights Act 1998
Mental Capacity Act 2005*

Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2017

The Care Act 2014 sets out that adult safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- has care and support needs, and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect, and
- is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or, the experience of, abuse and neglect.

However, the Care Act also clarifies circumstances that a safeguarding concern can be reported without consent even if the person has capacity. This includes:

- The alleged abuser is a member of staff
- Other adults 'at risk' are in danger
- There are children in the accommodation
- A crime could be prevented
- The risk is unreasonably high and meets the criteria for a MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference)
- You suspect the person may be under duress or being coerced
- A court order or other legal authority has requested the information (This requires authorisation from the SLT Safeguarding lead).

Please obtain the authorisation of the SLT Safeguarding lead, or the Safeguarding Manager to report a Safeguarding concern if the consent of the adult has not been obtained.

Mental Capacity

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 is a key part of Adult Safeguarding legislation. This is not something that Refugee Action staff need to know in specific detail but need to have an awareness of to ensure appropriate action is taken as and when needed.

Not all adults who lack capacity are at risk of harm and not all persons at risk of harm lack capacity. There is a presumption in law that all adults are capable of making their own decisions. Some people, however, because of illness or injury, are unable to make decisions for themselves, or may be able to make some decisions but not others, or may have temporary capacity impairments. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a framework to empower and protect people under these circumstances. It makes clear who can take decisions in which situations and how they should go about it.

If Refugee Action staff or volunteers have any doubt that an adult may lack capacity, then this needs to be escalated to a DSO to discuss potential risks and if a referral to any services needs to be made.

Please refer to the Ann Craft Trust for additional information on the Care Act and Adult Safeguarding

Mental Capacity Act 2005

Trauma-Informed Approaches

Due to the scope of the work that Refugee Action carries out, we often support people with lived experience of trauma. We recognise that we have to work in a trauma-informed way in order to provide the best service to our clients and in order to create safety. We try to do this through:

- Regular training
- Implementing practical techniques
- Understanding that trauma responses may sometimes present in the same way as impaired capacity
- Actively seek to avoid re-traumatisation in our day-to-day work

Domestic Abuse

Changes brought about by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 created a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling, or coercive, and economic abuse. It acknowledges the emotional impact on children, regardless of the absence of direct abuse toward them, specifically when a child sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, the abuse, and is related to the perpetrator or victim of that abuse. Refugee action operates a “Child First” approach when supporting families where there is a disclosure or concern of domestic abuse.

Exploitation

Exploitation is a significant risk for many of the clients we work with due to their pre and post migration experiences. Training and practice guidance is available for staff on volunteers to support in responding to disclosures of exploitation and making appropriate referrals to “first responders” and specialist organisations where appropriate.

3. Organisational Arrangements

Refugee Action has in place appropriate arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding adults at risk, including:

- a clear line of accountability with a Designated Safeguarding Officer structure, Safeguarding Manager and a Senior Safeguarding Lead (SSL) to take leadership responsibility for the organisation’s safeguarding arrangements;
- a designated Safeguarding Trustee
- a safe environment in which adults are listened to and an empowerment approach is followed to promote partnership working.
- arrangements which clearly set out the processes for sharing information, with other professionals

- appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training. This includes a clear pathway of safeguarding training from induction to advanced understanding. Including Mandatory Safeguarding Training every two years for all staff and two thematic Safeguarding training sessions annually for volunteers.
- robust procedures and practice guidance for staff, trustees and volunteers
- a comprehensive safeguarding strategy setting out our aspirations for excellent safeguarding practice
- specific guidance on digital safeguarding to support the change of service delivery prompted by the Coronavirus Pandemic

Referrals

When deciding whether to refer or not, the Designated Safeguarding Officer should consider:

- the adult's wishes and preferred outcome
- whether the adult has mental capacity to make an informed decision about their own and others' safety. Refugee Action staff are not expected to assess capacity, just to flag any concerns around this
- the safety or wellbeing of children or other adults with care and support needs
- whether there is a person in a position of trust involved
- whether a crime has been committed

Human Rights Act 1998

Local Government Association and Association of Directors of Adult Social Care

4.Underpinning values

Through living our organisational values, Refugee Action aims to provide a safe, responsive, and supportive environment to its beneficiaries. Our safeguarding responsibilities are guided by the principles underpinning all our work and specifically through:

- Believing that all people have a right to protection from abuse
- Respecting and being sensitive to difference, while acknowledging that the expression of difference must be restricted if its practices are harmful
- Understanding that, as an organisation, we have a responsibility to protect adults at risk from harm where appropriate to do so
- Promoting the values of respect and partnership working unless to do so would place an adult at risk of harm

Local Government Association:

	<p>What is Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)? MSP means a case should be person-led and outcome-focused. The individual should be involved in identifying how best to respond to their safeguarding situation by giving them more choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.</p> <p>Refugee Action will ensure that adults are involved in their safeguarding arrangements and everyone is dealt with on a case by case basis. Adults will have different preferences, histories and life-styles and the same process will not work for all.</p>	<p><i>Making Safeguarding Personal</i></p>
<p>5. Procedures and Practice</p>	<p>Refugee Action has clearly defined procedures for identifying and acting where there are safeguarding concerns about actual or suspected incidents or abuse. We ensure that each Refugee Action service has access to at least one Designated Safeguarding Officer who is competent to advise staff and respond to safeguarding concerns, ensuring that our actions are always respectful, professional and based on what we know to be good practice. Refugee Action also has a specific Safeguarding Manager post to ensure training needs are met and safeguarding information is proportionate and relevant to the needs of staff and volunteers. This is in addition to the Senior Safeguarding Lead.</p> <p>We work with other agencies that have expertise in all safeguarding and adult safeguarding matters including the Local Authority and LADO.</p>	<p><i>Managing Safeguarding Concerns- one page guide</i></p>
<p>6. Managing Risks</p>	<p>All staff, management, trustees, and volunteers at Refugee Action are expected to follow the safeguarding escalation procedure. If an allegation is against one of Refugee Action’s staff members, volunteers, Trustees or CEO, seek advice from Yvonne Kachikoti Senior Safeguarding Lead. If an allegation is against the Senior Safeguarding Lead, then the report should be made to the Head of HR.</p> <p>The Local Authority will decide on who will lead on a safeguarding enquiry should it progress to this stage. Refugee Action should not conduct its own safeguarding enquiry unless instructed to do so by the Local Authority.</p>	<p><i>Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998</i></p>
<p>7. Digital Safeguarding</p>	<p>Refugee Action offers hybrid and remote working options to staff and volunteers, dependent on operational needs, and some</p>	<p><i>Refer to Refugee Action’s ‘Digital Safeguarding’</i></p>

	<p>projects, such as Pathways to Employment are delivered entirely remotely. We recognize that our strong culture of safeguarding must remain central to any digital delivery of services. Comprehensive Practice Guidance has been created to help staff and volunteers to safely work with adults and children online. Internal training is offered to upskill staff and volunteers in online safety and there is a recognition of the importance of understanding the online world as an extension of the physical world. Specific guidance has been created to ensure we deliver individual and group sessions safely and securely which covers confidentiality of information, boundaries, and social media use.</p>	<p><i>Practice Guidance</i></p>
<p>8. Code of Conduct</p>	<p>Refugee Actions Behaviour at work policy sets out the organisational expectations for behaviour of staff and volunteers within their role including boundaries and relationships with each other. Service specific Client Charters or Client Agreements set out what clients can expect of their caseworker and service and the expectations placed on them, while engaging with Refugee Action Services. Such codes of behaviour are intended to safeguard the well-being of our beneficiaries and offer protection to staff and volunteer adults whose own vulnerability, in some situations, is recognised.</p> <p>Protected Disclosure (Whistle blowing policy)</p> <p>Where allegations of misconduct of a member of staff or a volunteer are shared through a protected disclosure, Refugee Action refers to the Refugee Action Protected disclosure (“Whistle blowing”) policy. The policy sets out clear lines of accountability for investigating protected disclosures including where an allegation is made about a member of SLT staff. If a protected disclosure is alleged against the Chief Executive, the lead trustee will oversee the investigation.</p> <p>A protected disclosure is outlined in The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) and provides guidance for workers on reporting possible concerns about wrongdoings and malpractice within the workplace. This is also known as ‘whistle blowing’.</p> <p>A qualifying disclosure is made if a worker has reasonable belief that any of the actions listed below have taken place or are taking place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a criminal offence• failure to comply with any legal obligation	<p>Behaviour at work & Service specific client charters</p>

- a miscarriage of justice
- an act endangering an individual's health and safety.
- an act causing damage to the environment.
- deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the above

Protected disclosures may need to be reported to Charity Commission and responsibility for registering and updating such disclosure sits with the delegated SSL, Yvonne Kachikoti, or another named individual appointed by the Chair of Trustees.

9. Records

Well-kept records are essential where there are safeguarding concerns for adults at risk.

Refugee action uses a GDPR compliant data storing and case management database, Apricot on most services and have recently introduced 'Advice Pro' for the National Immigration Advice Service. Other relevant Client documentation is stored on a password protected cloud storage system. The organisation has a clear policy on the management of records, confidentiality, and sharing of information. There is an expectation of confidentiality in the recording, use and management of personal information. Trustees, staff and volunteers are clear about what information can be shared with relevant people within and outside of the organisation.

Each service will keep and maintain records, which detail allegations of abuse against any member of staff working in a paid or voluntary capacity, whatever the outcome of subsequent enquiries.

A report of Safeguarding incidents and concerns is presented to the Board of Trustees on a quarterly basis.

10. Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers

Refugee Action is committed to safe employment and Safer recruitment practices. The organisation consistently applies a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting staff and volunteers in line with legislative requirements and best practice. This ensures that all individuals, whatever their role are both competent and safe to work for the organisation.

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult Procedures 2015 Paragraph 5

'Reporting and Recording Concerns'

Refugee Action Confidentiality Policy

Refugee Action Safeguarding, data sharing and confidentiality policy

All those responsible for employing and selecting staff and volunteers take every precaution to ensure sound and thorough vetting procedures. To encourage consistency across the organisation; all new staff and volunteer roles are assessed against the New Role Recruitment and induction Risk Assessment Framework. This process explores the level and type of risk inherent in each role, and sets out steps which can be taken to mitigate those risk at the point of recruitment and induction.

New roles, or roles subject to significant change are referred to an outsourced DBS checking provider for recommendation on the level of DBS check required and the role is signed off by the head of Service.

Refugee Action conducts values-based interviews to support safer recruitment processes. Care is always taken to ensure that references are taken up and obtained and that there is a focus on safeguarding throughout the recruitment process.

Support and supervision is provided to all staff and volunteers regardless of their role and Safeguarding is a standing agenda item for all operational staff and volunteers to ensure Safeguarding continues to be embedded throughout a person's volunteer or employment experience.

Refugee Action has also has a 'safety' email address where beneficiaries, staff and volunteers have the opportunity to email internally with any concerns related to organisational safeguarding. This is promoted in several languages and gives people the opportunity to share information openly.

11. A skilled workforce

There are procedures in place for the effective management, support, supervision and training of staff and volunteers and there is a robust structure and process for support and supervision appropriate to roles and responsibilities.

Each team has access to at least one Designated Safeguarding Officer who is trained to recognise and respond to situations where an adult may be considered to be at risk. Designated Safeguarding Officers, Safeguarding Manager and the Senior Safeguarding Lead should update their training at two yearly intervals.

Refugee Action ensures that all staff and volunteers receive basic awareness training on safeguarding adults as they may come across adults with care and support needs who may be at risk of

	<p>abuse. Those adults may report things of concern to staff or volunteers who should be equipped with the basic knowledge around safeguarding adults and be confident to identify that abuse is taking place and action is required. All staff and volunteers should be clear about the core values of Refugee Action and commitment to safeguarding adults.</p> <p>Designated Safeguarding Officer collaborative meetings are held every 8 weeks as an opportunity for safeguarding learning and reflection.</p>	
<p>12. Links with other Policies</p>	<p>The safeguarding policy is supported by other organisational policies and procedures aimed at promoting safe and healthy working practices.</p> <p>This document must be considered within the context of other policies at Refugee Action, which relate to work with adults. Staff will be aware of how other issues can have a bearing on adults within different situations, including family situations. If any children are present in the household, or associated with the adult at risk, Refugee Action’s Children’s Safeguarding Policy must also be adhered to. Any appropriate steps must be taken to safeguard the connected children if deemed necessary.</p>	<p><i>See relevant HR policies: -Anti-Harassment and Bullying -Behaviour at Work -Whistleblowing</i></p> <p><i>Safeguarding Children Policy</i></p>
<p>13. Policy Review</p>	<p>The safeguarding policy, procedures, and guidelines are subject to regular review to ensure that they are fit for purpose. These reviews take place following every safeguarding incident and at least annually.</p>	

This policy reaffirms the responsibilities of Senior Managers to ensure that all adults who work for and on behalf of Refugee Action are fully aware of the need to act continually to enhance the welfare and safety of adults at risk

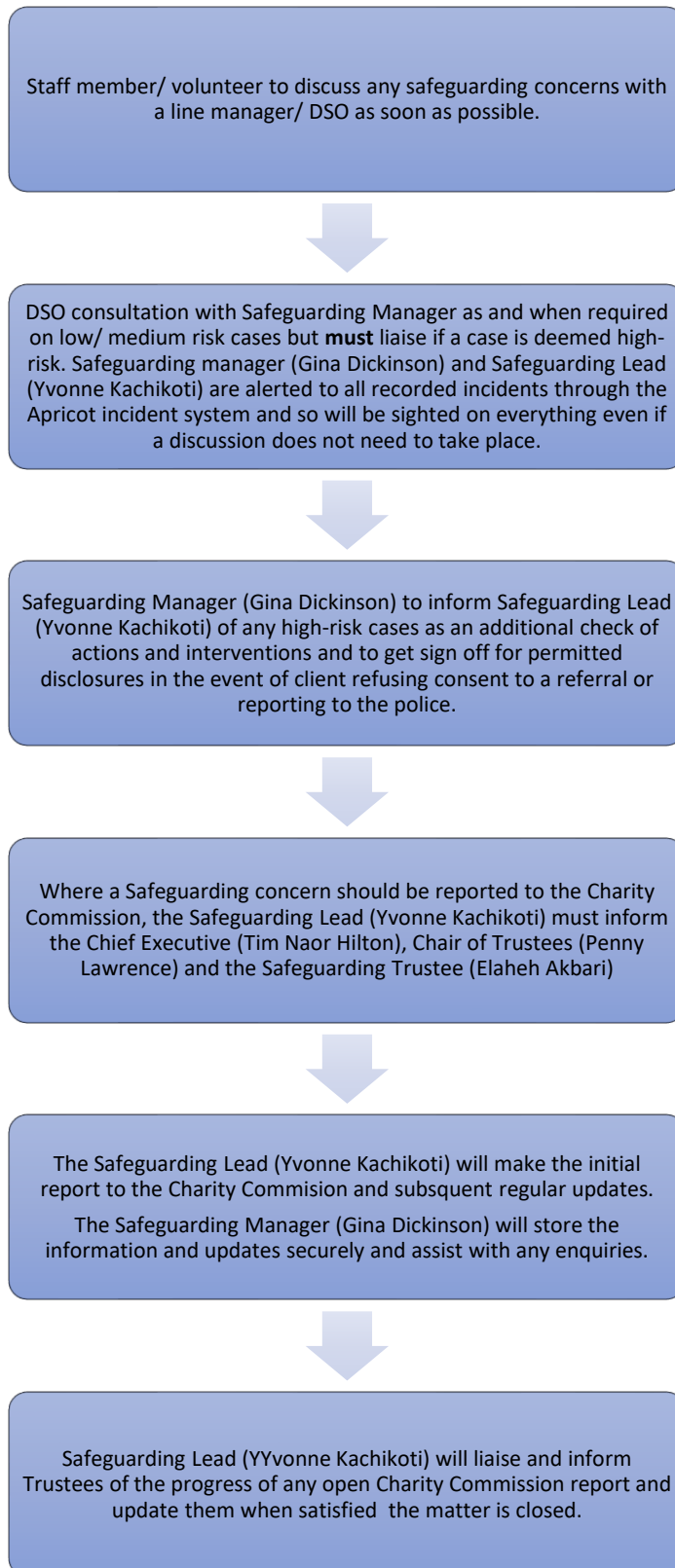
Agreed at Board of Trustees meeting 21/11/23

Signed CEO Tim Naor Hilton

Appendix 1

Escalation Process

Please use in conjunction with DSO contact list.



Appendix 2

Safeguarding Training Minimum Standards

Volunteers

Volunteer Recruited



Volunteer Induction Training before volunteering begins. Safeguarding section covering internal procedures, escalation policies and basic safeguarding information



Safeguarding General Training (2 hours) for all operational staff and volunteers (Held every 4 months or more frequently if needed dependent on recruitment of staff and volunteers). This covers adults and children's safeguarding. Focus on signs of abuse and neglect, professional curiosity, reflective practice, escalating risks and self-care.



Volunteer safeguarding peer support sessions held quarterly. Must attend 2 a year.



Mental Health and Suicidal Ideation Training. Compulsory for all asylum services volunteers and must be completed within 6 months of starting the role. Open to all Resettlement volunteers also.



Rolling program of themed safeguarding sessions e.g. domestic abuse, online safety and managing risks remotely

Staff

Staff member recruited- HR alert Safeguarding Manager who emails Safeguarding Policies



New staff induction day with talks from different departments. Safeguarding 15 min slot addressing culture of Safeguarding, DSO structure, escalation processes and general awareness raising of the importance of safeguarding to the organisation.

Operational Staff

Non-Operational Staff



2 hour Safeguarding General Training for all operational staff and volunteers (Held every 4 months or more frequently if needed dependent on recruitment of staff and volunteers). This covers adults and children's safeguarding. Focus on signs of abuse and neglect, professional curiosity, reflective practice, escalating risks and self-care.

1-hour Adult and Children Safeguarding training- basic overview relevant to job roles of staff in areas such as finance and IT. Covering policies and procedures, signs of abuse and organisational safeguarding strategy. Held bi-annually.



Rolling program of themed safeguarding sessions e.g. domestic abuse, online safety and managing risks remotely

Mental Health and Suicidal Ideation Training. Compulsory for all asylum services staff and must be completed within 6 months of starting the role. Also open to all Resettlement staff.

Safeguarding training is open to any staff member on a voluntary basis. Specific trainings also developed for certain areas of work e.g. campaigns team and work with EbE's

***DSO's must take part in the above process but also engage in the 8 weekly DSO safeguarding reflective sessions and annual DSO-specific training. Safeguarding Manager must take part in continuous professional development and ensure up to date knowledge of relevant social care legislation and best practice**

Trustees

Refugee Action Safeguarding induction on commencement of trustee post delivered by Head of Safeguarding and Resettlement



Completion of NSPCC Trustee safeguarding training within 6 months of starting as a trustee. To be refreshed every 2 years. Safeguarding Policies and Procedures to be shared with all new Trustees and re-enforced at board meetings. This information to be re-sent whenever amended or updated



Annual Safeguarding Board report to be shared with all Trustees. Quarterly meeting and report with designated Safeguarding Trustee and main findings shared at board meetings to ensure open culture of safeguarding and safeguarding consistently on the agenda.

