



Registered Charity No. 200069

RPLC SAFEGUARDING POLICY

May 2018

1. Policy Statement

RPLC is committed to safeguarding vulnerable individuals who come into contact with RPLC, its Trustees and staff. This policy provides guidance to staff to enable them to recognise signs of abuse and take appropriate action.

2. Safeguarding Aims

- a) To ensure vulnerable individuals who have contact with RPLC through grant-making and property work are protected from abuse and supported in seeking treatment and redress if they have been abused
- b) To provide all customers and stakeholders with a clear and easy to understand statement of values that underpins all safeguarding work.
- c) To ensure action is taken against those who deliberately abuse vulnerable individuals including abuse of children.

3. Scope

This policy covers vulnerable people, whether residents, tenants, service users, staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors, or anyone the RPLC staff or Trustees encounter due to its day to day activities. This list is not exhaustive.

4. Responsibility of the Individual

- a) All staff have a responsibility and moral duty to report any suspicion of abuse, however minor, of any group or individual.
- b) The priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of the vulnerable person.
- c) All staff have a responsibility to take all reports of abuse seriously regardless of the source of the report.
- d) All staff should follow the lone working policy. Two staff should attend interviews with vulnerable people. Details of any visits outside the office should be recorded on staff diaries.
- e) Any concerns about the actions of RPLC staff or trustees should be raised with the Director or with the Chair of Trustees under RPLC's Complaints Policy.

5. Responsibility of RPLC

- a) RPLC will ensure that all staff are trained to recognise signs of abuse and how to report any suspicion that abuse is occurring. Annual reviews will ensure compliance with this policy.
- b) RPLC will create a culture in which all reports will be treated seriously and without fear of reprisal. It is not the responsibility of anyone working, either paid or unpaid, within RPLC, to decide whether abuse has taken place or to carry out an investigation as this is the role of the local authority and/or police.

6. Confidentiality

Wherever possible RPLC will treat all information it receives from people with whom it has contact in relation to this policy in confidence and will seek consent before sharing any information. There are some circumstances where we are obliged to share information with a third party due to legal requirements. For example, we are obliged to share information if there is a risk of significant harm to the individual and/or others.

7. Equality

RPLC recognises that all children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to same protection regardless of age, gender, race, disability, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity. RPLC is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognises the additional needs of children and vulnerable adults from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and vulnerable adults and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

8. Safeguarding Officer

The Director has day to day responsibility for Safeguarding.

9. Reporting

All reported incidents should be recorded by the Charity in line with RPLC's Data Protection Policy. Incidents will be reported to the Trustees regularly or by exception where necessary. The Chair of Trustees will be kept informed regularly, as appropriate.

Trustees are required to report serious incidents to the Charity Commission's Risk Assessment Unit. A serious incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:

- harm to a charity's work, beneficiaries or reputation
- loss of a charity's money or assets
- damage to a charity's property

10. Definitions

10.1 Safeguarding

The Charity Commission defines safeguarding and promoting welfare of vulnerable groups and children as:

- Protecting from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of health or development
- For children – ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

In line with Care and Support Statutory Guidance, issued under the Care Act, 2014, safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of these needs) and;
- Is experiencing or at risk of, abuse, 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.

An '**adult at risk**' could include:

- People with a disability/physical impairment
- Older people
- People with learning difficulties/disabilities
- People with mental health needs
- People with sensory impairments
- People who have suffered a head/brain injury
- People who misuse drugs and alcohol.

10.2 Abuse

There is no overarching definition of abuse under the Care Act 2014. However abuse can be about:

- The violation of an individual's human and civil rights
- An action or inaction, either intentional or unintentional by another person or the person themselves
- The impact of the abuse affecting a person's wellbeing (this could be emotional, physical etc.)

10.3 Types of abuse:

1. **Psychological** – includes emotional abuse / threats of harm or abandonment / deprivation of contact / humiliation / controlling behaviour / exploiting, corrupting/ cyber bullying / exposure to the ill treatment of someone else
2. **Discriminatory** – includes forms of harassment/slurs similar treatment because of race/gender/gender identity/age/disability/sexual orientation or religion.
3. **Physical** – includes assault/ hitting/ slapping/ pushing/ restraint/ inappropriate punishment/ shaking/ burning etc. Misuse of medication and/ or physical harm caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child.
4. **Financial/material** – includes theft/fraud/internet scams/coercion/misuse or misappropriation of property or possessions etc.
5. **Neglect/acts of omission** – persistent ignoring of medical, emotional or physical care needs / failure to provide access to appropriate healthcare / withholding the necessities of life / unsupervised in inappropriate situations.
6. **Sexual** – Includes rape / indecent exposure / sexual harassment / exposure to pornography against the person's will / other sexual acts without consent etc.
7. **Organisational** – covers neglect and poor practice within an institution or specific care setting or in someone's own home. Can be through neglect or poor professional practice resulting from policies/culture/systems.
8. **Self-neglect** – covers a wide range of behaviour e.g. Neglecting to care for one's own health/hygiene/surroundings/hoarding etc.
9. **Modern slavery** - covers human trafficking / forced labour / domestic servitude / forcing individuals into a life of abuse or inhumane treatment

10. **Domestic violence and abuse** – the definition of domestic abuse is “Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional, controlling and coercive) between those aged 16 and over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality. This includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities such as so-called ‘honour killings’.”

