

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR ADULTS

POLICY OR PROCEDURE OR BOTH	Policy and Procedure
INFORMATION CATEGORY	Internal
WHO NEEDS TO READ AND /OR BE TRAINED	Trustees, Director of Operations, Supervising Staff, Employed Staff, and Volunteers
OWNERSHIP OF APPROVAL	Trustee with nominated responsibility for Safeguarding (Currently the Chair) / Director of Operations
ADOPTION	Management Committee: Feb 2018
REVIEW FREQUENCY	Annually
UPDATES	Mar 2019, Jan 2020, Feb 2021, Jan 22, Apr 2023, Apr 2024, Apr 2025
LAST REVIEW DATE AND PERSON	April 2025 Director of Operations and Trustee with nominated responsibility for Safeguarding (SLAS Chair)
E -signature of responsible persons	Director of Operations:  SLAS Chair:  Dated: April 25
CROSS REFERENCES	Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy & Procedure Vulnerable Person Policy Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Policy Conflicts of Interest Policy & Register Policy Statement on Confidentiality Referral and Signposting Procedure Whistleblowing Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (see also References in Procedure)

1. Purpose of this Policy and Procedure

This Policy and Procedure statement outlines St Lukes Advice Service's (SLAS) commitment to safeguarding adults, the principles underlying this commitment and the action, which will be taken if any concerns are identified or suspected. For those under 18 years old, please see the Policy Statement on Child Protection and Safeguarding.

2. What does safeguarding mean?

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about working together to support people to make decisions about the risks they face in their own lives and protecting those who lack the mental capacity to make those decisions.

Some of our clients may be considered to be vulnerable adults and all agencies involved in working with vulnerable adults have a duty to protect them from abuse and/or self-neglect. In addition, a person's mental capacity and ability to make decisions may be unclear. As an organisation which assists people who may fall into these groups it is vital that St Luke's Advice Service understands and performs its duties and responsibilities. Having a policy and procedures to safeguard vulnerable adults and to protect people's rights around mental capacity is a legal requirement and ensures that a proportionate, timely and professional approach is taken.

This Policy and Procedure focuses on ensuring a proportionate, timely and professional approach is taken to safeguarding issues. If you have any concerns, or suspect abuse is taking place you must report this immediately to the Director of Operations (Grace Smyth), who is SLAS's designated safeguarding lead, and this person has received training in safeguarding adults which is updated when required. Grace can be contacted initially via grace@stlukesadvice.service.gov.uk, in her absence Jess Keilthy is the deputy Safeguarding Lead and she can be contacted via jess@stlukesadvice.service.org.uk.

3. Aims of safeguarding

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned.
- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse.
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or wellbeing of an adult.

Statutory safeguarding duties are defined in the Care Act and apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs),
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect,
- as a result of care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves.

It is St Luke's Advice Service's policy to:

- follow the most current Code of Practice used by Local Authorities in Sussex version 5 at the time of writing: <https://sussexsafeguardingadults.org/media/ux1kxk5a/sussex-safeguarding-adults-policy-and-procedures-v5.pdf>

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- deal with concerns about people outside of this area on a case by case basis, using the Pan Sussex Code of Practice for guidance.
- comply with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) and the most current Code of Practice issued 2007 at the time of writing:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/497253/Mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice.pdf

The designated Safeguarding Lead for the organisation is the Director of Operations, Grace Smyth with Jess Keilthy, team supervisor as the Deputy Safeguarding Lead in her absence. The Safeguarding Leads will receive initial and update training to ensure they have up to date safeguarding knowledge.

4. St Luke's Advice Service Commitment

This Policy and Procedure is based on the following underlying principles:

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

To put these principles into practice it is essential that everyone, both individuals and the organisation, is clear about roles and responsibilities in regard to safeguarding policy and procedures. SLAS is committed to playing its part, both as an independent organisation and along with other services in partnership to ensure safeguarding issues are correctly addressed.

This includes raising awareness to enable identification of potential concerns, identification of issues and concerns, and reporting in a timely way any concerns or suspicions that an adult is at risk of being, or is, being abused. Where abuse or neglect takes place, it should be dealt with promptly and effectively, and in ways which are proportionate to the concern, ensuring that the adult stays in as much control of the decision-making as possible.

SLAS is committed to:

- promoting adults wellbeing as part of safeguarding arrangements;
- ensuring the welfare of at-risk adults is a primary concern for SLAS;
- ensuring all staff, volunteers and trustees understand that it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse and it is the responsibility of Social Services and the Police to conduct, where appropriate, investigations;
- ensuring all incidents of alleged poor practise, misconduct and abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately; and
- ensuring all personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

St Luke's Advice Service is dedicated to ensuring the safety and welfare of adults through robust recruitment procedures. All staff and volunteers who will be in direct contact with clients undergo thorough screening, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, in compliance with legal requirements.

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Our recruitment process is designed to identify individuals who are suitable and safe to work with vulnerable population. It includes rigorous interview procedures and reference checks.

During the recruitment process, candidates are required to provide details of any previous convictions or cautions, including those that may be considered spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Any relevant information disclosed is carefully considered in relation to the role and responsibilities involved.

All new staff members and volunteers are provided with comprehensive information about our organisation's commitment to safeguarding both children and adults, and the expected standards of behaviour and conduct. Trustees, whilst not required to have any direct contact with clients, are also provided with safeguarding information and are required to undertake regular safeguarding training.

We review and update our recruitment procedures to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and best practices in safeguarding.

As part of the regular operational report to the St Luke's Advice Service Management Committee (ie Trustee meeting) the Director of Operations will provide a safeguarding report to include the following information:

- number of concerns raised, and nature of concerns raised
- number of referrals made to statutory services
- number of allegations against staff and volunteers
- training record of staff and volunteers at all levels
- impact of any new legislation or guidance on your organisation.

5. SLAS Procedure

St Luke's Advice Service will:

- Follow the most current Code of Practice used by Local Authorities in Sussex version 4 at the time of writing: <http://sussexsafeguardingadults.procedures.org.uk>
- Comply with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Code of Practice. This includes referring service users for an assessment under the Mental Capacity Act, in line with the guidance in the Code where staff identify a potential question of an individual's capacity.
- Promote the well-being and welfare of vulnerable adults by providing opportunities for them to access advice and information through our service.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise staff, volunteers and trustees to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect at-risk adults from abuse and minimise risk.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers in direct contact with clients are required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Services check.
- Require staff, volunteers and trustees to adopt and abide by this Policy and Procedure. The Policy and Procedure will form part of Induction procedure for all staff, volunteers and trustees. If in doubt staff, volunteers and trustees will refer to the Director of Operations for advice, guidance and support in determining action.
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and trustees receive training on safeguarding and as part of their induction and this training will be updated every two years.
- Appoint the Chair of Trustees as the designated Trustee Lead (Martin Poole) on safeguarding. He is trained on safeguarding matters and will ensure that the Trustees understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including ensuring that staff and volunteers are properly trained in this area and that the relevant policies are up to date and appropriate for the organisation.

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- Ensure that the Trustees receive a regular report from the Safeguarding Lead about safeguarding matters (see relevant section above). At least once a year the trustee review whether there are any emerging trends or patterns and what additional actions if any are needed.
- Promote and implement appropriate processes within the services we provide to safeguard the well-being of at-risk adults to protect them from abuse.
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of at-risk adults in line with this Policy and Procedure as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.

If any staff or volunteer has a concern about actual or possible adult abuse or neglect, they should talk urgently to the Director of Operations, or if the manager was not available to the Chair of St Luke's Advice Service, making clear what they know or suspect. These concerns of abuse or neglect will then be recorded on the safeguarding concerns and incident log and raised with the appropriate responsible authority where necessary in line with the Safeguarding Adults Threshold: Guidance for Professionals document. For those living in Brighton and Hove an online Safeguarding Alert is made.

6. Safeguarding commitment to staff and volunteers

At St Luke's Advice Service, we aim to foster an environment and working culture where our staff and volunteers feel able to raise any concerns. We have various ways to do this including discussing concerns with the line manager or a Board member, raising a formal grievance or making a disclosure in line with our whistle blowing policy.

We want our trustees, staff and volunteers to feel confident and able to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities appropriately, and to have received appropriate, timely and relevant safeguarding training and that there are regular reviews of safeguarding practices.

We recognise the importance of whistleblowing in safeguarding the welfare of adults and encourage all staff, volunteers, and trustees to report any suspicions or incidents of abuse promptly. To ensure that whistleblowers are protected and reports are handled confidentially, the following procedures are in place:

- **Confidential reporting channels:**
Any individual who has concerns about the welfare or safety of an adult is encouraged to report them promptly. We provide multiple channels for reporting, including direct communication with the Director of Operations (Grace Smyth) or contacting external agencies such as social services or the police.
- **Protection of whistleblowers:**
St Luke's Advice Service is committed to protecting the identity and confidentiality of whistleblowers. Individuals who report concerns in good faith will not face any form of retaliation, victimisation, or discrimination as a result of their disclosure. Any attempts to intimidate or retaliate against whistleblowers will be treated as a serious disciplinary offense.
- **Confidentiality and data protection:**
All reports of concerns are handled with the utmost confidentiality and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Information shared during the reporting process is only disclosed to individuals on a need-to-know basis, ensuring the privacy and dignity of all parties involved.

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- **Handling of reports:**

Reports of concerns are taken seriously and investigated promptly and impartially. The Director of Operations (Grace Smyth) is responsible for overseeing the handling of reports and ensuring appropriate actions are taken in line with safeguarding procedures and legal requirements.

- **Feedback and support:**

Whistleblowers will receive feedback on the outcome of their report to the extent possible without compromising confidentiality. Additionally, individuals who report concerns will be offered appropriate support and guidance throughout the process.

7. Further information and support:

For further information on safeguarding and who to contact if you have any concerns about the welfare of children or vulnerable adults:

Brighton and Hove City Council: Contact the Access Point on 01273 295 555

Email accesspoint@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Online <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/adult-social-care-hub/online-forms/report-safeguarding-concern>

East Sussex County Council: Contact Health and Social Care Connect on 0345 60 80 191 Email HSCC@eastsussex.gov.uk

West Sussex County Council: Contact Adults' Care Point on 01243 642 121

Email socialcare@westsussex.gov.uk

Online <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/social-care-support/adults/raise-a-concern-about-an-adult/>

Reporting a concern about a child to the local authority

Brighton and Hove City Council. www.brighton-hove.gov.uk Contact on 01273 290 400

FrontDoorforFamilies@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

East Sussex County Council. www.eastsussex.gov.uk

Contact Single Point of Access (SPoA) 01323 464 222 Monday to Thursday 8.30am – 5pm and Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm.

Out of hours team on 01273 335 905 / 01273 335 906 webspoa@eastsussex.gov.uk

West Sussex County Council. www.westsussex.gov.uk

Monday to Friday between 9am – 5pm

Contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01403 229 900

Out of hours team on 0330 222 6664 WSChildrenService@westsussex.gov.uk

For further information:

General questions, concerns or for advice and guidance

Volunteers, staff and trustees should check with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Grace Smyth)

What to do if you or someone you know may be being neglected or abused leaflet

http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/5466_Safeguarding_Adults_Leaflet%20pdf.pdf

8. Other St Luke's Advice Service relevant documents

- Safeguarding – concerns and incident log
- Safeguarding policy and procedure on Child protection and safeguarding
- Complaints policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Data protection policy
- Recruitment policy
- Staff induction
- Trustee Induction