



SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Improving Lives Plymouth is committed to protecting adults at risk who use its services from abuse, neglect and exploitation. We will not condone the existence or occurrence of any form of abusive behaviour regardless of age, status or circumstance.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We are committed to creating a culture that is trauma-informed, person-centred, and enables people who use our services to feel safe, heard and respected.

This policy is underpinned by the statutory duties set out in the Care Act 2014 and reflects the principle of "Making Safeguarding Personal", ensuring that the adult's views, wishes, feelings and outcomes are central to any safeguarding response.

Definition of an Adult at Risk

For the purposes of this policy, an adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who:

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

Staff, volunteers and Students at Improving Lives Plymouth are subject to satisfactory references and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, where this is relevant to their job role.

This should be read in conjunction with the Children's Safeguarding Policy, Diversity and Equality Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Recruitment Policy, Data Protection Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Lone Working Policy, and DBS Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy, Preventing Extremism Leading to Terrorism Policy.

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

We will:

- Provide an environment where people can safely disclose abuse or neglect
- Ensure a trauma-informed and person-centred approach to safeguarding
- Train staff and volunteers to recognise signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including radicalisation
- Inform people who use our services of our safeguarding responsibilities in accessible formats
- Work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies where appropriate
- Ensure concerns are recorded accurately and shared appropriately in line with data protection legislation
- Ensure staff and volunteers understand professional boundaries
- Ensure safeguarding training is appropriate to role and refreshed regularly
- Ensure safer recruitment practices are followed
- Promote a culture where concerns can be raised without fear (including through whistleblowing)

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; however, specific roles are outlined below:

Trustee Board and Strategy Delivery Group (SDG)

- Provide oversight and ensure effective safeguarding governance
- Review policy and monitor implementation

Chief Executive

- Holds overall accountability for safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Receives and manages safeguarding concerns
- Makes referrals to appropriate agencies
- Provides guidance and support to staff
- Maintains oversight of safeguarding records

Managers

- Ensure implementation within their teams
- Support staff in responding to concerns

All Staff, Volunteers, Students and Contractors

- Adhere to this policy
- Recognise and report safeguarding concerns
- Maintain professional boundaries

4. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECK

Improving Lives Plymouth operates safer recruitment practices.

- DBS checks are undertaken in line with role requirements and legal eligibility
- Enhanced DBS checks are carried out for roles involving regulated activity
- All staff and volunteers must disclose relevant convictions or changes in circumstances
- Additional recruitment checks include references and identity verification

5. RECOGNISING SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Staff and volunteers should:

- Be alert to signs of abuse or neglect
- Take seriously what they are told
- Be aware that individuals may not recognise abuse
- Use professional curiosity to explore concerns appropriately

6. RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

If a concern arises:

DO:

- Listen carefully and calmly
- Take the concern seriously
- Reassure the individual
- Record information accurately

DO NOT:

- Promise confidentiality
- Investigate the concern
- Ask leading questions

7. PROCEDURE

Please refer to the [Safeguarding procedure](#) when acting on a safeguarding concern.

8. INFORMATION SHARING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Information will be shared:

- On a need-to-know basis
- In line with data protection legislation
- Where necessary to protect an individual from harm

Improving Lives Plymouth recognises that safeguarding concerns may override the need for consent where there is risk of serious harm.

9. MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

We will work in partnership with:

- Local Authorities
- Health services
- Police
- Other relevant organisations

10. SOURCES OF REFERENCE

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Local Safeguarding Adults Board procedure

Policy Review

As part of the annual policy review process, the impact of this policy on staff, volunteers and people who use our services will be considered.

Improving Lives Plymouth will:

- Ensure equal access to this policy
- Provide support where needed to understand it
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion in its application

SIGNED:

DATE: January 2026 **REVIEW DATE:** January 2027

Version Control/Change Log			
Version	Date	Author/s	Changes Made
1.0	Jan 2024	Lee Sewrey and Sarah Austin	Original Policy Adopted
2.0	Jan 2025	Lee Sewrey	No changes
3.0	Jan 2026	Lee Sewrey	Full legislative update; safeguarding principles added; DSL role introduced; procedures strengthened; trauma-informed approach embedded