



KEEPING SAFE

Safeguarding adults at risk from
abuse and neglect



What does Safeguarding Adults mean?

Safeguarding means protecting the health, wellbeing and human rights of adults at risk, enabling them to live safely, free from abuse and neglect.

It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and reduce both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect.

It is also making sure that the adult's wellbeing is supported and their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs are respected when agreeing on any action.

Who is an 'adult at risk'?

An 'adult at risk' is someone who may be in need of help because they have care and support needs. They may be unable to stop someone else from harming or exploiting them.

Abuse happens when someone hurts you or treats you badly.

Abuse can happen once or continue over months or years. It can be accidental or deliberate. Abuse can take many forms, just because there is no injury doesn't mean there is no abuse.

Neglect is when someone who is meant to look after you does not look after you properly.



What forms do abuse and neglect take?

Domestic violence – including all types of abuse between family members or partners.

Discriminatory abuse – harassment or slurs due to someone's race, gender, age, disability sexual orientation, religion or gender identity.

Financial abuse – including theft, fraud or coercion with regards to financial affairs.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within a care setting or in relation to care provided at home.

Physical abuse – including hitting, slapping, pushing, unnecessary restraint or misusing medications.

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats to harm, attempts to control, coercion, verbal abuse and bullying.

Modern slavery – including forced labour and people trafficking.

Neglect – failure to act or ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs.

Self-neglect – neglecting to care for your own health, hygiene or surroundings, this can include hoarding.

Sexual abuse – including inappropriate touching, indecent exposure, rape, harassment, or any sexual acts the adult has not consented to.



Where can abuse happen?

Abuse or neglect can take place anywhere. Abuse could take place at home, at work, in hospital, in a nursing or residential care home or anywhere else in the community.

Do not stay silent

Abuse is not your fault. No one has the right to abuse you. Please speak up if you or someone you know is at risk of, or experiencing abuse. If you are not sure what is happening to someone but you are concerned and would like some advice, please contact us.

What you can do

If you or someone you know is being abused or neglected then you can contact the council at any time on the following numbers:

Adult Social Care on (020) 8871 7707

Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

Adult Emergency Duty Team on (020) 8744 2442

Monday to Friday 5pm – 8am

and 24 hours at the weekends and Bank Holidays

In an emergency always call 999.

What will happen if you report your concerns?

You will be listened to, and will be given help and support. What you have reported will be passed to a Social Worker or Police Officer who will be able to support you further.

What will happen next will depend on the views and wishes of the person the concern is about, the nature and seriousness of the abuse or neglect and any possible risk to others.

Where necessary the Social Worker or Police Officer will involve other professionals to investigate and protect you from further abuse.

Confidentiality

Information will be treated as confidential.

There may be occasions when some information needs to be shared when it is in the best interest of the abused person or others who may be at risk.



What does the law say?

The council, the Police and the NHS work in partnership to safeguard adults who need support.

By law the council must:

- follow up any concerns about adults who need support and may be at risk of abuse or neglect and take action to protect them
- arrange for an advocate to support any adult who needs extra help during a safeguarding enquiry or review
- work with any other agencies involved in order to protect an adult with care and support needs who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect
- have a Safeguarding Adults Board with members from the council, the Police and the NHS who will work together to help keep people safe.

The right help in the right way

The council understands that not everyone wants the same kind of help and support to stay safe and aims to provide a flexible service.

The six principles for Safeguarding Adults are to:

Empower – to support and encourage people to make their own decisions.

Prevent – to take support people to take action before harm occurs.

Respect – we will not intrude any more than is essential to keep people safe.

Protect – when people need help, we'll do our best to support them.

Work together – we work with our local communities to find the best ways to keep people safe.

Explain – we will be clear and straightforward about what we do and why.

Further information

For further information complete our online enquiry form
wandsworth.gov.uk/make-an-adult-social-care-enquiry



Visit our web pages
wandsworth.gov.uk/adultsocialcare

Our contact details

Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

Telephone: (020) 8871 7707

SMS Phone: 07860 034 722

Email: adultsocialcare@wandsworth.gov.uk

Write to us at:

Wandsworth Council
Adult Social Care and Public Health
Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street
London, SW18 2PU

For information on our Privacy Notice please visit
wandsworth.gov.uk/privacy

If you have difficulty understanding this publication and you would like this leaflet in a different language, large print or Braille please call: **(020) 8891 7707.**