

Safeguarding Policy

Prevention recognition and response to abuse neglect exploitation and serious welfare concerns

Document control	Details
Organisation	Community Integration & Recovery Centre (CIRC) C.I.C.
Document owner	Directors and Safeguarding Lead
Effective date	17 September 2026
Next review	17 September 2027
Status	Approved website version

Purpose and status. This document sets the standard expected by Community Integration & Recovery Centre (CIRC) C.I.C.. It should be read with applicable law, contractual requirements, local safeguarding procedures and related operational procedures. It does not replace professional judgement or legal advice in a specific case.

Safeguarding commitment and scope

CIRC is committed to creating safe, inclusive and respectful programmes, events, mentoring, training, research, advocacy and online engagement. Abuse, neglect, exploitation, discriminatory treatment, harassment and avoidable harm are not tolerated. This policy applies to directors, staff, volunteers, students, contractors, speakers, partners and visitors and covers adults, adults at risk, children and young people who encounter CIRC's work.

CIRC provides non-clinical community support and does not diagnose, treat or replace emergency, statutory safeguarding or clinical services. A safeguarding or mental-health crisis must be escalated promptly to the appropriate emergency, NHS, police or local-authority service.

Principles

- person-led, outcome-focused and trauma-informed practice;
- immediate protection from harm with proportionate action;
- respect for dignity, culture, communication needs, equality and human rights;
- confidentiality subject to lawful safeguarding information sharing;
- partnership with statutory services and clear accountability;
- no retaliation against anyone raising a genuine concern.

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Directors or Board	Provide leadership, resources, scrutiny and assurance and review serious concerns and learning.

Role	Responsibility
Safeguarding Lead	Advise, assess immediate protection, coordinate referrals, record decisions, liaise with agencies and monitor actions.
Deputy or event lead	Act when the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable and ensure no delay during activities or events.
Programme and volunteer leads	Complete activity risk assessments, brief teams, maintain safe boundaries and escalate concerns.
All workers and volunteers	Recognise signs, listen, reassure, record facts and report immediately. Do not investigate or promise secrecy.
Safer recruitment lead	Apply references, identity, role suitability and DBS or barred-list checks where legally eligible and proportionate.

Forms of harm

- physical, sexual, psychological or emotional abuse;
- financial abuse, fraud, coercion, debt exploitation and misuse of documents or money;
- neglect, self-neglect and acts of omission;
- domestic abuse, coercive control, forced marriage, honour-based abuse and female genital mutilation;
- discriminatory abuse, hate incidents and harassment;
- modern slavery, trafficking, labour exploitation, sponsorship-related abuse and county lines;
- organisational abuse, misuse of authority, professional-boundary breaches and retaliation;
- online grooming, image-based abuse, stalking, doxxing, scams and radicalisation;
- suicide, self-harm or serious mental-health and welfare concerns requiring urgent escalation.

Immediate response

1. Make the person and others as safe as reasonably possible. Call 999 for immediate danger, serious injury, a crime in progress or an immediate threat to life.
2. Listen calmly, take the concern seriously, avoid leading questions and do not confront the alleged source of risk.
3. Do not promise confidentiality. Explain that information may need to be shared with people who can protect them or others.
4. Preserve potential evidence, including messages, images and documents. Do not investigate, delete material or ask the person to repeat their account unnecessarily.
5. Report immediately to the Safeguarding Lead or deputy. If they are implicated or unavailable, escalate to a Director, local authority, police or emergency service.
6. Make a factual, dated record using the person's own words where possible and record actions, decisions and people notified.

Referral and information sharing

The Safeguarding Lead will consider referral to the relevant local authority safeguarding adults team, children's social care, police, NHS urgent or crisis service, employer, education provider, commissioner, funder, Disclosure and Barring Service or professional regulator. Child concerns must follow local children's safeguarding procedures without delay. A Care Act referral should be considered where an adult has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and because of those needs is unable to protect themselves.

The person's wishes and desired outcomes should normally be sought. Information may be shared without consent where required by law, necessary to prevent serious harm or crime, needed to protect another person, where coercion affects the decision, or where the person lacks relevant capacity and sharing is in their best interests. Only necessary information should be shared, and the rationale must be recorded.

Events children digital contact and professional boundaries

- risk-assess venues, activities, transport, photography, one-to-one contact and online platforms;
- obtain appropriate participation and media permissions and provide accessible information;
- avoid unnecessary private communication with children or adults at risk and use approved channels;
- never exchange money, gifts, accommodation, immigration promises or personal relationships in a way that creates dependency or exploitation;
- use at least two responsible adults for child-focused activity where practicable and follow venue or partner safeguarding arrangements;
- escalate allegations about a worker or volunteer under local position-of-trust or LADO procedures where applicable.

Mental capacity and consent

Capacity is decision-specific and time-specific. CIRC will presume capacity, support decision making, respect unwise decisions and use the least restrictive response. Where a person lacks capacity for the relevant decision, action must follow the Mental Capacity Act and best-interests principles. Consent to participate, receive communications or be photographed is separate from consent to share information for safeguarding.

Whistleblowing recording and learning

Anyone may raise a concern through CIRC management or directly with a local authority, police or other appropriate body. Records must distinguish fact, allegation, professional opinion and decision rationale and be securely restricted. Complaints and safeguarding processes may run together, but protection takes priority. CIRC will review incidents, patterns, partner performance, training and actions and report material learning to the Board.

Emergency and external contacts

Situation	Contact route
Immediate danger or threat to life	999
Urgent mental-health support in England	NHS 111 and select the mental health option where available, or 999 for immediate danger

Situation	Contact route
Non-emergency crime or police advice	101
Adult safeguarding	Relevant local authority safeguarding adults team for the person's location
Child safeguarding	Relevant local authority children's social care or emergency duty team
Internal safeguarding concern	Safeguarding Lead through admin@circcic.com, marked private and confidential

Authoritative sources

This document was prepared with reference to the following official sources. The online version of each source should be checked at review or following a material legal or regulatory change.

Department for Education. Working Together to Safeguard Children. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Department of Health and Social Care. Care and support statutory guidance, including chapter 14.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

UK legislation. Care Act 2014. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents>

UK legislation. Children Act 1989. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>