

Gloucestershire Registration Service Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction and Context

- Gloucestershire Registration Service provides its service for a wide range of customers throughout the County. We recognise that some people who require our services are vulnerable.
- All staff members of Gloucestershire Registration Service play an important part in the protection of people at risk with whom the service has contact. We recognise that Gloucestershire County Council have primary responsibility for safeguarding.
- Safeguarding of children and adults at risk forms part of our Public Protection and Counter Fraud requirement as set by the General Register Office.
- The aim of this policy is to ensure that Gloucestershire Registration Service acts appropriately when it becomes aware that a vulnerable person may be at risk. It will provide staff with a clear understanding of the course of action they should take, in the absence of formal training, should they suspect a person is at risk from harm.

2. Definitions

Safeguarding

The charity commission defines safeguarding and promoting welfare of vulnerable groups and children as:

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

Safeguarding applies to adults who:

- Have needs for care and support
- Are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect;
- As a result of those care and support needs are 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 or impairment
- Older people
- People with learning disabilities/difficulties
- People with mental health needs
- People with sensory impairments
- People who have suffered a head/brain injury
- People who misuse drugs or alcohol
- People who may be subject to modern slavery

Abuse

Abuse can be:

- 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.)

There are several types of abuse. These include:

- Psychological e.g., emotional/threats of harm or abandonment
- Discriminatory e.g., harassment/age/disability
- Physical e.g., assault/hitting/slapping/shaking
- Financial/material e.g., theft/fraud/coercion
- Neglect/acts of omission e.g., withholding necessities of life
- Sexual e.g., sexual harassment
- Organisational e.g., neglect or poor practice within an institution, specific care setting or person's own home
- Self-neglect e.g., neglecting own hygiene or health
- Modern slavery e.g., human trafficking/forced labour
- Domestic violence and abuse

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly and may be a single or repeated act.

People at risk may be abused in more than one way.

Appropriate Agency

Gloucestershire County Council and/or the police hold the responsibility for investigating and co-ordinating all incidents of abuse.

Designated Person

The person or persons designated within Gloucestershire Registration Service to whom a member of staff should report any suspected abuse or neglect are the Proper Officer, Superintendent Registrar, Senior Registration Officers, Operations Manager and Registration Service Managers.

Principles

Gloucestershire Registration Service will ensure that:

- ✓ Safeguarding and the welfare of all our customers is embedded in everything that we do.
- ✓ Induction of new staff will include information on all relevant policies and procedures.
- ✓ Procedures are in place to ensure that concerns of abuse or neglect are dealt with appropriately and that action is taken promptly.
- ✓ All staff will have a designated person who will have the details of the appropriate local agencies to whom they can report concerns of abuse.

Reporting Abuse

- The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of the person at risk. To this end it is the responsibility of all staff to act on any suspicions of abuse or neglect and to pass on their concerns to a designated person within the service.
- It is not the responsibility of anyone working within the service, to decide whether or not abuse has taken place or to carry out an investigation as this is the role of the local authority and/or police. These agencies hold the lead responsibility for establishing and co-ordinating the local intra-agency framework for safeguarding adults and children at risk.
- All Designated Persons are required to act on any concerns raised by staff members and ensure that a decision is made on the appropriate action to be taken in each case. They are required to ensure that they act in line within the Gloucestershire Registration Service Safeguarding policy.
- If an adult with care and support needs whom the service is in contact makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect, care should be taken to explain to them that a report will be made to the designated person and the appropriate agency.

- Staff member becomes aware of suspected abuse and there is immediate danger to the individual. Emergency services are contacted by one of the designated persons immediately then a report made to the Service Manager
- Any suspected abuse or neglect must be reported as soon as is practically possible to the designated person so a decision can be made as to who will report the concerns to the appropriate agency.
- If a member of staff is suspected of abuse this must be brought to the immediate attention of a Service Manager who will alert the appropriate agency and seek advice from HR.

Good Practice and Supporting Websites

- ✓ All reported incidents will be recorded by the service in line with Gloucestershire County Council's Data Protection Policies and reported to the Management Team.
- ✓ Evidence of referrals made by the service will be maintained in line with the General Register Office's Public Protection and Counter Fraud (PPCF) requirement.
- ✓ Staff who are likely to be in contact with members of the public should receive annual awareness and/or refresher training to ensure their focus remains on their obligation to report safeguarding concerns. All training received to be recorded.

Online information and reporting routes:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gsab/contact-us/>

All professionals are required to raise safeguarding concerns via the portal in the link above.

APPENDIX A

Flowchart showing staff responsibilities for reporting concerns/incidents of suspected abuse

This flowchart is to be used in conjunction with information above

