

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Union Romani Voice

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1. Scope

- 1.1. This policy is the responsibility of all
- staff and volunteers
 - contractors and partners working for or on behalf of the Charity.

References to staff in this policy include all workers (e.g., permanent and temporary staff, agency staff, casuals, volunteers, apprentices and those undertaking internships or work experience).

- 1.2. Children and young people are defined as those aged under 18.

- 1.3. A vulnerable adult is someone aged 18 or over:
- Who is, or may be, in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability?
 - Who is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation?

For example, a person who:

- is frail due to age
- has drug or alcohol problems
- has a learning disability
- has mental or physical ill health or disability
- has been trafficked for purposes such as forced labour or sexual exploitation.

Vulnerability is related to how able an adult is to make and exercise their own informed choice, free from duress or undue influence, and to protect themselves from abuse, neglect and exploitation. There is no hard and fast rule: an adult should be assumed to be covered by this policy unless there is information to indicate that they are not.

2. Reasons for the policy

Everyone, including children, young people and vulnerable adults, has the right not to be abused. We recognise the need to ensure their welfare when they come into contact with the services we provide.

3. Safeguarding and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Person

- 3.1. Safeguarding children from abuse and promoting their welfare means:
 - protecting children from maltreatment.
 - preventing impairment of children's health or development.
 - ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- 3.2. Safeguarding vulnerable adults means protecting them from maltreatment and preventing injury or significant harm. Abuse violates an adult's human and civil rights. It can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering.
- 3.3. A safeguarding concern arises if abuse is suspected or disclosed. Abuse can happen anywhere – at home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day centre or educational establishment or in the street.
- 3.4. The Designated Safeguarding Person who is Anicuta Lazar-Facalet has overall responsibility for safeguarding, including e-safety. This responsibility includes Accident Record Book under safe keeping, fire health & safety procedures for all volunteers, employees and beneficiaries, Risk Assessments for the Hub and programme of works. All employees and volunteers to have the necessary E (online) learning for all relevant legislation. All Employees and volunteers to be enhanced DBS checked with certificates kept securely for record.
 - 3.4.1. keeping this policy up to date.
 - 3.4.2. making sure this policy is implemented, and that staff, volunteers, contractors and partners understand their responsibilities.
 - 3.4.3. checking that appropriate steps are taken in the event of any allegations against a member of staff, and that the Charity liaises appropriately and effectively with authorities responsible for investigating these safeguarding concerns: the Police and/or appropriate Council Charity Children's and Adults' Services. The Designated Safeguarding Person oversees liaison between the responsible authorities and the Charity to determine how any internal and external investigations can be conducted properly, preserving evidence and avoiding unnecessary duplication and delay. Investigation by the responsible authorities normally takes precedence over the Charity investigations under the complaints, grievance or disciplinary procedures.
 - 3.4.4. supporting the Safeguarding Contacts and providing direction, advice and guidance where appropriate.
 - 3.4.5. ensuring that the Charity actively supports all safeguarding adults' reviews (SARs) where the Charity may have had involvement / contact with the victim; and

3.4.6. ensuring that the Charity acts on lessons learnt from SARs and other safeguarding issues, grievances or disciplinary proceedings.

3.5. Specific safeguarding responsibilities are tabulated at Appendix A.

4. Types of abuse

- 4.1. **Physical:** causing physical harm, including hitting, shaking, biting, grabbing, withholding food or drink, force-feeding, wrongly administering medicine, unnecessary restraint, failing to provide physical care and aids to living.
- 4.2. **Sexual:** including sexual assault, rape, inappropriate touching/molesting, forcing or enticing, someone into sexual acts they don't understand or feel powerless to refuse; grooming a child or young person in preparation for abuse, including on-line activity.
- 4.3. **Emotional or psychological:** persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection (domestic or otherwise), including verbal abuse, shouting, swearing, threatening abandonment or harm, isolating, taking away privacy or other rights, bullying/intimidation, blaming, belittling, silencing, controlling or humiliating.
- 4.4. **Financial or material:** illegal or improper use of an adult's property, money or other assets without their informed consent or where the consent is obtained by fraud. It can include withholding money or possessions, theft of money or property, fraud, intentionally mismanaging finances, borrowing money and not repaying.
- 4.5. **Neglect:** persistent or severe failure to meet a person's basic physical and psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of their health or development, and can include withholding shelter, food, drink, heating and clothing, failing to provide access to health, social and educational services, ignoring physical care needs, exposing a person to unacceptable risk, failing to ensure adequate supervision or unresponsiveness to the basic emotional needs of a child.
- 4.6. **Discriminatory abuse:** including slurs, harassment and maltreatment due to a protected characteristic (Equality Act 2010);
- 4.7. **Institutional abuse:** including the use of systems and routines which neglect a person receiving formal care e.g., in a children's home.
- 4.8. **Modern slavery:** recruiting people by deception or coercion and moving them to a new place where they can be exploited. This includes human trafficking.
- 4.9. **Self-neglect:**
Self-neglect is 'the inability (intentional or non-intentional) to maintain a socially and culturally accepted standard of self-care with the potential for serious consequences to the health and well-being of people who self-neglect and perhaps even to their community' (Gibbons, 2006).
- 4.10. **Domestic abuse:** an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality.

In addition, children and vulnerable adults may be at risk of being drawn into extremism. Early intervention can help protect them before illegality occurs, and concerns relating to extremism can be reported as a Safeguarding Concern.

5. Signs of abuse

- 5.1. There are many possible signs of abuse, none being conclusive on their own. Examples include:
- Unexplained injury / weight loss / cuts and bruises / dirtiness
 - Changes in behaviour
 - Depression / low self-esteem / anxiety
 - Lack of self-care / dehydration / abnormal eating pattern
 - Harm to self
 - Obsessive behaviour
 - Bills not being paid
 - An overly critical or disrespectful carer (or boss, for trafficking) who may control, bully or undermine
 - Isolation from usual network of friends, family or community
 - No access to GP / local services and legal documents e.g. passport (trafficking)

6. Reporting safeguarding concerns

- 6.1. We all have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns over the welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults. This extends to the identification of signs of abuse; poor practice by staff, counsellors and others acting for or on behalf of the Charity, and allegations brought to our attention by a member of the public. Reporting safeguarding concerns can prevent serious abuse or harm from happening, or from escalating.
- 6.2. A list of the Charity's **Safeguarding Contacts** is maintained by **Adrian Stanesco** contact number: 07789712684
- 6.3. Safeguarding concerns must be reported to Maria Dolea in writing, preferably using a Safeguarding Form. Staff must not attempt to investigate abuse themselves; neither must they confront anyone who is allegedly responsible for abuse nor tell them that allegations have been made about them.
- 6.4. Safeguarding concerns must be reported in writing to a Safeguarding Contact at the earliest possible opportunity, and within one working day of recognising the risk. Verbal reports must be confirmed in writing within one working day.
- 6.5. **Dial 999** if a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be in imminent danger or a criminal offence may have been committed before taking the steps in 6.3 above.
- 6.6. The Safeguarding Contact should be given as much factual information as possible, preferably on a Safeguarding Form. For example:
- The child, young person or vulnerable adult's name and address (and parents'/carers' address if different);
 - The reason for concern – a notes of significant events or conversations should be made as promptly as possible to assist with any referral and subsequent investigation. Evidence such texts or Facebook entries should be preserved.
 - Any other known factors which may be contributing to the problem.
 - Additional information such as age (or date of birth), ethnicity, religion, language and disabilities / specific needs.

However, the safeguarding concern should still be reported whether or not the information is complete.

- 6.7 If there are doubts about whether a safeguarding concern has been handled in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy, these should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Person. If this is not appropriate, the Whistle Blowing Policy should be used.

7. Role of Safeguarding Contacts

- 7.1. A Safeguarding Contact is responsible for receiving reports of safeguarding concerns, maintaining appropriate records, seeking advice from local Council's Children's and Adults' Services and informing the Designated Safeguarding Person of the concern and advice received.
- 7.2. To discharge this responsibility, the Safeguarding Contact must inform the local Council's Children's or Adults Services of the safeguarding concern, where possible on the same working day as it is received and obtain their advice about the appropriate action to be taken. For Children's Services, the point of contact will be the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Advice may also be received from the Police if appropriate.
- 7.3 It is not the job of the Safeguarding Contact or the Designated Safeguarding Person to establish whether or not abuse is taking place, or whether a crime has been committed. That is the job of the "responsible authorities" (Police or local Council's Children or Adult Services).

8. Confidentiality, record keeping and sharing information

- 8.1 Information about safeguarding concerns should be regarded as confidential and should be channelled through a Safeguarding Contact. The information is not secret, however, and the Safeguarding Contact will seek advice from the local Council's Children's and Adults' Services and be guided by the information set out at Appendix B. Information sharing must be necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure.
- 8.2 If someone discloses abuse, but asks that it should be kept a secret, they should be told that if what they have said indicates that they, or someone else, may be harmed, there is a duty to report it to a Safeguarding Contact. This is called acting in the public interest.
- 8.3 If a witness who is not a member of staff requests anonymity, they should be told that it is much better if they are willing to give their name, but if not, their concern will still be reported to a Safeguarding Contact.
- 8.4 Records should be written in plain English and should always differentiate clearly between fact and opinion or judgement. All must be dated and stored securely. Any paper records must be signed, and appropriately destroyed after scanning.
- 8.5 Information about a safeguarding concern may be shared by a Safeguarding Contact or the Designated Safeguarding Person at the earliest opportunity with appropriate others, in accordance with principle vi of the Seven Golden Rules at Appendix B. For example:
- a. the Charity's HR Manager or Operations Manager.

- b. the appropriate company / organisation, where safeguarding concerns and allegations relate to contractors or partners.
- c. the alleged victim or their parent/carer where appropriate (regarding the safeguarding concern and steps being taken to deal with it). Advice must be sought from the local Council's Children's or Adults' Services before contacting them.

9. Allegations against a member of staff or volunteer

- 9.1 If someone witnesses behaviour by a member of staff, volunteer, contractor or partner, or an allegation is made about them that indicates that they have, or may have:
- harmed a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or put them at risk of harm.
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young person or vulnerable adult or
 - behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, young people or vulnerable adults,
- they must report it as a safeguarding concern to a Safeguarding Contact (see Section 6).
- 9.2 A Counsellor or member of staff must report any allegation made against them to a Safeguarding Contact following the procedure in Section 6 of this policy.
- 9.5 Safeguarding concerns and allegations relating to staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Charity disciplinary procedure (including in instances where the member of staff resigns or leaves). However, investigations by the responsible authorities will take precedence over internal Charity procedures relating to conduct. Designated Safeguarding Person will liaise with the responsible authorities to agree the appropriate course of action.
- 9.6 Designated Safeguarding Person will seek advice from the local Council Children's or Adults Services or Police prior to informing a member of staff of an allegation against them. Designated Safeguarding Person will offer appropriate welfare support to the member of staff and ensure that they are kept appropriately informed during any investigation process.
- 9.7 In accordance with the law, the Charity will refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any member of staff
- who was dismissed because they harmed a child or adult?
 - who was dismissed or removed from working in a regulated activity because they might have harmed a child or adult otherwise?
 - who would have been dismissed for either of these reasons, but they resigned first; or
 - who works with children or vulnerable adults in regulated activity and has been cautioned or convicted for a relevant offence?

10. Recruitment and Selection

The need to recruit quickly will not be allowed to take precedence over safe recruitment principles. Key aspects are:

- 10.1. Criminal record checks will be made where appropriate. Roles that involve "regulated activities," such as caring for, supervising or being in sole charge of children or

vulnerable adults, require an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check. This may include checking whether someone is included in the two DBS 'barred lists' of individuals who are unsuitable for working with children and adults. DBS Checks must be obtained for staff and volunteers undertaking these roles, and they will not be permitted to commence unaccompanied work until they have been received. It is against the law for employers to employ someone, or allow them to volunteer for, this kind of work if they know they are on one of the barred lists.

- 10.2. A commitment to safeguarding must be included in all future job descriptions.
- 10.3. Any post-specific requirements relating to safeguarding must be included in the job description and person specification.
- 10.4. Where a post or placement involves significant contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, recruitment interview questions will cover safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- 10.5. All staff sitting on interview panels will be suitably trained.
- 10.6. Offers of employment or placements are subject to receipt of satisfactory references and identity checks. Where the post involves significant contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, former employers will be asked about the suitability of the candidate and whether there have been any concerns, allegations or disciplinary investigations related to safeguarding.
- 10.7. The Charity is responsible for ensuring that employment agencies used by the Charity offer safe recruitment and selection processes. Employment agencies must be made aware of this policy, must provide the Charity with a copy of their safeguarding procedure and must agree to share with the Charity any safeguarding concern within the agency relating to individual staff.

11. Information and Training

- 11.1. Appropriate information of Safeguarding E Learning training will be made available to staff, volunteers, contractors and partners in the form of this policy and summary guidance.
- 11.2. Induction for new staff and volunteers on safeguarding must be completed within 3 months of the start of their employment / placement / term of office. It will include:
A health & safety Induction with a check list provided, a risk assessment, fire awareness and the safeguarding policy
 - signposting this policy and contact details of Safeguarding Contacts and the Designated Safeguarding Person.
 - awareness training on safeguarding, professional standards and role boundaries.
- 11.3. Existing staff and volunteers will be required to undertake refresher awareness training on safeguarding, professional standards and role boundaries every 3 years. A schedule to be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Person.
- 11.4. Requirements for more advanced training for staff who have significant contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults will be identified as part of the induction and/or appraisal process, dependent on the nature of the post.
- 11.5. Specialist training will be provided for Safeguarding Contacts, and the Designated Safeguarding Person (and deputy) and refreshed at appropriate intervals.

12. External organisations licensed by, or working with, for or on behalf of the Charity.

- 12.1 The Charity works with and through a number of external organisations such as other charities, contractors, other public sector bodies etc.
- 12.2 Where these external organisations are likely to have significant contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults as a direct result of their work for, on behalf of, or in partnership with the Charity, they are required to have safeguarding procedures, such as safe recruitment and selection processes, in place. They must be made aware of this policy, must provide the Charity with a copy of their safeguarding procedure and must agree to share with the Charity any safeguarding concern within their organisation relating to relevant individuals who undertake work for or on behalf of the Charity.

Approved the 28th day of October 2025

By Vasile Macovei

Chair

Appendix A – table of specific responsibilities in relation to safeguarding

| Designated Person | Safeguarding | Safeguarding Contacts | HR Manager (or person dealing with these tasks) |
|---|--------------|--|--|
| Maintain policy – and update as appropriate | | Receive reports of safeguarding concerns and seek advice from local Council's Children's and Adults' Services (including the LADO, for concerns about children). | Manage allegations against staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement disciplinary procedure where appropriate. • Liaise with responsible authorities • Share information with appropriate others. • Offer appropriate welfare support to person against whom allegations have been made. • Make referrals to the DBS when appropriate. |
| Oversee policy implementation and ensure awareness and understanding. | | Recommend the appropriate action to be taken to the Designated Safeguarding Person and implement their decision(s) promptly. | Implement safe recruitment practices including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DBS checks where applicable. • Information in application pack. • Pre-employment checks. |
| Oversee management of allegations against staff and volunteers including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of appropriate procedures. • Liaison with responsible authorities. | | Maintain appropriate records of concerns, advice, decisions and actions taken. | Arrange appropriate induction and training for staff. |
| Support Safeguarding Adult Reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active co-operation. • Lessons learnt. | | Share information with appropriate others. | Maintain and publicise a list of Safeguarding Contacts. |
| Support and direct the Safeguarding Contacts, in the light of advice from Councils Children's and Adults' Services | | | |

Appendix B – Information Sharing

Seven Golden Rules

- i. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately
- ii. Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- iii. Seek advice if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
- iv. Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgment on the facts of the case.
- v. Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.
- vi. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
- vii. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it - whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Working Together to Safeguard Children

- Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective identification, assessment and service provision.
- Early sharing of information is the key to providing effective early help where there are emerging problems, and effective child protection services where matters are already serious. Safeguarding Children Reviews (SCRs) have shown how poor information sharing has contributed to the deaths or serious injuries of children.
- Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.
- No professional should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to keeping a child safe. If a professional has concerns about a child's welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm, then they should share the information with local authority children's social care.

Approved the 28 day of July 2025 by

Name: Niculina Londra Pompas

Position: Chair