

Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement and Objectives

We have a responsibility to keep HFL Homes residents and customers safe from harm. Also, we have an overlapping set of responsibilities for those living on and around the estates that we are rebuilding, along with those we work with. Our safeguarding policy fits within this overall responsibility. It relates specifically to adults or children who are being abused or neglected, either deliberately or unintentionally, by others, or who are at risk of being abused or neglected by others. It relates to concerns that we may have about the safety and wellbeing of residents, customers, or others connected to our work.

We believe that living a life that is free from harm and abuse is a fundamental right of every person. We recognise, too, that safeguarding those at risk of abuse is everyone's responsibility. Across the organisation, we can all play a part in preventing, being alert to and responding appropriately to abuse and/or neglect.

Specifically, we aim to:

- raise awareness about the abuse and/or neglect of children, young people and adults at risk
- develop a culture that does not tolerate such abuse, and which encourages people to raise concerns
- prevent abuse from happening wherever possible
- respond promptly and proportionately where abuse does happen, to make the necessary referrals and engage the appropriate authorities, to stop the abuse continuing and to ensure the person harmed receives effective support.

Key Policy Principles

Our policy is based on the six key principles which underpin safeguarding work:

- **Prevention:** It is always preferable to take action before harm occurs, even if you are unsure about what you have seen, or you may think you do not have the right evidence
- **Proportionality:** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
- **Protection:** Support and provide representation for those in greatest need
- **Empowerment:** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and using informed consent
- **Partnership:** Seeking local solutions through services working with communities, who can have a key part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse and neglect
- **Accountability:** Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

We recognise:

- safeguarding is a multi-agency approach which depends upon effective joint working
- that appropriate information sharing between organisations is essential to safeguard people at risk and we will act in accordance with agreed inter-agency information sharing protocols.
- our responsibility to be vigilant regarding the welfare of children and adults at risk and to train staff to recognise the signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- that abuse may be committed by a member of staff, agent or by others who are in a trusting relationship with a vulnerable person.
- our obligation to ensure we only recruit and employ staff working with children, young people and adults at risk who are competent and safe to do so.
- the need to ensure that all our staff are confident and fully equipped to respond to concerns of abuse.
- the need to ensure that contractors and sub-contractors have an effective safeguarding policy in place and, where not, that they are willing to work in accordance with our policy and processes.
- that good record keeping (clear, concise, factual and accurate) is essential in safeguarding, enabling an appropriate response to concerns.
- the importance of monitoring all reports of suspected or known abuse, their management and resolution.
- that anyone raising a safeguarding concern in good faith should always be listened to, believed and assured that we will act on their concern.
- the value in promoting safeguarding so that customers can safeguard themselves.
- the importance of operating a child / victim-centred approach, which treats people with dignity, respect and without prejudice.
- our responsibility to ensure, where a HFL Homes resident is a known risk to others, that a risk assessment is undertaken regarding the appropriateness of any proposed letting and to agree how risks will be managed.

Scope

This Safeguarding Policy is an over-arching policy, applying across our business. It is important that all staff, managers, directors, board members and HFL Homes residents are aware that safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility' and that we all have a responsibility to act on concerns of abuse or neglect. Safeguarding is not restricted to staff working directly with HFL Homes residents and the public. This policy applies:

- to the protection of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse
- across all HFL Homes residents and customers
- all residents who live on estates that we will rebuild
- to staff, contractors, sub-contractors and agents working for Homes for Lambeth.

Key Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff must:

- ensure they maintain clear professional boundaries at all times. Further information is available in the HFL Code of Conduct.
- be vigilant as to what is happening around them – with both customers and colleagues – and be aware of the different types and indicators of abuse.

Further information is available in the supporting process / guidance.

- be familiar with this Safeguarding Policy, the supporting process.
- undertake safeguarding awareness training as appropriate to their role.
- raise any concerns they may have.
- keep factual records of any incident / concern.

Additionally, all Heads of Service must ensure that:

- they contribute to developing a culture that does not tolerate abuse and which encourages people to raise concerns.
- they listen to and support staff raising concerns.
- their staff are familiar with HFL's agreed Safeguarding Policy and supporting processes and that they undertake necessary training.
- no unsanctioned investigations are conducted.

The Director of Operations will be the Lead Officer for Safeguarding. A companywide safeguarding team will support this lead officer.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

The following legislation and guidance apply:

- Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998)
- Mental Capacity Act (2005) and supporting Code of Practice (2016)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- Data Protection Act (1998, as amended)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Care & Support Statutory Guidance (updated 2016)
- Care Act 2014
- Children Act (1989 and 2004)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated 2015)

The following Homes for Lambeth policies or procedures are also relevant: *NB: please note these will be added into the policy as soon as confirmed.*

- HFL Group Anti-slavery
- HFL Group Whistle Blowing Policy
- HFL Group Equality and Diversity Policy
- HFL Group Data Protection Policy

The Lead Officer for Safeguarding, supported by the safeguarding team, will creation of an implementation plan, along with a supporting set of procedures. This will also include ensuring that our policies fully support our safeguarding responsibilities.

The Lead Officer for Safeguarding, supported by the safeguarding team will support in the creation of an implementation plan, along with a supporting set of procedures.

HFL Policy Name:	HFL Safeguarding Policy
HFL Policy Owner:	HFL Operations team
Applies to:	All HFL Group Companies
Policy Compliance:	Annual Review
Policy Review Cycle:	Every two Years (min or as per legal/regulatory requirements). Next review May 2022 This will also include a review of the supporting procedures.
Version Control/Audit Trail:	
	DRAFT 1.0
Version 1.0	Approved 09 September 2020