



“Support for all with Compassion and Understanding”

HOPE – South Yorkshire Fire, Road, and Water-related Trauma Support

Safeguarding Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk or vulnerable adults, and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their contact with HOPE. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff, associated personnel which includes volunteers, associated with HOPE.
- The design and implementation of HOPE’s programmes and activities.

The policy sets out the commitments made by HOPE and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by HOPE OR associated HOPE personnel.

What is safeguarding?

It is the right of all children and vulnerable adults to be protected from harm and at HOPE with believe in and recognise our responsibility for child and adult protection. The safety and protection of all the vulnerable people we support is paramount. This means we must all comply with the HOPE Safeguarding policy and procedures by protecting people, including children and vulnerable adults at risk, from harm that arises from contact with our staff, associated personnel, or programmes.

Scope

All staff contracted by HOPE and associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to HOPE, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities, and politicians.

Policy Statement

HOPE believes that everyone we have contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. HOPE will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff and associated personnel.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding, adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. These key areas of safeguarding may have different policies and procedures associated with them and further details can be found within Government Guidelines, details of which can be found on the website Gov.uk.

HOPE commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

HOPE's responsibilities

HOPE will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy.
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their contact with HOPE. This includes the way in which information about individuals receiving support is gathered and communicated.
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing, and deploying staff, associated personnel. This includes appropriate DBS checks and references on all staff and volunteers where this is applicable to their role.
- Report any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level appropriate with their role in the organisation.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

Responsibilities

All staff, trustees and volunteers working on behalf of HOPE have a responsibility for the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults that they work with, in relation to their employment. This includes the duty of ensuring that any suspected incident, allegation, or other manifestation relating to child and vulnerable adult is reported using the reporting procedures detailed in this policy.

Child safeguarding

HOPE staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18.
- Sexually abuse or exploit children.
- Subject a child to physical, emotional, or psychological abuse, or neglect.
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking.

Adult safeguarding

HOPE staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults.
- Subject a vulnerable adult to physical, emotional, or psychological abuse or neglect.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

HOPE staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods, or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance.
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

Additionally, HOPE staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by HOPE staff members or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member.

Guidance for Responding to an Allegation of Abuse

If a child, young person, or adult makes a disclosure that they are being abused and/or an allegation of abuse against someone, the person being told should:

- Stay calm and listen carefully, don't appear shocked, look directly at them.
- Reassure the individual that they have done the right thing in telling, don't judge.
- **Don't** push for information or ask leading questions.
- Explain that they will need to tell someone else if they think anyone else is at risk of harm.
- **Don't** promise to keep secret what you have been told, let them know you will have to tell someone else. Be honest.
- Ensure the individual is informed about what will happen next.
- Reassure the individual, show acceptance of what they say and let them know what will happen next.
- Inform the relevant Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.
- Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and sign/date this record. This should be given to the Safeguarding Lead, who will take the necessary action and store the information securely in a locked filing cabinet.

Remember, reassure them by using a calm even toned voice. Use simple phrases where you feel its appropriate such as, telling them you take them seriously, show acceptance and that it's not their fault, you're sorry it happened and thank them for telling you.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to the Dedicated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), Line Manager or Supervisor.

Reporting should be done by completing the relevant Safeguarding Incident form with facts pertaining to the concern including dates and statements made verbatim. No personal feeling or general opinions should be recorded.

The DSO will review the information provided and make any necessary referrals to the appropriate external agencies. Under no circumstances should the individual member of staff or volunteer contact an external agency or undertake their own investigation.

Employees and volunteers must not discuss their suspicions, or any allegations made with anyone other than the designated Safeguarding Lead or Manager.

The organisation will support any investigation as appropriate, therefore, any member of staff or volunteer who has been involved in a safeguarding concern will be expected to

give a full account of the incident or their concerns and may be called on as a witness in any subsequent proceedings.

If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to the SDSO or Line Manager (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member. For example, this could be a Senior Manager or one of the Charity's Trustees.

Dedicated Safeguarding Officer: *Joanne Reeve*

Email: jo@hope-sy.org.uk.

Mobile:07591 387600

Chair of HOPE Board: Steve Ayris email: steve.ayris@councillor.sheffield.gov.uk

Response

HOPE will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligation.

HOPE will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

HOPE will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff or appropriate action to associated personnel found in breach of policy.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is normal practice for HOPE; however, the one exception is information received which raises concerns about the safety and welfare of a child or vulnerable adult. It is therefore essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when reporting and dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and should always be kept secure.

Glossary of Terms

Associated personnel - Including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities, and politicians.

Beneficiary of Assistance -Someone who directly receives goods or services from HOPE. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider bereavement support community and can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

Child - The Children's Act 1989 defines a child as a person under 18, for most purposes. Note a term often used is 'young person' and will include those aged between 5 and 24 years. For the purposes of this policy, a young person aged under 18 years is regarded as a child and a vulnerable adult includes all people aged 18 and over subject to the criteria of the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme (PoVA 2004) Scheme.

Harm - Psychological, physical, neglect and any other infringement of an individual's rights

Neglect - involves the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of the neglected person's health and development.

Psychological harm - Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, and isolation.

Physical abuse - Physical abuse may take many forms e.g., hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, or suffocating.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) - The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)

Safeguarding - In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing, and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect.

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults, and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

This definition draws from our values and principles and shapes our culture. It pays specific attention to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners, and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing, and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable, and transparent systems for response, reporting, and learning when risks materialise.

Sexual abuse - The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation - The term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

Survivor - The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience, and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

Vulnerable adult - Also referred to as 'at risk' adult. The Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme (PoVA 2004) defined a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type: A person who is or may need care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and effected persons at the centre of all we do.

HOPE Safeguarding Incident Form for reporting concerns.

Details of beneficiary of assistance

Name of Child/vulnerable adult:		
Gender:	Age:	Date of birth:
Name of parent(s)/carer(s) if beneficiary is a child:		
Child/vulnerable adult's address:		

Your details

Your name:	Your position:	Date and time of incident (if applicable)
Nature of contact with child/vulnerable adult (e.g., Hope group/family visit):		
Please provide details of the incident or concerns you have, include times, dates, description of any injuries, whether the information is first hand or the account of others, including any relevant details, the child/adult's account, any witnesses, or anyone else who has shared concern:		
Summary of discussion with Line DSO/Manager/Supervisor:		

CHILD - Has referral been made to statutory child protection authorities? Y/N

If yes: date of referral

If no: state reasons and what further action has been decided:

VUNERABLE ADULT - Has referral been made to relevant authorities' Y/N

If yes: date of referral

If no: state reasons and what further action has been decided:

Any other relevant details:

All persons involved in discussions/decisions to complete below:

Signed	Date and time	Name and position