

SAFEGUARDING OF CLIENTS POLICY & PROCEDURE



INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding our Clients

As an organisation we have to comply with the guidance set by the Charity Commission, take guidance of the Care Act, Data Protection Act and GDPR.

Definition of 'Staff' and "Staff Members": Paid and unpaid members of the organisation: volunteers, trainers, fosters, mentors, directors, trustees.

In safeguarding terms an adult at risk is defined as a person 18 and over who;

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

It is important to note that an adult does not need to be in receipt of a care or support delivered by the local authority

What constitutes abuse:

- sexual abuse
- psychological or emotional abuse
- physical abuse
- financial or material abuse
- neglect
- self-neglect
- modern slavery
- domestic violence
- discriminatory abuse
- institutional abuse

Underlined are the areas of SDUK which are of importance to our staff

We acknowledge:

- all vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- safeguarding vulnerable adults is everybody's responsibility
- doing nothing is not acceptable
- working in partnership with relevant agencies, in conjunction with local safeguarding procedures
- the individual should be involved in identifying how best to respond to their situation by giving them more choice and control as well as improving quality of life and wellbeing.

The principles that apply to Service Dogs UK

- We will promote the empowerment, wellbeing, security and safety of clients consistent with their rights, mental capacity and personal choices.
- We aim to minimise the risk of abuse by being sensitive to cultural, gender and individual needs in our service delivery.

- We will work closely in partnership with key agencies and professionals, sharing information and developing appropriate strategies to respond to the needs of clients.
- We comply with relevant legislation and regulation.
- We have adopted professional boundaries to be adhered to by all staff to protect, empower our clients, provide clarity to staff
- We actively promote and require transparency in dealing with clients so that the service can be most beneficial to our clients as part of good practise.
- We promote the reporting of any breaches to any of the legislation/procedure or policies as set out by Service Dogs UK regarding our clients.
- We will provide a safe and trusted environment which safeguards our clients and anyone who comes into contact with them.
- We aim for our service to be person-led and outcome-focused.

Safeguarding in Service Dogs UK deals with/affects

- Recording
- Dealing with media
- Social Media
- Sessions (access to session unvetted or persons unknown to the Directors is NOT allowed)
- Professional Boundaries
- Contact with clients outside of Sessions.

Safeguarding of Veterans and Lone working:

All fosters, volunteers and clients that we come into contact with will provide full details of their personal information and this information will be recorded and checked for accuracy where reasonably possible.

We will take every precaution when working with clients and volunteers to avoid lone working until we have established a good understanding of any risks that may be applicable.

Any 1-2-1 working will be fully risk assessed by the SDUK trainer or representative. Each trainer will be DBS checked to an enhanced level and all volunteers who come into unsupervised contact with Veterans will also be DBS checked to an enhanced level. All volunteers and trainers will have had an input on the importance of Professional Boundaries and Safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

Service Dogs UK is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around Safeguarding Adults issues should be shared only with those who need to know and clients will have consented to the Directors only to have access to information that is deemed sensitive and a third party like their mental health worker or partner. As in line with the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

Service Dogs UK will ensure that all staff receive basic awareness training on safeguarding adults. All staff should be clear about the core values of Service Dogs UK, Professional Boundaries and commitment to safeguarding adults.

Reports of self-harm or/and suicide MUST be reported to the Directors as a matter of urgency at which stage a client's GP and Emergency Contact might be contacted.

To protect the interests of the Charity and clients, reports are required in the following events:

- ANY significant contact with clients that impacts on them or the Charity must be recorded.
- ANY communication where details are given that could impact on a client's ability to partake or continue with programme or where there might be an issue in regards to the dog

Signed: *Garry Botterill* **Position:** Operations Director **Dated:** August 2025 **To be reviewed:** August 2026