

Safeguarding Procedures

Introduction

The Recruitment Junction works with adult male and female ex-offenders in the community with the aim of moving them into paid employment. It also engages in supporting the wider family and friends of prisoners and ex-offenders. In undertaking this work, it routinely encounters safeguarding issues in relation to vulnerable adults. Although it does not work directly with children, through its work with vulnerable adults it may sometimes receive information in relation to the welfare of a child that gives cause for concern. The following procedures are written in conjunction with The Recruitment Junction's Safeguarding Policy (Appendix A), Safeguarding Report Form (Appendix B) and External Complaints Procedure (Appendix C). The procedures aim to provide guidance in relation to the responsibilities of Board members, paid staff and volunteers of The Recruitment Junction and any actions that should be taken.

Appointment of staff and volunteers

Staff

- The appointment of staff will follow the relevant Recruitment Junction's recruitment, selection and probationary procedures. These are available from the personnel department and include what to do in relation to the application process, interviews, references and proof of identity, etc.
- All staff will be carefully selected using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), to check the background of each person.
- All staff will have a written job description, will complete an application form and will be interviewed before being appointed.
- Copies of Enhanced DBS disclosures for all staff will be kept in their personnel file stored at the charity's head office.
- At least two references will be obtained for all new staff.
- All new staff will be given a copy of The Recruitment Junction's 'Safeguarding Policy' and these accompanying procedures. It will be expected that the policy and procedures will be read and staff will sign a form indicating they have understood these and are willing to work according to the guidelines.
- As part of their induction, all staff will receive training on their safeguarding responsibilities from a suitably experienced person. All staff will also be required to undertake refresher training at least once a year.

Volunteers and Trustees

- All volunteers must fill out a Recruitment Junction Volunteer Application Form and provide at least two references. All regular volunteers will be DBS checked and a copy of the Enhanced DBS disclosure kept on file at the charity's head office.
- All volunteers will have a written role description.
- All volunteers will be interviewed to assess their suitability for the role.
- All volunteers will be given a copy of The Recruitment Junction's 'Safeguarding Policy' and these accompanying procedures to read and sign to say that they understand and are willing to work according to the guidelines.

- As part of their induction, all volunteers will receive training on their safeguarding responsibilities from a suitably experienced person. All staff will also be required to undertake refresher training at least once a year.
- All volunteers will be supervised by a member of staff and be accountable to and supported by that person.
- All trustees will undertake suitable safeguarding training on appointment. This training will specifically cover, amongst other things, trustees' duties to provide a safe service.

Identifying children or vulnerable adults

The definition of a 'vulnerable adult' and the possible signs that an adult with whom the charity is working is vulnerable is outlined in The Recruitment Junction's 'Safeguarding Policy', as is the definition of a 'child'.

Information sharing

The Recruitment Junction has a designated lead member of staff in relation to safeguarding issues. This is Beverley Brooks, who is also the designated child protection lead. All concerns in relation to safeguarding should be shared with the Safeguarding Lead, who can be contacted by email:

beverley.brooks@therecruitmentjunction.com or telephone: 07793 214967.

A flowchart explaining the safeguarding reporting process can be found at Appendix D.

Staff

The Recruitment Junction staff members should share their concerns directly with the Safeguarding Lead. This should be done as early as possible, ideally within 24 hours, and immediately if the concern is in relation to a situation of imminent risk to a child or vulnerable adult.

Volunteers

In the first instance, volunteers are likely to disclose concerns about safeguarding to The Recruitment Junction staff member who is directly supporting them in their role. In this case, the role of The Recruitment Junction staff member will initially be to support volunteers in talking through their concerns. In all cases, the Safeguarding Lead should also be notified of the safeguarding concern.

Imminent Risk and/or Life Threatening Situations

In situations where a vulnerable adult or child is considered to be at imminent risk of serious harm or in a life threatening situation, the emergency services should be contacted immediately by dialling 999.

Safeguarding Report Form

In all instances, including near-misses, the 'Safeguarding Report Form' (Appendix B) will be completed by a Recruitment Junction member of staff, either based on their own direct observation or on what has been reported to them as outlined above. Ideally, the form should be completed along with the person who has brought the initial disclosure or shared concerns. The completed form should then be given to the Safeguarding Lead as soon as is possible. This must be given as a hard copy or as a passworded soft copy; sensitive information should not be

sent via an insecure email. If concerns are immediate, the member of staff must contact the Safeguarding Lead by telephone to share concerns.

Discussion about next steps

The Safeguarding Lead will bring all completed safeguarding report forms to the monthly Senior Management Meeting (SMM), where all cases will be discussed and actions agreed. If the Safeguarding Lead feels that discussions need to take place prior to the next SMM, s/he will arrange to speak to another senior manager at the earliest possible time. Where concerns are about imminent risk of harm, the Safeguarding Lead will ideally speak to another senior member of staff of The Recruitment Junction and act appropriately. In these cases, the Safeguarding Lead will make contact with the local authority's safeguarding adults' team or child protection team, or the Police, as appropriate.

Decisions about next steps in each case will be made within Senior Management Meetings. If decisions need to be made outside of these meetings because of time constraints, the case will still be discussed at the next meeting and decisions reviewed.

Role of the Trustees

The chair of Trustees is the nominated Trustee for safeguarding. Safeguarding issues will be a standing item on the agenda for quarterly Trustees' meetings. The Safeguarding Lead will produce a brief report for the Board, giving an outline of any cases where there have been safeguarding issues, or safeguarding near-misses, and the decisions made and actions taken.

Working with other agencies

Whilst The Recruitment Junction's staff and volunteers will inevitably encounter situations that give rise to safeguarding concerns, addressing these issues is not part of the core business of The Recruitment Junction. The Recruitment Junction will therefore initially pass on information to the appropriate agency via the safeguarding lead, such as the local authority's safeguarding adults team or child protection team. If appropriate and invited to do so by statutory safeguarding agencies, The Recruitment Junction will contribute to multi-agency arrangements by providing information and attending meetings. This role will be undertaken by a senior member of staff.

Supporting service users

The primary role of The Recruitment Junction in multi-agency arrangements will be to provide support to service users through the process, acting as an advocate if appropriate. However, its focus will remain on the protection of children and vulnerable adults. This will entail being open and transparent with service users about what information it will share and enabling them to see safeguarding as a priority. The Recruitment Junction is well placed to support service users to take responsibility for engaging with safeguarding plans that are put in place. There may be circumstances where it is not appropriate to share all information with service users, e.g. where potential significant risks of harm to children, vulnerable adults or The Recruitment Junction staff and volunteers are present. Such cases and the approach adopted will always be discussed and agreed at Senior Management Meetings.

Accusations of abuse against The Recruitment Junction staff or volunteers



The Recruitment Junction, when dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers, aims to strike a balance between the need to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded accusations.

Given the regular contact with vulnerable adults in a variety of situations, staff and volunteers may be vulnerable to accusations of abuse. Their friendships with vulnerable adults may lead to allegations against them being made. The allegations may be false, malicious or misplaced and may be deliberate or innocent of such intent. Regardless of the motives underlying any allegations, they may also be well-founded. As an organisation, The Recruitment Junction has a procedure on the management of situations where there are allegations of abuse, its 'External Complaints Procedure' (Appendix C). If any member of staff or volunteer is accused of abuse, The Recruitment Junction will co-operate fully with other agencies in the enquiry.

The Recruitment Junction staff and volunteers must report any allegation made about themselves or others to their line manager and to the Director of The Recruitment Junction. During the course of the enquiry, the staff member or volunteer concerned should not be involved in face-to-face work. They should take a period of leave during which salary continues to be paid. If the enquiry is not concluded within a month this action will need to be reassessed.

Date of Approval and Issue: 23rd July 2024

Appendix A - Safeguarding Policy

The Recruitment Junction works with adult male and female ex-offenders in the community with the aim of moving them into paid employment. It also engages in supporting the wider family and friends of prisoners and ex-offenders. In undertaking this work, it routinely encounters safeguarding issues in relation to vulnerable adults. Although it does not work directly with children, through its work with vulnerable adults it may sometimes receive information in relation to the welfare of a child that gives cause for concern.

Policy Statement

At all times The Recruitment Junction's employees and volunteers consider the welfare of children and vulnerable adults to be of paramount importance. It is committed to achieving this by:

- Actively striving to promote the empowerment and wellbeing of vulnerable adults through respectful and responsive service provision.
- Believing and promoting that all individuals have the right to be able to live their lives free from fear, abuse, harm or degrading treatment. All individuals have the right to protection from any such mistreatment and harm.
- Believing and promoting that all individuals have the right to make choices and that their right to independence be actively encouraged. It acknowledges that such choices may at times involve an element of risk. It is committed to ensuring that any such risks are formally acknowledged and understood by all concerned, taking all reasonable measures to ensure risks be minimised wherever possible.
- Being committed to respecting equal opportunities, anti-discriminatory practice and diversity issues.
- Ensuring that the views of people accessing The Recruitment Junction's services are actively sought and used to influence the development of practice.
- Publicising complaints procedures which all service users, staff and volunteers are provided with.
- Ensuring that the law and statutory requirements which relate to children and vulnerable adults are known and put into practice.

The Recruitment Junction does not directly undertake work with children, so a separate child safeguarding policy has been determined to not be needed. The Recruitment Junction believes that everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

It is also recognised that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues, such as being the child of, or a close relation of, an ex-offender.

Definitions

Vulnerable Adult: The updated Care Act (2014) no longer uses the term 'vulnerable adult' but instead defines an individual in need of safeguarding much more broadly. Throughout this document we will use the term vulnerable adult to refer to those who fit within these categories, and understand vulnerable adult to mean: A person aged 18 or over who has an impairment in their ability to protect themselves from harm, either physical or emotional, through any form of assault, abuse, exploitation or neglect. Their vulnerability may be in the form of any of, or a combination of: a learning or physical disability; a physical or mental illness (chronic or otherwise), including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; a reduction in physical or mental capacity; a dependency upon others, or a requirement for assistance in the performance of physical functions; severe impairment in the ability to communicate with others.

Child: Is understood by The Children Act (1989) as being a person under the age of 18.

Abuse: This may be a single or repeated act, or a lack of appropriate care; taking place in any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which could result in harm or exploitation of the person subject to it.

Abuser: It is important to recognise that the 'abuser' could be anyone, including friends, relatives, family members, other service users, professional paid staff, volunteers and persons unknown to the vulnerable adult.

Significant Harm: This is an important legal term as The Children Act mandates that local authorities must help children deemed at risk of significant harm. However, public sector resources are stretched and local authorities' children's social care threshold for intervention has crept higher and higher. It must be clear then that 'significant harm' should be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment that are not physical); but also the impairment of, or an unavoidable deterioration in physical or mental health, and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development. Significance and seriousness will be determined in relation to the individual's vulnerability; the motive, extent and duration of the abuse; the impact on the adult; who is the abuser; and the likelihood of it reoccurring to the adult or others.

Important note:

The Recruitment Junction does not wish anyone to suffer ANY harm that could be avoided or prevented. For this reason it will act on its concerns regardless of whether or not the harm is deemed to be 'significant'. If statutory agencies become involved and then choose not to act, then it will have fulfilled its own duty towards the individual deemed to be at risk.

Categories of abuse: indicators, signs and symptoms

The following categories of abuse are outlined in the Care Act:

1. Physical Abuse:

Physical mistreatment or non-accidental injury, including:

- Assault
- Hitting
- Slapping
- Pushing
- Misuse of medication
- Restraint

Possible indicators of physical abuse may include, but are not limited to:

- An injury not fitting the explanation given
- Unexplained or unusual fractures
- Bruises or burns in the shape of objects e.g. cigarette burns or belt buckles
- Bruising in well protected areas e.g. behind the ears, on face, inside of the upper arms or thighs, buttocks, breasts, genital or rectal area
- Lacerations

2. Neglect

Acts of omission or refusal to meet basic needs, including:

- Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs
- Failure to provide access to appropriate healthcare and support or educational services
- The withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

3. Organisational abuse

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital, school or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one-off incidents to on-going ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation. This can include:

- Lack of individual choice/denial of diversified support
- Judgmental attitudes towards children or vulnerable adults including derogatory terms used about the person or their situation
- Failure to ensure appropriate privacy and dignity
- Over-protective practices

4. Psychological abuse

This includes threats of harm, abandonment, isolation or humiliation which may result in the adult feeling in low mood, undervalued and perhaps unnecessarily dependent. Psychological abuse includes:

- Emotional abuse
- Threats of harm or abandonment
- Deprivation of contact
- Humiliation
- Blaming
- Controlling
- Intimidation
- Coercion
- Harassment
- Verbal abuse
- Cyber bullying
- Isolation
- Unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks

Possible indicators of psychological/emotional abuse may include, but are not limited to:

- Low self esteem
- Tearfulness
- Aggressive or challenging behaviour
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Self harm
- Depression
- Insomnia
- Unexplained paranoia
- Withdrawal from support networks

5. Sexual abuse

This is the involvement of any individual in any sexual activity to which they either cannot or have not given their consent or they were pressured into consenting. Sexual abuse includes:

- Contact abuse, e.g. rape, inappropriate touching, masturbation, penetration or attempted penetration
- Non-contact abuse, e.g. voyeurism, sexual photography, indecent exposure, sexual teasing/innuendo, being subjected to pornography, witnessing sexual acts and sexual harassment

Possible indicators of sexual abuse may include, but are not limited to:

- Change in usual behaviour
- Overtly sexual behaviour/ language/dress
- Bleeding or pain in the genital/rectal area
- Disturbed sleep pattern

6. Financial or material abuse

Unauthorised use of an individual's resources, or their resources being withheld or misused by someone else.

This includes:

- Theft
- Fraud
- Internet scamming
- Coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions
- The misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

Possible indicators of which financial or material abuse may include, but are not limited to:

- Change in living conditions
- Lack of heating, clothing or food
- Inability to pay bills/unexplained shortage of money
- Unexplained withdrawals from an account
- Unexplained loss/misplacement of financial documents
- The recent addition of authorised signatories on a service user's signature card
- Sudden or unexpected changes in a will or other financial documents

7. Modern slavery

This encompasses:

- Slavery
- Human trafficking
- Forced labour and domestic servitude.
- Traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment

8. Discriminatory abuse

This includes forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of:

- Race
- Gender and gender identity
- Age
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religion

9. Domestic Abuse

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional
- So called 'honour' based violence

10. Self-neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviours such as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes hoarding. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on the adult's ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support.

Other areas for concern:

Abuse of Trust

A relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their role, work or the nature of their activity. Abuse of trust is the inappropriate leveraging of this power in order to gain a personal benefit, be it romantic, sexual, financial or otherwise.

Conditioning

Conditioning is something that happens to everyone in everyday life and it is only an area for concern when it progresses to a form of manipulation in order to use a relationship for some sort of gain. Conditioning often happens on a sliding scale, starting with a small request for something seemingly trivial, building to a bigger request. Those aiming to condition another individual can use varying tactics of charm, emotion and aggression in order to convince someone to do something for them. If someone is unsure as to whether they are being conditioned, a good question to ask oneself is: 'Would I do this for someone else in the community?' If the answer is no, then this may be an indicator that they have been conditioned by the relationship.

Grooming

Grooming is linked to conditioning in that it involves an individual taking deliberate actions to form a trusting relationship with another individual, with the intent of later gaining something from the relationship. However, grooming is more serious than conditioning as its end goal most commonly relates to sexual abuse and/or financial abuse. The act of grooming may include activities that are legal in and of themselves, but later lead to forms of abuse. Typically, the initial activities are done to gain a child's or vulnerable adult's trust as well as the trust of those responsible for the individual's wellbeing. Research has shown that crimes are less likely to be reported if it involves someone that the individual knows, trusts, and cares about. Additionally, a trusting relationship with those involved in the individual's wellbeing can mean that potential accusations are less likely to be believed.

Spiritual Abuse

Spiritual abuse is the mistreatment of an individual who is in need of help, support or greater spiritual empowerment, with the result of weakening, undermining, or decreasing that individual's spiritual empowerment. Spiritual abuse often looks like a positive practice of faith on the outside, but this is used in order to gain power and control over a group or an individual. Spiritual abuse can also be inflicted by those who are well-meaning and do not intend any harm to individuals, who may be acting on what they believe their faith has compelled them to do or say. This unintentional spiritual abuse is often linked to a lack of empathy with the individual concerned; not having the ability to perceive, to understand, to sense or to feel what the individual is experiencing.

Date of approval: This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on 23rd July 2024.

Date of review: This policy will be reviewed on or before 23rd July 2026.



Please sign and return a duplicate copy of this Safeguarding Policy to Beverley Brooks to acknowledge you have read and understand the Safeguarding Policy, and you agree to comply with it. You should then keep the other copy safe for your records.

I have read, understood and agree to comply with this Safeguarding Policy.

Signed

Name

Date

Appendix B – Safeguarding Report Form

This form is for the reporting of any concern or incident, including near-misses, regarding data protection, staff welfare, health and safety or safeguarding. Please be aware that, should this incident be part of any police investigation, you may be asked to take a copy of this report to police interviews and/or The Recruitment Junction may be required to share it with the police directly.

Name of person reporting: _____

Date of report: _____

Type of report: Data Protection / Staff Welfare / Health and Safety / Safeguarding (*delete above as appropriate*)

Please write a third person account of the incident, keeping this information as a factual outline of events:

Date of incident:		Time of incident:	
Location:		Staff present:	
Person(s) involved:			
Details:			

To be completed by the Safeguarding Lead:

Report concerning (please delete as appropriate):	Children / Vulnerable Adults / Males / Females
Types of concerns (please delete as appropriate):	Physical / Neglect / Organisational / Psychological / Sexual / Financial / Modern Slavery / Discrimination / Domestic Abuse / Self-Neglect / Spiritual / Near-miss / Other
If 'Other', please explain the concern:	

Actions or support to be given	Person responsible	Date for completion	Completed (please tick)

Appendix C - External Complaints Procedure

The Recruitment Junction aims to provide high quality services which meet your needs. We believe we achieve this most of the time: if we are not getting it right please let us know. In order to ensure our services remain at a high and improving standard, we have a procedure through which you can let us know of any reason you are not satisfied with your dealings with The Recruitment Junction.

If you are not happy with The Recruitment Junction, please tell us

If you are unhappy about any of The Recruitment Junction's service, please speak to the relevant staff member, manager or Director. If you are unhappy with an individual in The Recruitment Junction sometimes it is best to tell him or her directly. If you feel this is difficult or inappropriate, then speak to the staff member's manager or the Director.

Often we will be able to give you a response straight away. When the matter is more complicated, we will give you at least an initial response within five working days.

Making a written complaint

If you are not satisfied with our response or wish to raise the matter more formally, please write to the Director. (If your complaint is about the Director, please write to the Chair of Trustees.) All written complaints will be logged. You will receive a written acknowledgement within three working days. The aim is to investigate your complaint properly and give you a reply within ten working days, setting out how the problem will be dealt with. If this is not possible, an interim response will be made informing you of the action taken to date or being considered.

If after we have responded you are not satisfied, please write to the Chair of Trustees who will report the matter to the next meeting of the Trustees, which will decide on any further steps to resolve the situation.

Finally, please also let us know if you are happy with The Recruitment Junction's services.

Appendix D – Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

