



**KNOWSLEY**  
**SAFEGUARDING**  
**ADULTS BOARD**

PREVENTION THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

# Guidance Criteria for Reporting a Safeguarding Adults Concern

February 2024

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<b>Document Control</b>	
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## Foreword

This document is intended to offer guidance in deciding when to report a Safeguarding Concern. There may be incidents where decision-making is not straightforward, and this guidance is not a substitute for professional judgement but is a framework to inform decision making. In all cases ensure that the reasons for decisions are recorded.

If in any doubt, report a Safeguarding Concern to the Knowsley Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by completing the [Multi Agency Referral Form \(knowsley.gov.uk\)](https://www.knowsley.gov.uk) on the Council website or ring for advice: **0151 443 2600**. Professionals based in the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will then decide how to proceed.

### What is meant by Safeguarding Adults?

The Care Act 2014 sets out a statutory responsibility for keeping adults at risk of abuse and neglect safe, and to promote wellbeing in local communities.

Adult safeguarding is about protecting, preventing, and responding to concerns of abuse or neglect of adults while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted. Staff should work together in partnership with adults at risk so that they are:

- Safe and able to protect themselves from abuse and neglect
- Treated fairly and with dignity and respect
- Protected when they need to be and are able easily to get the support, protection, and services that they need

### Aims of Safeguarding Adults

The aims of Safeguarding Adults under the Care Act (2014) are both reactive and proactive as follows:

- To prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with Care and Support needs
- To stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- To safeguard adults in a way that supports them to make choices and have control about the way they want to live
- To promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adult (s) concerned
- To raise public awareness so that communities, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying, and responding to abuse and neglect
- To provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the diverse types of abuse, how to stay safe and well and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or Wellbeing of themselves or another adult
- To address what has caused the abuse or neglect

**Safeguarding is fundamentally identifying and managing risk to improve safety and wellbeing of an adult at risk of abuse or neglect.**

## Statutory Guidance for Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Abuse or Neglect

The Care Act 2014 says that “Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse and neglect”

**Any concerns meeting the Care Act 2014 duties should prompt a Safeguarding referral.**

Responding to individuals with mental health needs, risks and/or wider vulnerabilities may therefore require practitioners to consider alternative support pathways to statutory safeguarding routes and require co-ordinated multi agency responses.

See KSAB [Guidance for managing Mental Health / Self Harm/ Suicidal ideation](#)

A concern which does not meet the criteria for a safeguarding enquiry may still require a response such as a referral for a carers assessment, MARAM, mental health assessment etc. or signposting to a relevant agency for support.

It is important to distinguish between what may be an incident of poor practice, concerns about the quality of care (in any setting) and abuse or neglect. As there are different pathways to support these issues. –

Professional judgement may be required along with consultation with colleagues from other agencies. In these circumstances safeguarding procedures may not be the most appropriate process to follow.

**All decisions should be recorded accurately, stating facts and demonstrate defensible decision-making, with any opinions being recorded as such.**

### Consent

Where you have identified that an adult is at risk of, or is experiencing, abuse and neglect you need to have a conversation with the adult about what they want to happen and to seek their consent to share information. The safety of the adult and the potential for increasing risk should always be considered when planning to speak to the person.

Any situations where there is the potential for endangering safety or increasing risk should be assessed carefully and advice taken from your line manager. Where there is a concern that seeking the adults,' views would increase risk or cause delay then the safeguarding concern can be submitted without this information.

Where an adult with capacity to make an informed decision about their own safety does not want any action taken, this does not override a professional's responsibility

to raise a safeguarding concern and to share key information with relevant professionals e.g., where others are at risk, or a crime has been committed.

**Consent should always be sought where safe to do so, however all safeguarding concerns must be reported to the local authority regardless of the adults wishes; the professionals in the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will then assess the adult's wants and needs and how to proceed.**

Adults who may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves are protected by utilising the Mental Capacity Act (2005). The Act provides a statutory framework to empower and protect people who may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves; and establishes a framework for making decisions on their behalf. This applies whether the decisions are life-changing events or everyday matters. All decisions taken in the adult safeguarding process must comply with the Act.

For more information on consent see: [Knowsley-Safeguarding-Adults-Procedures / link to MCA](#)

### **Making Safeguarding Personal**

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) allows for a person-centred approach within adult safeguarding. Which means that adults are encouraged to make their own decisions and are provided with the information and support to empower them to do so. Working towards outcomes that a person wants whilst helping manage the needs, risk of abuse or neglect.

### **Raising a concern**

Report a Safeguarding Concern to the Knowsley Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by completing the [Multi Agency Referral Form \(knowsley.gov.uk\)](#) on the Council website or ring for advice: **0151 443 2600**.

**Professional judgement always informs decision making.**

## Flow Chart - What to do if you suspect abuse or neglect

