



NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY BLIND ASSOCIATION (NCBA) SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Background

Northumberland County Blind Association's aim is to ensure that all staff, volunteers, trustees, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and visitors are not harmed in any way through our actions. The following document provides information to support managers to easily identify all relevant policies, procedures, training and development opportunities to meet the safeguarding Policy standards.

The following standards are applicable to all trustees, staff, volunteers and any third party providing a service on behalf of NCBA.

2. Safeguarding Standards and Commitments

Standard 1 – NCBA has Safeguarding Policies for children and adults at risk supported by robust procedures.

NCBA Board of Trustees are committed to ensuring a continual improvement in safeguarding practice and to support this have endorsed 6 policy commitments:

I. Promoting a safe and trusted environment and a culture that prioritises safeguarding.

All NCBA staff, volunteers, trustees, independent advisors, and visitors will respect Adults at risk and promote their well-being first and foremost.

NCBA will strive to create and maintain environments which are safe for everyone who has dealings with NCBA. This will be achieved by:

- Staff and volunteer training
- effective communication
- organisational learning

- monitoring through effectively implemented quality assurance arrangements that ensure consistency and compliance throughout the organisation.

NCBA will train all staff, volunteers, trustees, independent advisors, in working to this policy by challenging poor practice and reporting all safeguarding concerns and abuse.

II. Safely recruiting and supporting all people within NCBA

NCBA will have specific procedures in place to select and carry out the required vetting for all people (staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors) involved within it, in accordance with legislation and government guidance.

See NCBA Recruitment and Selection Policy.

NCBA will provide appropriate and effective training to all staff, volunteers, trustees, independent advisors, committee members working within the organisation.

III. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

Anyone who reports any safeguarding concerns or allegations to NCBA will be treated with respect. All safeguarding concerns and allegations will be dealt with in accordance with statutory adult safeguarding guidance and NCBA safeguarding procedures.

All NCBA staff, volunteers, trustees, independent advisors, will cooperate fully with the statutory authorities in all cases.

IV. Treating with respect, care and dignity, the victims of abuse and other safeguarding concerns:

Whenever a safeguarding concern, including any poor practice issue or allegation of abuse is raised, NCBA will offer support to all those that have been affected. People will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously. NCBA will respond to any disclosure of a safeguarding concern, including poor practice or abuse in accordance with its policy and practice guidance. Where appropriate, this will be done in collaboration with the relevant statutory agencies.

V. Treating with respect, care and dignity, those that are subject of concerns or allegations

In responding to safeguarding concerns, or allegations of abuse, NCBA will endeavour to respect the rights under criminal and civil law of an accused person. A presumption of innocence will be maintained during any NCBA process.

NCBA will take responsibility for ensuring that steps are taken to protect people when any person is considered a risk to others through a mitigation process.

In addition, NCBA recognises people who are subject to safeguarding concerns are vulnerable during any NCBA or statutory agency process. NCBA will take all reasonable steps to support people through this process.

VI. NCBA will encourage a culture of learning throughout the organisation

NCBA commits to doing the right thing every time for all the people involved in safeguarding concerns. However, NCBA recognises that processes and outcomes, on occasions, can and must be improved. NCBA commits to being transparent about learning from these situations.

This policy will ensure NCBA puts its customers first who all have a right to be safe from inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive or harmful behaviour when using our services or sites.

NCBA has developed this Safeguarding Policy to meet this standard.

In addition this policy is supported by other organisational policies and procedures aimed at promoting safe working practices.

Standard 2 – NCBA consistently applies a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting workers and volunteers in line with legislative requirements and best practice.

The term worker is used to describe people who are:

- Employed
- Self Employed
- Agency Worker
- Contractor

NCBA has developed various resources to support managers and staff to meet this standard including policies, procedures and training resources.

All staff and volunteers working with vulnerable clients are subject to an enhanced DBS check

In addition managers must ensure that agency workers are suitably checked and able to carry out the role to which they are appointed.

Standard 3 – NCBA has procedures in place for the effective management, support, supervision and training of staff and volunteers.

Managers must ensure that where people work directly with Adults they have additional training to support their ability to recognise the signs that a disabled Adult may have been abused. This is necessary because disabled Adults are over 3 times more likely to be abused or neglected than non-disabled Adults and may not always be able to communicate concerns to people.

Standard 4 – NCBA has clearly defined procedures for raising awareness of, responding to, recording and reporting safeguarding concerns.

The following procedures have been developed to support this standard:

- Recognising and responding to low level concerns
- Recognising and responding to adult abuse and neglect
- Whistleblowing policy

Standard 5 – NCBA operates an effective procedure for assessing and managing risks with regard to safeguarding children and adults at risk.

A formal risk management process is in place in NCBA which supports the identification and management of risk across the organisation at both a strategic and service level.

Trustee level:

Trustees are tasked with undertaking formal review and analysis of strategic risks and significant operational risks every year, and play a key role in ensuring mitigation plans are up to date and relevant.

A formal discussion to sign off updates to the risk register takes place at Board meetings as and when required, with a full formal review being carried out on an annual basis.

Discussions can be refocused if a significant risk event is likely to occur or a potential high impact risk has been identified and requires their expertise (for example when a risk is escalated for their attention). In this scenario a brief report with recommendations will be prepared by the Chief Officer (Julie Boyack)

Regular safeguarding audits take place across the organisation where we engage in activities and services delivered to people in their own homes to determine if risk control measures in relation to safeguarding management are complied with and effective.

Operational level

All staff must comply with NCBA's Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

Each service area must identify all services engaging in activity and/or delivering services to people in their own homes. They must assess services to determine if there are any specific, safeguarding risks which may require the introduction of additional safeguarding controls to manage risks. This assessment should be focussed on the types of activities carried out to determine if any present a safeguarding risk. At an operational level risk assessments must be completed for all Safeguarding risks identified.

In addition to the operational risk assessments, individual risk assessments must be carried out with people who may be vulnerable when they engage in, or are involved in specific activities. For example, managing money and valuables, accessing community activities via volunteer support, moving and handling etc.

Risk assessments must be reviewed yearly or following any incident or changing needs.

All areas that carry out and/ or provide services to people in their own homes must have a named Safeguarding Lead. **(Chief Officer Julie Boyack Tel: 01670514316 Julie.boyack@visionnorthumberland.org.uk)**

The Safeguarding Lead (Chief Officer - JB) must ensure that regular safeguarding meetings or review discussions take place, safeguarding may be an agenda item on other meetings if this meets specific business needs.

Standard 6 – NCBA has clear procedures for receiving comments and suggestions and for dealing with concerns and complaints about the organisation.

- Regular Customer Feedback
- Regular Volunteer feedback
- Volunteer meetings
- Service user meetings
- Staff meetings
- Board meetings

Standard 7 – NCBA has a clear policy on the Roles and Responsibilities, of the management of records, confidentiality, and sharing of information.

Everyone involved with NCBA has a responsibility to familiarise themselves with this safeguarding policy and the processes that support it. NCBA will support this responsibility through a structured rollout of training to staff, volunteers' trustees and carers.

NCBA trustees have the final responsibility to ensure this safeguarding policy is implemented and working effectively. The trustees, by ensuring effective quality assurance, compliance and reporting retain overall responsibility, but delegate the safeguarding work to all staff and volunteers who are accountable for their decisions and actions they take within their own role. The trustee's full responsibilities are listed under standard 5

Training

All staff, volunteers, trustees, will receive safeguarding induction training which will outline the fundamentals, their core responsibilities and NCBA processes.

Depending on the individual's role further training, including regular updates, will be provided to enhance their knowledge of safeguarding to enable them to complete their responsibilities.

Training and resources have been developed to support staff and managers in this area.

Standard 8 – NCBA has a written code that outlines the behaviour expected of all involved with the organisation, including visitors.

Staff handbook/ Volunteer Induction

3. Review

This Policy is due for review every 12 months or following any legislative changes, whichever comes first by the Chief Officer (JB) and signed off by the Board member with responsibility for Safeguarding

Ratified on 28.11 2019

To be reviewed Annually

Appendix 1

NCBA Resources

Please note that the following list of policies, procedures and training are correct at the time of policy review. However, new developments and procedural change are ongoing therefore the following may not reflect the full resources available.

1. NCBA policies, procedures and guidance

Recruitment and Selection

- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Probation and Assessment Period Policy
- Volunteering Recruitment Process, which includes Getting Ready to Recruit, Attracting Volunteers, Using Application Forms, Interviewing Volunteers and Following up References.
- All staff and volunteers are subject to DBS check

Support, Supervision & Development

- Induction Policy
- People Development Policy
- Appraisal Policy
- Sickness Absence Reporting Policy

Raising Concerns / Feedback

- Customer Feedback

- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Supervision with staff/volunteers
- Volunteer
- Volunteer Standards "Raising Concerns" and "Problem Solving Procedure".

Data Protection

We are compliant with GDPR and we adopted its seven key principles:

- Lawfulness, fairness and transparency
- Purpose limitation
- Data minimisation
- Accuracy
- Storage limitation
- Integrity and confidentiality (security)
- Accountability

Conduct

- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Alcohol/Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy
- Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Email and Outlook Use Policy
- Internet Access Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Social media policy for staff and volunteers
- Capability Policy
- Suspension Policy
- Investigation Policy

Health & Safety

- Hazardous Substances Policy and Guidance
- General Risk Assessment Standards and Guidance
- Manual Handling Policy
- Managing the risks associated with hot surfaces
- Hot water safety
- Legionella and other water borne bacteria policy and guidance
- Policy and guidance on slips and falls
- Portable Appliance Testing
- Food Hygiene Policy and Guidance

- Events Health and Safety Forms
- Fire Safety Information
- First Aid at Work Policy
- Accident/Incident Investigation Procedure
- Reporting Accidents under RIDDOR
- Managing Aggression and Violence at Work
- Personal Protective Equipment Policy and Guidance

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding Policy
- Recognising and Responding to Adult Abuse
- Fraud, Theft and bribery Policy

3. Training

- All staff and Volunteers will be required to undertake Safeguarding Training when they commence employment with NCBA
- All staff and Volunteers will be required to take a Safeguarding refresher course every two years.

Appendix 2

Agency worker requirements

NCBA are committed to protecting people who use our services. All agency workers must provide evidence of the following to ensure that we are able to fulfil this aim:

- That robust procedures have been followed including an interview and eligibility to work in the UK, reference checks, full employment history, DBS/AccessNI registration have been undertaken and that in their opinion the person is suitable to carry out work with adults at risk.
- The declaration must also include assurances that workers have completed the relevant training required to carry out the role. In addition all workers must complete safeguarding training which meets NCBA's internal standards.

I declare that the following checks and training have been carried out and I am satisfied that the person named is suitable to work with adults at risk.

Date, type and level of criminal record check:

Organisation:

Name (Printed):

Signature:

I declare that I have provided all the information listed above in relation to recruitment and have completed all specified training and feel competent to carry out the duties required by NCBA.

Name (Printed):

Signature:

Appendix 3

Regulated Activity/Work – Definitions

1. Vulnerable adults

- 1.1 Adults are no longer defined as vulnerable because of age or disability. It is now the service that adults need that lead people to being defined as vulnerable at a particular point in time in England.
- 1.2. This means that the focus is on the activity or service required by the adult rather than for example age or disability.

2. Regulated Activity, Adults (England)

- 2.1 There are six categories within the definition of regulated activity which in general relate to those activities provided to people because of the person's age, illness or disability:

- Providing health care
- Providing personal care
- Providing social work
- Assistance with general household matters
- Assistance in the conduct of a person's own affairs
- Conveying

Examples of regulated activity:

- A volunteer who collects shopping lists and the cash to pay for the shopping from people who may be vulnerable but living in their own homes and then who does the shopping on their behalf.
- Provision of rehabilitation services following sight loss which involves training, instructing or the provision of advice or guidance which relates to eating, drinking, going to the toilet, washing, bathing, dressing, oral care, care of the skin, hair or nails. For example, teaching a person to use adapted cutlery.
- A volunteer transports an adult to and from a GP appointment and this service is provided by a volunteer of NCBA.

Appendix 4

Trustees: Safeguarding role and responsibilities

Trustees must take reasonable steps to protect those connected with NCBA from harm. This includes:

- people who benefit from NCBA's work and service
- staff
- volunteers
- other people connected to NCBA activities.

'Any failure by trustees to manage safeguarding risks adequately would be a serious regulatory concern to the Charity Commission who may consider misconduct and/or mismanagement in the administration of NCBA and may be a breach of trustee

duty'¹. Trustees can be held responsible for any consequences or loss that NCBA incurs if they have not followed their duties.

NCBA Trustees will ensure:

- there is a clear line of responsibility for and reporting to them safeguarding matters;
- that safeguarding practice complies with statutory and national guidance, and local best practice;
- the safeguarding policy and process guidance is accessible to people both internally and externally to NCBA and in their preferred format;
- the reporting procedures to deal with safeguarding concerns and allegations are implemented consistently, efficiently and effectively;
- clear roles and responsibilities are explicitly outlined and clear for staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders;
- Any failures by any person connected with NCBA to follow the safeguarding policy and procedures will be dealt with as a serious matter;
- there is a culture of learning from poor practice;
- there is a safer recruitment procedure in place which is linked to the wider safeguarding process;
- clear arrangements for support and/or supervision for staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders;
- Effective and ongoing appropriate safeguarding training for all NCBA staff, volunteers, trustees and associates.
- Ongoing and effective working with statutory and voluntary sector partners;
- complaints and whistleblowing procedures are well publicised;
- effective information sharing with all statutory and voluntary partners;
- Effective and accurate record keeping in accordance with GDPR 2018 and;
- Serious incidents are reported to the Charity Commission in accordance with their statutory obligations.

¹ Strategy for dealing with safeguarding issues in charities, Charity Commission for England and Wales, 6th December 2017
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-for-dealing-with-safeguarding-issues-in-charities/strategy-for-dealing-with-safeguarding-issues-in-charities>

TITLE: NCBA Safeguarding Policy	
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK REF	
DISCUSSED WITH NCBA STAFF TEAM	26.11.2019 - revised policy sent to all volunteers
APPROVED BY BOARD	SIGNATURE: Mala Janes
ISSUE DATE	28.11.2019
REVIEWED DATE	May 17 th 2022 - no changes required
REVISION NO.	4