HACKNEY DOORWAYS

Policies and Procedures

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Policy agreed by the Board of Trustees	16 July 2026
Policy to be reviewed by the Board of Trustees	July 2027

1. Policy

1.1 Overview

Hackney Doorways, through the Hackney Night Shelter and other projects, is committed to the wellbeing of those who stay at the shelter (known as guests). Its approach is thus informed by the following six safeguarding principles[1]

- Empowerment
- Protection
- Prevention
- Proportionate responses
- Partnership
- Accountability

It is the duty of Trustees, volunteers and staff to ensure that guests are safe from harm and that adequate safeguarding policies and procedures are in place. Safeguarding is everybody's business.

The key message for volunteers is that they are responsible for reporting any concerns but not for any other stage of the process e.g. interviews, evidence, documentation. (Although volunteers should employ active listening, ask questions and get as much relevant information as they can at point of disclosure).

[1] Care Act 2014 and Department of Health Care and Support Statutory guidance

Safeguarding is a legal responsibility under the Care Act 2014. Hackney Doorways Safeguarding Policy is in line with the London Multi-Agency Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures[2] and should be read in conjunction with these.

The London policy states that "Providers have a duty of care to protect adults at risk and meet safeguarding standards; this can be evidenced where there is a clear commitment to protection in their policy and procedures that is observed in practice". Hackney Doorways puts safeguarding concerns over and above reputational or management considerations, and believes that this is, in fact, the best way to ensure best practice and a good reputation.

1.2 Definitions

In the context of the legislation, specific adult safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- Has care and support needs, and
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- Is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, because of those needs.

As the guests at Hackney Doorways are at risk of homelessness, they are deemed vulnerable by the statutory definition.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons which results in harm. It may be intentional or unintentional.

Types of abuse and neglect are [3]

- Disability Hate Crime
- Discriminatory Abuse
- Domestic Abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Financial or Material Abuse
- Forced Marriage
- Hate Crime
- Honour-based Violence
- Human Trafficking
- Mate Crime
- Modern Slavery
- Neglect and Acts of Omission
- Organisational Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Psychological Abuse
- Restraint
- Sexual Abuse

[2] 2019.04.23-Review-of-the-Multi-Agency-Adult-Safeguarding-policy-and-procedures-2019-final-1-1.pdf - Google Drive.

[3] As defined in Care and Support Statutory Guidance April 2019

- Sexual Exploitation
- Radicalisation.

More detailed definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect are given in the London Multi Agency Adult Safeguarding Policies and Procedures (ibid) pages 21-32, to be found at 2019.04.23-Review-of-the-Multi-Agency-Adult-Safeguarding-policy-and-procedures-2019-final-1-1.pdf - Google Drive and trustees, staff and volunteers should familiarise themselves with these through training and guidance.

1.2 Policy Scope

This policy only applies to guests who stay in night shelters operated by Hackney Doorways.

1.3 Trustee and Staff Responsibilities

1.3.1 Trustees and staff have a particular responsibility to ensure that all volunteers are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. This will involve ensuring that volunteers are aware of what constitutes a safeguarding concern and what action to take should they suspect that a guest may be at risk of or suffering abuse or neglect. Concerns can relate to abuse or neglect being experienced by a guest in a night shelter setting or elsewhere[4].

The leads on safeguarding are the Director and the Trustee Safeguarding Lead.

1.3.2 **Training**

The Director holds overall responsibility for ensuring that all staff and volunteers have adequate training and updating in safeguarding. The Director will work with the Shelter Manager and Volunteer Co-ordinator to implement the training through the induction of new staff and volunteers which will include familiarisation with this policy, the volunteer and staff handbooks. This will be supplemented by training events and other resources.

The Trustee Safeguarding Lead and/or the Chair of the Board will have overall responsibility for ensuring that all trustees understand safeguarding and are familiar with this policy.

1.3.3 Annual Safeguarding Report to the Board

The Director will report annually to the Board (usually in July) on:

- all incidents which occurred throughout the previous 12 months,
- any lessons learned and follow up action required
- update on the training undertaken by staff, volunteers and trustees

1.4. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

Hackney Doorways' policy is that all Trustees and staff are subject to a basic DBS check every three years.[5] Volunteers are not currently DBS checked but the following policies are in place:

[4] Where guests pose a risk to other guests, staff and volunteers see HNS Guest Exclusion Policy

[5] And if a new trustee or employee has a very recent DBS check through another organisation the trustees will use their discretion as to whether to carry out another check or not.

- Main shelter - staff on site during the day. At night volunteers come on at 6pm until 10pm and a paid member of staff from 9.30pm until 8.30am. Volunteers will not be alone on shift.
- Women's shelter – at times volunteers may be alone on site. This is a known volunteer who has had specific safeguarding conversation with Safeguarding Leads, Shelter Manager or Volunteer Coordinator. Plus safeguarding policy and procedures are available on-site with contact details in case of need.
- Temporary SWEP Shelter – two members of paid staff on duty at all times when the shelter is operating.
- A policy that there should be no situations where one volunteer is left alone with a guest in a confined space.
- The provision of training that is sufficient and up to date.

Volunteers are required to sign a declaration that they have read volunteer handbook including safeguarding.

Staff or volunteers from outside agencies coming into the shelter are required to have a DBS check.

2. Procedures

2 .1 Disclosure of abuse

The possibility of abuse and neglect can come to light in various ways, for example:

- An active disclosure of abuse by the adult at risk.
- A passive disclosure of abuse where someone's attention is drawn to the symptoms of the abuse.
- A growing awareness that "something is not right".
- An allegation of abuse by a third party.
- A complaint or concern raised by an adult at risk or a third party who doesn't perceive that it is abuse.

If a volunteer suspects or knows that a guest is being abused or neglected, they should inform staff immediately. If this feels difficult, they can contact the Director, the Trustee Safeguarding Lead or the Chair. Volunteers will not lose their voluntary position if they have misreported a safeguarding issue in good faith, and they do not bear any responsibility for taking further action. This key message is to be rolled out through training and guidance. Staff may also report a safeguarding concern following good practice as set out below.

2.2 Good practice following disclosure

The Shelter Manager or the Director should within 48 hours:

Speak to the person in a private and safe place

- Accept what the person is saying
- Establish basic facts
    - What happened
    - Who involved

    - Are they scared?
    - What are they scared of?
- Escalation in behaviour?
- Ask them what they would like to happen
- Don't promise the person that you'll keep what they tell you confidential; explain who you will tell and why
- If there are grounds to override a person's consent to share information, explain what these are
- Explain how the person will be involved and kept informed
- Provide information and advice on keeping safe and the safeguarding process
- Assess the risks and what immediate steps to take
- Assess whether an interpreter or other support is needed
- Take into account any personal care and support arrangements
- Make plan of action with Director or Safeguarding Lead If decided that Safeguarding Referral is necessary, follow checklist below. Take advice of specialists if unsure e.g. LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)
- Record decisions in folder where safeguarding referral **not made** and why in brief notes.

2.3 Checklist

Where there is a need for a safeguarding referral (see 2.4 for incidents where this is a requirement - The Director (or Trustee Lead and Shelter Manager in their absence) should ensure that the following actions have taken place:

- Initial conversation held with the adult
- Consent sought – explanation given around situations where referral made without consent
- Ensure the safety of the adult and others
- Contact emergency services
- Arrange medical treatment where necessary
- Preserve any evidence
- Take action taken to remove/reduce risk where possible and recorded
- Refer to Local Authority Safeguarding Team or Police
- Inform the Board of Trustees immediately via Chair or Safeguarding Lead
- The Director, Shelter Manager, Trustees should keep written records of all conversations relating to safeguarding incidents and of all actions taken. Records to be kept in template and stored in password protected documents in folder shared only with Chair, Safeguarding Lead and Director.
- Reports written up within a week from incident

2.4 Referral to Local Authority Safeguarding Team.

If, on the basis of the information available, it appears the following three conditions are met a referral MUST be made to the Local Authority Safeguarding Team:

- A person has care and support needs
- They may be experiencing, or be at risk from, abuse or neglect
- They are unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect because of their care and support needs

Referrals may be part of the regular processes for especially vulnerable guests (and thus not issues for Board of Trustees) or may be emergency issues where abuse has taken place within the shelter. The latter requires trustee involvement.

2.5 Personnel issues

2.5.1 Paid staff and volunteers have a responsibility to be aware and alert to safeguarding concerns about a guest. However, they are not responsible for diagnosing, investigating or providing a therapeutic response to abuse.

2.5.2 If a volunteer believes that there is a safeguarding concern which may involve another volunteer, this should be reported to the Director or Shelter Manager immediately.

2.5.3 If there are concerns that there is a safeguarding concern which may involve an employee, this should be reported to the Director as well as Trustee Safeguarding Lead and Chair of Trustees immediately.

3. Confidentiality

Hackney Doorways has a legal duty to disclose confidential information in certain circumstances. If an illegal act is believed to have taken place, or if a guest is considered to be at risk of harming themselves or others, this will be reported to the appropriate authorities. In other situations, Hackney Doorways staff and volunteers will not disclose any information considered sensitive, personal, financial or private without the knowledge or consent of the individual.

4. Contacts

In the case of immediate danger the police should be called - telephone 999. For less immediate cases, the 101 line should be called and the relevant police safeguarding team requested.

The designated responsible persons for safeguarding are the Hackney Doorways Director, Trustee Safeguarding Lead and Chair of Trustees. They can be contacted via office 0208 533 5255 or mark@hackneydoorways.org.uk.

In Emergencies & out of hours contactable via:

Mark Palframan - 07724331972

Trustee Safeguarding Lead:

Contact details for the local authority Safeguarding Team:

Hackney Service Centre

1 Hillman Street

E8 1DY

Tel 020 8356 5782

Tel 020 8356 2300 (out of hours)

Email: adultprotection@hackney.gov.uk

Online referral form available here: https://hackney.gov.uk/safeguarding-vulnerable-adults