Sanctuary

Safeguarding: what you can expect from us

This guide explains how we help keep children and adults safe from abuse, neglect and exploitation. It summarises the safeguarding policies and procedures that apply to staff in Sanctuary Housing in England, Sanctuary Supported Living and Sanctuary Students.

Sanctuary Scotland and Sanctuary Care staff in Scotland follow separate safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff in Sanctuary Care in England follow a separate policy and procedure for managing adult safeguarding cases.

> **Are you worried about somebody's safety? If anyone is in immediate danger, call 999.**
>
> **Please see 'How to raise a safeguarding concern' for other ways to report safeguarding concerns.**

Our commitment to you

Everyone has the right to feel safe and to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. All Sanctuary staff, agency workers and contractors have a responsibility to recognise and report any safeguarding concerns they become aware of.

If you have any concerns about your safety or welfare, or the wellbeing of another person, our staff will listen to you, take your concerns seriously and carefully consider what action is needed to keep people safe. We treat all concerns seriously, whether they relate to recent events or something that happened in the past.

Where appropriate, we will work with the police and make referrals to, and share relevant information with, local authority safeguarding teams.

To effectively recognise and escalate safeguarding concerns, and to reduce safeguarding risks in our properties and services, we will ensure that:

- Clear procedures, training and systems are in place to assist staff with recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Staff are aware of the importance of maintaining professional boundaries with customers.
- We carry out appropriate pre-employment checks, including references and Disclosure and Barring Service checks where required.
- Antisocial behaviour cases are managed promptly in line with our Antisocial Behaviour Policies and Procedures. Hate-related incidents and harassment are managed in line with our Hate-Related Incidents and Harassment Policy and Procedure.
- Where care and support are provided, staff are aware of what poor practice looks like and how it can result in safeguarding concerns.
- Domestic abuse concerns are recognised and responded to appropriately, in line with our Domestic Abuse Policies and Procedures, taking into account any associated safeguarding risks to adults and children.

Safeguarding concerns

Safeguarding involves taking action to protect a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse or neglect. Abuse can take many forms. For adults, this can include physical abuse, domestic abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, financial or material abuse, modern slavery, institutional abuse, neglect or self-neglect. Abuse of children can include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

In addition to taking different forms, abuse can:

- Happen once or over a period of time.
- Occur inside and outside the home.
- Be deliberate or happen when a person is not aware they are causing it.
- Be caused by someone you know, another customer, a family member, a member of staff or someone you don't know.
- Be caused by poor care or support practices.

Our staff are also expected to remain alert to situations where someone may be exploited or harmed, including:

- Child sexual exploitation
- Someone taking over another person's home to carry out criminal activity, sometimes called 'cuckooing'
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- County lines, where people are exploited to transport or sell drugs
- 'Honour'-based abuse
- Abuse by other children or young people
- Online abuse or exploitation
- Radicalisation
- Trafficking and modern slavery

Safeguarding adults who may be at risk

Some adults may be particularly at risk of abuse or neglect because they have care or support needs that affect their ability to protect themselves.

For an adult, we will usually ask for their consent before we share safeguarding information with, or report concerns to, relevant agencies, such as the local authority. We may share relevant information without consent when the law allows or requires us to. This may be to protect someone from harm, prevent or detect crime, or support a safeguarding enquiry.

Children and young people

A child is anyone aged under 18. When managing children's safeguarding cases, we will refer safeguarding concerns to the local authority or the police where we believe it is necessary to protect and promote the welfare of the child. We do not need consent to share information about a child if they are at risk of harm. Where it is safe and appropriate to do so, staff may involve parents and carers.

If a child is missing from our premises, we will search for them straight away. We will contact the police without delay if we cannot find them quickly or believe they may be in immediate danger. Staff in Sanctuary Supported Living follow a specific process if a young person is reported missing in Ofsted-registered services.

What happens after a safeguarding concern is raised

A safeguarding concern may arise from someone telling us about abuse or neglect they have experienced; a report from another customer, professional or member of the public; staff noticing changes in behaviour; or information provided by another organisation, such as the police or local authority. When we receive a concern, we will:

- Consider immediate safety and support needs. If anyone is in immediate danger, we will contact the emergency services.

- Listen carefully and keep a clear, factual record. We may preserve evidence to assist with safeguarding investigations.
- Contact the local authority, police or another relevant safeguarding agency if we believe it will help to protect an adult or child from harm.
- Cooperate with safeguarding enquiries and multi-agency meetings.
- Review risks and keep relevant people informed.
- Consider what we can learn and improve after a case closes.
- Continue to support the person affected. Where it is appropriate and possible, we will also support a customer who is said to have caused harm, while taking steps to manage any risks.

Concerns about someone working for us

If you have concerns about someone who works for us or on our behalf, we will take reports extremely seriously and take steps to manage any immediate risks. Where required, we will report the concern to the police, local authority or another relevant safeguarding organisation.

Your choices and mental capacity

We will always support customers to make their own decisions wherever possible and will assume they have capacity unless there is evidence otherwise. If there are concerns about a customer's ability to make a specific decision, we will make sure a mental capacity assessment is completed. Any decisions made on a customer's behalf must be in their best interests and be the least restrictive option available.

We will follow the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and keep appropriate records of important decisions. If we believe that someone with legal authority to manage a customer's affairs is abusing their position, we will report this to the relevant authorities to help keep the customer safe.

How to raise a safeguarding concern

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999. If it is not an emergency but you think a crime may have been committed, call 101 to speak with the police.

You do not need to know whether something legally counts as abuse or safeguarding before speaking to us. If you are worried about your own safety or someone else's safety, please speak to a member of staff or call us on **0800 131 3348.**

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, our Customer Hub offers the following services:

- Text relay service: 07800 006781
- Helping you to access a British Sign Language interpreter

Further information

For more information about Sanctuary's role in safeguarding, please visit the Safeguarding page on our website. For information about safeguarding at Sanctuary Supported Living, please visit the Supported Living Safeguarding page.

For information on how to contact us, please visit https://www.sanctuary.co.uk/contact-us.

There are also specialist organisations that can offer advice and support on safeguarding:

- Keeping children safe - visit NSPCC or call 0808 800 5000
- Keeping older people safe - visit Hourglass and Age UK
- Female victims of domestic abuse - visit Women's Aid
- Male victims of domestic abuse - visit ManKind
- Abuse and violence against LGBTQ+ people - Galop
- Keeping people with learning disabilities safe - Mencap
- Anonymously report a crime - Crimestoppers or call 0800 555 111