

# AutAngel Safeguarding Policy

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## Policy Statement

AutAngel is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults engaged in the breadth of its activities, and to provide a welcoming, secure and comfortable environment for the benefit of all.

Safeguarding is about upholding the fundamental right of people to be safe at the same as respecting their right to make choices. Safeguarding is everybody's business – abuse can happen to anyone, anywhere, and the responsibility for addressing it lies with all of us.

## Responding to an allegation of abuse

Any member of staff, contractor or volunteer who becomes aware of any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must raise the matter as soon as practical with their supervisor or with the designated safeguarding lead. A written record must be kept.

In most situations there will not be an immediate threat and the decision about protecting the vulnerable person will be taken in consultation with themselves and/or the local Social Services or Child Protection Services. The person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional protection agencies.

However, there are some cases that require an urgent response:

- **If a person is in immediate danger of being harmed, call the police on 999.**
- If you suspect a serious criminal act has taken place, call the police on 999. Tell them if you think this might be a vulnerable adult or child abuse situation.
- If the individual is injured seek immediate medical treatment. Tell the ambulance personnel or A&E staff that this is a potential vulnerable adult or child abuse situation.

In the event of an incident or disclosure as soon as is practical:

#### DO

- Allow the person to talk and listen.
- Stay calm.
- Always accept what you are told.
- Tell the person you need to pass on the information.
- Give reassurance that you will only tell those who can make the person safe.
- Make careful notes of the conversation and write the current date and time and who is present. If possible obtain agreement on them.
- Report the incident or allegation as soon as practical to your manager or the safeguarding lead.

#### DON'T

- Ask any question that may be leading.
- Appear shocked, horrified, disgusted, etc.
- Panic
- Pressure the person.
- Be dismissive of the concern.
- Ignore what you have been told.
- Make promises (including promising to keep it a secret).
- Voice your opinion or put it in your recording.
- Pass judgement on the victim or the abuser.
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation.
- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts.
- Confront the alleged abuser.

Where possible, AutAngel's safeguarding lead will inform the person of the actions we propose to take. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the child or adult is the priority. The adult's or child's involvement in the process of sharing information should be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account. We will:

- Endeavour to ensure that they are safe and supported before proceeding with any other action.
- Seek their agreement for any referral.

- Ensure that they are kept informed about what will happen next, so they can be reassured about what to expect.
- Seek advice from or report concerns to an external agency if required by the situation.

All actions taken must also be recorded. The records must be signed and dated. All personal information must be kept confidential. The written records must be stored securely and kept only for as long as necessary.

## Further information

For further information about adult safeguarding, see the ["No Secrets" guidelines \(Department of Health 2000\)](#), and for children safeguarding [The Children's Act 1989](#).

## Contacts

### Designated safeguarding leads

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### Adult social services

- Reading Social Services Safeguarding Adults – 0118 937 3747

### Child protection

- Reading Child Protection Safeguarding Hub – 0118 937 3641

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