



Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy

Healthwatch Hackney takes the welfare of adults and children in our communities very seriously. We comply with Hackney Council (HC) and the City and Hackney Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards policies and procedures and these policies apply to all board members, staff, volunteers and contractors.

All Healthwatch Hackney board members, staff and volunteers are subject to rigorous checks on their suitability for their chosen role. This includes an interview and obtaining satisfactory references prior to employment.

Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are undertaken if they are working directly with adults, children and young people. All board members, staff and volunteers will undergo full training in safeguarding as part of their induction.

All board members, staff and volunteers are sensitive to the diversity of adult's and children's circumstances and backgrounds in respect of their age, gender, physical and mental ability, ethnicity, culture and religion, language, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status

If during the course of their work with Healthwatch Hackney any board member, member of staff or volunteer has any concerns regarding the safety or wellbeing of an adult or a child, they should discuss their concerns with the Executive Director.

It is the Executive Director responsibility to ensure the concern is dealt with and to escalate this concern if a risk of significant harm is identified. In the absence of the Executive Director the Chair of Healthwatch Hackney is the point of contact.

Guiding Principles

In safeguarding adults Healthwatch Hackney will:

- Ensuring that the policy and associated procedures are reviewed on a regular basis
- Ensure this policy links closely with those of the Safeguarding Boards
- Ensure all Healthwatch Hackney board, panel members and staff undergo safeguarding awareness training
- In the event of receiving any safeguarding alerts, these are recorded and passed to Hackney Council in line with their reporting procedures (see Safeguarding Procedure below)
- Ensuring by means of training, supervision and information that employees and volunteers have sufficient knowledge and understanding of this policy and associated procedures
- Supporting employees, volunteers or individuals in instances of suspected abuse

- Ensuring they are up-to-date with relevant legislation and have the skills required to carry out these responsibilities
- Ensuring staff and volunteers undertake regular and appropriate training, are supported in adhering to the policy and procedures, and that experience is shared through supervision and team meetings
- Nominating a member of staff as Safeguarding Trainer who will act as a link and point of expertise for the staff team and volunteers.

Safeguarding Procedure

- Alert the Executive Director immediately (same day) where abused is suspected.
- Provide a report on the suspected abuse
- If the Executive Director assesses significant risk they will contact Hackney Council:
 - For Adults:
 - Address:** Hackney Service Centre, 1 Hillman Street, E8 1DY
 - Telephone:** 020 8356 5782
 - Telephone:** 020 8356 2300 (out of hours)
 - Fax:** 020 8356 5043 (020 8356 2374 out of hours)
 - Email:** adultprotection@hackney.gov.uk
 - For Children
 - Address:** Children and Young People's Access and Assessment Social Work Service, Hackney Service Centre, 1 Hillman Street, E8 1DY
 - Telephone:** 020 8356 5500 (Mon to Fri 9am - 5pm)
 - Telephone:** 020 8356 2710 (Emergency Out of Hours Team)
 - Email:** fast@hackney.gov.uk
- If the Executive Director believes it is an emergency they must call 999.
- If the person reporting the abuse believes it is a emergency and there would be delay reporting to the Executive Director they should call 999, then report to the Executive Director the action they have taken. In an emergency
- Employees and volunteers must not discuss individual cases with any other person, including a member of that individual's family or the alleged abuser.
- There should be no discussion about individual cases with other employees or volunteers where this is not necessary.

- The Executive Director will record information and actions relating to concerns of abuse and report to next Healthwatch Hackney Board meeting.
- Information relating to concerns will not be stored where other employees and volunteers can access them, for reasons of data protection. Information will be stored securely for the Executive Director to access as necessary.

Consent and Sharing of Information

For adults

- Any disclosure of abuse must be reported to the named person as soon as possible. People have the right to expect that information shared with a member of staff should be treated as confidential (see Healthwatch Hackney' confidentiality policy and procedures).
- However, it should be made clear that where anyone has a reason to be concerned for the welfare of an adult or a child, they must share the information with someone who is in a position to take action or responsibility.
- If a disclosure of abuse is made by an adult or child, care should be taken to explain the procedure that will be followed and that it may not be possible for Healthwatch Hackney to maintain confidentiality.
- Many of the issues surrounding the disclosure of information can be avoided if the informed consent of the individual has been obtained.
- Consent must be freely given after the alternatives and consequences are made clear to the person from whom permission is being sought.
- If the data is classified as sensitive (see Healthwatch Hackney' Data Protection policy and procedures), the consent must be explicit. In this case, the detail of the processing must be explained.
- If informed consent has not been sought, or sought and withheld, Healthwatch Hackney must consider if there is justification for the disclosure being made to a third party.
- In making this decision and to be compliant with the Human Rights Act, the following questions should be considered:
 - Is the disclosure necessary for the protection of people in vulnerable situations?
 - Is the disclosure necessary for the prevention or detection of crime, to protect

- Public safety or to protect the rights and freedoms of others?
- What will be the impact of the disclosure on the offender?
- Is the disclosure proportionate to the intended aim?
- Is there an equally effective but less intrusive alternative means of meeting the aim?
- Having regard to the seriousness of the abuse and the potential risk to others, disclosure in such circumstances would be justified.

For children

- If you have the slightest concerns about a child or young person's welfare, don't ignore it – do something about it. The Children Act 2004 identifies a child as any young person under the age of 18.

This policy is reviewed annually