Working with Vulnerable Adults Policy

PRN-159: Working with Vulnerable Adults Policy
Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd
Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES
Company Registration Number: 15556946
SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled
Email: admin@carehopes.com
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1. Policy Introduction

CAREHOPES, the trading name of AI Auto-Tech Ltd, is committed to safeguarding and supporting vulnerable adults through safe, respectful, professional, and compassionate companionship services. Vulnerable adults may include elderly individuals, disabled adults, people with long-term health conditions, individuals experiencing mental health challenges, and adults at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

This policy outlines how staff must work with vulnerable adults safely, ethically, and in line with UK safeguarding legislation.

2. Key Principles

- **Zero tolerance:** Abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm are never acceptable.
- **Respect:** Vulnerable adults must be treated with dignity and courtesy.
- **Safety:** Safeguarding is central to all companionship work.
- **Autonomy:** Adults have the right to make choices about their lives.
- **Boundaries:** Professional limits protect both staff and service users.
- **Awareness:** Staff must recognise signs of vulnerability and risk.
- **Reporting:** Concerns must be escalated immediately.
- **Compliance:** All actions align with UK safeguarding legislation.

3. Policy Statement

CAREHOPES ensures that all staff:

- Recognise vulnerability and risk
- Support autonomy and independence
- Maintain professional boundaries

- Report safeguarding concerns immediately
- Document concerns accurately
- Communicate respectfully
- Avoid coercion, manipulation, or pressure
- Protect vulnerable adults from harm

Staff must **not**:

- Ignore signs of abuse or neglect
- Provide personal contact details
- Engage in inappropriate relationships
- Offer financial support
- Breach confidentiality
- Remain in unsafe environments

4. Purpose

- Protect vulnerable adults from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Ensure staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- Promote safe, ethical companionship practice
- Strengthen organisational safeguarding culture
- Support autonomy, dignity, and emotional wellbeing
- Ensure compliance with UK safeguarding legislation

5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Agency workers
- Zero-contract workers (**PRN-149**)

It covers vulnerable adult safeguarding in:

- Private homes
- Community settings

- Public spaces
- Holiday companionship
- Overnight companionship
- Digital environments

6. Related Policies

Safeguarding & Protection

PRN-003 Adult Safeguarding Policy PRN-136 Safeguarding Children Policy PRN-144 Child Abuse Policy PRN-116 Domestic Abuse Policy PRN-131 Prevent Duty Awareness Policy PRN-129 Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy PRN-070 Safeguarding Reporting and Escalation Procedure

Conduct, Ethics & Behaviour

PRN-014 Code of Conduct Policy PRN-015 Code of Ethics PRN-099 Professional Boundaries Policy PRN-004 Anti Harassment & Anti Discrimination Policy PRN-030 Dignity and Respect Policy PRN-139 Staff Conduct and Behaviour Policy

Client & Service User Interaction

PRN-011 Client Engagement Policy PRN-012 Client Interaction & Communication Policy PRN-137 Service User Rights Policy PRN-138 Service User Involvement Policy PRN-109 Companionship Standards Policy PRN-017 Companion Charter

Safety, Health & Risk Management

PRN-046 Health and Safety Policy PRN-069 Risk Assessment Policy PRN-100 Environmental Safety & Home Condition Policy PRN-121 First Aid Policy

7. Definitions

Vulnerable Adult: A person aged 18 or over who is unable to protect themselves from harm due to age, disability, illness, mental health, or circumstances.

Abuse: Any action causing harm, distress, or exploitation.

Neglect: Failure to meet basic needs or protect from harm.

Coercion: Pressure or manipulation that restricts autonomy.

8. Recognising Vulnerability and Risk

Staff must be alert to:

8.1 Physical Indicators

- Poor hygiene
- Malnutrition

- Unexplained injuries
- Unsafe home conditions

8.2 Emotional Indicators

- Withdrawal
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Fearfulness

8.3 Behavioural Indicators

- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Confusion or disorientation
- Signs of coercion or control
- Reluctance to speak freely

8.4 Environmental Indicators

- Unsafe living conditions
- Presence of aggressive individuals
- Substance misuse in the home
- Financial exploitation risks

9. Companion Responsibilities

9.1 Safeguarding

Companions must:

- Treat concerns as safeguarding emergencies
- Report concerns immediately
- Avoid confronting suspected perpetrators
- Protect vulnerable adults from harm

9.2 Professional Boundaries

Companions must **not**:

- Provide personal contact details
- Form personal or romantic relationships
- Offer financial assistance

- Accept inappropriate gifts
- Provide personal transport outside approved procedures

9.3 Ethical Conduct

Companions must:

- Uphold organisational values
- Maintain confidentiality
- Document concerns accurately
- Support autonomy and independence

10. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

10.1 Immediate Actions

Companions must:

- Report concerns to the DSL
- Document factual observations
- Avoid making assumptions
- Avoid escalating conflict

10.2 Emergency Situations

If a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger:

- Call emergency services
- Move to a safe location
- Inform the office immediately

10.3 External Reporting

The DSL may contact:

- Local Authority Adult Social Care
- Police
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Mental health crisis teams

11. Working with Vulnerable Adults in Different Settings

11.1 Private Homes

- Observe interactions sensitively

- Maintain boundaries
- Report concerns discreetly

11.2 Community Settings

- Maintain public professionalism
- Avoid unsafe environments

11.3 Digital Environments

- Recognise unsafe digital behaviour
- Avoid personal digital contact

11.4 Holiday & Overnight Companionship

- Maintain boundaries
- Avoid informal behaviour
- Ensure safe sleeping arrangements

12. Supporting Autonomy and Independence

Companions must:

- Encourage decision-making
- Respect preferences
- Avoid coercion or pressure
- Support confidence and independence

13. Documentation & Record Keeping

Records must include:

- Observations
- Reports
- Actions taken
- Safeguarding escalations
- Communication with authorities

Records must be stored securely.

14. Training Requirements

Staff must receive training in:

- Vulnerable adult safeguarding

- Recognising abuse and neglect
- Trauma-informed practice
- Professional boundaries
- Domestic abuse awareness
- Mental capacity
- Digital safety

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to:

- Legislative changes
- Safeguarding updates
- Organisational changes
- Workforce feedback