SAFEGUARDING REPORTING AND ESCALATION PROCEDURE

PRN-118: Safeguarding Reporting and Escalation Procedure
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. Purpose

This procedure provides clear guidance for employees and volunteers on how to recognise, report, record, and escalate safeguarding concerns involving adults at risk.

The organisation is committed to ensuring that safeguarding concerns are identified and acted upon promptly, effectively, and in accordance with legal and safeguarding responsibilities.

This procedure aims to:

- Protect adults from abuse and neglect.
- Ensure concerns are reported promptly.
- Promote consistent safeguarding practice.
- Clarify reporting responsibilities.
- Support timely escalation of concerns.
- Maintain accurate safeguarding records.

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2. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Managers
- Directors

- Trustees
- Students and placements
- Contractors working on behalf of the organisation

The procedure applies to concerns involving:

- Service users
- Adults at risk encountered during service delivery
- Members of the public where safeguarding concerns arise

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3. Key Principle

If in doubt, report it.

Employees and volunteers are not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred.

Their responsibility is to:

- Recognise concerns.
- Respond appropriately.
- Record information accurately.
- Report concerns immediately.

Investigations must only be undertaken by authorised agencies.

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4. Types of Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may involve:

Physical Abuse

- Hitting
- Slapping
- Assault
- Misuse of medication

Emotional or Psychological Abuse

- Threats

- Intimidation
- Humiliation
- Bullying

Financial or Material Abuse

- Theft
- Fraud
- Exploitation
- Misuse of finances

Neglect and Acts of Omission

- Failure to provide appropriate care
- Lack of basic necessities
- Poor living conditions

Discriminatory Abuse

- Harassment
- Hate incidents
- Unequal treatment

Organisational Abuse

- Poor practice within services
- Unsafe procedures

Self-Neglect

- Failure to care for personal wellbeing
- Hoarding
- Significant health risks

Domestic Abuse

- Coercive control
- Financial control
- Emotional abuse
- Physical harm

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5. Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may arise through:

- Direct disclosure.
- Observation of injuries.
- Behavioural changes.
- Environmental concerns.
- Reports from others.
- Financial irregularities.
- Signs of neglect.
- Professional judgement.

Employees and volunteers should remain alert to signs that a person may be at risk.

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6. Immediate Danger

If a person is at immediate risk of serious harm:

Step 1

Call **999** immediately.

Step 2

Take reasonable action to keep yourself and others safe.

Step 3

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Manager as soon as possible.

Step 4

Complete safeguarding records at the earliest safe opportunity.

Emergency action should never be delayed while seeking managerial approval.

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7. Responding to a Disclosure

If an individual discloses abuse or neglect:

Do:

- Remain calm.
- Listen carefully.
- Take the information seriously.
- Reassure the person they have done the right thing.
- Explain that the information may need to be shared.
- Clarify facts if necessary.

Do Not:

- Promise confidentiality.
- Ask leading questions.
- Investigate.
- Challenge the person's account.
- Express shock or disbelief.
- Confront the alleged perpetrator.

The priority is to listen and report.

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8. Recording Safeguarding Concerns

As soon as possible after receiving information:

Record:

- Date and time.
- Location.
- Individuals involved.
- Exact words used where possible.
- Observations made.
- Actions taken.
- Witnesses present.

Records should be:

- Accurate.
- Factual.
- Objective.
- Legible.
- Signed and dated.

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9. Reporting Procedure

When a safeguarding concern is identified:

Step 1

Ensure immediate safety where possible.

Step 2

Record the concern.

Step 3

Report the concern immediately to:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL); or
- Manager.

Step 4

Submit safeguarding documentation.

Step 5

Cooperate with any further safeguarding actions.

Safeguarding concerns should be reported on the same day whenever possible.

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10. Reporting Timescales

Level of Concern	Reporting Timeframe
Immediate danger	Immediately / 999

Serious safeguarding concern	Immediately
Significant concern requiring referral	Same working day
Emerging concern requiring monitoring	As soon as identified

Delays in reporting may place individuals at increased risk.

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11. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Receiving safeguarding reports.
- Assessing risk.
- Determining next actions.
- Making external referrals.
- Maintaining safeguarding records.
- Supporting staff and volunteers.
- Liaising with relevant agencies.

The DSL does not replace statutory safeguarding agencies.

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12. Safeguarding Decision-Making

Following receipt of a concern, the DSL or Manager may:

- Take no further action where appropriate.
- Seek further information.
- Implement risk management measures.
- Make a safeguarding referral.
- Consult with safeguarding professionals.
- Refer concerns to emergency services.

Actions should be proportionate to the level of risk identified.

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13. Escalation Procedure

Concerns must be escalated where:

- Risk is increasing.
- Immediate action is required.
- Concerns are not being addressed.
- There is disagreement regarding safeguarding actions.
- Additional professional support is required.

Escalation should be prompt and documented.

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14. Concerns About a Volunteer or Employee

If allegations involve an employee or volunteer:

Step 1

Report immediately to the Manager or DSL.

Step 2

Do not discuss concerns with the individual concerned.

Step 3

The organisation will determine appropriate safeguarding and management actions.

Step 4

Relevant agencies may be informed where required.

Safeguarding considerations take priority.

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15. Concerns About a Manager

If concerns involve a manager:

Report directly to:

- Director
- Senior Manager
- Trustee (where applicable)

Employees and volunteers should not feel prevented from raising concerns because of organisational hierarchy.

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16. Whistleblowing and Safeguarding

If an individual believes safeguarding concerns are:

- Being ignored.
- Being concealed.
- Not being reported appropriately.

They should follow the Whistleblowing Policy.

Individuals raising genuine concerns in good faith will be supported.

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17. Information Sharing

Safeguarding concerns may require information sharing.

Information should be:

- Relevant.
- Necessary.
- Accurate.
- Timely.
- Shared securely.

Safeguarding concerns may justify sharing information without consent where risk of harm exists.

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18. External Referrals

The Designated Safeguarding Lead may refer concerns to:

- Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team.
- Police.
- NHS services.
- Emergency services.
- Community Safety Partnerships.
- Relevant regulatory bodies.

Referral decisions should be documented.

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19. Safeguarding Case Management

Following a referral, the organisation may:

- Participate in safeguarding meetings.
- Share relevant information.
- Implement safety plans.
- Support service users.
- Monitor ongoing risks.

The welfare of the individual should remain the guiding principle.

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20. Confidentiality

Safeguarding information must be handled confidentially.

Information should only be shared:

- For safeguarding purposes.
- On a need-to-know basis.
- In accordance with legal requirements.

Confidentiality must never prevent appropriate safeguarding action.

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21. Supporting Employees and Volunteers

Safeguarding situations can be emotionally challenging.

Support may include:

- Debriefing.
- Supervision.
- Wellbeing support.
- Additional guidance.
- Further training.

Support should be available following significant safeguarding incidents.

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22. Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart

Concern Identified

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Ensure Immediate Safety

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Record Facts

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Report to DSL / Manager

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DSL Risk Assessment

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Referral Required?

Yes → Refer to External Agency

No → Monitor / Take Internal Action

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Record Outcome

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Review and Follow-Up

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23. Case Study

Scenario: Possible Financial Abuse

During a companionship visit, a volunteer notices that a service user appears distressed and reports that a relative has been taking money from their account without permission.

Action Taken

- The volunteer listens calmly.
- Reassures the service user.
- Records the disclosure accurately.
- Reports the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Outcome

A safeguarding referral is made to the Local Authority and appropriate protective measures are implemented.

Learning Point

Staff and volunteers should report concerns promptly and avoid conducting their own investigations.

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24. Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Responsible for:

- Managing safeguarding concerns.
- Making referrals.
- Maintaining records.
- Supporting staff and volunteers.

Managers

Responsible for:

- Supporting safeguarding reporting.
- Escalating concerns appropriately.
- Following safeguarding procedures.

Employees and Volunteers

Responsible for:

- Remaining vigilant.
- Reporting concerns immediately.
- Recording information accurately.
- Participating in safeguarding training.

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25. Monitoring and Review

The organisation will monitor:

- Safeguarding reports.

- Referral outcomes.
- Reporting timescales.
- Training completion.
- Safeguarding audits.
- Lessons learned.

Findings will be used to strengthen safeguarding practice and improve organisational learning.

Related Policies

- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Financial Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Incident Reporting Policy
- Records Management and Record Keeping Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy