



West Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue Service

Safeguarding Policy

PRE-POL-002



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1 What is our offer?

West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service will report all situations where a safeguarding issue has taken place, is threatened or where an omission of care has been identified or is suspected.

We will therefore ensure that all our staff are:

- Knowledgeable about how to recognise abuse, neglect and self-neglect.
- Confident about when and how to report those at risk.

We will respond to any cause for concern in line with our [Safeguarding Procedure](#) and the 'Joint Multi-agency Safeguarding Adult's Policy and Procedures', West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and York (2018).

Safeguarding applies to the protection of children, and vulnerable adults, from abuse and neglect and applies in different settings i.e., they may live independently or receive formal or informal care. A vulnerable adult is any adult who may be in need of support or care services and is unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation.

Our decision to raise a cause for concern or safeguarding referral should be made, wherever possible, in conjunction with the person concerned if they have the capacity to contribute to the decision. During our delivery of the identification and reporting of safeguarding cases, we will:

- Ensure individuals are empowered and encouraged to make their own informed decisions.
- Treat individuals fairly and with dignity and respect.
- Take action to prevent harm in a timely manner.
- Act proportionally to the risk presented.
- Be accountable and transparent in our processes.
- Support and represent those in the greatest need.
- Work together in partnership to ensure people are protected from neglect and abuse.

We are a reporting agency only, so no member of staff will investigate any incident of abuse unless they have been designated a specific role as part of a formal safeguarding authority investigation.

Where an adult is not subject to abuse but is at some risk, perhaps due to an element of self-neglect, and may benefit from further engagement with support or care agencies we will, with permission, access suitable support through our existing referral pathways or through direct referrals as appropriate.

We will always report situations where a child's future health or development may be negatively affected by the situation within which they live. Child protection is part of our safeguarding process; in addition to focussing on protecting individual children who have been identified as experiencing actual harm or abuse we will also take action to report those who are likely to experience harm.

Occasionally, we may see something occurring, or someone may disclose some information, which implies or suggests that someone else is at potential risk of abuse. This abuse may include child sexual exploitation, honour-based violence, human trafficking, intrafamilial abuse, forced marriage, forced labour, domestic servitude and hate crime.

This acquired information, by itself, may not be enough for us to raise a safeguarding cause for concern but, when put together with other information that may be held by our partners, indicates that abuse is taking place or likely to occur. We will share this information with relevant partners as soft intelligence.

2 Accessibility

We will always try to seek agreement and permission prior to raising a cause for concern and will be open in our reasons for concern. We will have regard to the person's views, wishes, feelings and beliefs when deciding on any action, recognising that they may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances. We will always contact the appropriate emergency service if someone is in immediate danger. Our safeguarding policy is published on our website.

3 Partnerships

We are represented on each of West Yorkshire's safeguarding panels and as such are committed to the principles of safeguarding as defined by the Department of Health. We will work together with others to prevent and stop the risks and experience of abuse or neglect arising and to access suitable support when it does. We review our partnerships regularly to ensure the systems and processes in place are effective.

4 Data and information sharing

Any information gathered by WYFRS staff is recorded electronically and securely at the earliest opportunity. Information is shared on a need-to-know basis both within the organisation and with others. People are able to access their data and information by request in line with current Data Protection legislation.

5 Equality and Diversity

All WYFRS staff should raise any cause for concern that they become aware of. Our internal safeguarding procedure ensures that all those affected by or subject to a cause for concern are treated fairly and with respect regardless of their faith, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or race.

6 Change / Review Record

Date	Approver(s)	Version	Comments	Review Date
7/9/23	Emma Gealy		Styles updated	Sept 25