

Safeguarding Policy

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Audience:	All internal and external audiences		
Owner:	Governance Committee	Author:	ADCH Central Team
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1. Purpose

This policy outlines the Association of Dogs and Cats Homes' (ADCH's) commitment to safeguarding and provides our staff, trustees and volunteers, as well as our Members and those we work with, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

2. Scope

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of ADCH, including our staff, board of trustees, and volunteers.

3. Commitment to Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the process of protecting people's health, wellbeing, and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect. It involves identifying and responding to risks, promoting welfare, and ensuring that individuals, especially those who may be vulnerable, are safe in all interactions with an organisation.

ADCH is committed to:

- Creating a safe, caring, and respectful environment for all those we encounter as part of our charitable activities.
- Recognising our duty to safeguard and protect everyone's right to live in safety, free from fear and harm.
- Recognising that children, young people, vulnerable adults and those from minority groups can experience the need for greater safeguarding protections.
- Promoting the welfare of all people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.
- Giving equal priority to keeping all people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- Responding appropriately to any safeguarding concerns in line with our safeguarding procedures.
- Ensuring all individuals working on our behalf understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

4. Safeguarding Actions

ADCH will seek to keep people (especially children, young people and vulnerable adults) safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL
- Adopting safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and codes of conduct for staff and volunteers

- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- Making sure that staff and volunteers know where to go for help if they have a concern
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe environment for our staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, and all those we work with, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

ADCH's DSL is Rebecca Cooper (Executive Director). ADCH's Deputy DSL is Giles Webber (Chair of Trustees).

The role of the DSL is to oversee our safeguarding policy and processes at ADCH, and to respond to any safeguarding incidents or concerns that may arise.

Their responsibilities are:

- Managing, reviewing and, where necessary referring, all safeguarding concerns
- Implementing lessons learned from safeguarding incidents and concerns
- Ensuring safeguarding risks and controls are appropriately included in the organisational Risk Register
- Ensuring all our people have the relevant level of safeguarding training, skills and knowledge
- Ensuring all our people are recruited safely and appropriately
- Reviewing this safeguarding policy annually or sooner

The Deputy DSL will be available to support or cover for the DSL. They will also handle any complaints or allegations against the DSL.

6. Safeguarding Procedures

ADCH staff and volunteers will find guidance and advice on how to perform their safeguarding duties in ADCH's Safeguarding Procedures documents:

[Safeguarding Procedure - Children and Young People.docx](#)

[Safeguarding Procedure - Adults at Risk V1.docx](#)

7. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes in legislation or safeguarding guidance.

Version History

Version	Changes Made	Date	Made by
2	Published	21/09/2023	Emily Sockett, Training and Assessment Manager
3	Re-written	23/10/2025	ADCH Central Team
3	Approved	24/03/2026	Board