

Safeguarding Corporate Policy

Why this Policy matters

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility; we all have a duty to protect children (under 18) and adults at risk from harm, abuse, and exploitation. The BBC Safeguarding Team is responsible for the strategic direction and operationalising the organisation's legal and regulatory responsibilities for safeguarding [children](#) (under the age of 18) and adults at risk (those aged 18 years and older who require additional support).

This Policy outlines the moral and legal expectations to protect children and adults at risk from harm and in addition the actions required to uphold BBC values, thus reducing the risk of reputational damage or legal liability. The BBC take allegations against employees and contractors regarding children and adults at risk, extremely seriously and take appropriate action. This may include an internal investigation or referral to an external agency such as: the police, relevant Local Authority, and the Disclosure and Barring Service. You may read more in the Whistleblowing and Investigations Corporate Policy.

Abuse has a devastating impact on a child's life, which frequently persists into adulthood. If someone is found to have harmed a child, they may be taken into custody and face legal action. They could be banned from working with children in the future and be subject to assessments in relation to their own children or children who are linked to them. There are five recognised categories of abuse: **Physical, Sexual, Emotional, Neglect and Bullying**. You may read more about [how to recognise the signs of abuse](#).

Anyone found to be operating in breach of Child Performance Licencing legislation is committing a criminal offence and may be subject to financial penalties. You may be forced to stop operating, have broadcasting licences revoked, lose crucial funding or support from partners. You may read more about [Child Performance Licensing](#).

Who this Policy applies to

This Policy applies to you if:

1. You work for, or represent, the BBC or one of its subsidiaries, and
2. You come into contact with or influence children or adults at risk, as part of your role.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- employees, full-time or part-time
- those on a fixed term or temporary contract
- freelancers, contractors or consultants
- volunteers or interns

The essential things you must do or not do

These high-level essential mandatory requirements are the most important for you to understand and follow to meet the Policy objectives.

1. You must contact the emergency services on 999 or relevant country emergency number before following the reporting process below if a child or adult at risk is in **immediate danger**.

Our priority is to protect children and adults at risk from harm, ensuring their safety and promoting their welfare. You may read more [guidance on contacting the emergency services](#).

2. You must report any concerns about the safety or well-being of a child or adult at risk to the **Safeguarding Team** immediately.

Report concerns to the **Safeguarding Team** via the online reporting system; a safeguarding specialist will apply the Safeguarding Escalation Framework. Commissioning Editors may act as conduits for reporting these concerns where they are raised by Indies (Independent Production Companies). We also encourage you to report low level concerns which can be discussed with the Safeguarding Team or your Working with Children Advisor to preserve confidentiality. You may read more about [how to report a safeguarding concern](#).

3. You must be aware of the types and signs of abuse, and know how to deal with a disclosure. All employees and contractors must complete the mandatory Safety, Security, and Safeguarding online course. If your role requires a criminal records check, you must undertake additional Safeguarding Advanced training.

You may read more about the [types and signs of abuse](#) and [how to deal with a disclosure](#).

You may read more about [safeguarding training including how to book it](#).

4. You must obtain written consent with the person who has parental responsibility, before involving children under the age of 16 in any BBC activity.

You may read more [detailed information in the Editorial Guidelines on working with children](#).

For any queries relating to: Consent, Identification, Content, or Aftercare regarding children or adults at risk, please contact an Editorial Advisor.

5. You must assess and document the safeguarding risks when planning any activity with children or adults at risk. You must prioritise the physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing of these contributors even if you have informed consent. **A child or adult at risk's welfare takes priority over any editorial need.**

It is best practice to work on a 'worst case scenario' basis when considering all aspects of the potential for harm. You may read guidance on assessing safeguarding risks or contact the Safety Team for support on completing an online risk assessment.

6. You must never be alone with a child. Children must be supervised by a licensed chaperone or an appropriate adult, for those children who fall outside of licencing conditions, at all times while on a BBC site/location. A parent, guardian, or family member must not be used, unless the child has specific needs, or the performance licence specifies this.

We recommend a supervision ratio of one licensed chaperone per six children (1:6); however, you may need additional chaperones if any of the children have individual needs. You may read more on [child supervision and working with chaperones](#).

7. You must adhere to 'Safer Recruitment' practices defined by HR (or refer to your own internal policies if you are a third party), to ensure employees are suitable to work with children and adults at risk. Anyone whose role requires a criminal record check must work under **restricted duties** until their certificate is approved.

You may read more [guidance on safer recruitment](#) and [more about restricted duties](#).