

International 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 internationally. 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 mirrors the safeguarding standards of the BBC Safeguarding Corporate Policy (UK), but takes into account the diverse and complex international environments within which we work. Local legislation may vary from country to country, therefore this policy identifies the BBC's minimum standards which may exceed the local legislation requirements.

This policy outlines the moral and legal expectations to protect children and adults at risk from harm internationally 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 or relevant authorities. 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 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 four recognised categories of abuse internationally: **Physical, Sexual, Emotional, and Neglect**. You may read more about [how to recognise the signs of abuse](#).

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, fixers or consultants
- volunteers or interns

If you work in Studios, refer to the *Studios Policy Hub* in case of policy variations specific to Studios.

Overview

We discharge our safeguarding responsibility in-line with legislation and provide an assurance and governance structure based on industry 'best-practice'. For further reading, you can click each of the links below:

- [Legislation](#)
- [Governance](#)
- [Assurance and Vetting](#)
- [Information Sharing](#)
- [Third Party Engagement](#)
- [Children on BBC Sites](#)

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.

In addition to these, there are detailed requirements and best practices outlined in supporting procedures and guidance, linked below. Read this information when you need to understand the detail.

If you have any concerns or conflicting priorities that prevent you following the essential requirements, please discuss them with one of the people listed in the section under 'Where to go for help and exceptions'. Without an approved exception, breaches may put the BBC at risk and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, or termination of our relationship with you.

1. You must contact the emergency services on the 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 ISPOC 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 (or police background 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](#), plus you may read a series of [‘7 minute briefing’ guides \(BBC Login required\)](#) which provide further information about safeguarding topics.

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 at all times by an appropriate adult. All activities should be organised so there is a parent/guardian/chaperone present at all times.

You may read more on [child supervision](#).

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 with care and support needs. 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](#).

Where to go for help or an exception

For general advice on this Policy or to suggest improvements, contact the First Point of Contact listed below.

You may read [general advice on working with children outside of the UK](#) or, for employees and contractors, the [Safeguarding Gateway Hub – International](#).

For specific questions or concerns, you can also speak with your line manager or HR Business Partner. If you prefer to raise anonymous concerns about the Policy, or compliance, you may use the [Whistleblowing](#) channel.

For confidential support, you may access the [Employee Assistance Programme](#).

If you believe you need a business-critical exception to this Policy, discuss the need with the First Point of Contact listed below. If appropriate, they will facilitate exception approval from the Policy Owner.

Note that exceptions are rare and must be thoroughly justified. No exceptions can be made to legal requirements.

For employees outside the UK, please consult your local management for guidance on regional variations or additional support options.

Responsible individuals

First Point of Contact: Kim Collins – Head of Safeguarding

Policy Owner: Simon Adair – Director Safety, Security and Resilience

Executive Sponsor: Leigh Tavaziva – Chief Operating Officer

Document Control

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16/12/2024	1.0	Megan Wright	Original version