

Labour Party

# **Safeguarding and Member Welfare Policy**

(2018)

# Labour Party Safeguarding and Member Welfare Policy

1. Introduction
2. Policy Statement
3. Key principles
4. Application
5. Definitions
6. Safeguarding Accountability
7. Reporting a safeguarding concern
8. Action by the Safeguarding Unit
9. Reporting a welfare concern
10. Sexual Harassment
11. Information sharing
12. Safer recruitment
13. Vetting
14. Recruitment of ex-offenders
15. Guidance available
16. Key contacts
17. Policy ownership

## 1. Introduction

The Labour Party Safeguarding and Member Welfare Policy demonstrates our commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse who are members of, volunteer with or who otherwise engage with the Labour Party. It also demonstrates our commitment to protecting and supporting any person when there are concerns about their physical or mental wellbeing.

The policy provides staff, members, volunteers and elected representatives with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and protecting children and adults who may be at risk of abuse.

## 2. Policy Statement

The Labour Party believes that it is unacceptable for anyone to experience abuse of any kind, in any circumstances including through social media and other online activity. Children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse have a legal right to protection from all forms of abuse. We have a duty of care to ensure that this remains the case throughout all contact that members have with us.

The Labour Party welcomes its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults and is committed to safeguarding practices and procedures which protect them and to providing a welcoming and safe environment in which they can engage with the activities of the Labour Party.

## 3. Key principles

The Labour Party recognises that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991 and the current relevant legislations and associated statutory guidance in place in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

---

<sup>1</sup> The Labour Party definition of an adult at risk uses the Department for Health definition of a Vulnerable Adult <https://www.england.nhs.uk/>  
<sup>2</sup> Definition of harm under Section 31(9) of the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002

- There are differences in health and social care structures and legislation for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Labour Party adopts the principle that safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse is paramount and we will comply with the relevant legislation and structures applicable to each country.
- We can make a positive contribution to safeguarding adults and children and preventing abuse and by ensuring that our staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives can identify the signs that a child or adult may be suffering abuse and that they know how to report their concern to ensure that action is taken to protect the individual(s) involved.
- All children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse regardless of age; disability; gender re-assignment; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation or identity;
- Some children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse have additional vulnerabilities because of their previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues;
- Working with children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential when protecting them and promoting their welfare.
- It is not the responsibility of the Labour Party to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, however, it is the responsibility of staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives of the Party to report any cause for concern, in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any protective action which is necessary.

#### 4. Application

This policy applies to all staff, members, volunteers and elected representatives of the Labour Party including the National Executive Committee and any other person working on behalf of the Labour Party.

Where the Labour Party is working in partnership with other organisations, including affiliated organisations, they are expected to have their own safeguarding arrangements in place but where these do not exist then extracts of the Labour Party Safeguarding and Member Welfare Policy, related procedures and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct will apply to them and this will form part of any partnership or contractual arrangement from the outset.

#### 5. Definitions

- **Child:** A person under the age of eighteen years old. The fact that a young person has reached the age of sixteen, is living independently, is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or is in custody does not change their entitlement to protection.
- **Adult at risk:** A person aged eighteen years old or over, who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation<sup>1</sup>.
- **Abuse:** Maltreatment of a child or adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult at risk by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may be perpetrated by an adult towards an adult at risk, an adult towards a child, a child towards another child, or a child towards an adult at risk.
- **Safeguarding and promoting welfare:** Protecting children and adults at risk from maltreatment, preventing harm to their development, ensuring they grow up or live with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable them to have the best outcomes.
- **Harm:** The ill-treatment or impairment of the health or development of an individual, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another<sup>2</sup>.
- **Safeguarding concern:** When there is information that a child, young person or an adult at risk has been harmed, or is at risk of being harmed, by their own or someone else's behaviour.
- **Welfare concern:** When there is information that there is a risk to the physical or mental wellbeing of a member of staff or a volunteer, member or elected representative of the Labour Party or any other person (a welfare concern may also constitute a safeguarding concern).

<sup>1</sup> The Labour Party definition of an adult at risk uses the Department for Health definition of a Vulnerable Adult <https://www.england.nhs.uk/>  
<sup>2</sup> Definition of harm under Section 31(9) of the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002

- **Safeguarding Allegation:** Where a person has:
  - a) behaved in a way that has harmed a child or an adult at risk, may have harmed a child or an adult at risk, or behaved in a way that might lead to a child or an adult at risk being harmed;
  - b) possibly committed or is planning to commit a criminal offence against a child or an adult at risk or related to a child or an adult at risk, or;
  - c) behaved towards a child or an adult at risk in a way that indicates they are, or would be, unsuitable to work with children or adults at risk
- **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):** A named individual within the organisation who is responsible for the management of safeguarding allegations. The DSO is responsible for reporting safeguarding allegations to the police and/or Local Authority Services (LAS) for children or adults within statutory timescales. The DSO will be responsible for liaising with the police or LAS during an investigation and they will attend case management conferences if required.

## 6. Safeguarding accountability

Safeguarding our members and in particular children, young people and adults at risk is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives of the Labour Party. The responsibility extends to employees, volunteers and members of organisations that the party works in partnership with including affiliated organisations and contractors to the organisation.

- The National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Labour Party has overall accountability for safeguarding provision.
- The Executive Director - Governance, Membership & Party Services has strategic responsibility for safeguarding provision across the party.
- The Labour Party Safeguarding Unit is responsible for the planning and delivery of effective safeguarding provision across the organisation. The unit is composed of the Director of Human Resources & Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Manager.
- The Director of Human Resources & Safeguarding is responsible for the planning, implementation and delivery of safeguarding provision across the party. They act as the Designated Safeguarding Person for the organisation<sup>3</sup>.
- The Safeguarding Manager is also responsible for the planning, implementation and delivery of safeguarding provision across the party. They act as a Designated Safeguarding Officer for the organisation.
- A network of staff members in regional and national offices and the Parliamentary Labour Party will act as Regional Safeguarding Leads. They will be responsible for:
  - Promoting the Labour Party safeguarding policy, procedures and guidance in their region and regional office (or organisational unit in the case of the Parliamentary Labour Party)
  - Delivering safeguarding awareness events and promoting the safeguarding training available
  - Acting as a name point of contact for staff, volunteers and members to go to for safeguarding advice or if they have a safeguarding concern
  - Escalating safeguarding concerns to the national Safeguarding Unit

## 7. Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

### *Safeguarding reporting principles*

**Recognise** - that a child, young person or adult at risk is being harmed or might be at risk of harm

**Respond** – appropriately if a child, young person or adult at risk tells you about what is happening to them or somebody else

**Report** – your concern. Don't keep it to yourself or try to deal with it on your own

**Record** – your concern and who it has been reported to

---

<sup>3</sup> The role of the Designated Safeguarding Person is specified in the Children Act 2004 ensuring that every organisation had a "named person" for safeguarding children and young people.

Further details of these principles are provided in 'Safeguarding procedures for members of staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives of the Labour Party'.

### Definition of a safeguarding concern

Where there is information that a child, young person or adult at risk has been harmed, or is at risk of being harmed, by their own or someone else's behaviour.

### Reporting a safeguarding concern

It is important that safeguarding concerns are reported promptly so that the report can be assessed and action taken to protect the people involved. Members of staff, volunteers, members or elected representatives of the Labour Party must report safeguarding concerns to the Regional Safeguarding Lead or the Safeguarding Unit no later than the next working day that the concern is raised or received. The Safeguarding Unit telephone number is 0207 783 1134.

If any person is at immediate risk of harm or requires medical attention the emergency services should be contacted immediately by telephoning 999. Once the safety and welfare needs of the individual have been addressed the Safeguarding Unit must be contacted as soon as practicable.

There are a number of ways to report a safeguarding concern:

1. Members, volunteers and elected representatives can report safeguarding concerns to their Regional Safeguarding Lead (RSL) who will offer advice and guidance and will escalate the report to the Safeguarding Unit;
2. Staff members, volunteers, members and elected representatives can report safeguarding concerns to the Labour Party Complaints Team who will record the concern and refer it to the Safeguarding Unit;
3. Staff members, volunteers, members and elected representatives can also report safeguarding concerns directly to the Safeguarding Unit;
4. Members of the public, the police service and/or Local Authority Services can report safeguarding concerns via the Complaints team or directly to the Safeguarding Unit;

If a member of the public, police or Local Authority Services reports a safeguarding concern to another individual or unit of the organisation it **must** be referred to the Safeguarding Unit for assessment no later than the next working day.

A safeguarding concern **must not** be investigated by any individual within the Labour Party except in cases where the Safeguarding Unit has received the report, assessed the information and agreed, in writing, with a party unit, for example the Disputes team or a regional office, that they will start an investigation.

### Reporting a safeguarding concern



Any member of staff, volunteer, member and elected representative can contact the Safeguarding Unit for advice, support or guidance by telephoning 0207 783 1134 or emailing [safeguarding@labour.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@labour.org.uk).

If for any reason the Safeguarding Unit cannot be contacted, the following organisations can be contacted for advice:

- Concern about a child or young person - The NSPCC helpline can be contacted for advice and guidance. The helpline is available twenty-four hours a day by telephoning 0808 800 5000;
- Concern about an adult at risk - You should contact the Local Authority Services for Adult Social Care. Use the <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council> website to find the Local Authority Services for your area;
- Children and young people can contact Childline which is available twenty-four hours a day by telephoning 0800 1111. All calls are free;
- Adults and adults at risk can contact the Samaritans for support. They are available twenty four hours a day by telephoning 116 123. All calls are free.

## 8. Action by the Safeguarding Unit

The Safeguarding Unit will manage the investigation and respond to any safeguarding concern. The role of the unit is not to investigate the concern reported or to make judgements about the individuals or allegations involved but to ensure that appropriate referrals are made to statutory agencies and/or the police or that effective internal action is taken to keep people safe.

When a safeguarding concern has been reported the Safeguarding Unit will:

- Assess the information received;
- Identify any risks to individuals contained within the report;
- Decide if immediate action is needed to remove, reduce or control the risks identified;
- Take such action if it is required;
- Decide whether the information in the safeguarding concern constitutes a safeguarding allegation against a member of staff, volunteer, member or elected representative of the party;
- Decide whether a referral to the police and/or Local Authority Services for children or adults is required;
- Decide what further action by the Labour Party may be needed for the management of the investigation;

Where it is decided that the information contained in the safeguarding concern constitutes a safeguarding allegation the Safeguarding Unit will follow the Labour Party procedure for the management of a safeguarding allegation.

Where it is decided that the information contained in the safeguarding concern does not constitute a safeguarding allegation the Safeguarding Unit may refer the report to another Labour Party unit.

## 9. Reporting a welfare concern

A welfare concern is any situation in which there is information that there is a risk to the physical or mental wellbeing of a member of the public, a member of staff, a volunteer, member or elected representative of the party (a welfare concern may also constitute a safeguarding concern). Any member of staff, volunteer, member or elected representative of the party who is concerned about the welfare of another person should contact the Safeguarding Unit for guidance on how to support the person involved. The Safeguarding Unit can be telephoned on 0207 783 1134 or emailed at [safeguarding@labour.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@labour.org.uk).

If you believe that there is an **immediate** risk that someone is going to hurt themselves, or someone else, you should contact the police on 999. The police will assess the level of risk and take the action necessary to keep people safe.

### *Threats of suicide, self-harm*

People who contact the party may indicate through what they say, what they write or through their behaviour (in face to face contact) that they may be thinking about or intending to harm themselves. The person may make indirect verbal or written cues, such as "What's the point of living?" "Soon you won't have to worry about me," and "Who cares if I'm dead, anyway?"

Some of the signs that someone may be at risk of suicide:

- lacking energy or appearing particularly tired
- appearing more tearful
- not wanting to talk or be with people
- not wanting to do things they usually enjoy
- a change in routine, such as sleeping or eating more or less than normal
- using alcohol or drugs to cope with feelings
- finding it hard to cope with everyday things
- appearing restless and agitated
- not liking or taking care of themselves or feeling they don't matter
- being un-typically clumsy or accident prone
- becoming withdrawn or losing touch with friends and family

### ***Threats to harm another person***

People who contact the party may also make direct or indirect threats of violence or to harm another person(s) or threats of violence or harm not directed towards a specific person.

### ***What to do***

When there is information that there is a risk to the physical or mental wellbeing of a member of the public, a member of staff, a volunteer, member or elected representative of the party it is vital that we take action to protect people and help them get the support they need for their long-term wellbeing.

If you believe that there is an immediate risk that someone is going to hurt themselves, or someone else, you should contact the police on 999. The police will assess the level of risk and take the action necessary to keep people safe.

When you call the police you should try to have the following information available (do not delay calling the police if the information is not readily available):

- Name of person or people involved
- Date(s) of Birth
- Mobile telephone number
- The person's current location and/or home address
- What is the risk or threat(what has been said or written and why are you concerned)
- Your name, address and phone

Once you have contacted the police telephone the Safeguarding Unit on 0207 783 1134 or 07703 462 539 as soon as possible.

If you believe there is a risk that someone may harm themselves or another person but the risk of this happening is not immediate or does not warrant a call to 999 you must contact the Safeguarding Unit on 0207 783 1134 or the Safeguarding Manager by telephoning 07703 462 539 as soon as possible. The Safeguarding Unit is available between 09:30am and 5pm Monday to Thursday and 09:30am to 4:30pm Friday.

You can email [safeguarding@labour.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@labour.org.uk) but this inbox is not constantly monitored and an email should always be followed up with a phone call.

If you are unable to reach the Safeguarding Unit and are in any doubt about what to do you should contact the police using the non-emergency telephone number 101 to raise your concerns or via 999 in an emergency.

It is essential that you take prompt action to keep people safe.

## 10. Sexual Harassment

[This section will be amended to include the independent telephone helpline once this process has been set up]

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that takes place when someone is subjected to unwelcome and unwanted sexual behaviour or other conduct related to their gender. This can range from inappropriate comments to assault, can be verbal, non-verbal or physical and can take place both in person or online.

The Labour Party will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment. We are committed to ensuring that the party is a welcoming environment for all who share our aims and values to engage in political activity and debate without feeling disadvantaged or unsafe. Any behaviour that is perceived to discriminate against or harass another due to their gender has no place within the Labour Party.

We understand that reporting sexual harassment can be intimidating. If you wish to report sexual harassment or discuss any concerns you can speak to the Head of Complaints by telephoning: 07595 432 542 or by emailing: [complaints@labour.org.uk](mailto:complaints@labour.org.uk)

## 11. Information sharing

The Labour Party recognises that every person has a right to privacy under the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 8) and a common law right to privacy. The Data Protection Act 1998 protects personal data stored on computers or in an organised paper filing system.

Sharing information effectively is essential if we are to protect children, young people and adults at risk who interact or engage with the party. The decision about how much information to share, with whom and when, can have a profound impact on individuals' lives. Poor or non-existent information sharing is a factor repeatedly flagged up as an issue in Serious Case Reviews carried out following the death of, or serious injury to, a child.

The Data Protection Act (1998), human rights and other legislation do not stop the sharing of information if there is a safeguarding concern. In circumstances where staff, members, volunteers or elected representatives believe that a child, young person or adult may be at risk of harm then they should share information with their Regional Safeguarding Lead and/or the Labour Party Safeguarding Unit.

The Safeguarding Unit will manage the process of sharing information with the police, local authority services and/or any third party organisation. Any member of staff, volunteer, member or elected representatives who is asked, or may need, to share information in relation to a safeguarding concern should contact the Safeguarding Unit before doing so, except in cases where there is an immediate risk of harm and the emergency services need to be contacted.

It is important that information about the people and information involved in a safeguarding concern are kept confidential and are only shared with Labour Party staff members who need to know the information. If a member of staff, volunteer, member or elected representative is unsure about whether to share information, or who to share it with, they should contact the Safeguarding Unit for advice by telephoning 0207 783 1134 or by emailing: [safeguarding@labour.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@labour.org.uk) before disclosing any information.

## 12. Safer Recruitment

The safe recruitment of staff is one of the first steps to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk who interact or otherwise engage with the Labour Party. The party is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and keeping them safe and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise that this is best achieved through the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to, and fulfilled in the roles they undertake. The Labour Party will take all reasonable steps to prevent unsuitable people from joining our organisation.

The Labour Party is committed to encouraging and valuing diversity through the development of positive policies to promote equal opportunities for all employees. We will ensure that all new, existing or prospective employees are treated in a fair and equal manner irrespective of; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (This list is not exhaustive).

All new employees of the Labour Party will receive a safeguarding induction to ensure that they know how to report safeguarding concerns and who to speak to for advice and guidance. Every member of staff will receive safeguarding training relevant to and sufficient for their role.

### **13. Vetting**

As part of the development of safer recruitment, selection and vetting the Labour Party will require that staff members and applicants for roles which involve regular engagement or interaction with children, young people or adults at risk undergo vetting by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), formerly referred to as a CRB check, and complete a self-disclosure form. The DBS will search police records and, in relevant cases, barred list information, and then issue a DBS certificate to the applicant.

A vetting check with the DBS will return one of two results, clear or not clear. A clear result is returned when no criminal convictions or relevant information has been found. A not clear result is returned when a criminal conviction or other information of concern has been found. In cases where a not clear result is returned the employee or applicant will be required to bring their certificate to a DBS Disclosure Meeting with a member of the Safeguarding Unit and the Director of Human Resources & Safeguarding. The purpose of the meeting is to gather the information necessary to assess whether the employee or applicant may pose a risk to children or adults at risk. When a decision is made that an employee or applicant for a role may pose a risk to children or adults at risk the HR department will consider what further action is appropriate in line with Labour Party disciplinary and HR policies.

### **14. Recruitment of ex-offenders**

As an organisation undertaking vetting checks to assess candidates' suitability for positions of trust, the Labour Party complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all candidates fairly. The party will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a background check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience. For those positions where vetting checks are required, all application forms and job adverts will contain a statement that the post will be subject to vetting and a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position. Where vetting checks are to form part of the recruitment process the party will encourage all candidates to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process.

Unless the nature of the position allows the Labour Party to ask questions about a candidate's entire criminal record the party will only ask about unspent convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Staff members who make recruitment decisions as part of this process will have guidance and training to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences or information which is disclosed during the vetting process.

### **15. Guidance available**

Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Labour Party Disciplinary policy (detailed in the Staff Handbook)

Labour Party Rule Book

Labour Party Whistleblowing Procedure for staff (detailed in the Staff Handbook)

Labour Party Sexual Harassment Policy

## 16. Key contacts

### *Labour Party Safeguarding Unit*

The Labour Party  
Southside  
105 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1E 6QT

Telephone: 0207 783 1134

Email: [safeguarding@labour.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@labour.org.uk)

### *Holly Snyman*

Director of Human Resources & Safeguarding

Telephone: 0207 783 1442

Email: [holly\\_snyman@labour.org.uk](mailto:holly_snyman@labour.org.uk)

### *Ben Jameson*

Safeguarding Manager

Telephone: 0207 783 1141

Email: [ben\\_jameson@labour.org.uk](mailto:ben_jameson@labour.org.uk)

### *NSPCC*

Helpline (24/7) for advice or guidance on safeguarding concerns about a child or young person

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### *Samaritans*

Offer a safe place for anyone to talk any time they like, in their own way – about whatever's getting to them

Telephone **116 123**

### *Police*

Emergency telephone: 999

Non-emergency telephone: 101

## 17. Policy ownership

The Safeguarding and Member Welfare Policy is owned by the Safeguarding Unit. It will be reviewed every two years and updated in response to new legislation, guidance and/or organisational changes. The Safeguarding Unit will ensure that each published version of this policy is archived with details of when it was in operation.

