



## Safeguarding: Policies & Procedures

Use this page to understand the key safeguarding documents you will need. There are links to templates and tools for creating them.

### Safeguarding policy

Every voluntary sector organisation must have key documents that help it manage safeguarding well. You must have them if your organisation is a charity or if you work regularly with children or adults at risk. These documents set out what your organisation will do to keep people safe.

You must make sure that everyone, no matter what their role, understands the documents and uses them in the day-to-day running of the organisation. Every year you must review how you're doing and address areas for improvement that have come up.

Your policy should cover all the key risks for the groups you work with and the activities you do.

The amount of detail in your policies and how often you review them depends on what your charity does, where it works, who with, and the level of risk. Everyone, including your staff, volunteers and people you work with, should be aware of how you manage safeguarding. Your policy and procedures should be easily available, either online or on paper (or both).

Keep a record of any changes you make to your safeguarding policy. You must have a clear plan of how you'll make sure everyone knows about the changes and keep track of how effective they are.

Knowhow NCVO recommends these resources to help you write your policy:

- Guide to writing a safeguarding policy statement for children (NSPCC Learning): <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/writing-a-safeguarding-policy-statement/>
- Writing a safeguarding adults policy and procedure document (Ann Craft Trust): <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/tips-safeguarding-adults-policy-procedure/>

### Reporting procedure

Your safeguarding policy may contain several different procedures depending on your organisation and activities. However, you will always need a reporting procedure that clearly explains how people can make their worries known and how you will handle any problems.

This factsheet has been adapted, with minimum changes, from a series of free, online, high-quality factsheets, practical tools, podcasts and videos to promote a good safeguarding culture in charities that were developed collaboratively by an NCVO-led partnership (<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding>).

The reporting procedure needs to set out:

- who to speak to
- how issues should be reported
- where information will be stored and shared internally
- how you'll share this with police, social services or regulators if necessary.

Use Knowhow NCVO's 'Recognise, respond, report' page to help you create your reporting procedures: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/steps-to-a-safer-organisation/recognise-respond-and-report>

## Code of conduct

A code of conduct sets out your expectations of staff and volunteers. You should include clear expectations of what people should do and say, and what they must not. This will help raise awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour. Being clear about standards of behaviour is an important part of safeguarding.

What you should do with your code of conduct:

- Involve staff, volunteers and even your participants in creating the code so you can make sure people feel it protects everyone.
- Make sure everyone in the organisation is aware it applies to them and they must follow all its standards.
- Be clear about what will happen if someone doesn't follow it.
- Include specific standards or expectations for roles with particular responsibilities if necessary.
- Keep a record to show that all your staff and volunteers have seen and understood it and agree to follow it.
- Make sure the code allows participants to question staff and volunteers if they think they're doing something wrong.

More about the importance of a good code of conduct

- Need an example? You can find pdfs of sample behaviour codes for children and adults (from NSPCC Learning): <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/templates/behaviour-codes-adults-children/>

Or NCVO members can use a sample code of conduct for trustees:

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/tools-resources/board-basics/model-documents-and-templates/code-of-conduct>

- For a reminder about the importance of using your code of conduct well, see Knowhow NCVO's 'code of conduct in day-to-day safeguarding' section: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/steps-to-a-safer-organisation/safeguarding-day-to-day#section-2>

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## A risk policy and register

Charity trustees and senior managers of organisations must regularly review what risks their organisation faces, including safeguarding risks. They must have a plan showing how they'll manage those risks. You should do this by keeping an up-to-date risk register. This document shows that you have thought about how likely and severe risks are. It also covers how you plan to reduce those risks and helps you see how safeguarding sits alongside other risk management.

- See The Charity Commission guidance on risk management: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-risk-management-cc26/charities-and-risk-management-cc26#knowing-the-requirements---the-risk-management-statement>
- NCVO members can use this risk register template: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/tools-resources/board-basics/model-documents-and-templates/risk-register-template>

## Trustees' annual report

Every registered charity has to send an annual report and accounts to the Charity Commission. It's good practice for charities of any size to include a risk management statement in their report. Where its income is over £500,000, it must include this by law.

The risk management statement should state all major risks the charity faces and how it controls those risks. This will include safeguarding matters, especially if you regularly work with children or adults at risk or have had an increase of reports of harm in the organisation.

- Look at the Charity Commission templates for your annual report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/trustees-annual-report-template-sorp-frs-102>

## Related documents, policies and procedures

You'll need to think about the big picture and how your organisation's mission statement, policies and procedures contribute to safeguarding.

These links take you to more detailed and specific policies relating to safeguarding.

- To see if there is a specific guide that suits your organisation's work with children, look at safeguarding children for voluntary and community groups (from NSPCC Learning): <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/voluntary-community-groups>
- Whoever you work with, use a checklist or framework that helps you pick the right guide for what you do. NCVO has three tools to choose from: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/steps-to-a-safer-organisation/policies-and-procedures>

The following Knowhow links take you to templates for NCVO members to use which help create a safer organisation. Membership is free for small organisations and you can follow the links and then sign up.

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- Health and Safety policy: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/employment-law-and-hr/policies-and-templates/healthsafety>
- Equality and Diversity policy: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/hr/equality-and-diversity/equality-and-diversity>
- Whistleblowing policy
- Bullying, harassment and sexual harassment policy: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/tools-resources/hr-policies/anti-harassment-and-bullying>

These are tools for looking at overall good practice in your organisation.

- The Governance Code, which makes sure your trustees are carrying out their duties correctly: <https://www.charitygovernancecode.org/en/front-page>
- The Charity Ethical Principles, which aim to make charities a safer place: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/ethics/ethical-principles>

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