

# Safeguarding Adults



Information sheet A8

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This information sheet is about safeguarding adults, how to identify if you, or someone you know, may be at risk or are vulnerable and what to do.

## **Safeguarding vulnerable adults**

We work in partnership with other organisations, such as health and social care providers and the police, to prevent and stop abuse or neglect. We have a duty to protect adults aged 18 or above who may be at risk of abuse. We call this safeguarding.

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live safely, free from abuse and neglect.

## **How to get help**

If you, or someone else, are in immediate danger please phone the emergency services on **999**.

If you or an adult you know may be at risk of abuse you can phone us on **0300 123 2224**.

## **Making safeguarding personal to you**

To help us respond to your concerns it is important for us to know what you, or the person experiencing the abuse, wants to happen next. Our work with you will focus on what is important to you, what you wish to achieve and in what way we can help to keep you safe. There are times when we will need to share information with partner organisations to help improve your safety and wellbeing.

***'Safeguarding is everyone's business'***

If you are worried about a vulnerable person being abused or neglected by others, please say something. Report your concerns by phoning **0300 123 2224**.

## **How can I report my suspicions of abuse?**

If possible, tell someone you can trust. This could be a:

- family member, or friend
- police officer
- member of staff
- social worker or nurse
- an advocate
- someone in your local community, neighbour or church
- phone Somerset Direct **0300 123 2224**

## **What is abuse?**

Abuse is a violation of a person's human and civil rights by any other person or people. It can consist of a single act or repeated acts. It can happen anywhere by anyone. There are different types of abuse some of them are listed here.

- **Physical abuse** – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, imposing restrictions on another person. Examples can be, injuries, bruises, broken bones and burns.
- **Domestic violence** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and honour-based violence.
- **Sexual abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks. Example could include, changes in behaviour or mood or unexplained withdrawal from normal activities and friends, family or community.

- **Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements. Examples could include: bills not being paid, sudden loss of assets, friends or family threatening a person to gain access to money.
- **Modern slavery** – slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic slavery.
- **Discriminatory abuse** –forms of harassment, because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Organisational abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home or care provided in your own home.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding or not getting to medical appointments.

## **Who abuses and neglects adults?**

Abuse may be carried out by many different people including:

- Relatives and family members
- Paid staff or professionals
- Neighbours or local residents
- Volunteers and strangers

## **Where does abuse happen?**

Abuse can happen in many different settings, for example:

- In someone’s own home
- In a care setting – hospital or residential home
- In a public place

## **What happens when you tell us?**

We take your concerns seriously and we will work with partner organisations to help maintain your safety. We may need to share your information with others if it helps to protect adults from harm. You can expect to be told before your information is shared. We are interested to know what is important to you so when possible we will speak to you, or your advocate, to find out more and we will keep you informed about what is happening.

## **If you are concerned about an adult at risk of abuse please tell us:**

- In an emergency call **999**
- Non-emergency call to police **101**
- Somerset County Council Somerset Direct **0300 123 2224**
- Somerset County Council Adults and Mental Health emergency out of hours team **0300 123 23 27**

## **Your opportunity to feedback**

We welcome your comments about the services you receive. If you would like to tell us what you think, please either:

Contact us by going to our website, [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk), or

- Speak to your social care worker
- Phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224, or  
Contact the Adults and Health Customer Experience Officer  
Floor B2 East  
County Hall  
Taunton  
TA1 4DY  
Email: [customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk)

This document is also available on request in Braille, large print, tape, disc and can be translated into different languages.