

IronOak



IRON OAK

**SAFEGUARDING ADULTS & CHILDREN IN
ADULT SETTINGS POLICY**

Control Sheet

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Version	Date of review	Author	Note of revisions
01	January 2023	Head of People & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reformatted and added to new policy template. • Removal of references to Allerton Group. • Change of references to 'The Company' to 'IronOak'. • Change of references to 'Service Users' to 'Residents'. • Section 2 addition of children to definitions • Section 4 addition of tenancy fraud relating to safeguarding • Change of references to 'HR' to 'People'. • Change of references to 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' to 'Head of Operations'. • Policy review section removed

1. Introduction

- 1.1. IronOak Homes Limited (IronOak) acknowledges the potential for abuse of vulnerable people, including residents, employees and children (whether children of residents, visitors, or where residents may have access to children). IronOak seeks to establish an environment in which the potential for abuse is recognised and can be prevented by developing a culture of understanding the ways in which abuse may occur.
- 1.2. IronOak has a standpoint of **ZERO TOLERANCE** where the issue of abuse is concerned.
- 1.3. This policy recognises that the following groups have the right to be supported:
 - People that may have been abused.
 - People who may have been neglected.
 - People who have been accused of abuse.

2. Definitions of Abuse

- 2.1. For the purposes of this policy the definition of 'abuse' is taken to be:
 - 'A violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or person's (Care Act 2014).
 - For vulnerable adults and children this will focus upon others who have influence over them. These violations may be intentional or unintentional.
 - These violations may be a single act, or a repetition of acts over a period of time or lack of proper care and attention.

3. Definitions of a Vulnerable Adult

- 3.1. Someone who may be, in need of community care or support services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is, or may be, unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation.
- 3.2. Within this policy this will apply to people aged 18 and over.

4. Types of Abuse

- 4.1. IronOak recognises that abuse may take many forms including the following:
 - **Physical Abuse** – Any physical contact likely to cause unnecessary distress, e.g., hitting, slapping, pushing, or kicking. It can also cause psychological harm.
 - **Psychological/Emotional Abuse** – Any form of verbal or non-verbal behaviour, which shows disrespect of the resident and/or employee e.g.: harassment, bullying, ignoring, threatening, mocking, intimidation and/or excessive familiarity.
 - **Sexual Abuse**
 - Forcing, inducing, or attempting to pressurise a resident to engage in any form of sexual activity.

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- Forcing, inducing, abusing one's authority or attempting to pressurise an employee to engage in any form of sexual activity.
 - Sexual abuse may include physical behaviour or/and verbal remarks of a sexual nature or connotation.
- **Verbal Abuse** – Any comment made to or about a resident and/or employee, which may be seen as disrespectful in any way.
- **Financial/Material Abuse** – Theft of resident's and/or employee's monies or property.
 - The inappropriate use of resident's/employee's monies or properties.
 - Any pressure applied to employees and/or residents by staff in relation to the inappropriate use of the employees and/or resident's funds e.g. borrowing money, withholding money, not facilitating access to money, lending money.
 - Power of attorney obtained illegally in relation to residents.
 - Any type of fraud involving a residents will, property and other assets.
- **Tenancy Abuse** - Fraudulent tenancy activity resulting from a vulnerable tenant being exploited, coerced, or unable to manage their tenancy, leading to situations where the property is misused by third parties
 - Cuckooing (Forced Takeover)
 - Exploitative Subletting
 - Wrongful Succession Fraud (Coerced)
 - Abandonment Due to Neglect or Coercion
- **Institutional Abuse** – The mistreatment of or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individual within an institution. Institutional abuse can occur when the routines, systems, and norms of an institution force individuals to sacrifice their own preferred lifestyle, cultural diversity to the needs of the institution.
- **Neglect or acts of Omission** – (Other than self-neglect) The unauthorised withdrawal of resident's basic services e.g., heat, medication, clean clothes, food, access to the doctor in the event of illness.
- **Discriminatory Abuse** – Exists when values, beliefs, or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunities to some groups or individuals.
 - Racism
 - Sexism
 - Ageism
 - Slurs and Offensive remarks regarding ethnic origin, religion, culture, sex, and age
 - Discriminatory practices based upon the person's disabilities.

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- **Professional Abuse**
 - Any exploitation of a Resident by a member of staff who is in a position of trust in their role of supporting a resident.
 - Any exploitation of an employee by a member of staff who is in a position of trust, or in a position of power over that person, including any supervisory role.
 - Disclosure of confidential information.

Note: The above list is not exhaustive.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. Recruitment, Selection & Training of Staff & Volunteers

- IronOak Homes Limited will ensure that its selection and recruitment process for roles which come into direct contact with our residents will take account of the need to protect vulnerable adults:
 - Offers of employment are subject to the receipt of two satisfactory written references. Where appropriate referees will be asked to comment on the applicant's suitability to work with vulnerable adults and children.
 - All successful candidates will be subject to an appropriate Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check. Disclosures/DBS will be requested prior to the applicant taking up the post. No lone working shall occur before the DBS report has been received by the People department and clearance to do so is granted.
 - Prior to a post being offered, the applicant's employment history shall be checked, and any gaps explored.
 - If convictions are disclosed, then a full risk assessment will be completed.
- Induction on all new staff and volunteers shall include information on all relevant policies and procedures. Until such information has been provided and relevant training given no lone working with vulnerable adults shall occur.
- All new staff or volunteers shall have a designated mentor/line manager who will provide ongoing support and supervision.

5.2. All Staff and Volunteers

- All staff and volunteers must ensure that they always maintain professional boundaries and have awareness of equality and diversity issues.
- All Staff and Volunteers have a responsibility to act on any allegation, report, or concern of abuse of a vulnerable adult to ensure that the situation is investigated immediately a concern is raised.

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- All staff members, including volunteers, who come into contact with residents shall not be permitted to lone work until they have undertaken and successfully completed safeguarding training.
- In addition, all staff and volunteers will be required to complete the safeguarding training within 3-6 months of employment.
- In addition, all senior members of staff shall undertake more in depth Guidance for Managers training.
- All staff shall attend training as required.
- All staff should inform their manager if they are convicted of an offence whilst in the employ of IronOak Homes Limited.
- Personal relationships between Line Managers and their subordinate staff must be declared to the People department, in the interests of the company and the individuals concerned
- Personal relationships between staff and residents are **NEVER** acceptable.
- All staff must be fully aware of the organisations staff code of conduct and adhere to it at all times.
- It is the responsibility of every staff member to maintain strict professional and appropriate boundaries within staff/staff relationships at all times.
- Staff should respect the decisions of residents, and their preferences, promoting and protecting the interests of Residents regardless of gender, age, sexuality, disability, and cultural or religious beliefs and in line with the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Under no circumstances must staff lend money to residents.

5.3. Managers

- Managers are responsible for ensuring that procedures are followed and that all staff and residents are aware of this policy.
- Managers shall ensure that all reports of issues surrounding Protection from Abuse are reported to the Head of Operations.
- Managers will respond to and report all allegations of abuse within timescales set out in this policy.

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- Managers shall follow up all training that their staff have attended to ensure that staff have gained the desired level of knowledge and will put this knowledge into practice.
- Ensure that all residents are fully aware and have a good understanding of the procedure for reporting abuse/neglect, as well as what constitutes abuse and to whom incidents of abuse/neglect should be reported, including the right to report concerns to external agencies.

5.4. Residents

- The Safeguarding Policy will be introduced to all new residents at their induction to the house.
- A copy of policy will be kept at each property for each resident's reference.
- Adult Protection will form part of agenda at House Meetings.
- Have a right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- Have a right to disagree with the way that they are being treated when having been assessed as lacking capacity.

6. Dealing with Allegations or Evidence of Abuse

6.1. Information suggesting that abuse has occurred could come from any number of sources. These include:

- Directly from the vulnerable adult.
- A concern arising from an observation.
- From a relative or friend or another resident.
- From another member of staff.
- From any other person.

6.2. All staff have an absolute and unequivocal duty to report any allegations or suspicions of abuse or potential abuse of a vulnerable person to their line manager or the Head of Operations.

6.3. Staff who become aware of possible abuse should:

- Try to ensure the immediate safety of the resident.
- If a criminal offence has been committed the Police should be informed immediately.
- Ensure that any evidence of abuse is kept safe and free from contamination.

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- Contact their line manager so that the matter can be reported in accordance with this policy.
- Record all details of the abuse concerns clearly and factually as soon as possible. When recording any disclosure, record the actual words used by the person.

6.4. Reports of actual or suspected abuse should be passed immediately to the Head of Operations.

6.5. The victim (or alleged victim) of abuse shall be offered additional support and/or advocacy services during and after any report and investigation taking place.

6.6. The alleged victim shall be offered a review of risk assessment which may look at living environment if alleged perpetrator continues to reside at property pending investigation, amongst other areas of need/risk.

6.7. The alleged perpetrator shall also be offered extra support and/or advocacy services during and after any report and investigation.

6.8. The alleged perpetrator shall be offered a review of risk assessment which may look at their living environment and other areas of risk after the allegation.

7. Information Sharing & Disclosure without Consent

7.1. All staff have an absolute and unequivocal duty to report any allegations or suspicions of abuse or potential abuse of a vulnerable person to their line manager or the Head of Operations.

7.2. Everyone working with, or coming into direct contact with, vulnerable adults share a responsibility to be aware of issues of adult abuse and neglect and to report concerns or information they have which indicates that an adult is, or may be, experiencing abuse.

7.3. Staff have a responsibility to inform residents of their duty to record and report all allegations, disclosures, concerns, or suspicions of abuse, and to discuss these concerns with their line manager.

7.4. The alerted cannot keep information about an alleged incident of abuse confidential to themselves. It must be made clear to anyone who shares such information that they will need to pass it on in accordance with this policy and procedure.

7.5. Information about the vulnerable person, or circumstances surrounding an incident of abuse, will only be shared where there is a legitimate need to know.

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- 7.6. All staff and volunteers should be aware of their responsibility and obligations to respect and confidentiality and comply with the organisations Confidentiality policy and procedure and Information Sharing Protocol.
- 7.7. Informed consent should be obtained from the person making the report of abuse, but if this is not possible and a serious crime has been committed, or other vulnerable adults are at risk, it will be necessary to override the requirement.
- 7.8. Information should only be shared on a strict 'need to know' basis and in the best interests of the resident.
- 7.9. Clear documentation must support information sharing; including with whom information was shared and for what reason.
- 7.10. Information given for one purpose should not be disclosed to another person or used for a different purpose without the resident's consent.
- 7.11. Assurances of absolute confidentiality in cases of abuse should not be given to the resident, particularly in those situations where other vulnerable people may be at risk.

8. Mental Capacity Act 2005

- 8.1. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides the legal framework for acting and making decisions on behalf of individuals who lack the mental capacity to make particular decisions for themselves. Everyone working with an adult who may lack capacity to make specific decisions must comply with this Act when making decisions or acting for that person, when the person lacks the capacity to make a particular decision for themselves. The same rules apply whether the decisions are life-changing events or everyday matters.
- 8.2. Any assessment of mental capacity shall always be undertaken by a relevant professional.
- 8.3. The resident shall have rights to advocacy services should they disagree with any decisions made on their behalf.
- 8.4. If the resident reports any abuse issues, then it shall be reported as 6.3 – 6.8 above.

9. Acceptance of Gifts

- 9.1. Staff should always try to decline gifts from residents. However, we understand that at times it may cause more damage than good in declining a gift from a resident and under these circumstances the following procedure should be followed.

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- 9.2. Staff may only accept gifts from residents up to the value of £5.00. Anything over this value must be politely refused whilst explaining to the resident why we must refuse it.
- 9.3. Any gift that is received must be reported to the Company Secretary.
- 9.4. If a resident is found to be giving gifts to a staff member on regular basis, then this must be investigated by the line manager or where appropriate the Head of Department to ensure that there is no protection from abuse issues.
- 9.5. Any inappropriate gifts received which can be deemed as pornographic or discriminatory or any other such material that may cause offence to any other individual must be declined and reported to their line manager and discussed with the resident as to why it is deemed as inappropriate.

10. Whistleblowing

- 10.1. Whistleblowing can occur where an alleged matter of serious concern either within the workplace or externally, has been perpetrated by the Organisation or by a member of staff of the Organisation, and this has been observed and reported.
- 10.2. It is the policy of IronOak Homes Limited to encourage the reporting to management of all matters of serious concern involving a member of staff, and for persons to feel that they can do so freely and without fear of reprisals or intimidation, matters of serious concern will include but are not limited to, the following:
- Professional/unethical malpractice
 - Abuse of a resident
 - Criminal offences
 - Health and safety violations
 - Fraud
 - Damage to the environment
 - Breach of any legal obligation
 - Miscarriages of justice
 - Deliberately concealing any of the above
- 10.3. Persons reporting such incidents can include the following:
- Staff members
 - Residents
 - Residents' family/relatives/friends
 - Professional person acting on behalf of a resident (advocate/minister of religion etc)
 - A 'worker' as defined in section 43k of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, this also includes employees, agency workers, people training with employers and some self-employed people.

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10.4. IronOak Homes Limited has its own comprehensive Whistleblowing policy and procedure, which should be read in conjunction with this Safeguarding Adults policy and procedure.

11. Related Policies

- Code of Conduct
- Training Policy
- Equality Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Gifts & Hospitality Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

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