

**Tenants First Housing Co-operative Limited
Protection from Abuse Policy**

Approved: April 2009

Next Review Date: April 2012

INDEX

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Policy Aims | 2 |
| 2. Objectives..... | 2 |
| 3. Definitions. | 2 |
| 4. Types of Abuse. | 3 |
| 5. Detecting Potential Abuse. | 3 |
| 6. Co-operative Staff. | 3 |
| 7. Co-operation. | 4 |
| 8. Restraint..... | 4 |
| 9. Training | 4 |
| 10. Equal Opportunities | 4 |
| 11. Monitoring and Reporting | 5 |
| 12. Review | 5 |
| 13. Legal Framework..... | 5 |
| 14. References..... | 5 |
| 15. Related Policies/Documents | 5 |

[Return to Main Policy Index](#)

1. Policy Aims

As a provider of social housing and housing support services Co-operative staff are likely to come into contact with members of the public who may be vulnerable to abuse. This can include, but is not limited to children and vulnerable adults, including older persons.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all staff are aware of how to handle any concerns they may have regarding the safety of any child or vulnerable adult in the process of performing their duties.

2. Objectives

In developing this policy, the Co-operative recognises that members of the community, whether vulnerable through age, illness, disability or infirmity, may be subject to abuse or potential abuse.

3. Definitions

The term 'abuse' can be widely interpreted but for the purpose of this policy, abuse is broadly defined as;

"Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons."

(*'No Secrets'* Department of Health guidance document, 2000)

"Abuse (of older people) is a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action occurring within a relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person!"

(Age Concern – Action on Elder Abuse)

The broad definition of a 'Vulnerable Adult' is;

"An adult 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."

(*'No Secrets'* Department of Health guidance document, 2000)

The term "Child Abuse" is defined as:

"When an adult harms a child or a young person under the age of 18."

(NSPCC)

4. Types of Abuse

There are many different recognised forms of abuse and fall into the follow categories.

- 🏠 **Physical** - includes hitting, shaking, kicking, punching, scalding, suffocating and other ways of inflicting pain or injury. It also includes giving harmful substances, such as drugs, alcohol or poison. If a parent or carer reports non-existent symptoms of illness in a child, or deliberately causes illness in a child, this is also a form of physical abuse. (NSPCC)
- 🏠 **Emotional** - allows one person to gain power and control over another through words and gestures which gradually undermine the other's self respect. Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify, as there is no scars or marks, and the torment can continue indefinitely. (Counselling Directory)
- 🏠 **Financial** - stealing or defrauding someone of goods and/or property.(Action on Elder Abuse)
- 🏠 **Domestic** - physical, sexual, psychological or financial violence that takes place within an intimate or family-type relationship and that forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. (Women's Aid)
- 🏠 **Sexual** - If a person is pressured to do something sexual against their will (Counselling Directory)
- 🏠 **Non-Organic Failure to Thrive** - Children who significantly fail to reach normal growth and developmental milestones (i.e. physical growth, weight, motor, social and intellectual development) where physical and genetic reasons for the failure have been medically eliminated and a diagnosis of non-organic failure to thrive has been established.

5. Detecting Potential Abuse

If in the process of carrying out their duties staff encounter a situation where they suspect or witness that a child or vulnerable adult's safety is at risk or whom they suspect may be subject to abuse, the member of staff will comply with the protection procedure.

6. Co-operative Staff

Front Line Co-operative staff are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Check on appointment.

Housing Support Staff are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Check every three years.

In the process of carrying out their duties, Co-operative staff should also be aware of situations or potential situations where the conduct of a member of Co-operative staff towards any person is

inappropriate. In such circumstances the staff member must report these incidents or suspicions to their line manager immediately using the Whistleblowing Policy.

7. Co-operation

The Co-operative will fully co-operate with any investigation by the Police or any statutory agency into allegations or incidents of abuse.

8. Restraint

The Co-operative does not operate any form of restraint.

Controlled Access

The Co-operative has many properties where communal controlled entry is installed. The purpose of controlled entry is to provide an added level of security in communal areas to prevent unwanted external access.

Controlled entry is not used to prevent anyone leaving a building – a recognised form of restraint.

CCTV

The Co-operative has several properties where CCTV is installed in communal areas for the prevention and detection of crime.

CCTV is not used to monitor residents and control their movements - a recognised form of restraint.

9. Training

All members of staff will receive annual instruction on how to recognise and respond to situations where abuse is, or is alleged to be taking place.

Training for office based staff will be provided annually, in-house.

Field based housing support staff will receive annual external training.

10. Equal Opportunities

The Co-operative will ensure that in implementing this Policy it will not unfairly discriminate against any individual, household or group on the grounds of gender, gender identity or marital status, on race grounds, or on the grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

11. Monitoring and Reporting

The frequency of potential or actual abuse cases is probably rare. Therefore, regular reporting is not required.

Where serious incidents occur, individual, anonymous confidential reports will be submitted to the Committee of Management summarising the events and our response actions within the context of this policy.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years after approval, or earlier if legislation and best practice requires a review.

13. Legal Framework

- Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001.
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007.

14. References

- Grampian Interagency Policy and Procedure for people working in health and social care settings – supporting and protecting adults from abuse.
- Grampian Adult Support and Protection Policy and Procedures (draft) 2009.

15. Related Policies/Documents

Disclosures Policy.
Whistleblowing Policy.
Duty to Co-operate Policy