

Quick guide for Leaders: working with Safeguarding Officers

Leaders can contact Safeguarding Officers via 0203 874 9192

General information:

- There is one dedicated phone number to contact Safeguarding Officers which can be used by Leaders to seek advice and guidance when made aware of a Safeguarding concern by a volunteer.
- Safeguarding Officers are available 24/7 for advice and guidance as needed regarding safeguarding concerns, both urgent and non-urgent.

Practicalities:

- Two Safeguarding Officers will provide on-call support to volunteers 24 hours a day
- Safeguarding Officers on-call are supported by one Lead Safeguarding Officer on-call
- Safeguarding Officers report to two Lead Safeguarding Officers, who then report to Functional Lead for Caller Support.

Safeguarding concerns may come to a Leader as a current urgent situation or as a non-urgent situation, either for support and guidance to the volunteer or for information, if the concern has already been referred onto a Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding concerns where further action is required by Samaritans

Urgent concerns

1. Leaders will be contacted by volunteers seeking immediate support and guidance in situations requiring an emergency response, ie, an ambulance callout or contacting police. Leaders are responsible and authorised to make these decisions.
2. Leaders should ensure that the volunteer will record this as a safeguarding concern on eLog including selecting that 'further action' was required. This will generate an electronic 'safeguarding concern form' asking the volunteer to provide some additional details of the concern for the volunteer to complete. If an ambulance call-out has taken place, it would also still be relevant to tick the 'ambulance callout' box on the service provision page.
3. Leaders can liaise with the Safeguarding Officer on-call at the time or the next day as needed for additional support and guidance about any concerns relayed to them by volunteers.
4. As volunteers will have passed information onto the Safeguarding Officer regarding the nature of this concern via eLog and the safeguarding concern form, Leaders do not have to refer this to a Safeguarding Officer on-call at the time.
5. Safeguarding Officer to review the Safeguarding Concern form for information and offer feedback to the volunteer and Leader if required.

* A call may originate from mental health facility or prison, in which case call appropriate facility if details available.

**In difficult circumstances, Safeguarding Officers may need to seek consultation with the Lead Safeguarding Officer on-call, the Safeguarding Panel or Emergency Phone Holder at Central Office.

NB If guidance is sought from the Safeguarding Officer, they have the final responsibility for the decision and resulting outcomes.

NB Safeguarding Officers will share relevant information to the Caller Support Team at Samaritans Central Office who will in turn share with Regional and Branch Caller Support Officers as necessary.

Non-urgent concerns

1. Leader will be contacted by volunteers to debrief and for support and guidance in situations where a non-urgent safeguarding situation was identified during their shift. This may happen during or at the end of their shift as normal.
2. Leaders should ensure that the volunteer recorded this as a safeguarding concern on eLog including selecting that 'further action' was required. This will generate an electronic 'safeguarding concern form' asking the volunteer for some additional details of the concern for the volunteer to complete
3. Leaders can liaise with the Safeguarding Officer on-call at the time or the next day as needed for additional support and guidance about any concerns relayed to them by volunteers.
4. As volunteers will have passed information onto the Safeguarding Officer regarding the nature of this concern automatically via the safeguarding concern form, Leaders do not have to refer this to a Safeguarding Officer on-call at the time.
5. Once the Safeguarding Officer has reviewed the safeguarding concern form, they will consider the best possible Samaritans response for the caller at that time and they will be responsible for following up with the caller regarding any action to be taken.

Safeguarding concerns where no further action is required by Samaritans

1. Leader will be contacted by volunteers to debrief and for support and guidance in situations where a safeguarding situation was identified during their shift. This may happen during or at the end of their shift as normal.
2. Leaders should ensure that the volunteer has recorded this as a safeguarding concern on eLog including selecting that 'no further action' was required. The volunteer will then be able to complete eLog as normal and no further information is required.

Remember:

- With no identifying information Samaritans cannot and will not trace calls.
- When a caller with the ability to make decisions for themselves is in a harm situation, but does not want to any action to be taken, Samaritans will respect that decision.
- When a child under 13 or a teenager or vulnerable adult is unable to make decisions for themselves (using the four criteria check), is in a harm situation and Samaritans has identifying information, then we may share that information to access help for them.

Example of eLog Service Provision page

Safeguarding concern identified ☒



The caller or someone else (who is a child or vulnerable adult) is at risk of serious harm.

This will bring this contact to the attention of a Safeguarding Officer.

Remember to debrief the nature of this call with your Leader.

Please also check and adhere to safeguarding

As a result of ticking the box above volunteers will need to select one of the boxes below to confirm what has happened or needs to happen with the concerns raised by caller.

☐ **Further action taken/or may be required to protect the caller or another person at risk of harm?**



Action taken/required means this concern needs to be raised internally to our Safeguarding Officer(s) for information (urgent) or further consideration (non-urgent).

This box must also be selected if the caller mentions organisational abuse (where identifying information is provided).

☐ **No further action above and beyond Samaritans normal support was needed to protect the caller or another person at risk of harm.**



During the contact, the caller demonstrated they are able to make their own decision in relation to the situation of serious harm. The caller may have discussed that they were going to seek further support themselves or that they did not want seek further support.