



## **Policy 23 - Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults**

### **Introduction**

A24 Group has a statutory responsibility to ensure that Children and Vulnerable Adults in receipt of services from the agency are safe from harm.

The commitment of A24 Group is reflected in its procedures for recruitment, induction and training. Registration with the Agency is supported by our policy of vetting and checks with the Independent Safeguarding Authority and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), Disclosure.

A24 Group will take all reasonable steps to provide protection for Vulnerable Service Users in our care.

### **Recruitment Processes**

A24 Group ensures that all employees who are involved in the recruitment process have been given appropriate guidance in the relevant legislation relating to the recruitment of workers, including the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, The Rehabilitation of offenders Act 1974 and Police Act 1997 Part V.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 sets out the scope of the Vetting and Barring Scheme, managed by the Independent Safeguarding Authority. The scheme aims to stop unsuitable people from working with Children or Vulnerable Adults. ISA is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of a register of those able to work with vulnerable groups.

All applicants who register with the Agency are required to complete an Enhanced CRB disclosure application form and to confirm if they have any criminal convictions. Failure to reveal any criminal conviction could result in the candidate being rejected from the agency.

## **Independent safeguarding Authority**

A child is defined by section 60 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act and Article 2 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Order as being any person who has not attained the age of 18, regardless of the setting they are in or the service they receive.

A Vulnerable Adult would meet one of the criteria below:

- Living in residential accommodation, such as a care home or a residential special school.
- Living in sheltered housing
- Receiving domiciliary care in his or her own home
- Receiving any form of health care
- Detained in a prison, remand centre, young offender institution, secure training centre or attendance centre, or under the powers of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- In contact with probation services
- Receiving support, assistance or advice to help them live independently, for example through the Supporting People programme
- Receiving a service or participating in an activity that is specifically targeted at people with age related needs, disabilities or are expectant or nursing mothers in residential accommodation
- Receiving direct payments from a local authority/HSS body in lieu of social care services or
- Requires assistance in the conduct of his or her own affairs.

People with a physical or mental health condition are not vulnerable adults just because of their condition. They will be Vulnerable Adults when they receive health, social care or other services or activities specifically for those with physical or mental health conditions

## **ISA Referrals**

Information sharing is vital to the ISA's decision making process.

A24 Group has a duty to refer any issues about conduct which endangers or is likely to endanger a child or vulnerable adult.

Relevant conduct would also involve sexual material relating to children (including possession of such material) sexually explicit images depicting violence against human

beings (including possession of such images) and conduct of a sexual nature involving a child or vulnerable adult.

A referral should be made when an individual is rejected from the agency or the agency thinks relevant harm has occurred, a risk of harm is present or there is a relevant conviction or caution.

### **Criminal records Bureau (CRB)**

The CRB manages ISA Registration and undertakes all vetting and Barring Checks. The CRB also provide a disclosure service to enable employers and other organizations to obtain access to applicant's criminal record details when assessing their suitability to register with the agency.

A disclosure provides details of a persons criminal record including convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC) and may include information held by the local police forces.

The criminal records bureau allows two levels of disclosure Standard Disclosure and Enhanced Disclosure

All workers registering with A24 Group are required to be checked at Enhanced level. Enhanced disclosures contain the same information as standard disclosures but with the addition of non conviction information from local police records considered relevant by Chief Police Officers.

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the candidate's full consent has been given.

### **Portability of disclosures**

Portability refers to the re-use of a Disclosure obtained for a position in one organization and later used for a position in another organization.

A24 Group does not accept disclosures obtained by any other organizations.

### **Decisions on CRB Disclosures for prospective candidates**

If a CRB Disclosure reveals criminal convictions, the counter signatory in conjunction with the registered manager must decide whether the applicant is suitable for registration with A24 Group.

This decision takes into consideration several factors:

- The relevance of the offence to the services offered by the agency
- The level of access to Vulnerable groups
- The applicants age at the time of the offence
- The nature of the offence
- The length of the sentence
- The time span since the offence occurred
- Is it an isolated offence or is there a pattern
- How likely is the candidate to re offend
- The context of the offence

### **Data Protection**

A24 Group and its employees comply fully with its obligations under the data protection act, CRB code of practice and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of disclosure information.