

OMV Short Form Safeguarding Policy

(What to do if you are concerned at abuse may have taken place)

Introduction

This Short Form Safeguarding Policy is intended for easy access guidance if a volunteer, guest or activity organiser, is concerned that a safeguarding incident may have arisen during the course of an OMV activity.

The full version of the Unified Safeguarding Policy (pertaining BASMOM GPE, Companions and OMV) is available on the OMV Website.

Definitions

Safeguarding is about the embedding of practices throughout the OMV to ensure the protection of children, young persons and vulnerable adults wherever possible, all as further detailed and defined below.

1. In relation to children and young persons, safeguarding means (i) ensuring they are safe and free from neglect, maltreatment or abuse of any kind, including from witnessing such neglect, maltreatment or abuse, and (ii) preventing impairment of their health, wellbeing or development.
2. In relation to vulnerable adults, safeguarding means (i) preventing abuse or neglect wherever possible (ii) preventing harm and reducing the risk of abuse or neglect to adults who have care and support needs (iii) promoting an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned (iv) addressing what has caused the abuse or neglect and (v) providing information and support in readily accessible ways to help adults at risk to make safe choices and stay safe.
3. Abuse almost always involves exploitation and manipulation by someone in a position of authority; and it can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to prevent harm from occurring. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture. It can take a number of forms, including but not limited to the following:
 - (i) **Physical abuse:** physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness to a child/ or adult at risk.
 - (ii) **Sexual abuse:** sexual abuse involves forcing a child or adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not that person or child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. Sexual abuse may also involve non-contact activities, for example involving children or adults at risk in the production of, or watching of sexual images, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave sexually (grooming) in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). These acts can be committed by both males and females as well as by other children or adults at risk.

- (iii) **Emotional abuse:** emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of children, young persons or adults at risk so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development and wellbeing. It may involve conveying that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or only valued in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child, young person or adult at risk the opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another and doing nothing about it. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children, young persons or adults at risk frequently to feel frightened or in danger, exploited or open to corruption. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, as well as over-protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing participation in normal social interaction.
 - (iv) **Neglect:** neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or adult at risk's basic physical and/or psychological needs in a way that is likely to result in a serious impairment of their health or development.
 - (v) **Domestic abuse:** domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence, or conduct by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. It includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse; so-called 'honour' based violence; Female Genital Mutilation; and forced marriage.
 - (vi) **Discriminatory abuse:** discriminatory abuse comprises harassment, insults or similar actions related to race, religion, gender, gender identity, age, disability, or sexual orientation.
 - (vii) **Financial (or material) abuse:** financial abuse ranges from failure to access benefits through inadvertent mismanagement and opportunistic exploitation of a person at risk to deliberate and targeted abuse for personal gain, often accompanied by threats or intimidation. It can take a number of forms including theft, misappropriation of money or property, or misuse of assets.
4. Definition of a Child: a child is any person under the age of 18 (as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child). A young person is also a child.
 5. Definition of a Vulnerable Adult: a vulnerable adult (or adult at risk of harm or adult at risk) is a person who is 18 or more years old, and who: has a dependency on others, or a requirement for assistance from others in the performance of basic physical functions or who is in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; or who has a severe impairment in their ability to communicate with others or has an impairment in their ability to protect themselves from assault, abuse, neglect, harm or exploitation. This may include a person who is elderly and frail, is a substance abuser, is homeless or is isolated with minimal interaction with friends and family. Further details may be found in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Procedure in event of report of an abuse

6. It is important to the OMV that, for their protection, children, young persons and vulnerable adults have and are aware of clear and direct means for reporting abuse issues. All such reports of abuse whether comprising an allegation of abuse or a complaint or concern regarding abuse or of a risk of abuse (hereinafter a 'report of abuse') will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.
7. The policy and the procedures set out herein must be followed whenever any report of abuse is made.
8. Any members, trustees, volunteers, employees and contractors and any other persons who work on behalf of the Order who receives a report of abuse should
 - respond to that report as set out in the Appendix to this document
 - inform their SAL or SO immediately of the report of abuse.
9. If the SAL receives the report, which may be in oral form in the first instance, they must escalate the report to their SO immediately.
10. A full written record of the report of abuse must be made and retained by the relevant SO as soon as possible, including details of the allegation, complaint or concern and all relevant information about the reported abuse. This record will be stored safely and access thereto limited appropriately.
11. This record should include the date of the report and the name and age of the person who made the report. In so far as it is known, the record should include:
 - the date, time and place where the reported abuse happened (or risk of abuse arose);
 - the name and age of the child, young person or vulnerable adult affected;
 - the nature of the alleged abuse;
 - a description of any injuries observed;
 - the names of any persons present or witnesses to the reported abuse; and
 - a full version of events relating to the reported abuse
 - the date this record is submitted to the OMV Safeguarding Officer.
12. The relevant SO should respond to each report of abuse in accordance with the procedures below and the OMV shall take all appropriate action.
13. Any child, young person or vulnerable adult who is the subject of or who is affected by a report of abuse will be removed to a place of safety.
14. The alleged abuser or any person implicated by a report of abuse will be removed from the relevant place or activity and suspended from the activity and all related duties with the OMV until the report has been investigated and resolved.
15. Any report of abuse must be escalated to the OMV Safeguarding Officer via the relevant Safeguarding Officer and/or Safeguarding Activity Lead who has received the report - on the

same working day wherever possible. The OMV Chairman and the Chair of the OMV Trustees of the OMV, must also be informed of the report of abuse as soon as practicable.

APPENDIX

RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF ABUSE

Upon receiving a report of abuse, any OMV member should follow these steps:

1. Assure the person making the complaint that they will be taken seriously.
2. Listen to what is being said.
3. Stay calm.
4. Do not probe for detail.
5. Empathise but do not jump to conclusions.
6. Do not disturb anything that may be evidence.
7. Do not promise complete confidentiality, but explain that you have a duty to report the concern to somebody.
8. Do not attempt to question the alleged abuser.
9. Ensure that the person affected is in a safe environment.
10. Inform your Safeguarding Activity Lead or Safeguarding Officer, whichever is more convenient, immediately (and in any event within four hours).
11. Tell all the facts that you have been told or observed. Try not to give your own interpretation.
12. Record accurately details of the report. Include the date and the time of the incident, the people involved and details of any observed injuries, as well as the appearance and behaviour of the victim and what they have said.
13. Be prepared to co-operate, as requested, in any reasonable way with the subsequent safeguarding enquiry.
14. If an individual's concern involves any OMV member, volunteer or other person working with the OMV, the concerned individual has a duty to report their concern.
15. If an individual thinks that someone is being abused or that poor standards of care are making for conditions in which there is a risk of abuse, they have a duty to report. They should write down what they have witnessed, including dates, times, places and people involved, and make a report to their Safeguarding Activity Lead or Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.