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# GUIDANCE ON THE CHURCH IN WALES SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL FORM

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V1-DATE  
CHURCH IN WALES  
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## Guidance on the Church in Wales Safeguarding referral Form

### Reporting a safeguarding concern or allegation

The Church in Wales *Safeguarding Referral Form* is to be completed by anyone with safeguarding concerns about a child or adult at risk.

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**If you have information about a safeguarding situation where a child or adult is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical attention, please call the emergency services on 999 – DO NOT DELAY. If you think that a child or adult is at risk of harm but is not in immediate danger, please call the local authority social services department.**

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If there is concern for the immediate safety of an individual you must seek help straight away. The *Safeguarding Referral Form* should be completed as soon as possible after the concern is reported to the statutory authorities.

**On no account should the person completing the *Safeguarding Referral Form* undertake any investigation into a safeguarding concern or make any contact with an alleged abuser.**

The *Safeguarding referral Form* should be submitted with any other relevant documents and supporting information without delay to the Provincial Safeguarding Team. The form and any other information relating to the concern must be kept strictly confidential and filed securely in accordance with data protection and record keeping policies and procedures.

The *Safeguarding Referral Form* is provided to assist you in reporting concerns about a child or adult at risk to the Provincial Safeguarding Team. Please refer to this guidance when completing the form.

The primary purpose of the referral form is to convey relevant information to the Provincial Safeguarding Officer in order that they can make risk-based decisions, including whether the concern should be referred to the police or social services.

You will need to provide as much information on the form as possible but do not delay in making the referral if the information is not available or you do not have it to hand.

The essential information to record is:

- identity of any victim or survivor of abuse
- identity of any alleged perpetrator of abuse
- identity of any witnesses
- details of the concern
  - who, what, when, where, how
- details of any disclosure made by a victim or survivor

A referral to the provincial safeguarding team should include the following information:

- the name, date of birth and address of the child/children or adult(s) at risk who are the subject(s) of the concern
- in the case of an adult, an explanation for why they are considered to be an adult at risk for the purpose of this referral
- the names and contact information of parents or carers
- details of any other children or adults in the same household
- details of the concern, incident, allegation or disclosure
- time and context of the disclosure, if relevant
- whether the concern has been referred to social services and/or the police
- whether the child or adult has needed medical care in relation to the concern
- any available information about the person of concern
- whether the person of concern is aware that the concern has been reported
- whether there are any other children or adults who may be at risk of harm
- what the child or adult at risk has been told about the referral
- the name and contact information of the referrer

## Recording a Safeguarding Concern or Disclosure

The following steps should be observed:

- Explain the importance of recording information and ask permission to take notes during any conversation. It might not be appropriate to take notes while someone, especially a child, is making a disclosure of abuse because it might discourage them from telling their story.
- If you cannot take notes at the time, make a written record as soon as possible afterwards and always before the end of the day.
- Ensure that the person giving you the information knows that they can have access to the records you have made in respect of their own information.
- Record the time, date, location, format of information (e.g. letter, telephone call, direct contact) and the everyone present at the time when the information was given and sign and date the record.
- Include as much information as possible but clearly identify which information is fact, what is hearsay and what is opinion. Do not speculate or make assumptions.
- Use the exact words of the individual sharing information or making a disclosure as far as possible.
- Do not re-write the account in your own style or sanitize the language by removing unpleasant or offensive words.
- Include any relevant context and background leading to the disclosure.
- Maintain a log of actions on the *Safeguarding Referral Form* and record times, dates and names of people contacted and spoken to as well as their contact information.
- Include full details of referrals to the social care services and the police.
- Pass all original records, including rough notes, to a Provincial Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and ideally by the next working day.

## Recording and Record-Keeping Guidance

The *Safeguarding Referral Form* is the primary means of recording a safeguarding concern but might be accompanied by other sources of information or evidence.

The purpose of written records in safeguarding is to:

- Ensure that important information is recorded clearly, concisely and accurately.
- Provide a clear documented account of involvement with a child, adult at risk and/or family including the time of contact.
- Assist continuity when a worker is unavailable or changes.
- Provide the basis for professional judgements and decision-making.
- Provide evidence for investigations, enquiries and for court proceedings.
- Record directions given and agreements or disagreements made and provide evidence that procedures have been followed appropriately.

Records should:

- Use clear, straightforward language.
- Be signed, dated and timed.
- Be concise, legible and comply with professional, national and local agency standards and requirements.
- Be accurate in fact and distinguish between fact, opinion, judgement and hypothesis.
- Be organised and comprise detailed recording and chronologies and summaries, including all contacts.
- Be sufficiently comprehensive so as to capture important points, but not overly detailed.
- Clearly record judgements that are made and action and decisions taken.
- Clarify where decisions have been taken jointly across agencies, or endorsed by a manager.
- Record both formal and informal supervised discussion, including telephone advice.

## Storage of Records

All forms and documents should be stored securely, used and retrieved in accordance with data protection requirements. According to the Data Protection Act 2018 records containing personal data should be:

- Processed fairly and lawfully
- Obtained and used for specific purposes
- Adequate, relevant and limited to only what is necessary
- Accurate
- Not kept for longer than is necessary
- Processed in line with a person's rights
- Secure

- Not transferred to non-UK countries without adequate protection

Records must be stored confidentially and in a secure place and must only be shared with a Provincial Safeguarding Officer, a professional from the relevant local authority social services, the police, or in line with appropriate disciplinary procedures in order to safeguard a child or adult at risk. Any requests made by statutory agencies for disclosure of information should be brought to the attention of the Provincial Safeguarding Officer.