

Safeguarding Guideline to Prevent Physical and Sexual Abuse

Recruiting



This guide is about making sure your recruitment process not only finds the best people but also screens out those looking for opportunities to sexually abuse vulnerable people.



BE THE ORGANISATION THAT PUTS SAFETY FIRST

Your governance and processes must be designed so that it is difficult for a perpetrator of sexual abuse to get into or remain in your organisation.

Some ways to do that are to keep good HR records, set up a formal process for reporting concerns, and give frank, meaningful reports to the board.

Your workplace culture needs to be another barrier. Cultivate personal responsibility and an awareness of history. Respect privacy but stamp out secrecy. Ask your directors to be visible and the most knowledgeable people in the room when it comes to safeguarding.

With the right governance, processes and culture in place, you can make your organisation a place that abusers don't want to be.



RECRUITMENT

Every stage of the process must send a clear signal that your highest priority is the safety and wellbeing of the people in your care.

Those managing the process should know that they are playing a critical role in keeping perpetrators of sexual abuse out of the organisation.



DESCRIBING DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Make sure your position description includes safeguarding duties and refers to your code of conduct.

Use the relevant principles, sector standards and frameworks to guide your description of duties and responsibilities.

Here is a list of national standards for you to refer to

- National Child Safe Principles
- Commonwealth Child Safe Framework
- Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety Recommendations
- Aged Care Quality Standards
- National Standards for Disability Services

States and territories also have laws and requirements. Make sure you are across those as well.



Make it clear that employees are personally responsible for the safety of the people in their care—it's not just about compliance with laws.



INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

This is your first opportunity to inquire deeply into a person's motivations, attitudes and knowledge about preventing sexual abuse.

Ask who, what, where and how questions, rather than yes/no questions. Ask them why they want to work with vulnerable people. Explore their understanding of human rights. Test their response to any myths and misconceptions about victims of abuse and perpetrators. Give them a scenario where they would need to choose between the interests of a vulnerable person and the organisation—ask them what they would do.

In this face-to-face situation, ask them if they have anything to disclose, such as criminal charges or convictions, court orders, or allegations of harm or abuse.



CHECKING QUALIFICATIONS & HISTORY

Read a candidate's resume thoroughly looking for potential misrepresentations or gaps—bearing in mind that there are many reasons why someone might have a gap in their work history.

Ask for two referees, preferably with employers. Prepare your inquiry carefully so you use the referee's time well and uncover

the information you need. This process applies equally to potential employees and volunteers.

Ask the referee direct questions about the suitability of this person to work with vulnerable people. For example:

- This role involves working with vulnerable people. Do you have any concerns about this person doing this work?
- Was this person ever subject to investigation of inappropriate behaviour or breaches of code of conduct?

Candidates will need a Working with Children Check Card and Working with Disabled. You will also need to carry out a criminal history check with your state or territory's police force.



SIGNING THE CONTRACT

Give your code of conduct and safeguarding policy to the candidate at the same time as the contract. Ask them if they have questions about the code, policy and contract and make it clear that you welcome questions and clarifications.

We recommend that you also ask the candidate being offered the job to formally declare—for the second time and in writing—whether they have anything they should disclose.





INDUCTION

Use induction to reinforce that your new employee has committed themselves to the code of conduct, safeguarding policy and contract.

Reinforce the safety, care, dignity and privacy of people in your care. Make sure they know what to do if they see anything that could indicate sexual abuse or receive a complaint.

Schedule a meeting for them with the safeguarding officer.



MANAGING PERFORMANCE

Get to know the standards relevant to your organisation thoroughly. What counts as performing well is set out there. Some of them also describe the observable indicators that work is being done the way it should. You should be able to see it happening in your workplace.

The performance of your staff is up to you. Make sure your managers have the time and support to guide and give evidence-based feedback. Encourage your directors and executive team to take a personal interest in what is happening at the point of care.

Finally, make sure your staff have a frank and factual understanding of sexual abuse, their obligations, and what actions they must take to prevent perpetrators from getting a foothold in your organisation.



To learn more about Ansvr Safeguarding resources, please scan the QR code.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Call us on **1300 650 540**
Email us at **info@ansvarrisk.com.au**
Visit us at **ansvar.com.au**

Registered Office:
Level 5, 1 Southbank Boulevard, Southbank Vic 3006

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