

Dated 12th March 2024



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

OVERVIEW

Elite Security Group is a privately owned and independent provider of manned security guarding, mobile patrol services, keyholding and alarm response services. Our Client sites include Office buildings, Multi-Tenanted units, Shopping Centres, Retail Parks, Industrial Parks, Logistical Hubs and more. It is with this varied portfolio in mind that this policy has been written.

BACKGROUND & DEFINITION

Whilst 'safeguarding' might typically be a subject matter concerning children, it does in fact affect any and all individuals who may be considered vulnerable – including adults. Section 115(4) of the Police Act 1997 states that a person can be considered to be vulnerable if they are *“substantially dependent upon others in performing basic physical functions, or their ability to communicate with those providing services, or to communicate with others, is severely impaired, and, as a result, they would be incapable of protecting themselves from assault or other physical abuse, or there is a potential danger that their will or moral well-being may be subverted or overpowered”*.

For good reason there is ample legislation referring to and addressing safeguarding of individuals, including but not limited to, section 175 of the Education Act 2002, The Children Act 2004, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the Human Rights Act 1998 and more.

SCOPE

Whilst our work does not generally involve working with children or vulnerable adults, there are a small number of occasions where we may interact with individuals who may be considered as part of this grouping. An example might be when locating a parent or guardian of a lost child within a shopping centre or retail park. As a consequence, the Company considers it useful and beneficial (if not essential) that a documented policy is available for wider distribution.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of children, and those individuals who may be considered vulnerable, is of primary concern
- Safeguarding is a right afforded to any and all individuals; no matter their age, sex, race, ethnicity, culture, disability, socio-economic status, religious belief, language, sexual identity - or indeed any other characteristic taken to be a negative against that individual

- Abuse may be defined as either physical, psychological, sexual, financial, discriminatory, neglectful and/or institutional. It is understood that these definitions, whilst summarised, may be singular, or part of a collective
- It is everyone's responsibility to report welfare and/or safeguarding concerns to either their immediate superior and/or any relevant authorities as may be deemed appropriate
- Allegations and/or Incidents of poor practice will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly, with an appropriate response provided in a timely manner

TRAINING

Where required, adequate training is provided to ensure that individuals working for and on behalf of the organisation are aware of their role and how they should behave when dealing with children and/or vulnerable individuals. Public engagement is initially considered within the SIA licensing training course. However, additional training – sometime specific to a Client site – will be provided as appropriate.

Employees most likely to come into contact with members of the public, including children and vulnerable adults, are those working within our shopping centre and retail park portfolios. These roles specifically include additional training because of this public engagement. This additional training includes mandatory first aid and oxygen training. It also includes conflict management and diversity training. Importantly though, a reasonable degree of common sense is a useful pre-requisite when dealing with situations likely to be considered a safeguarding issue.

DOs & DON'Ts

We recognise that employees and/or agents acting on behalf of the Company will, from time to time, engage with consumers, members of the public, client employees and/or other individuals for whom a degree of responsibility may befall.

However, it is important that employees and those in positions of responsibility do not overstep their remit. The following guidance is simply that; guidance. Situations are inherently fluid and so no hard and fast response fits all. But giving sufficient consideration to the following DOs and DON'Ts is a useful starting point in managing safeguarding, whilst also protecting the person doing the engaging.

- 1) DON'T spend time alone with children and/or vulnerable adults – always ensure you remain visible to others, including simply being visible on CCTV whilst notionally alone with the individual

- 2) DON'T overly engage physically with an individual as this may cause alarm or distress and be taken as inappropriate occasioning assault. This might include horseplay or other interactions which may be taken out of context.
 - 3) DON'T engage with an individual you have met through your job role, outside of work. This includes offering a lift somewhere or inviting someone to something socially. It also includes befriending someone through social media. This again may be taken out of context and considered inappropriate.
 - 4) DON'T use gestures or language which may suggest over-familiarity with an individual. This again may be taken out of context and considered inappropriate.
 - 5) DON'T take photographs of an individual or situation, except where body cameras are deployed for the safety of those involved. Body cameras should be used as instructed.
 - 6) DON'T let allegations go unchallenged or unrecorded. These might include allegations against yourself or a colleague. In the age of CCTV – it is likely sufficient evidence can be quickly obtained to support or dismiss such an allegation.
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- 7) DO protect children and vulnerable individuals as part of your role.
- 8) DO consider a persons' privacy and respect them when managing a situation.
- 9) DO ensure you remain visible by others and/or CCTV when dealing with a situation.
- 10) DO exercise caution when discussing sensitive issues.
- 11) DO exercise caution when physically engaging with an individual. *Try to avoid.*
- 12) DO challenge unacceptable behaviour and report incidents as necessary.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees are very often in a position of trust. Indeed, members of the public will consider a uniformed security officer to be fundamentally “trustworthy” and so some consideration must be given for that implied role and the responsibilities that may extrapolate from that implied role.

It is the responsibility of everyone to report safeguarding issues. For employees, it is expected that concerns are raised to both their Line Manager (and then on to their Contracts Manager), but also – where appropriate – to the relevant authorities. Even where concerns may turn out to be without merit, it is far better to air on the side of caution and report concerns and/or incidents as deemed necessary.

All concerns may be reported to the Control Room in the first instance on: **01793 522355**

Relevant authorities might include: Police, Social Services, Local Councils

SUMMARY

This safeguarding policy is intended to provide guidance on the subject of safeguarding. It should not be taken as a lone training tool. It should be read in conjunction with SIA training, site training, first aid training and considered with your wider knowledge of human behaviour and social interactions.

The overriding intention of safeguarding is of course the support, assistance and protection of children and vulnerable individuals. However, in this age of litigation, this policy has considered important points to mitigate against risk. The DOs and DON'Ts section, whilst not exhaustive, provides some degree of guidance to limit an employees' exposure to risk when dealing with a safeguarding concern.

Elite Security Group remains committed to supporting all employees by way of additional training where necessary. It is also committed in supporting Clients' expectations of how safeguarding concerns are managed and so often a Clients' policy or instruction will override this company's position. However, clarity is often provided within Site Assignment Instructions and Site Induction Training.

Should anyone have any queries or concerns about safeguarding generally, or the contents of this policy, please contact Scott Huntley, Director of Support Services in the first instance.