

British Athletics & The Home Country Athletics Federations

ADULT AT RISK SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

Responding to and Managing a Concern about an Adult at Risk

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Consent and Information Sharing

Adults' views and wishes must be sought wherever possible (Making Safeguarding Personal).

Information can be shared without consent if:

- Others are at risk of harm
- A crime has been committed
- The adult lacks capacity

All sharing must comply with UK GDPR and The Data Protection Act 2018.

Use ACT information-sharing flowchart as reference.

Introduction

These procedures apply to the following governing bodies in athletics:

- British Athletics (BA)
- England Athletics (EA)
- Athletics Northern Ireland (ANI)
- Welsh Athletics (WA)
- Scottish Athletics (SA).

In this document, any reference to British Athletics means British Athletics and the above listed Home Country Athletics Federations (HCAFs).

We are committed to providing a safe environment for everyone to participate in athletics. These procedures should be implemented with reference to the Adult at Risk Safeguarding Policy and supporting information.

Safeguarding Principles Ann Craft Trust (ACT) Guidance:

- Empowerment: People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions
- Prevention: Acting before harm occurs
- Proportionality: Least intrusive response appropriate to risk
- Protection: Support for those in greatest need
- Partnership: Local solutions through services working together
- Accountability: Clear roles and transparency.

These procedures detail the steps to be taken when a concern is raised that an adult involved in athletics and related activities is at risk (per the definitions included in the Adult Safeguarding Policy) of or is experiencing harm.

Reporting a Concern About Yourself

If you are in immediate danger or need immediate medical assistance, contact the emergency services on 999.

To raise a concern about yourself, as an adult at risk, please contact your Club Welfare Officer. If you would prefer, you can contact the Welfare lead at the relevant HCAF or other member of staff who will help you raise your concern.

Alternatively, you can report a safeguarding concern about yourself directly to the BA Safeguarding Team by submitting the Online Safeguarding Concern Form available on the BA website, available [here](#), or by emailing the team on safeguarding@uka.org.uk.

You can also contact the Police, Social Services, your doctor or other organisations that can provide information and give help and support.

Everyone in athletics will follow the procedures in this document. If you do not think your concerns are being addressed in the way that they should be, please contact the BA Safeguarding Team.

At all stages you are welcome to have someone who you trust to support you and help you to explain what happened and what you want to happen.

It is of utmost importance to British Athletics and your HCAF that you can take part in our activities safely and we will take every step to support you to do that.

ADULT AT RISK SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

Recognising a Concern About an Adult at Risk

You may be concerned about harm to another person because of something you have seen or heard, information you have been told by others, or because someone has confided in you about things that are happening or have happened to them.

It is not your responsibility to prove or decide whether an adult at risk has been harmed or abused. It is, however, everyone's responsibility to respond to and report concerns they have.

Types of Abuse and Neglect, aligned with ACT categories:

- Organisational abuse
- Discriminatory abuse (racism, misogyny, ableism, homophobia, transphobia)
- Self-neglect
- Domestic abuse (including coercive control)
- Financial or material abuse.

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected. There may be other explanations, but they should not be ignored. The signs and symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present.
- A person who has belongings or money going missing.
- A person is not attending/no longer enjoying their sessions. You may notice that a participant in a team has been missing practice sessions and is not responding to reminders from team members or coaches.
- Someone losing or gaining weight/an unkempt appearance. This could be a athlete whose appearance becomes unkempt, does not wear suitable sports kit and there is a deterioration in hygiene.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person. For example, a participant may be quiet and withdrawn when their brother comes to collect them from sessions, in contrast to their personal assistant whom they greet with a smile.
- Self-harm.
- A fear of a particular group of people or individual.
- A parent/carer always speaks for the person and doesn't allow them to make their own choices.

- A direct disclosure from someone that they or another person is being abused.

Responding to a Disclosure or Concern about an Adult at Risk

If an adult indicates to you that they are being harmed or abused, or information is received which gives rise to a concern, you should follow the guidance below.

- If it will not put them or you at further risk, discuss your safeguarding concerns with the adult and ask them what they would like to happen next. Inform them that you need to pass on your concerns to the Safeguarding Team at BA, HCAF Welfare Lead or a Club Welfare Officer.
- Do not contact the adult at risk before talking to a Safeguarding Lead, HCAF Welfare Lead or Club Welfare Officer if the person allegedly causing the harm is likely to find out.
- Take their concern seriously.
- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the adult to continue at their own pace.
- Be sensitive.
- Keep questions to a minimum – only ask questions if you need to identify/clarify what the person is telling you.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Explain what you would like to do next.
- Explain that you will have to share the information with the Club Welfare Officer.
- Ask for their consent for the information to be shared with other agencies.
- Decide how you/the welfare officer can contact them safely.
- Help them to contact other organisations for advice and support (e.g. Police, Domestic Abuse Helpline, Victim Support).
- Act swiftly to report and carry out any relevant actions (see below).
- Do not confront the person thought to be causing harm.

It is important **not** to:

- Dismiss or ignore the concern
- Panic or allow shock or distaste to show
- Make negative comments about the alleged perpetrator
- Make assumptions or speculate
- Come to your own conclusions
- Probe for more information than is offered
- Promise to keep the information secret
- Make promises that cannot be kept
- Conduct your own investigation of the case
- Confront the person thought to be causing harm
- Take sole responsibility
- Tell everyone (the information is confidential).

If someone has a need for **immediate medical attention**, call an ambulance on 999.

If you are concerned someone is in **immediate danger** or a **serious crime** is being committed, contact the Police on 999 straight away. Where you suspect that a crime is being committed, you must involve the Police.

Recording a Concern

- Make a note of what the person has said, using their own words, as soon as practicable.
- Completing the Safeguarding referral form on the BA Website.
- Ensure you describe the circumstances in which the concern came about and what action you took/advice you gave.
- It is important to distinguish between things that are fact and things that have been observed or overheard, to ensure that information is as accurate as possible.
- If someone has told you about harm or abuse, use the words the person used. If someone has written to you (including by email or social media) include a copy with the form.

Reporting a Concern

Inform the Club Welfare Officer, HCAF Welfare or BA Safeguarding Team that you have made a referral without delay.

This information is confidential and must only be shared with your Club Welfare Officer, HCAF Welfare or BA Safeguarding team and others that have a need to know, in order to keep the person safe whilst waiting for action to be taken.

Case Management

a. The Role of the Club Welfare Officer

On receipt of a referral, the Club Welfare Officer will take the following action:

1. Ensure any immediate actions necessary to safeguard anyone at risk are taken.
2. If the risk or concern is believed to be due to the behaviour of a club member, then consider the relevant procedures (e.g. interim suspension from the club) to prevent that person contacting the adult at risk.
3. If you have been advised that somebody has made a Safeguarding referral, check that you understand the concern and who made it and what the concern was about.
4. If you are being contacted directly by a club member, or a member of the public, ensure that they provide enough information for you to complete the Adult at Risk Safeguarding Report Form.
5. Reassure, and advise the person making the report. Explain what will happen next and reinforce the need for confidentiality.
6. Decide if you need to contact the adult concerned to get more information, determine their capacity and wishes, or explain what actions you need to take. **Only do this if you have a known safe way of contacting them.**
7. In all situations the Club Welfare Officer should ensure those in the club/organisation who can act (within their remit) to prevent further harm have the information to do so. Depending on the situation you may need to pass information to, and work with, other organisations such as the Police or the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team.
8. The Club Welfare Officer must refer the case to their Home Country or to the BA Safeguarding Team as soon as possible. This can be done by contacting safeguarding@uka.org.uk, or by submitting an Online Safeguarding Concern Form using the link on your Home Country governing body website. This will be sent directly to the BA Safeguarding Team.

b. The Role of the HCAF and British Athletics Safeguarding Team

On receipt of a concern about an adult from any source, the BA Safeguarding Team will take the following action:

1. Consult and decide.

If necessary, the BA Safeguarding Team will consult with the HCAF Welfare Lead and the Club Welfare Officer and decide what initial actions need to be taken and by whom.

2. Contact the Police (where the crime took place).

The Police will be contacted if:

- a serious crime has been committed
- a crime has been committed against someone without the mental capacity to contact the Police themselves
- the adult has asked them to make a report to the Police on their behalf because they are unable to themselves.

3. Refer to a Local Authority Safeguarding Adults Team if it is believed they may be an adult at risk and:

- the adult appears not to have the mental capacity to make decisions about their own safety and wellbeing
- the risk is from a person employed or volunteering in work with adults with care and support needs (including within the club)
- there may be other 'adults at risk' (e.g. another family member, another club member or other people using a service)
- the adult at risk lives in Wales or Northern Ireland (no consent required)
- the adult at risk lives in England or Scotland and they have asked you to make a report or have given their informed consent to you making it.

If a child is at risk the team will also make a child safeguarding referral to the Local Authority. This includes all situations where there is domestic abuse within the household where the child lives.

If there is uncertainty on whether to make a referral/report, then advice will be sought from the Local Authority Safeguarding Adults Team without disclosing the identity of the adult or the person who may be causing harm.

4. Use policy and procedures to stop harm within the organisation. If the person who may be causing harm is a person involved in athletics in whatever capacity, the BA Safeguarding Team

will:

- decide what policy and procedures to follow (e.g. breach of code of conduct, relevant disciplinary procedures, breach of contract).
- agree what short-term arrangements can be put in place to enable the adult at risk, to be able to continue participating in their role or activity.

- 5. Ongoing liaison with statutory agencies.** If statutory agencies are involved, the BA Safeguarding Team will ensure the relevant people are assigned to work together with them to coordinate and agree the next steps. The Head of Safeguarding will decide who attends and contributes to any safeguarding adults' strategy or case meetings that are called by the Local Authority. This may be a club or HCAF representative.
- 6. Ongoing liaison with the adult.** The BA Safeguarding Team will confirm who will maintain contact with the adult, to consult with them, keep them informed, and make sure they are receiving the support they need. This may be a club or HCAF representative.
- 7.** When the statutory agencies conclude their investigations or decide to take no further action in relation to a referral, the BA Safeguarding Team will ensure the matter is investigated at the appropriate level and in line with the Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations.
- 8.** The BA Safeguarding Team will coordinate and oversee all case related decisions and actions in line with the Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations and supported by the Safeguarding Case Management Group.

Whistleblowing and Vexatious Complaints:

- Concerns can also be raised through the BA Whistleblowing Policy.
- Malicious or vexatious complaints will be managed fairly, ensuring integrity of safeguarding processes in line with the BA vexatious complaints policy.

National Safeguarding Contact Details

Governing Body	Email	Phone
British Athletics	safeguarding@uka.org.uk	07345 470821
England Athletics	welfare@englandathletics.org	07464 522426
Welsh Athletics	safeguardingandwelfare@welshathletics.org	07792 242153
Athletics Northern Ireland	welfare@athleticsni.org	02890 602707
Scottish Athletics	welfare@scottishathletics.org.uk	07522 701203

APPENDIX 1: PROCESS MAP

REPORTING A CONCERN ABOUT AN ADULT AT RISK

