



**Gabriela Safehaven - Southeast and East Asian Women's Association (SEEAWA)  
Policy Document – Digital Safeguarding Adults and Children Policy and  
Procedure**

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| <b>Policy Name:</b>      | Digital Safeguarding Policy and Procedure |
| <b>Date Created:</b>     | 25 September 2024                         |
| <b>Next Review Date:</b> | 25 September 2025                         |
| <b>Trustee Champion:</b> | Sarah Yeh                                 |

## Who is covered by the policy:

This policy and procedure document applies to all SEEAWA trustees and volunteers, staff, committee members, senior management, and/or students on work placements.

This document will be reviewed annually.

All trustees and volunteers, staff, committee members, senior management, and/or students on work placements should read and familiarise themselves with the contents of this policy and procedure document, and explore relevant resources referenced in the policy & procedure document.

### **The Nominated Safeguarding Person (Role and Responsibilities)**

It is the responsibility of the Nominated Digital Safeguarding Person and his/her Deputies to support all staff and volunteers in understanding this policy and procedure document and applying it in their everyday work and ensuring safe working practice guidance which all staff/volunteers have read and understood.

The Nominated Digital Safeguarding Person is the lead person to whom all safeguarding concerns and suspicions should be reported and from whom advice should be sought on all safeguarding matters.

The Nominated Digital Safeguarding Person is currently **Sarah Reid**, Development and Fundraising Manager.

**The policy:  
(what we do,  
when & where)**

**Digital safeguarding for adults and children means -**

Digital safeguarding means protecting everyone at SEEAWA from online harms like:

**Cyberstalking** – Repeatedly using electronic communications to harass or frighten someone. For example, by sending threatening messages.

**Discrimination and abuse** on the grounds of protected characteristics – It can be an offence to stir up hatred – 'inciting hatred' - on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics.

**Disinformation** - Deliberate intent to spread wrong information.

**Hacking** – Accessing or using computer systems or networks without authorisation, often by exploiting weaknesses in security.

**Harmful online challenges** – Online challenges sometimes show people doing dangerous things. People share these posts on social media, encouraging others to do the same.

**Hoaxes** – A lie designed to seem truthful.

**Impersonation** - Where someone pretends to be someone else online. This is often by taking photos from social media to build a fake profile. This is sometimes known as 'catfishing'.

**Misinformation** - Where someone shares information they think is correct, but it isn't.

**Online bullying** - Offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting behaviour and abuse of power online. This can humiliate or denigrate people.

**Online harassment** - Unwanted contact online intended to violate someone's dignity. It could be hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive.

**Promotion of self-harm, suicide and eating disorders** – Content encouraging these harmful behaviours on social media.

**Radicalisation** - Radicalisation aims to inspire new recruits, embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable people to support a cause. This may be through a direct relationship, or through social media.

**Sexual exploitation and grooming online** - Developing a relationship with a child with the

intention of abusing them. Offenders use emotional and psychological tricks to build relationships. The abuse can take place online or offline.

**Sharing of illegal and inappropriate imagery** - 'Illegal' means child sexual abuse imagery and imagery that incites violence, hate or terrorism. 'Inappropriate' could mean sharing pornography, or violent or hateful content.

**Oversharing personal information** - This includes information that makes someone identifiable, like their names or phone number. It may also include identifying details based on someone's protected characteristics.

If you think someone is at risk of any of these harms, you must report it.

This policy applies to all SEEAWA volunteers, members and HQ staff. This includes employees, officers, consultants, contractors, interns, casual workers and agency workers.

It also applies to everyone who uses our online services. These include websites, digital platforms and social media.

It covers all activities at any level which take place online. These include:

Any activities that take place over internet SEEAWA provides. Any SEEAWA activities that take place on non-SEEAWA affiliated digital platforms, like Facebook or Zoom, or devices, like mobile phones or computers.

## **Digital safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**

We expect all SEEAWA members, volunteers and staff to:

Always report a safeguarding concern, offline or online, even if you aren't sure. SEEAWA's HQ Safeguarding team is here to help.

Follow this policy and procedure, alongside our Safeguarding procedure.

Recognise the types of online harms and the risks they have.

Make every effort to ensure our beneficiaries, staff and trustees understand why and how to stay safe online.

Make sure you have the correct permissions before

taking and using photographs.

Delete photos after events, in line with our managing information.

Never contact a child or young member under 18 without permission from their parent or carer. This applies even if they contacted you first, unless it's an emergency.

Make sure you set up and use social media accounts responsibly.

Make sure you do everything possible to stop access to illegal or inappropriate content on SEEAWA devices or devices used for SEEAWA activities.

## **SEEAWA's commitment to digital safeguarding**

Our team is on hand to support you with any concerns you might have. If you think someone might be at risk of harm, offline or online, you must report it.

We make sure our projects, activities, programmes and campaigns support all of our members, volunteers and staff to stay safe online.

We aim to incorporate best practice in digital safeguarding in everything we do.

We help our volunteers to support members to be effective online.

We take action in line with best practice when a digital safeguarding incident happens.

We support and train volunteers with digital safeguarding.

We keep links with key organisations to raise awareness and refer and report incidents.

We risk-assess all our projects, initiatives, programmes, activities, services and campaigns to make sure digital safeguards are in place.

We support volunteers and staff using our safeguarding structure.

Staying safe is our priority but we can't resolve every issue. Some may be the service provider or user's responsibility.

## Who's responsible for digital safeguarding at SEEAWA?

Our Safe practice team leads digital safeguarding at SEEAWA. They make sure we're obeying the law and using best practice. They also work with our Digital team on safeguarding.

If you know of an allegation, concern or disclosure, you must report it.

You must deal with online incidents in the same way as other safeguarding incidents. This could be something that happens at a unit meeting, or a member raising an issue at an online meeting.

The digital Safeguarding lead is on hand to support you. You can contact them at [sarahreid@seeawa.org.uk](mailto:sarahreid@seeawa.org.uk)

SEEAWA will only share information with other agencies when necessary. This could be if there's a significant concern, or where someone may have committed a crime.

If a volunteer breaches this policy, we'll manage it internally with meetings with Sarah, and trustees.

For staff, we'll use our staff disciplinary procedure.

**Other relevant  
SEEAWA  
Policies:**

This policy and procedure document should be used in conjunction with:

- Ending Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) Policy,
- Health & Safety Policy,
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy and
- Data Protection Policy.

**Gabriela Safehaven – Southeast and East Asian Women’s Association (SEEAWA)  
Policy Document – Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure**

**Safeguarding Procedures:**

It is the responsibility of everyone working on behalf of SEEAWA (staff/volunteers), to understand SEEAWA’s Safeguarding policy & procedures.

To achieve good practice in our setting we will ensure the following areas are clear and put into practice:

**1) Safer Recruitment & Selection**

All staff/volunteers will go through the following process prior to delivering/ supporting activities/services to vulnerable adults.

We have a policy and procedure which ensures that all paid staff and volunteers:

- Complete an application form or a letter of application. This includes: address, evidence of relevant qualifications, the reasons why they want to work with vulnerable adults, paid work and voluntary work experience and all criminal convictions.
- Provide two pieces of identification which confirm both identity and address.
- Undergo an interview (formal or informal) involving at least two interviewers.
- Provide at least two references which are followed up before a post is offered. One reference is from the last employer or an organisation that has knowledge of the applicant's work or volunteering with vulnerable adults. If the applicant has not worked with vulnerable adults before, then they should confirm this and give an alternative referee.
- Consent to a Disclosure and Barring Service check (formal CRB check) at the appropriate level (standard or enhanced). Agree to sign up to the DBS update service.

Furthermore, the organisation complies with all other safeguarding regulations:

- We understand that a person who is barred from working with vulnerable adults is breaking the law if they work, volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with these groups.
- We understand that an organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law.
- We understand that if our organisation dismisses a member of staff or volunteer because they have harmed a vulnerable adult, or would have done so if they had not left, we must complete a DBS referral form.
- SEEAWA will have an induction process including access to policies, procedures and code of conduct expected to be followed by all those delivering services on behalf of SEEAWA to support their work.
- An appraisal system in place to identify any concerns or issues.

## **2) Management & Support of Paid Staff & Volunteers**

- All staff and volunteers will be provided with a job description (paid staff) or a role profile (volunteers) outlining their main responsibilities. This includes a requirement to comply with our Safeguarding Policy and procedures and ground rules for appropriate behaviour.
- All staff and volunteers are supported through an induction process in which safeguarding procedures are explained and training needs identified.
- All paid staff and volunteers complete a role review at the end of their induction period before being confirmed in post. Inductions will be completed within 6 months.
- All paid staff are given supervision at least every 8 weeks by the designated authorised person of the organisation.
- All volunteers are given regular support sessions. (This may include one to one or group support, mentoring or shadowing opportunities).
- Implements disciplinary and grievance procedures for all paid staff and volunteers.
- All paid staff and volunteers attend regular ongoing safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- All paid staff and volunteers receive an induction, which includes information on all the organisation's policies and procedures.

## **3) Safer working practice:**

We will ensure that adequate staff and/or volunteers are supporting activities that Gabriela Safehaven runs.

All activities are properly planned and organised. Planning ensures that the activities are age- appropriate, appropriately supervised, take staff ratios into account and use qualified instructors.



- Risk Assessments for activities are carried out prior to delivering activity sessions.
- All activities are risk assessed to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent vulnerable adults being harmed whilst participating in the organisation's activities.
- We will regularly assess and review safety risks which arise from premises, activities, equipment and travel arrangements, as outlined in the organisation's Health and Safety Policy.
- Ground rules are set for appropriate behaviour for vulnerable adults, staff, volunteers, parents and carers. Systems are in place and implemented if the ground rules are broken.
- We will ensure that images of vulnerable adults and families are only used after written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given.

#### **4) Providing Safer Activities and Trips**

Necessary arrangements:

- People whose suitability has not been checked, including through a DBS check, must not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults.
- All paid staff and volunteers undertaking specialist roles are provided with appropriate training.
- Employer's liability and/or public liability insurance has been taken out to ensure that all activities and services and all people taking part, are covered.

#### **5) Responding to concerns**

If any member of staff/volunteer is concerned about an adult at risk, they must inform the nominated safeguarding lead person (NSP) or deputy NSP immediately.

- The written record must be clear, precise and a factual account of observations or what has been said.
- The NSP will decide on the most appropriate course of action and whether the concerns should be referred to other social service providers. If it is decided that a referral needs to be made, this will be discussed with the adult at risk. All concerns, discussions and decisions will be recorded in writing.
- If a member of staff disagrees with the level of concern and feels that an adult at risk has not been protected, then any member of staff can make a direct referral.

## **Disclosure by a Vulnerable Adult:**

SEEAWA recognises that an adult at risk may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously, individually or in groups when you are present. In these situations, YOU MUST:

- Listen carefully to the vulnerable adult. You can seek clarification but DO NOT ask direct questions or start to investigate the matter.
- Give the adult at risk time and your full attention.
- Allow the adult at risk to give their account; do not stop an adult at risk who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present. Make a record of the adult at risk's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the adult at risk's own words where possible.
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared - do not offer false confidentiality.

## **Reassure the Vulnerable Adult that:**

- They have done the right thing in telling you.
- They have not done anything wrong.
- Tell the adult at risk what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep him/her safe.
- DO NOT ask the adult at risk to repeat her account of events to anyone.
- You must log and record information regarding concerns on the same day.

## **Allegations Against Adults Who Work with Vulnerable Adults**

If you have information which suggests an adult who works with vulnerable adults (in a paid or unpaid capacity) has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a vulnerable adult.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a vulnerable adult.
- Behaved towards a vulnerable adult in a way that indicated s/he is unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults.

You should speak immediately with the Nominated Safeguarding Lead Person (NSP) or your manager who has responsibility for managing allegations. The NSP will consult with/make a referral to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) via the MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub) Team. If one of those people is implicated in the concerns you should discuss your concerns directly with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) via the MASH Team.

## **Making a Referral**

A referral will involve providing information of concern to the Nominated Safeguarding Lead Person (NSP) (unless the concern is about the Nominated Safeguarding Person) about an Allegation against a staff/ volunteer.

The MASH will need to be contacted in order for the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to be informed. The LADO will make enquiries and take appropriate action, provide guidance and may request for further information to be submitted. You may be called for a meeting with the LADO. The LADO may have to speak to the Police to decide if a criminal act has taken place, in serious cases the Police may be informed and may investigate.

You will be informed of the action that will be taken by the LADO.

## YOU SHOULD NOT:

- Call a staff meeting and discuss the matter with staff/volunteers. The LADO will guide you on what needs to be done.
- You should not try and bring the perpetrator of the alleged abuse in contact with the victim to discuss concerns.
- Do not delay your response.

**There are some cases that require an urgent response. If a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or is at harm or risk you should refer to the social care and/or the police.**

**If you suspect a serious criminal act has taken place, telephone 999. Tell them if you think it might be adult abuse.**

**If the individual is injured, seek immediate medical treatment. Tell the ambulance personnel or A&E staff that this is a potential adult abuse situation.**

- In emergency dial 999
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

Email: [enquiry@towerhamletsconnect.org](mailto:enquiry@towerhamletsconnect.org)

Tel: 0300 303 6070 (weekdays 9am to 5pm)

We recommend also emailing a [safeguarding alert form](#) to [enquiry@towerhamletsconnect.org](mailto:enquiry@towerhamletsconnect.org).

Tower Hamlets Connect staff will send this directly to the local authority/initial assessment team.

**Out of hours emergency duty team:**

Tel: 020 7364 4079 (5pm to 9am including weekends).

[https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community\\_and\\_living/community\\_safety\\_crime\\_preve/domestic\\_violence/Domestic-abuse.aspx](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/community_and_living/community_safety_crime_preve/domestic_violence/Domestic-abuse.aspx)

## Action To Be Taken Following the Referral:

SEEAWA will ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern(s) made at the time. SEEAWA puts concerns in writing to the social care team following the referral within 48 hours duty.

SEEAWA will accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

## Confidentiality

SEEAWA will ensure that any records made in relation to a referral are kept confidentially and in a secure place.

Information in relation to adult safeguarding concerns should be shared on a "need to know" basis. **Note:** The sharing of information is vital to adult protection and, therefore, the issue of confidentiality is secondary to the need for protection.

## Challenges & Escalation

All staff and volunteers need to be robust in constructively challenging colleagues when necessary, to achieve the best outcome for vulnerable people.

## Whistle Blowing

This is the confidential disclosure by any individual of any concern encountered in the workplace related to a perceived wrongdoing. SEEAWA considers such wrongdoing to include:

- General malpractice, such as immoral, illegal or unethical conduct
- Conduct where someone's health and safety has been put in danger.
- Gross misconduct.

If individuals have concerns relating to their employment with SEEAWA these should be raised under SEEAWA's grievance policy. Where it is felt that the organisation has not or will not address the concerns appropriately, there are several services available:

- Whistleblowers UK - <https://www.wbuk.org/help>
- Care Quality Commission - 03000 616 161
- Action on elder abuse 0808 808 8141 – (Hourglass)

Signed by Trustees:

Sarah Yeh, Trustee –



Susan Cueva, Trustee -

Date: 25 Sep 2024