



Croydon Multi-Agency  
**SAFEGUARDING**  
**ADULTS BOARD**

# **SAFEGUARDING**

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# **ADULTS**

**What is abuse and what to do if an  
adult is being abused or neglected.**

## What is adult safeguarding?

Adult safeguarding supports people who are experiencing or are at risk of abuse, have care and support needs and as a result of those needs may be unable to protect themselves. Croydon Council has to enquire into each report of concern under the Care Act of 2014.

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop the risk of abuse or neglect. Adult safeguarding should take into account the adult's views, wishes, feelings and beliefs when deciding on any action.

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## What do we mean by abuse?

Abuse is when someone does something to harm another person, damages their quality of life or puts them at risk of harm. It can be deliberate, unintentional or accidental. It can take many forms and more than one abuse can take place at the same time. It can be a criminal act when it is an offence against another person.

Abuse and neglect can occur anywhere: in your own home or a public place, social centre, in hospital or in a care home.

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## Who might be at risk?

Some adults might be more at risk than others, such as people who depend on others for their care and are isolated, having little contact with friends or family. They may not be able to stop someone from hurting them or taking advantage of them.

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## Who can abuse?

Anyone can be an abuser but it is usually someone known to the person, such as a family member, a friend, a neighbour, a health or social care worker.

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## What should you do if you suspect or hear of alleged abuse?

If there is any immediate danger, first ensure the safety of the adult. Call emergency services on 999 if immediate help is needed.

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### Reporting abuse

Contact Croydon council to report concerns over the phone on **020 8726 6500** if the case is urgent and requires immediate attention.

If the matter does not require urgent attention then please use the online Safeguarding adults referral form which can be found in the “**Report It**” section on: **[www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk)**

*Please note: if the form is completed out of standard office hours (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday) the report will be picked up the next working day - if the matter is urgent please ring **020 8726 6500** or **999** to report abuse.*

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### Contacts

Contact Croydon Council: **020 8726 6500**

Out of hours: **020 8726 6500**

Email: **[referral.team2@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:referral.team2@croydon.gov.uk)**

Website: **[www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk)**

Address:

**Bernard Weatherill House**

**8 Mint Walk**

**Croydon**

**CR0 1EA**



## What will happen next?

In response to your contact, a worker from adult social care services will ensure that enquires are carried out into the concern raised, using the London multi-agency guidelines on safeguarding adults. Download available on the ADASS website [www.londonadass.org.uk](http://www.londonadass.org.uk).

You can expect staff to:

- Listen to you
- Treat you with dignity, respect and sensitivity
- Take action as necessary
- Tell you what will happen next

If abuse has occurred or is suspected then the council will ensure that action is taken to try and safeguard the adult in the future. Where it appears a criminal offence has been committed, the police will be informed.

What happens then will depend on the wishes of the person and the seriousness of the situation. If they are in immediate danger, ensuring their safety will be the first priority.

Information and advice will be offered so that the adult can make an informed choice about any practical help they need or action they wish to take. If they are unable to make an informed choice, care will be taken to support and protect them. Where necessary social workers may meet with all involved in order to help develop a protection plan and hear the views of the adult concerned as well as their relatives/advocates.

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## Recognising abuse

The following are some examples of abuse and what you might notice:

- **Physical Abuse:** being hit, slapped, pushed or injured on purpose. The adult could be in pain, have bruises or injuries that cannot be reasonably explained and be fearful and withdrawn.
- **Neglect and acts of omission:** medical, emotional or physical care needs being ignored; being left in wet or dirty clothes, hungry, ill but not receiving medical attention. Being ignored when calling for assistance.

- **Financial or material abuse:** theft, fraud, internet scamming, pressure to buy or accept services, coercion in relation to money, including wills or inheritance. Can result in items disappearing from the home; unexplained withdrawals from the bank, unpaid bills and an unusual shortage of money.
- **Sexual abuse:** involvement in a sexual activity which is unwanted or not understood, and to which the adult has not consented or was pressurised into consenting. Includes inappropriate touching, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts. There may be an unexpected change in the adult's behaviour and signs of physical discomfort.
- **Self-neglect:** when an adult is not taking care of their personal hygiene, health or surroundings, and/or hoarding. They may not be changing their clothes; their home may be increasingly cluttered.
- **Domestic abuse:** any incident (or pattern) of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour or violence between those aged 16 or over, who are/were intimate partners or family members. Includes Honour Based Violence, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The adult may have unexplained bruising and be in pain; fearful and isolated.
- **Psychological:** includes emotional abuse, threats of humiliation, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse or isolation. This is harmful to a person's emotional health and well-being. The adult may be fearful, withdrawn and confused.
- **Modern slavery:** includes slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Includes victims that have been brought from overseas and vulnerable people in the UK. The adult may be working but gets little or no payment for the work, not have access to their passport and their movements are closely monitored and restricted. They may have been harmed or deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care or social interaction.
- **Discriminatory abuse:** experienced as harassment, insults or similar actions due to race, religion, gender, gender identity, age, disability, or sexual orientation.
- **Organisational Abuse:** poor or inadequate care and support due to systematic poor practice and neglect in a care setting. Individual needs or wishes are ignored due to inflexible systems or routines. For example: little choice available about time to get up in the morning or diet. People may be unkempt.

## What should you do if someone tells you that they are being abused?

### **Do**

- Stay calm and listen to them
- Take what you are being told seriously
- Offer support to help them stop the abuse happening
- Be aware that medical evidence or other evidence may be needed
- Make a written note of what you have been told
- Contact Social Services or the police

### **Do not**

- Press the person for more details (these can be taken later)
  - Assume that someone else is aware of the situation and will take action
  - Contact the alleged abuser
  - Promise to keep it a secret
  - Be afraid to contact Social Services or the police to discuss it
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## What if you are the person being abused?

- Contact Social Services or the police
  - Or ask someone to contact them for you
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For further information see the Croydon Council website at [www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk) as well as the Croydon Safeguarding Board website, [www.croydonsab.co.uk](http://www.croydonsab.co.uk)

## Should you have any concerns call:

Contact Croydon Council: **020 8726 6500**

Out of hours: **020 8726 6500**

Email: **[referral.team2@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:referral.team2@croydon.gov.uk)**

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In cases of domestic violence or abuse, for advice and support you can call the Family Justice centre helpline on **020 8688 0100** or email: **[fjc@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:fjc@croydon.gov.uk)**

For more information on safeguarding adults, please see **[www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk)** or the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board website on **[www.croydonsab.co.uk](http://www.croydonsab.co.uk)**





Croydon Multi-Agency  
**SAFEGUARDING**  
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A multi-agency board made up from:

Croydon Council

The Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group

South London and Maudsley

The London Fire Brigade

Croydon Mencap

Age UK Croydon

Mind in Croydon

Croydon Health Service

Croydon Safeguarding Children's Board

The London Ambulance Service

Croydon Police

The BME Forum

The Care Quality Commission

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[www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk)