



GUIDANCE NOTES NO:

**10.6**

# RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING TO ADULT SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

**FOR OPEN-AGE ADULT DISABILITY CLUBS & LEAGUES**

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**FOR ALL**

# RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING TO ADULT SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Safeguarding adults can be complex. The rights of the adult to self-determination and to be involved in decisions about their lives needs to be balanced against risks, such as the need to keep others safe.

Advice can always be sought from the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer (CFA DSO). The CFA DSO has had extra training and can seek advice from The FA's Case Management Team, based at Wembley Stadium.

Club-based Community organisations/Trusts and professional game clubs will have their own internal reporting processes. Some organisations, for example teams related to charities, may already have reporting processes they have to follow in the event of a safeguarding concern. Despite this, any safeguarding concerns arising in football must also be reported following the guidance below.

## The basics

Reports from within the club should normally be to the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) If this person is suspected of being involved in the concern, reports should be made directly to the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Poor practice can often be addressed in the club, but support and guidance is always available from the County FA.

The Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) must report anything that might be abuse to the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer (CFA DSO).

A flowchart of the reporting process is shown in **Appendix 1**.

## 1. RECOGNISING ADULT SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

For definitions of poor practice and abuse, please read The FA's **Guidance Notes 10.1: Safeguarding Adults in Open-age Adult Disability Football**. Please also see **Appendix 2: Categories and indicators of adult abuse**.

Everyone who works or volunteers in open-age disability football should complete The FA's free 'Safeguarding Adults' online course. This will help raise awareness of safeguarding concerns.

Stay aware of changes in appearance, behaviour and communication which may indicate a safeguarding concern.

## 2. RESPONDING TO ADULT SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

### a) Receiving a disclosure

A disclosure is when someone tells a person about poor practice or abuse that has happened to them. If this happens:

- Find a quiet place to talk;
- Be patient, listen carefully and stay calm;
- Allow enough time for the person to communicate fully;
- Be clear with them that they have a right to be safe;
- Ask the adult what they would like to happen and reassure them that their views and wishes will be taken into account;
- Explain the information must be passed on to the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) – assuming they're not implicated.

### But please avoid:

- Asking lots of questions;
- Beginning investigations or touching any evidence;
- Deleting any messages or pictures;
- Putting anyone at risk by the actions you take.

### b) Feeling concerned?

If you are worried about an adult don't keep concerns to yourself. Depending on your relationship with the person and how serious your concerns are, see if the person would like to talk to you or the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams).

It is best practice, when safe to do so, to discuss any safeguarding concerns with the adult to establish their views and the expression 'nothing about me without me' is a useful one to remember. However, you can also seek advice yourself from the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) if you are unsure what to do.

### c) Non-recent abuse

If non-recent abuse is disclosed the adult should be encouraged to go to the Police. If you need advice or support after receiving such a disclosure, contact your CFA DSO or email [safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:safeguarding@TheFA.com).

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## 3. REPORTING ADULT SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

**a) Initial reports will normally be to the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) unless they are suspected of being involved in the concern. If this happens the report should be made directly to the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer (CFA DSO).**

Even if the adult does not want action taken, the concern must still be shared as no volunteer or staff member should hold back information that might mean an adult is at risk. Holding back information could mean that poor practice or abuse continues or gets worse. Keeping information private puts unfair pressure on volunteers and encourages a culture of secrets.

After receiving a report, the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) will involve the adult to establish their views and involve them in the next steps (assuming it is safe to do so).

If something is – or might be – abuse, the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) must report this to the CFA DSO within 24 hours. Possible breaches of the Relationship of Trust should be discussed with the CFA DSO in the strictest of confidence.

To read more about the Relationship of Trust, please refer to **Guidance Notes 10.7: Best-Practice Guidance for Safeguarding Adults in Open-Age Disability Football.**

Affiliated Football's referral form can be used to report possible abuse to the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer. The referral form is contained within **Guidance Notes 2.2: Safeguarding Referral Form – Affiliated Football.**

The CFA DSO may seek advice from or refer to The FA's Safeguarding Case Management Team at Wembley. The adult will be kept informed and their views considered in this process. Sometimes the CFA DSO may seek advice without identifying the individual to protect their privacy.

There are various risk management actions which can be taken by Case Management Team at Wembley. These include education, mentoring, supervision and, where appropriate, suspensions.

### **b) Reporting safeguarding concerns in an emergency**

In an emergency contact the Police, call an ambulance or seek advice from local adult services.

An emergency includes situations where:

- Other adults and/or children could be at risk of harm;
- A crime may be committed;
- A serious crime has been committed;
- The adult is at risk but is being coerced into not wanting action taken;
- Health and/or wellbeing may be adversely affected by ongoing harm or abuse;
- The person posing the risk has care and support needs and may also be at risk.

The safeguarding team at Wembley can also be contacted via [safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:safeguarding@TheFA.com) or by calling **0844 980 8200** and select 'Safeguarding' from the menu (office hours Monday-Friday excluding bank holidays).

## 4. RECORDING ADULT SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Make a record of the concerns noting who was involved, what is said to have happened, and where and when it is said to have happened. Use the person's own words even if you find them difficult to repeat or upsetting and include the adult's views if known. This should be signed and dated and given to the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams).

## 5. MANAGING AND REVIEWING CONCERNS

### **a) Poor practice**

Following reports of a poor-practice incident, the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams), should explore exactly what happened. This will include listening to all those involved to get a clear picture of what happened, when, where, why and how and then identifying the most appropriate way to address what happened and prevent reoccurrence.

Clubs should have a complaints procedure to guide the process.

These interventions can help address poor practice and prevent reoccurrence in the future:

- Encouraging a coach or manager to attend an FA Level 1 coaching qualification or Coaching Disabled Footballers' course;
- Providing a 'buddy' for a volunteer or player;
- Asking the County FA if a club mentor is available to support a coach;
- Reviewing the planning process –for example, are there enough helpers, have they had an induction to their role?

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- Reviewing risk assessments and ensuring everyone knows what's expected;
- Reminding everyone about The FA's Respect Codes of Conduct;
- Making effective use of the easy read documents (see **Guidance Notes 10.9, 10.10, 10.11 and 10.12**);
- Checking that everyone has completed The FA's free 'Safeguarding Adults' online course;
- Checking the recruitment and induction process to ensure all new starters know what the club expects;
- Reviewing and strengthening guidance such as for changing rooms or social media.

Clubs may also choose to take other action in accordance with their own procedures.

If the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) is unsure how to manage the situation, they should talk to the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer.

## **b) Abuse**

If abuse has occurred, the CFA DSO will be involved and The FA may take regulatory action. Clubs must follow any such direction from The FA.

The Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) should talk to the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer about reviewing what happened and preventing reoccurrence.

## **Whistle-blowing**

Everyone should also be aware of whistle blowing. Whistle-blowing is an important and accepted practice. No-one should feel guilty about using it. It allows anyone to report if they feel a safeguarding concern has not been properly managed – or if a colleague's conduct is not appropriate.

To whistle-blow, either email: [safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:safeguarding@TheFA.com) or call The FA on **0844 980 8200** and select 'Safeguarding' from the menu (office hours Monday-Friday excluding bank holidays).

You can also contact your local adult services or the Police.

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility – you are not alone.**

**Help and support is always available.**

# APPENDIX 1: REPORTING FLOWCHART

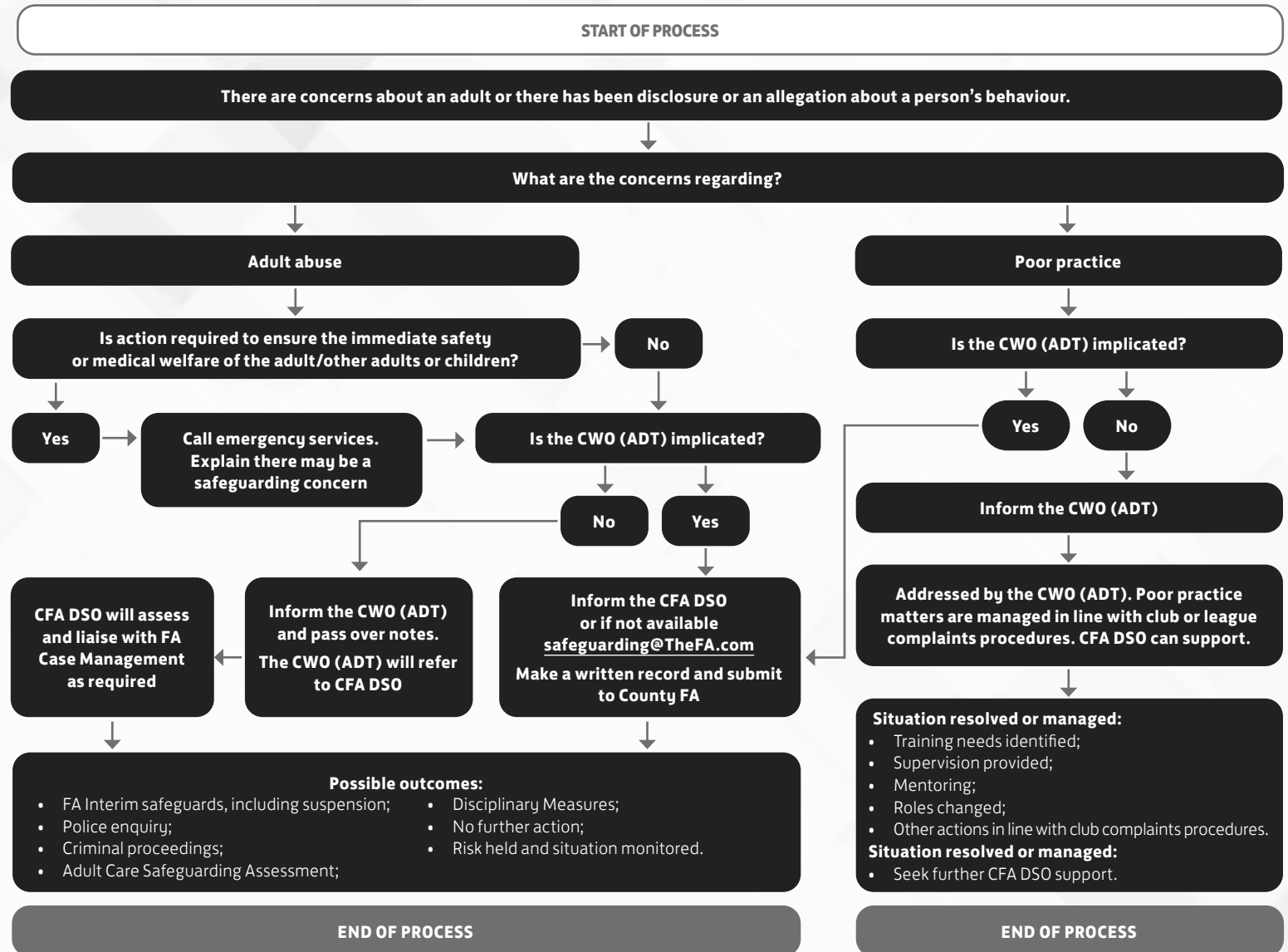
This is a generic flowchart detailing the process for reporting safeguarding adults concerns in grassroots football. Professional clubs' Community Trusts/Foundation that run open-age disability teams should follow the relevant professional league reporting procedures.

Adults should be involved and their views and wishes considered at every point.

In an emergency and if the CFA DSO and their deputy are not available, contact the Police, call an ambulance or seek advice from local adult services.

CFA DSO = County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer

CWO (ADT) = Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams)



# APPENDIX 2: CATEGORIES AND INDICATORS OF ADULT ABUSE

The Care Act, 2014 recognises 10 types of abuse. Some of these categories are the same as those used in relation to children and others are unique to adults. What matters is to recognise and pass on any concerns.

NO.	CATEGORIES	INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND BEHAVIOURS THAT MIGHT BE SEEN IN FOOTBALL. THESE MIGHT ALSO BE DISCLOSED BY A PERSON OR REPORTED BY SOMEONE.
1	<b>Self-neglect</b> – not looking after own personal hygiene, health or surroundings or hoarding.	Football might notice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor personal hygiene, need for dental care or glasses;</li> <li>• Consistently dirty playing kit;</li> <li>• Untreated medical conditions.</li> </ul>
2	<b>Domestic abuse</b> – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. Includes so called 'honour'-based violence.	Football might notice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A person is withdrawn, fearful or anxious when a carer or partner or family member comes to collect them;</li> <li>• Lack of money for drinks/kit;</li> <li>• Bruising, grip marks or other signs of physical harm.</li> </ul>
3	<b>Discriminatory abuse</b> due to race, gender or disability or any of the other protected characteristics of the Equality Act, 2010.	In football we might: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear 'jokes' about disability or other discriminatory comments;</li> <li>• Become aware of discriminatory language on or offline;</li> <li>• See mocking behaviour;</li> <li>• Be told about discriminatory behaviour.</li> </ul>
4	<b>Organisational abuse</b> – including neglect or poor practice in a care setting	In football we might: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear a player describe conditions where they live e.g. being forced to go to bed at a specific time, missing medication or not having choices about what and when they eat;</li> <li>• Notice a player has deteriorated in health or wellbeing after moving to a different establishment.</li> </ul>
5	<b>Physical abuse</b> – includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions. This might happen in football or elsewhere	In football we might become aware of settings with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular over training, lack of breaks;</li> <li>• Punishment such as intentionally hitting or kicking a player.</li> </ul> In football we might see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruising, repeated injuries, fearfulness, anxiety or fear.</li> </ul>

# APPENDIX 2: CATEGORIES AND INDICATORS OF ADULT ABUSE (CONT'D)

NO.	CATEGORIES	INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND BEHAVIOURS THAT MIGHT BE SEEN IN FOOTBALL. THESE MIGHT ALSO BE DISCLOSED BY A PERSON OR REPORTED BY SOMEONE.
6	<b>Sexual abuse</b> – adults with care and support needs can consent to sexual activity but can still be abused. This includes sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and rape.	In football we might : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become aware of someone demanding sexually explicit pictures from a player.</li> <li>• Hear a player comment on behaviours they don't like from other adults or young people.</li> <li>• Notice or hear about sexually inappropriate behaviours</li> </ul> Adults can be sexually exploited so be aware of strangers collecting people, alcohol abuse and fearfulness.
7	<b>Financial or material abuse</b> – including theft, fraud, internet scamming or coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements.	In football we might become aware of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Someone demanding a player buys them a ticket for a game for example.</li> <li>• A player who is unable to afford subs or new kit, appears to be hungry or report being unable to pay rent.</li> <li>• An adult reporting loss of money, loans they can't repay or that their belongings have been taken.</li> </ul>
8	<b>Neglect</b> – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of medication, food or heating.	In football we might notice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical conditions are untreated.</li> <li>• A person is consistently underweight and hungry.</li> <li>• Players who don't receive drinks, rest and shelter at training and games</li> <li>• Medication is out of date.</li> </ul>
9	<b>Emotional or psychological abuse</b> – this could include: threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.	In football we might notice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A coach or manager threatening a player with physical harm or persistently blaming a player for poor performance.</li> <li>• Harassment after the game</li> <li>• Bullying behaviours.</li> </ul> We might be told about cruelty or punishment at home.
10	<b>Modern slavery</b> – slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.	A person may work long hours but be without money or food or living in very poor conditions. They may not be getting health care. They are likely to be afraid. Modern slavery does happen and adults with care and support can be forced into this position or trafficked from abroad.

# APPENDIX 2: CATEGORIES AND INDICATORS OF ADULT ABUSE (CONT'D)

You should also be aware of the following behaviours, which are not in the Care Act:

**Bullying** – Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. This imbalance of power can be between players, not just from staff and volunteers. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace, and comes in many different forms.

**Cyber-bullying** – using technology to bully people.

**Forced marriage** – a term used to describe a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry. The adult may report gifts of gold jewellery, planned trips abroad or disclose anxiety about an event.

**Mate crime** – is when vulnerable people are befriended by people who then take advantage of them. This is sometimes called 'fake friends'. It may not be an illegal act but still has a negative effect on the individual.

**Cuckooing** – is an expression used when the adult's home is used for criminal purposes.

**Radicalisation** – the aim of radicalisation is to attract people to a cause, inspire new recruits and embed extreme views. Vulnerable individuals may be targeted. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media. There is a free online course provided by the government (see link below) which covers the 'Prevent' programme.

[elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html](https://elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html)

**Sometimes concerning behaviours that might be indicators of abuse could be due to other things.**

**Other causes may include a medical condition, a bereavement, deterioration in mental health or any other significant change in a person's life.**

**The important thing is to pass your concerns on to the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams).**







**FOR ALL**

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