



Embroiderers' Guild: Safeguarding Adults Policy

The Embroiderers' Guild (The Guild) is committed to ensuring that it provides a safe and welcoming environment for all members and visitors, and recognises the need to safeguard both children and adults at risk, and to ensure their well-being in all their interactions with the Guild.

Policy Statements:

- The Guild will raise awareness of Adult vulnerabilities throughout its organisation, promoting positive actions and signposting members to relevant groups and information.
- The Guild will not tolerate behaviours and actions that cause harm and will respond to concerns within (and about) branches or regions.
- The Guild will undertake to provide guidance to members who may have concerns outside the Guild, assisting them to find local resources and support.

We believe that:

- **We all have a responsibility to help prevent abuse** (physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, financial, and/or discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults at risk). Safeguarding is a whole Guild activity and not just the responsibility of designated officers or staff.
- **Discrimination, harassment and bullying are unacceptable.** Members who present these behaviours should be challenged and, if necessary, barred from attending activities. Officers who abuse their position in any way may be required to step down and should not take up any future officer role.
- **Domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable.** Should we discover any member is subject to such abuse we should seek to support them in seeking appropriate help and consider what practical help might be appropriate in relation to any volunteer duties they may be undertaking in their branch, region or, nationally, for Guild (HO).

We are committed to:

- The establishment of a safe environment for meetings and other events.
- Raising awareness among members to create an informed vigilance about the dangers of abuse.
- Following the relevant legislation, in line with statutory, local, and specialist guidelines, in relation to safeguarding adults at risk.
- Ensuring that we keep up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding, reviewing this policy when needed.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that as an organisation, everyone works within the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policies.
- Supporting Branch and Regional Committees in any action they may need to take in order to protect adults at risk.

Responding to concerns and issues:

Any concern covered by this policy must be registered with the Guild CEO cc. Chair of the Board of Trustees at the outset and, unless there is a compelling urgency, before action is taken.

Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed or there is the prospect of a civil redress being sought, the local Guild representative (member/officer) dealing with the issue should seek immediate advice from the CEO cc. Chair of the Board of Trustees prior to the police or a solicitor being contacted.

If there is an immediate threat of harm, the Police should be contacted without delay and the Guild (CEO) also be informed without delay.

Members reporting an issue or concern directly to HO will receive immediate attention and objective support. Any such reporting will be treated as 'in confidence' and sources of information will not be disclosed to investigated parties without prior consent unless there is a legal requirement to do so.

When Guild Head Office (HO) is advised of concerns about behaviours within a Branch or Region – by members of that Branch, by visiting Regional officers, or by other concerned individuals – it will endeavour to undertake an internal investigation before any formal reporting is actioned. The Guild's intentions will always be focused on prevention and protection, rather than punitive responses. Where possible, solutions will be sought that reduce or prevent abuse/exploitation, and relevant Guild policies and guidance will be updated to reflect the learning obtained.

Reporting issues or concerns will always be actioned at local level if possible – Branches and Regions will need to identify their local authority reporting procedures and, when (or if) necessary, act in compliance with any associated policies. Local Authorities generally publish this information on their websites. All reporting must be objective and factual.

Whenever a concern has been reported, or an issue raised with local services, the Branch or Region will inform the Guild HO (CEO) about the issue, and the response, or advice received. The report to HO should **not** include any personal information unless there is a specific requirement for the Guild Head office to become directly involved. If this is the case, any personal information provided should be the minimum necessary to address the issue, and HQ will undertake to restrict access to that information on a strict 'need to know' basis.

Should the local Branch or Region become involved in any subsequent investigations, or further action, Guild HO should be kept updated. The Guild will assist if needed, seeking advice and guidance from relevant professionals, including legal input if required. We will co-operate with the statutory authorities in any investigation, will follow multi-agency decisions and will maintain confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

The Guild recognises that it does not have the in-house skills needed to advise on Adult Safeguarding issues, and where there are concerns, local advice will be sought. Adult Safeguarding Co-ordinators can usually be contacted via local Adult Social Care services, or through enquiry with the Police.

Discussions concerning safeguarding issues should always be regarded as confidential. A record should be made and kept securely, regardless of the outcome of those discussions. If required, this record should be shared with statutory authorities and Guild HO (CEO).

Wherever possible, consent to report an issue should be obtained from the vulnerable adult concerned. If they do not wish action to be taken their wishes should be respected. Concerns may

still need to be acted upon if the individual is felt to be at immediate risk of harm, others are at risk, or unacceptable behaviours are impacting on the safe activities of the Guild. Branch officers should consider seeking professional advice from local Safeguarding services before taking formal action in such cases and should share that advice with Guild HO (CEO).

Where allegations of abuse have been raised, the person about whom an allegation is made must **not** be informed by anyone in the Guild if it is judged that to do so could place a child or adult at increased risk. If the statutory authorities are involved, they should be consulted beforehand.

All Members, volunteers and staff (paid or unpaid) have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

We expect all members of the Guild and, in particular staff, regional and branch officers, committee members and volunteers, to promote good practice by being an excellent role model for safeguarding and preventing any form of abuse within the life and work of the Guild, its regions and branches (particularly regional and branch officers), contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

Trustees have responsibility to ensure that this policy is kept up to date, and to monitor its effectiveness if/when relevant issues or concerns arise.

This policy was adopted by the Trustees of the Embroiderers' Guild on 25th April 2017 and published to Staff, Regional Chairs, Branch Chairs, Bucks County Museum Director, and Guild Members within 30 days. Regional and Branch Chairs are expected to publish the policy to all committee members and make members aware that they can read and/or download a copy of this policy from the Guild website (see Members' Documents).

This policy will be reviewed at the April meeting of the board of trustees to be held in 2019.

What is abuse of adults at risk?

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.

This may include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Physical abuse

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

Psychological or emotional abuse

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the adult at risk. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the adult at risk's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

Sexual abuse

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

Neglect, or Act of Omission

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the adult at risk needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult at risk or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired.

Financial or material abuse

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.

Discriminatory abuse

This is the inappropriate treatment of an adult at risk because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability, etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals.

Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

Institutional abuse

This is the mistreatment or abuse of an adult at risk by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.