

Little Lady Locks
Charity number: 1195950

Dealing with Safeguarding Reports Policy

1. Purpose and scope

This document provides the procedures for dealing with any reports of breach of Little Lady Lock's Safeguarding Policy, where the safeguarding violation is either:

- Against Little Lady Locks staff or members of the public
- Perpetrated by Little Lady Lock staff, partners or associated personnel (*including, but not limited to, consultants, volunteers, contractors, and program visitors*).

2. Procedure

2.1 Report submission

Safeguarding concerns may be observed as letters, e-mails, texts, through social media, video calls, or in person.

Safeguarding reports should be formally submitted through the use of the Little Lady Locks **Safeguarding Report Form** and subsequently submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), **Miss Ashley Higgins** within 24 hours.

If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their Designated Safeguarding Lead (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member. For example, this could be another charity employee or trustee.

If a safeguarding concern is disclosed to a member of staff from a member of the public or service user, the staff should:

- Listen to the concern
- Find out the details (who, when, where, what but not why)
- Double check your understanding of the situation
- Report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The member of staff receiving the report must then record the information using the Little Lady Locks Safeguarding Report Form. Following this the Safeguarding Report Form must then be submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours.

2.2 Report confidentiality

Because of the sensitive and private nature of safeguarding concerns, confidentiality is to be maintained throughout the entirety of the reporting process. Information relating to the report is to be shared only if absolutely required, regardless of management level.

2.3 Escalation of report

The member of staff submitting the report has the right to escalate the report to the trustees of Little Lady Locks or an external statutory body, should they feel the report is not being dealt with appropriately.

2.4 Report evaluation

Following the submission of the Safeguarding Report Form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Little Lady Locks will assess whether the report is viable and will be pursued depending on if:

- The reported safeguarding incident breaches the safeguarding policy
- The report contains enough information in order to be followed up

If the reported safeguarding incident involves (in any way) and/or presents a risk to children under the age of 18, Little Lady Locks will seek expert advice before proceeding and the report will be referred to the appropriate authorities, provided it is safe to do.

If the submitted report contains insufficient information required in order to follow up the incidence Little Lady Locks will attempt to contact the person submitting the report via their recorded contact details in the Safeguarding Report Form. If it is not possible to ascertain required missing information (for instance it is impossible to contact the person submitting the report) then the Safeguarding Report Form will be securely filed in case it is required in future.

2.5 Dealing with the report

If the safeguarding report is taken further then Little Lady Locks will ensure that the charity possesses the relevant expertise and knowledge to successfully manage the case. If the case is beyond the capacity of Little Lady Locks then the charity will immediately seek external legal assistance.

At all times the information submitted within the safeguarding report will remain strictly confidential and will be shared only on a need-to-know-basis.

The safeguarding report will be dealt with according to the relevant Little Lady Locks policy. If Little Lady Locks does not possess a suitable policy for the type of safeguarding concern submitted then external legal advice will be sought.

Relevant statutory bodies, funding organisations, and umbrella bodies/networks may also be informed annually, upon receipt, or after completion of safeguarding reports (while following confidentiality procedures).

A Decision Maker (*senior member of staff not implicated or involved in the case*) will be appointed to the case.

If the safeguarding report involves a serious safeguarding violation, Little Lady Locks may hold a case conference to discuss the report and decide upon the subsequent steps. This conference will include:

- The appointed decision maker
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or person who received the report
- HR manager
- External legal advice (if required)

2.6 Survivor support

Little Lady Locks will provide support to the survivor(s) of any reported safeguarding incidents if requested or needed by the survivor(s).

Little Lady Locks will support the survivor(s) through:

- Counselling or other suitable care
- Medical assistance
- Security

This support will be available and provided as soon as the Safeguarding Report Form has been submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All decision relating to post-incident support will be led by the survivor(s).

2.7 Risk assessment

For serious safeguarding incident Little Lady Locks will perform an immediate risk assessment to identify any ongoing or potential risks to the health or wellbeing of all those involved in the safeguarding incident. Upon identification of any risks Little Lady Locks will formulate an appropriate mitigation plan.

The risk assessment will be continually updated and any mitigation plan developed will be enforced throughout and post case review.

2.8 Next Steps

After the Safeguarding Report has been reviewed the Decision Maker assigned to the case will decide on the next steps to be taken, including but not limited to:

- No further action to be taken
- Investigation to be instigated in order to gain further information
- Immediate disciplinary action (if suitable information available)
- Case passed to relevant authorities

If the safeguarding concern related to personnel associated to Little Lady Locks through external companies or organisations (for example suppliers or consultants) Little Lady Locks still will have a duty of care. However disciplinary action cannot be taken against associated personnel, although other sanctions may be taken against the external company or organisation (for example contract termination).

2.9 Case conclusion

All decisions relation to safeguarding reports will be made by the Decision Maker assigned to the case.

The final decision will be made in accordance with Little Lady Locks existing policies or following external advice (if required).

If criminal activity is observed or suspected the case will be passed on to the relevant authorities, unless this poses a direct risk to persons involved in the case. If the case cannot be passed to the authorities due to direct risk then the Decision Maker with the combined advice of senior staff will decide how best to proceed.

All decision relating to the case will be recorded and stored securely in accordance with current GDPR legislation.