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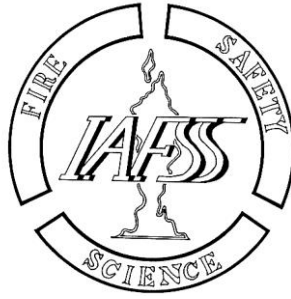
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Immediate Past Chairman

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IAFSS is registered in England and Wales as a charity, No 800306

IAFSS Policy on Safeguarding and Protecting People

Policy statement

As the professional association for its members, IAFSS's work to protect the public and to maintain public confidence in the profession is at the heart of everything that we do.

IAFSS is committed to protecting people who come into contact with the Association, including our members, our volunteers, our trustees, and members of the public. As a registered charity in the UK, we have developed this policy in line with UK Charity Commission guidance.

Everyone who works with or on behalf of IAFSS needs to be aware of this policy and must act in accordance with it. This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or contract for services and we may amend it at any time. This policy should be read alongside the following policies and procedures (where applicable):

- IAFSS Member Code of Conduct
- IAFSS Trustee Code of Conduct

We publish this policy on our website, and we encourage our members and those around them, to report any safeguarding concerns to us.

Safeguarding Lead

Trustee / Vice-Chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Subcommittee (DEI SC)

- email – dei@iafss.org

IAFSS's approach to safeguarding and protecting people

We use the term safeguarding to refer to the steps that we take to protect people from the risk of harm or abuse.

Safeguarding risks

Safeguarding risks can take many different forms. We have given some examples below. This is not an exhaustive list, and it is important to recognise that any action or inaction by another person that causes a violation of their human and civil rights is a safeguarding issue, whether deliberate or unknowing and whether contained in a single act or repeated acts.

- **Sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation** – including indecent exposure, exposure to pornographic material, sexual teasing or innuendo, and inappropriate touching.
- **Physical abuse** – including hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, pushing, restraining, burning or scalding or otherwise causing physical harm.
- **Emotional or psychological abuse** – including threatening to hurt or abandon, humiliating, blaming, controlling, overprotecting, isolating, intimidating or harassing.
- **Bullying or harassment** – including cyber bullying, harassment, or abuse.
- **Discriminatory abuse on any of the grounds in the Equality Act 2010** – abuse that is related a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- **Neglect and negligent treatment** – including withholding medication, food or shelter, ignoring medical, physical or emotional needs.
- **Commercial or financial exploitation** – including stealing, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Responsibilities

Trustees

IAFSS's Trustees are ultimately responsible for:

- leading by example to promote a culture of safeguarding and protecting people;
- ensuring IAFSS's staff and volunteers are competent to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities,
- ensuring that all safeguarding concerns and allegations are taken seriously and responded to appropriately,
- deciding whether a safeguarding issue should be reported as a serious incident to the Charity Commission,
- acting in the best interests of IAFSS, exercising sound judgment, and seeking to avoid potential conflicts of interest in connection with the association's safeguarding commitments,
- ensuring that IAFSS's safeguarding practices and procedures are effective by regularly reviewing this policy and monitoring its impact.

Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead reports directly to the Trustees and is responsible for:

- ensuring that anyone working for or on behalf of IAFSS is made aware of this policy and relevant associated policies,

- arranging for the Board of Trustees to review this policy on an annual basis or (if sooner) when there are material changes to the safeguarding legislation,
- ensuring that IAFSS follows safer recruitment practices, appropriate to the role and the level of risk,
- arranging safeguarding training for trustees, staff and volunteers on induction and at regular intervals,
- working to promote a culture of listening and encouraging people to speak up,
- acting as the principal point of contact within IAFSS for safeguarding questions or concerns,
- ensuring that safeguarding concerns are investigated appropriately and in line with this policy,
- maintaining a record of all safeguarding incidents, concerns, reports and referrals,
- liaising with external stakeholders (including regulators, local authority safeguarding contacts, and/or the police) on safeguarding issues.

Volunteers

Everyone who works for or on behalf of IAFSS shares responsibility for protecting people who come into contact with our organisation from harm or abuse. You must:

- comply with the IAFSS Member Code of Conduct,
- familiarise yourself with this policy and apply it in your work,
- report any safeguarding concerns or suspicions using the procedure set out below,
- co-operate with any safeguarding investigation.

Responding to safeguarding concerns

Safeguarding reports may reach IAFSS through various routes, including telephone conversations, text messages, social media, face-to-face discussions, or rumours. All concerns must be taken seriously.

If someone raises a safeguarding concern with you, you should:

- listen,
- empathise with the person making the report,
- ask who, when, where, what but not why,
- repeat what you have been told to check your understanding,
- reassure the person making the report that IAFSS will treat all safeguarding reports as confidential and that information will only be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis, and
- (if the person receiving the report is not the Safeguarding Lead) make a report to the Safeguarding Lead without delay following the process set out below.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

If you have concerns that someone may be experiencing, has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing, harm or abuse you should make a report to the Safeguarding Lead without delay. You should report all safeguarding concerns even if your concern relates to an incident that occurred some time ago.

If you witness a safeguarding incident, or if an incident has just taken place, and you believe someone is at imminent risk of significant harm, you should call the emergency services by calling the appropriate local emergency number and then report the matter following the process in this section.

When you make a report, it is helpful if you can provide details of your concerns including:

- the name(s) of the people involved,
- a description of each incident, and
- the dates, times and location of each incident.

Confidentiality

IAFSS will treat all safeguarding reports as confidential and information will only be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis. This may include sharing information with professional advisers or trustees. Anyone who makes a report under this procedure will be protected against any negative repercussions as a result of raising a safeguarding concern.

You must keep all safeguarding reports confidential. If you breach confidentiality, you may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of membership or, if you are a contractor or volunteer, we may terminate your engagement with us.

Action

The Safeguarding Lead will consider the report and will make a decision about how to take the matter forward. This could include:

- carrying out an internal investigation – when appointing someone to carry out the investigation, the Safeguarding Lead will take account of relevant experience, skills, and legal considerations as well as potential conflicts of interest or loyalty,
- following the procedures set out in the IAFSS Feedback and Complaints Procedure,
- bringing voluntary roles or engagements with contractors or consultants to an end,
- terminating partnership agreements or other relationships with third parties,
- making a report to external agencies (see below).

In reaching this decision, the Safeguarding Lead will review all of the available information and, if necessary, discuss the matter further with the person who reported the concern.

If there is insufficient information to follow up the report and no way to obtain additional information (for example, if the person making the report did not leave their name or contact details), the Safeguarding Lead will keep a record of the report. Wherever possible, records will be anonymised and used for organisational learning and reporting purposes.

Reporting to the Board of Trustees and to regulators

The Safeguarding Lead will inform the Board of Trustees as soon as a safeguarding report is received. The Board of Trustees will be responsible for deciding whether the matter should be reported to the Charity Commission as a serious incident, in line with IAFSS's Serious Incident Reporting Procedure.

Referrals to External Agencies

Where appropriate, IAFSS will refer safeguarding concerns to appropriate external agencies, which may include the following in the UK or equivalents in other jurisdictions:

- the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Local Safeguarding Adults Board in England and/or their equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland,
- law enforcement authorities for criminal investigation,
- children's social care services,
- the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or equivalent barring authority.

Where necessary, a description of safeguarding allegations, incidents or concerns may also be provided to other third parties (for example, our insurers).

Safer recruitment

IAFSS is committed to the safe recruitment, selection and vetting of trustees and volunteers. The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the recruitment measures set out below are applied rigorously and consistently.

All new trustees must sign a Trustee Declaration Form to confirm that they are not disqualified under the Charity Commission's automatic disqualification rules. Trustees in post will be asked to sign a fresh declaration every year.

As part of the recruitment process for trustees and volunteers, we will:

- seek to have an open and measured discussion with trustees and volunteers prior to appointment about any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position applied for – failure to reveal information (including information about convictions and cautions) directly relevant to a position could lead to termination of the appointment,
- when applicable undertake checks to confirm that the individual has the right to volunteer in the in the locality where work or volunteering will occur,
- when appropriate or required by law, carry out appropriate criminal records checks.

Version control

Date	Action	Next review
	New policy	N/A
30 June 2022	Policy reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees	No later than June 2024