



EXTRACTS FROM
VULNERABILITY & YOUNG PERSONS PROTECTION POLICY

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1. Aim

Rossendales are committed to treating all people fairly and with respect. This policy places an obligation on our personnel to acknowledge and cater for the needs of children and / or vulnerable adults.

2. Policy Statement

To safeguard children and vulnerable adults by providing guidance about how our employees or workers or contractors ("Staff") or Bailiffs should act on concerns they may have about their welfare.

Enshrined in this policy are two key principles:

- The welfare of the *child and **vulnerable adult is the paramount consideration.
- All children and vulnerable persons, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm.

It is not expected that Staff or Bailiffs will act as child protection workers or that they will be trained to intervene in suspected cases. It is, however, expected that Staff and Bailiffs will always act on any suspected or potential case of child or vulnerable person abuse. In such circumstances it must be reported directly and without delay to a Manager. In such cases, the company will support Staff and Bailiffs who, in good faith, report concerns, even if those concerns prove to be unfounded.

3. Principles

- Identifying the relevant persons/posts whose background requires Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and arranging for those checks to be made.
- Providing awareness training to Staff and Bailiffs that may have contact with children or vulnerable adults in the course of their duties.
- Protecting Staff and Bailiffs from placing themselves in vulnerable and/or inappropriate situations.
- All suspicions and allegations of harm will be taken seriously by the company and will be dealt with as sensitively as possible.
- This policy will be implemented in the context of UK legislation, Government guidance and relevant procedures issued by our Clients.

*The term "child" refers to any person under the age of 18 years. It therefore refers to students up to the age of 18 years.

**The term "vulnerable" adult refers to any person aged 18 years and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness and who is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

4. Identifying Vulnerability

Vulnerability includes anything that may have an impact on a person's ability to make a sound decision - such as:

- Unfamiliarity with or difficulty in understanding what is happening
- Physical disabilities
- Mental disabilities
- Language Barriers

Assessing the potential 'vulnerability' of a debtor is a sensitive matter and requires a judgment call. Rossendales Staff and Bailiffs should understand their obligations in the community and act in accordance with this Policy.

Potentially vulnerable adults include:

- the elderly

- those with physical health problems or a disability
- the seriously ill
- the recently bereaved
- mental health problems
- learning difficulties
- pregnant women
- unemployed
- those with alcohol/drug misuse problems
- those who have difficulty in understanding, speaking or reading English

This list is only indicative and is by no means exhaustive so Staff and Bailiffs should use their judgement, discretion and common sense. If in doubt, simply contact the Welfare Department for assistance (details follow at the end of this document).

5. The Approach

Rossendales are aware that we often work with individuals, families and businesses going through difficult periods which can produce strong feelings and emotions. These feelings and emotions can be exaggerated in people who feel vulnerable.

Rossendales are committed to ensuring individuals regardless of their circumstances are treated properly and that vulnerable people are given a greater level of help. The appropriate amount of discretion is essential in every case and no amount of guidance could cover every situation, therefore we ask all Staff and Bailiffs to contact the client and report the circumstances in situations where there is potential cause for concern. Bailiffs should be aware of and carry a copy of the client's guidelines in relation to vulnerable people and act accordingly.

In addition, we require ALL Staff and Bailiffs when encountering vulnerable people to:

- Encourage people to seek support from family and friends.
- Assist people in finding independent support by referring them to either their local CAB (Bailiffs should refer to the Client Guidelines document) or to the National Debtline – free phone 0800 808 4000.
- Provide assistance to people who have difficulty with written or spoken English. Rossendales have arrangements in place to rapidly access translation services, provide paperwork in other languages, large print and Braille.
- Do not make assumptions about the degree of knowledge or understanding that a debtor has. Be prepared to explain what you will do and what will happen next.
- Report to the relevant authorities any possible abuse or suspected abuse.
- Notify the client immediately and report all the circumstances and advise the client if future action is or is not appropriate.
- Ensure that when leaving the person they are reassured and not left in a more vulnerable position than when you first dealt with them.
- **ADVISE, HELP AND REASSURE**