

Safeguarding Policy



1. Introduction

The Royal Medical Benevolent Fund (RMBF) is committed to safeguarding – applicants, beneficiaries, volunteers, trustees, staff, donors and anyone to whom the charity owes a duty of care; namely has a responsibility to protect from harm and promote the wellbeing of. The RMBF is committed to promoting a positive safeguarding culture in which all feel able to speak up and there is learning from any concerns or issues.

For the purpose of this policy ‘Safeguarding’ means the safeguarding of both children and adults at risk of harm in vulnerable situations.

In October 2018 the Charity Commission updated its guidance and broadened the duties of all trustees to ensure charities take responsible steps to protect people who come into contact with their organisation from harm: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

The RMBF complies with its legal requirements, for instance in relation to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

It is committed to protecting volunteers and staff from harm and has clear policies and procedures on:

- bullying and harassment ([link](#))
- whistleblowing ([link](#))

The RMBF has policies in place to provide guidance and processes to support and protect staff, set out how concerns and complaints should be raised handled and reported and the roles and responsibilities of those in the organisation for safeguarding issues and should be read in conjunction with the RMBF safeguarding Procedures ([link](#)). The RMBF reviews these policies and procedures annually, and more frequently as required.

The RMBF provides regular refresher training for all staff, trustees and volunteers. The RMBF keeps and maintains a safe, secure and comprehensive record of safeguarding training, issues and concerns in line with data protection, confidentiality and safeguarding requirements.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and trustees, who should speak up if they have any concerns.

Although safeguarding is the responsibility of all trustees, the board appoints a lead trustee to support, advise and guide the board on safeguarding matters and to support the RMBF safeguarding officers who look after the charity’s day-to-day operational safeguarding issues. Safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda of board meetings.

Safeguarding at the RMBF

The RMBF has carried out a risk assessment in relation to all roles held by staff, trustees, volunteers, trustees and third party organisations we work with.

The RMBF does not provide direct physical care to vulnerable applicants and beneficiaries. The help it provides is primarily in the form of financial support, emotional support and advice, as well as arranging specialist advice through appropriately accredited organisations.

Neither Trustees nor staff meet with applicants and beneficiaries. Staff contact is by post, e-mail, phone and fax.

RMBF volunteer Coach Mentors usually provide Coach Mentoring sessions to RMBF beneficiaries remotely via Zoom, Skype or telephone. Occasionally, they will meet them face to face either in a café or at the home of the beneficiary. RMBF volunteer PhoneFriends do not meet beneficiaries and only talk on the phone at pre-arranged times.

The RMBF ensures that all organisations who have contact with our beneficiaries have their own appropriate safeguarding policy and procedures in place and their roles have been risk assessed for example Doc Health.

2. Safeguards for Applicants and Beneficiaries

2.1 The Head of Volunteering (HoV) has responsibility for ensuring safe recruitment, selection and vetting of volunteers working with applicants and beneficiaries; and also, for arranging appropriate training for trustees, staff and volunteers to learn about the protection of vulnerable applicants and beneficiaries. Neither staff nor volunteers have direct contact with the children of RMBF applicants and beneficiaries.

2.2 Prospective trustees are required to have current unfettered GMC registration or a check of equivalent professional standing (for another profession, where available) or a basic DBS check where no comparable evidence is available. Prospective trustees also complete the Charity Commission's Declaration of Eligibility.

2.3 The recruitment process for staff includes provision of an up to date Curriculum Vitae, a letter of application, a formal interview(s) and two references (including current employer). Referees are contacted directly to ensure their veracity.

2.4 The recruitment process for all RMBF volunteers includes completion of an application form, the provision of two references, a telephone (or video) interview and face to face/phone /zoom induction session with the HoV. Prospective volunteers are required to have current unfettered GMC registration, if applicable. When GMC is not applicable, a basic DBS check is undertaken.

2.5 Please note as volunteers do not carry out any DBS regulated activities with RMBF applicants and beneficiaries, the RMBF cannot undertake a standard or enhanced DBS check on staff, trustees or volunteers.

3. Safeguards for Volunteers

3.1 The RMBF provides comprehensive guidance, training and support to volunteers at induction and online on: Basic Safeguarding Awareness and Personal Safety and Lone Working.

3.2 Volunteers are required to adhere to the following RMBF policies: Data Protection, Confidentiality, Safeguarding, Personal Safety and Lone Working. ([link](#))

4. Safeguards for staff

4.1 All staff have regular supervision with their line manager.

4.2 All staff have access to the free Croner Employee Assistance Programme including a 24/7 confidential support helpline.

4.3 All staff receive safeguarding training at induction. This is updated periodically and as and when required.

5. Safeguards for Donors

5.1 RMBF staff and volunteers adhere to the Fundraising regulator's [Fundraising Code of Practice](#).

6. Safeguards for other people who come into contact with the RMBF

6.1 The RMBF has a clear process for referring or reporting to relevant organisations as and when a safeguarding issue arises as set out in the RMBF Safeguarding Procedures ([link](#)).

7. Safeguards for working online

7.1 All RMBF staff and volunteers adhere to the social media policies set out in the staff and volunteer handbooks when communicating online and on social media platforms.

8. Working with or making grants to other organisations

8.1 The RMBF carries out proper due diligence when it works with, or makes grants to, other bodies to achieve their aims. It makes sure any grant recipient or partner body is suitable and has appropriate safeguarding procedures in place to report issues in a timely manner to the RMBF so appropriate steps can be taken.

Reviewed by Kate Bresler-Jones, Liz Gagiano & Juliet Oliver

Date: 01/06/24

Review Date: 01/06/25

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