

Policy Title	Safer Recruitment Policy
Version Number	1
Date of Equality Impact Assessment	August 2023
Next review/revision due	August 2025
Volunteer training delivered	In line with volunteer training program.
This policy outlines the duty and responsibility of staff and volunteers working on behalf of Healthwatch Greenwich in relation to safer recruitment.	
This policy can be supplied in different formats: Tel: 020 8301 8340 or email: info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk	

Table of Contents

1. Policy Statement.....	1
2. Aims and Objectives	2
3. Recruitment and Selection Procedures	2
4. Safer Recruitment Practices	3
5. Pre-Employment Checks.....	3
7. Commitment and Review.....	4

1. Policy Statement

Healthwatch Greenwich is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable individuals within our community. We recognise the importance of maintaining a safe environment for all. We will deter unsuitable applicants from seeking roles involving vulnerable groups using recruitment and selection practices in line with relevant legislation and best practices.

2. Aims and Objectives

Our Safer Recruitment Policy aims to:

- Safeguard the welfare of vulnerable individuals by implementing best practice recruitment and selection procedures.
- Treat all candidates fairly, consistently, and in accordance with anti-discrimination laws, equal opportunity principles, and our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Prevent individuals with a history of unsuitable behaviour from gaining positions giving them access to vulnerable groups.
- Promote transparency, accountability, and responsibility in our recruitment practices.

3. Recruitment and Selection Procedures

1. Advertising: Our job advertisements are designed to attract qualified candidates while clearly communicating our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable individuals.
2. Application Forms and CVs: Candidates are asked to provide comprehensive details about their qualifications, work history, and relevant skills. Where relevant, specific questions related to their understanding of safeguarding principles and their approach to working with vulnerable groups will be requested.
3. Job Descriptions: Job descriptions outline the duties and responsibilities of the role and, where appropriate, emphasise the significance of maintaining a safe and supportive environment for vulnerable individuals. Expectations regarding adherence to safeguarding policies and procedures will be clearly stated.
4. References: We request references from previous employers, covering the past three years, to gain insights into a candidate's work performance, conduct, and their suitability for the role. We will carefully assess any comments or concerns raised by referees.
5. Interviews: Interviews are conducted by panels comprising individuals trained in recruitment practices. Candidates will be evaluated not only for their qualifications and skills but, where appropriate, also for their understanding of safeguarding principles. Scenarios related to

safeguarding situations may be presented to gauge candidates' reactions and decision-making.

6. Offer of Recruitment: Conditional offers are made to successful candidates pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks. This approach reinforces our commitment to safer recruitment and ensures that unsuitable candidates are not granted unconditional employment.
7. Rejections: If a candidate does not meet the requirements or standards required for the role, they are informed respectfully and transparently. Feedback, if requested, is provided constructively.

4. Safer Recruitment Practices

1. Training: Staff taking part in recruitment receive training to understand of safeguarding and recruitment practices.
2. Inclusivity: We promote equality, diversity and inclusivity in our recruitment process, ensuring that all candidates are treated fairly and without bias.
3. Documented Processes: All stages of the recruitment process, including correspondence, interview notes, and reference checks, are documented to maintain transparency and accountability.
4. Confidentiality: Information obtained during the recruitment process, particularly regarding criminal history, is held in confidence and shared only with individuals involved in the selection process. Where further advice is required, this information may be shared, in confidence, with 3rd party agencies.

5. Pre-Employment Checks

1. DBS Checks: Depending on the role, we carry out Standard or Enhanced DBS checks. This involves a thorough review of an individual's criminal record to ascertain their suitability for working with vulnerable groups.

2. Identity Verification: Before proceeding with pre-employment checks, we verify the candidate's identity to ensure they are who they claim to be.
3. DBS Update Service: If a candidate is registered with the DBS Update Service, they are asked to provide their details. This will allow us to check their existing DBS certificate status.

6. On-Boarding Process

1. Induction: New staff members and volunteers receive a comprehensive induction program that covers not only their job responsibilities but also our safeguarding policies and procedures.
2. Safeguarding Training: We provide training to all new recruits on recognising signs of abuse, reporting procedures, and their individual responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment.
3. Support and Supervision: New staff and volunteers are assigned a line manager who guides them through their probation period. Regular check-ins and support sessions are provided to address any questions or concerns.

7. Commitment and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness, relevance, and compliance with legislative and organisational requirements.

By implementing this Safer Recruitment Policy, Healthwatch Greenwich aims to create a culture of safety, responsibility, and respect, protecting the rights and well-being of all individuals we work with or support.