

Rise and Climb CIC – Adult Safeguarding Policy

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Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

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All safeguarding concerns, disclosures, incidents, and referrals must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Staff and volunteers must not investigate concerns themselves.

1. Introduction

Rise and Climb CIC is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all adults participating in our climbing and wellbeing activities. Safeguarding is a core organisational responsibility and underpins all aspects of our work.

We recognise that adults may engage with our services while experiencing a range of needs, including physical disabilities, mental health conditions, emotional distress, trauma, or social vulnerability. We are committed to responding in a person-centred, proportionate, and non-discriminatory way, while maintaining the safety of all participants, staff, and volunteers.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how Rise and Climb CIC safeguards adults at risk of harm and ensures clear procedures for identifying, reporting, and responding to safeguarding concerns.

It applies to all staff, volunteers, freelancers, trustees, and anyone acting on behalf of Rise and Climb CIC across all activities, including indoor climbing, outdoor climbing, wellbeing sessions, one-to-one support, outreach work, and all related communication.

3. Safeguarding Principles

Rise and Climb CIC operates in line with the Care Act 2014 and guidance from the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Adults Board.

We are committed to:

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all staff and volunteers must act accordingly.

4. Definitions

Adult: A person aged 18 or over

Safeguarding: Protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation

Adult at risk: A person with care and support needs who may be unable to protect themselves

Abuse may include:

Physical, emotional, sexual, financial, discriminatory abuse, neglect, coercive control, self-neglect, or exploitation.

5. Climbing, Risk, and Mental State

Rise and Climb CIC recognises that climbing is a physically demanding activity involving inherent and unavoidable risk. Unlike many wellbeing or support-based interventions, climbing requires continuous engagement with safety-critical systems, including height,

equipment use, belaying, and shared safety responsibilities. A momentary lapse in attention, judgement, or communication can have immediate consequences for the individual and others.

Safe participation depends on both physical capability and current functional capacity. This includes the ability to maintain attention, follow safety instructions consistently, communicate clearly, regulate emotional responses under pressure, and make proportionate decisions in real time within a dynamic group environment.

Mental state is relevant only insofar as it may impact these functional capacities. Situations involving acute distress, significantly impaired judgement, disorientation, extreme agitation, or highly fluctuating emotional states may temporarily reduce an individual's ability to participate safely.

Because of the inherent risks involved in climbing, it is acknowledged that this activity may not be an appropriate form of intervention for some individuals at certain times. This is not based on diagnosis, label, or background, but on whether the current level of risk can be safely and proportionately managed in a safety-critical environment.

Rise and Climb CIC does not make assumptions based on diagnosis or history. A mental health condition, recent discharge from inpatient mental health treatment, or engagement with services will never be used in isolation as an exclusion criterion.

Where an individual has recently been discharged from inpatient mental health care or detention under the Mental Health Act, participation will be subject to an individualised risk assessment. This will consider current stability, responsiveness to instruction, support in place, and readiness for safe participation. Where appropriate and with consent, relevant professionals may be consulted.

Where concerns arise regarding safety, participation may be modified, delayed, or supported through reasonable adjustments. These decisions will always be made on a case-by-case basis.

Possible adjustments may include:

- One-to-one support
- Reduced group ratios
- Modified session structure
- Gradual participation pathways
- Enhanced supervision

All decisions are overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and recorded appropriately.

6. Responsibilities

- The DSL holds overall safeguarding responsibility
 - All concerns must be reported immediately
 - Staff must not investigate safeguarding concerns
 - Safe practice must be maintained at all times
 - Participants are encouraged to raise concerns
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7. Reporting Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may arise from disclosures, observations, incidents, or behaviour changes.

All concerns must be:

- Reported immediately to the DSL
- Recorded factually
- Treated seriously and confidentially

If there is immediate risk of harm, emergency services must be contacted without delay.

8. Safeguarding Response Process

The DSL will:

1. Receive and record the concern
 2. Assess immediate risk
 3. Take immediate action if required
 4. Refer to external agencies where necessary (e.g. Adult Social Care or emergency services)
 5. Record decisions and rationale
 6. Provide appropriate feedback where possible
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9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information will be treated confidentially but may be shared where necessary to:

- Protect an adult or others from harm
- Meet legal obligations
- Support safeguarding processes

Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.

10. Recording and Data Protection

All safeguarding records will be:

- Factual and accurate
 - Free from opinion or speculation
 - Stored securely in line with GDPR
 - Kept only as long as necessary
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11. Recruitment and Training

Rise and Climb CIC uses safe recruitment practices including:

- References
- DBS checks where appropriate
- Role suitability assessment

All staff and volunteers receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role, including:

- Recognising abuse
 - Responding to disclosures
 - Reporting procedures
 - Safe practice in climbing environments
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12. Whistleblowing

Staff and volunteers may raise concerns about unsafe practice. If necessary, concerns may be escalated externally. No one will suffer detriment for raising genuine safeguarding concerns.

13. Code of Conduct

All staff, volunteers, and participants must:

- Act respectfully
- Follow safety instructions
- Maintain appropriate boundaries
- Prioritise safety at all times

Unsafe or inappropriate behaviour may result in removal from activities.

14. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or guidance.

Monitoring includes:

- Incident reporting
 - Staff feedback
 - Safeguarding reviews
 - External guidance updates
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15. Conclusion

Rise and Climb CIC is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where adults can participate with dignity and confidence.

We recognise that climbing is a high-risk, safety-critical activity that may not be appropriate for some individuals at certain times. We balance inclusion with safety through proportionate, individualised safeguarding decisions overseen by the DSL.

Safeguarding is central to all work at Rise and Climb CIC.

