



Global Safeguarding Policy

Risk Owner	Global People Director (Safeguarding Lead)
Approver	International Board
Review Date	March 2026

1. Purpose and objectives of policy

This policy outlines World Animal Protection's approach to protect the health, safety and welfare of all employees, consultants, volunteers, beneficiaries, trustees and individuals who come into contact with the organisation (stakeholders) including local partners, communities and indigenous peoples.

Is intended to help World Animal Protection protect certain people who may be in vulnerable circumstances. It is recognised that within the course of its activities World Animal Protection stakeholders may come into contact with children (individuals who are under 18 years old) or adults at risk (those over 18 who are rendered vulnerable to harm or exploitation due to their personal situation and/or social circumstances). There may also be situations where a stakeholder member falls into these categories.

The primary objectives are:

- To safeguard and promote the health and welfare of all stakeholders.
- To assign accountability and responsibilities to those with a core role to play in the protection of our stakeholders.
- To establish a procedure for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- To outline the support available for survivors/those the subject of safeguarding concerns.

Scope of policy:

- It applies to all employees, agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers, suppliers, donors and trustees of World Animal Protection and their branches.

- It is acknowledged that Affiliates will have their own robust risk management frameworks monitored by their respective independent boards and regulators. However, they are welcome to adopt this policy in part or whole.

2. Safeguarding Policy Statement

World Animal Protection will not tolerate abuse, harassment or exploitative actions of any nature by any of its stakeholders. We recognise the rights of all of our stakeholders to be treated with respect and dignity by our employees and others who represent us.

World Animal Protection also has a responsibility to protect its employees, volunteers and consultants (personnel). Unacceptable behaviour towards any member of personnel by another member of personnel will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action or the termination of contractual arrangements.

For the purposes of the organisational Safeguarding Policy, a child shall mean anyone under the age of 18 years old.

A vulnerable adult can be any adult that is vulnerable by virtue of their circumstances, including (but not limited to) the following: having a disability of any kind, having an addiction of any kind, receiving community support services or having recently left foster care.

Abuse of power and trust

We recognise that in some situations our stakeholders may be perceived as having a position of power, authority and trust. They must not take improper personal advantage of their position under any circumstances.

Recruitment of employees and volunteers

In recruiting new personnel, and especially those whose intended role is likely to involve contact with children or vulnerable adults, World Animal Protection will make every effort to ensure that it does not employ or engage anyone with any history which suggests that it might pose a risk to these groups.

Sexual activity

Obtaining sexual contact through influence, whether monetary or otherwise, is universally and totally unacceptable. Sexual activity of any nature while being seen to represent World Animal Protection must not take place.

Working with vulnerable adults

World Animal Protection fully recognises its responsibilities when working with people who, in the context of our activities, may be particularly vulnerable or susceptible to abuse or exploitation.

Stakeholders will treat all people with whom they come into contact with respect and dignity.

Working with children

World Animal Protection will maintain the highest possible standards to meet its responsibilities to protect and safeguard children. If stakeholders engage with children on behalf of the organisation, they must do so with reference to the best practice principles of working with children and young people. For example, ensuring two adults are present when working with anyone under the age of 18.

Types of harm that might lead to a safeguarding concern

Any number of things could give rise to a safeguarding concern. In particular stakeholders of World Animal Protection must be vigilant for the following (non-exhaustive list) which could give rise to a safeguarding concern if children or vulnerable adults are involved:

- Bullying/harassment (in person or online)
- Modern slavery
- Forced marriage
- Human trafficking
- Sexual exploitation
- Radicalisation
- Discrimination
- Physical or emotional abuse
- Financial abuse

3. Values and behaviours

At World Animal Protection everything we do is guided by our values and behaviours and these form part of this Safeguarding Policy by shaping and influencing our decision-making processes. They are:

- Global – We make decisions and act with a global mindset.

- Diverse and Inclusive – We actively encourage and promote diversity, ensure all voices are heard and are committed to equal opportunities for all.
- Collaborative – We work together and co-create to achieve change at scale.
- Agile – We make change happen in a fast-moving world.
- Growing People – We continually learn and develop.
- Accountable – We are role models. We take responsibility for our actions and encourage others to do the same.
- Courageous – We push boundaries, take risks and set ambitious targets.

4. Safeguarding Procedure

The following outlines our procedure for dealing with reports of a breach of this policy where the safeguarding violation is:

- Against employees or members of the public,
- Perpetrated by employees, volunteers or associated personnel.

4.1. How to report a safeguarding concern

Employees or volunteers who experience, witness or hear of an incident that is a safeguarding concern, must report it to either their line manager or a Safeguarding Committee member (see email contact below). Line managers are responsible for escalating the safeguarding concern to a Safeguarding Committee member.

If a safeguarding concern is disclosed directly to an employee, the person receiving the report should bear the following in mind:

- Listen
- Empathize with the person
- Ask who, when, where, what but not why
- Repeat and check your understanding of the situation
- Report to the Safeguarding Committee member within 24 hours

All associated partners and members of the public should report their concerns directly to a member of our Safeguarding Committee through our dedicated safeguarding email address: safeguarding@worldanimalprotection.org.

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