



## DECISION MAKING GUIDANCE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Government recognises that safeguarding concerns and referrals may increase during the Covid-19 outbreak, with more people receiving support and also support needs changing, which may prompt concerns.

**The Coronavirus Act 2020 sets out how Local Authorities can use the new [Care Act Easements](#) during this exceptional time.**

**Safeguarding is everyone's business, so it is important that we remain alert to possible abuse or neglect concerns.**

Local Authorities, social care providers, the health voluntary sector and our communities must continue work to prevent and reduce the risk of harm to people with care and support needs, including those affected by Covid-19.

**Safeguarding adults remains a statutory duty of Local Authorities to keep the most vulnerable safe from abuse or neglect.**

**The Coronavirus Act 2020 does not affect the safeguarding protections in the Care Act, particularly at Section 42 of the Care Act.**

It is vital that Local Authorities continue to offer the same level of safeguarding oversight and application of Section 42. However, it is also important that the response to safeguarding referrals and subsequent actions are proportionate and mindful of the pressure social care providers are likely to be under.

All providers of adult social care or health care have a key role in safeguarding adults in their care, and all agencies have a duty to ensure adults with care and support needs are not placed at risk of abuse or neglect by delays in care and support planning.

Unlike the Care Act, the [MCA](#) – and the related [Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards \(DoLS\)](#) – has not been altered by the emergency Coronavirus Act 2020. However, the Government has announced plans to give updated guidance from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on the practical issues affecting DoLS very shortly, all relevant information will be shared as it becomes available.

**Employers must ensure that staff, including volunteers, are trained in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect, how to respond, and where to go for advice and assistance.**

The [Ethical Framework for Adult Social Care](#) provides support to ongoing response planning and decision-making to ensure that ample consideration is given to a core set of ethical values and principles when organising and delivering social care for adults, including for safeguarding. Appropriate records must be kept of which decisions are taken and their justifications to ensure accountability, every decision will require consideration of individual wellbeing, overall public good and the resources that are available. The values and principles of the Framework should serve as a starting point to guide decision-making.

**The table below identifies the level of concern where immediate action is required.**

The examples are not exhaustive and as per previous guidance it is expected that practitioners will use professional judgement to inform decision-making – [Derbyshire Safeguarding Adults Board Decision Making Guidance](#).

<p><b>RED / High Priority</b></p>	<p><b>Critical Safeguarding Adult Concerns where there is a need for immediate action.</b></p> <p><b>Example:</b> You have been made aware of an individual with care and support needs who is being subject to significant abuse/neglect which is highly likely to cause risk to life and/or risk of life changing injury; there may be concerns regarding capacity and/or him/her being subject to controlling and coercive behaviour and therefore powerless to seek help. There is no agency visiting the property/the individual hasn't been seen by any professionals/third party for some considerable length of time and there's no identifiable, safe means of having some dialogue with the individual therefore no additional information can be gathered.</p> <p><b>Further factors to consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk to life, risk of significant life-changing injury.</li><li>• Significant sexual assault within the past week.</li><li>• Imminent Forced Marriage.</li><li>• Significant threats to wider public safety.</li><li>• Human Trafficking and/or Modern Slavery.</li><li>• Welfare concerns</li></ul>
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- Cases where an urgent application needs to be made to court.

***Please note Visits need only be completed where the context of the safeguarding meets the current RED RAG rating criteria, AND creative use of technology (such as video call, Skype, telephone contacts, etc.) to gather critical information and complete critical assessments and consultations to meet legal requirements cannot otherwise be achieved.***

***All visits must be discussed and agreed with your line manager.***