

TAXATION DISCIPLINARY BOARD

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy ('the Policy') is to protect people, particularly children and at-risk adults, from harm that may be caused due to their contact with The Taxation Disciplinary Board Ltd. and the Taxation Disciplinary Board (jointly described in this document as TDB).

1.2 In this policy "Personnel" means all TDB employees, officers, consultants, contractors, casual workers, agency workers and Members who sit on the Disciplinary Tribunal and Investigation Committee Panel.

1.3 Children are defined as all those who are under 18 years of age. An at-risk adult is one who is or may need care by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation either temporarily or permanently.

1.4 This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of TDB Personnel;
- The design and implementation of TDB's activities.

1.5 The Policy lays out the commitments made by TDB and informs Personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

1.6 The Policy does not cover:

- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by TDB or associated personnel;
- Routine Health and Safety arrangements;
- Personnel who are not acting on behalf of TDB.

1.7 The Policy will address both child safeguarding and adult safeguarding.

2 WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

2.1 Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing, and human rights, and enabling them to live in safety and free from harm, abuse, and neglect. It is a preventative and precautionary approach to planning and the procedures needed to protect individuals from any potential harm.

2.2 TDB understands it to mean protecting people, including children and at-risk adults, from harm that arises from contact with Personnel, or the design and implementation of TDB activities.

3 SCOPE

3.1 This Policy is concerned with actions and omissions by Personnel.

3.2 It is appreciated that the level of direct control over the actions of those above will vary with the nature of the relationship that they have with TDB but nevertheless TDB will seek either directly to control, or to influence, the behaviour of those associated with it and acting on its behalf to achieve its safeguarding aims.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 TDB believes that everyone, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. TDB will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by its Personnel.

4.2 TDB commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

5 PREVENTION – TDB responsibilities

5.2 TDB will:

- Ensure all Personnel have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within the Policy;
- Design and undertake all its activities in a way that protects people from the risk of harm that may arise from their contact with TDB. This includes the way in which information about individuals on our activities is gathered and communicated;
- Implement safeguarding procedures proportionate to the risk when recruiting, managing, and deploying its Personnel who will come into contact with children and/or potentially at-risk adults;
- Ensure its Personnel receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation;
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process;
- Ensure Safeguarding is considered as part of TDB's risk assessments and risk register;
- Review policies and safeguarding practices for effectiveness annually.

6 PREVENTION – Personnel responsibilities – Child safeguarding

6.1 Personnel must not:

- Ignore safeguarding practices;
- Subject anyone to physical, emotional, financial, or psychological abuse or neglect;
- Use TDB sanctioned activities to develop unauthorised personal relationships with children;
- Compromise child safety by the provision of alcohol/drugs or by placing them in unsafe settings;

- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking;
- Engage in sexual activity (paid or unpaid) or sexting (or pressuring others to do so) with anyone under the age of 18 if in a position of authority or trust over them as a result of a role for the TDB;
- Engage in any sexual activity of any type, including sexting, with children under the age of 16.

7 PREVENTION – Personnel responsibilities - Adult safeguarding

7.1 Personnel must not:

- Ignore safeguarding practices;
- Subject anyone to physical, emotional, financial, or psychological abuse, or neglect;
- Refuse to assess and possibly adapt processes to enable potentially at-risk adults to participate;
- Use TDB activities to develop relationships with potentially at-risk adults for personal gain;
- Place potentially at-risk adults in unsuitable or unsafe settings;
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with potentially at-risk adults including trafficking;
- Sexually abuse or exploit potentially at-risk adults.

8 PREVENTION – Personnel responsibilities - Children and At-Risk Adult safeguarding

8.1 Personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Policy;
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a TDB staff member or associated personnel to the safeguarding lead officer (see section 12.1).

9 ENABLING REPORTS AND COMPLAINTS

9.1 TDB will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting a safeguarding complaint and concern are made available to Personnel and the public. TDB also accepts complaints and concerns from external sources, including members of the public, partners, and official bodies.

9.2 Personnel who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to the safeguarding lead officer (see section 12.1).

9.3 Members of the public who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it as soon as practical to the safeguarding lead officer (see section 12.1).

10 COMPLAINT OR CONCERN RESPONSE

10.1 TDB will follow up safeguarding reports according to policy and legal and statutory obligations. TDB will notify statutory authorities and cooperate with any investigation. TDB may collate information but will not attempt to investigate allegations or formally interview witnesses or complainants or take independent action so as not to hinder statutory body investigations unless permitted to do so.

10.2 TDB will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff and action may be taken against Personnel who are found to be bringing the profession into professional disrepute. TDB will offer appropriate support to enable complainants to engage with the complaints process and will consider how best to communicate with them in a way that meets their needs. Discussions and decisions regarding the nature of the support needed to enable participation will involve the complainant, child, or at-risk adult.

11 CONFIDENTIALITY

11.1 It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.

12 SAFEGUARDING LEAD PERSONNEL AND ASSOCIATED POLICIES

12.1 The Safeguarding Officer is Tom Hayhoe, Chair of TDB thayhoe@tax-board.org.uk

12.2 Associated Policies

- Code of Conduct for Panel Members and Assessors
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

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